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Reading

HORIZONS



Spring 1968

Reading **HORIZONS**

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Editorial Comment

The Need of Adult Reading in the Junior College

In our changing world the content of all college courses is being modified in keeping with new facts resulting from research. This is especially true in the natural sciences, social studies, literature, art, and music. The educated man of today will not be the educated man of 1998 unless he learns to hunger and thirst after new facts, new ideas, and new points of view. This means that college students of today must learn to read with zest and eager curiosity. Reading is an act of the total organism and, as long as it maintains vigorous life, reading should be a continuous process.

For thirty-six years colleges and universities have provided credit courses in adult reading for their students who wished to develop their maximum reading and study skills. Men and women taking these developmental courses have made significant gain not only in reading ability as measured by tests but in point-hour-ratio as well. Studies show that superior readers need to facilitate, through reading, their use of textbooks and other reference materials.

In America, junior colleges are increasing at the rate of one each week. Their student body is made up of vocationally minded students who are less carefully selected than the enrollment in four year colleges and universities. These young people need the opportunity to develop more effectively their reading and study skills. They are saying, "Give us the know-how, and we can do the job."

Homer L. J. Carter
Editor

THE DISADVANTAGED CHILD AND HIS PROBLEMS WITH REGARD TO READING

Joseph B. Tremonti, C.S.V.

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH

One of the most fashionable topics for discussion among educators today is the problem of the education of the culturally deprived child. The few people trying to understand this child have given him a name, not a satisfactory name, but a name; they call him "*culturally deprived*." What defines him is not an absence of money or nice clothes or good furniture or cars or food, although all these objects are usually lacking. These children suffer from poverty of experience. Perhaps their lives are rich with experience their teachers know nothing about. But they are growing up unequipped to live in an urban, primarily middle-class world of papers and pens, books and conversations, machines and desks and time clocks.

Their numbers are staggering. While in 1950, one child out of every ten in America's 14 largest cities was "*culturally deprived*," by 1960 the figure had become an alarming one out of three. This is an estimate made for the Ford Foundation by a group of big-city school boards organized as the Great Cities School Improvement Studies. By 1970, one of every two big-city children is expected to be "*culturally deprived*."

Some of these deprived children are the sons and daughters of coal miners and "branch water" farmers of the Southern Appalachian backwoods, driven to the cities when their land would no longer support an ever-growing population. Others are children of Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and refugees from American Indian reservations.

Our first reaction to the term "*cultural deprivation*" should be one of skepticism bordering almost on rejection, knowing as we do that there is no such thing as "*cultural deprivation*." This is to say, every child has a culture; and, moreover, he takes unmistakable evidence of his culture along with him everywhere he goes, even to school. An anecdote about a first-grade teacher who was preparing her children to listen to a story illustrates this notion. Because the story had in it princesses and dragons and fairies, the teacher wanted to be sure that her first graders had adequate concepts of what those creatures are. Accordingly, she asked the class, "*Do you all know about fairies?*" Many of the first graders eagerly raised their hands and heartily chorused "*Yes*." One little boy with wildly waving arms

went even further to say: "*I know one. He lives right across the street from me.*" In this instance, I think we can say that the teacher was culturally deprived.

It is a psychological fact that mentally retarded children can learn. I assure you that the majority of the children you will help are not mentally retarded. If we can demonstrate that it is possible to teach organically defective children certain basic skills, we can surely demonstrate that it is possible to teach socially and economically denied children academic skills. The needs and capacities of any given child cannot be determined by an observation of the color or economic group to which he belongs.

Human intellectual potentials vary as widely in one group as they do in all other groups. There is a potential Einstein and Bunche among many groups of children in our society, save those who are clearly organically or functionally defective.

These deprived children are being systematically categorized, classified, and relegated to groups in terms of slow learners, Track A, Track B, but it all adds up to the fact that they are not being taught; and not being taught, they fail. They have a sense of personal humiliation and unworthiness. They react negatively, hostilely, and aggressively to the educational process. They hate teachers: they hate schools: they hate anything that seems to impose upon them this denigration, because they are not being respected as human beings, because their dignity and potential are being obscured and ignored in terms of educationally irrelevant factors, their manners, their speech patterns, their dress, or their apparent disinterest. The most insidious consequence of these assumptions is that they are self-fulfilling prophecies. The fallacy of the assumptions does not mean that they will not be demonstrated to be effective. Once one organizes an educational system wherein children are placed in tracks, or that certain judgments about their ability determine what is done for them or how much they are taught or not taught, the horror is that the results tend to justify such assumptions. However, they can learn if they are respected. They can learn if it is communicated to them that those who are responsible for teaching them believe they can learn. And above all, these children can learn if they are taught, and if they are taught with precisely the same standards and quality of instruction as are given to other, more privileged children; and if they are taught with whatever empirical evidence demonstrates what they need by way of extra attention or increased intensity in skill.

What we must realize is that there are many ways of learning.

Some people learn best by reading and writing, some people learn best from doing and acting, some from seeing. What emerges from this is that teaching must make available opportunities to learn in many ways, through many styles. But regardless of the person's style, whether it be a reading style or not, reading is obviously a fundamental requirement of our learning culture. Although it is possible for formal learning to occur without reading ability, it is generally much more difficult. While it is not necessary for one to be an excellent reader or a fast reader, at least minimum reading skill is necessary. Stating that reading is relatively necessary for learning is not to say, however, that the learner must possess or develop a reading style. Thus, an individual's basic learning style may be auditory, based on hearing, or it may be physical, based on manipulation. At the same time he has to know how to read. In teaching disadvantaged children to read we should not try to transform their style of learning into a reading style. Actually, their reading ability may be greatly enhanced only when they can see and manipulate the things they are reading about, thereby utilizing their visual and physical styles. In teaching reading, for example, you can use puppets or you can do it through reading aloud, or you can do it by acting out the story.

Research tells us there are learning styles among the low income groups that represent unique, untapped sources of learning. The following is a brief list of some of the major characteristics of the mental style of the low-income people:

1. Physical and visual rather than oral.
2. Problem-centered rather than abstract-centered.
3. Words in relation to action rather than word-bound (inventive word power and "hip" language.)

Extraordinary ingenuity is required if we are to produce strong motivation for learning in children who must look far away for models of success. We cannot depend on promises of greater opportunity to come after the struggle over equal education is won, to provide this motivation. (We cannot rely upon the standard white-oriented text material to convince these children that their people can lay claim to a significant place both in America's past and in its future.)¹

Let us not denigrate the positive aspects of these deprived children. The strong points of the deprived arise out of their efforts at coping with an essentially negative environment. These efforts may in some cases lead to new difficulties, but it is important to view the behavior in terms of what the disadvantaged are trying to do rather than to

place, typically, one-sided emphasis on their failures and pathology. Nor should these efforts be compared to standard middle-class behavior as though the latter were likely alternatives for the deprived.

The positive aspects themselves are uneven and complex; often they are the reverse side of weaknesses. Thus the positive features found in the strong peer culture and the greater sibling interaction may arise from the limited time that the parents can spend with their children in large families; the greater freedom from intellectualization may stem from less access to intellectual occupations, and the maturity of the children may be related to the fact that the poor are less educated by parents and teachers and hence forced to develop their own resources at an early age.

There are a number of other sources for the strength of the poor which need only be mentioned.

1. The minority poor, mostly immigrants or a generation or two removed, often preserve their ethnic traditions more fully than their richer brethren, who often shed their old cultural ways as they adapt to American middle-class life. Thus, whatever strengths there are in the ethnic tradition probably remain with the poor.

2. Traditions of various groups of the poor often contain elements contributing to their strength. Negro history is important in this context as is Puerto Rican and Spanish tradition.

It is probably no accident that the Black Muslim Movement has had considerable appeal for the Negro poor, despite the fact that many dimensions of its program and psychology are deeply alien to Negro traditions. Its success, however, is rooted in its call to Negro traditions. It suggests that there is enormous moral integrity in a people who have not been guilty of enslaving others, and further that whatever is wrong, pathological, or evil in the black man has been imposed from without and is not intrinsic to his character, culture, or make-up. It says, instead, that what is internal to the people is strong, moral, and decent.

Regardless of whether this represents an oversimplification, it nonetheless provides a significant model for us to consider because it supplies a novel, action-attuned formulation of the relationship of assets and liabilities in a have-not population.

In his research on the disadvantaged child and the learning process, Deutsch confronts all public metropolitan school systems with this question: Why is it that slum children who are "*so curious and cute and affectionate and warm and independently dependent in kindergarten and the first grade,*" later soon become "*alienated, withdrawn,*

angry, passive, apathetic, or just plain troublemakers?" His study supports the thesis that slum children, whatever their backgrounds, enter our middle-class school system unprepared for its demands, find the system unprepared to cope with their problems, and leave it, not enriched and armed against the hostile and degenerative influences of their slum environment, but embittered by school failure and less able to cope with life than when they entered school.

Psychologists are beginning to discern that this child's inattention may be a highly developed skill, the result of intensive conditioning. When a child lives with 11 other people in three rooms, separated by thin walls from other households of 11 people in three other rooms, smelling their cooking, sharing their toilets, knowing when the man next door is drunk and the baby awakens downstairs, a child must *learn* to be inattentive to survive. His ears become skilled at not hearing, his eyes at not seeing.

There is the story of social misfit in a Harlem School. A school psychologist, moved to investigate, learned that the boy liked to lock himself in a closet. This had ominous Freudian implications, such as a need to withdraw to the dark comfort of the womb. To confuse the implications, however, the boy showed a predilection for a certain closet in which he could turn on an electric light. On investigating this deviation, the psychologist discovered that the boy, indeed a misfit among his peers, merely liked to read. He would go to all lengths to do so in quiet. This eccentricity had led his family and school to suspect that he was seriously out of his mind.

Most teachers hardly suspect other forms of the deprived child's poverty of, or indifferences in, experience. They have found that kindergarten children often have not learned to tell one color from another, except red and blue. No one has told them to wear the pink dress today or wondered aloud in their presence about the advisability of getting lavender draperies to go with the gray rug. They may be unaware of shapes, clocks, circles, squares, the idea of short or long. The teacher assumes a knowledge of these things. She often cannot conceive of a child's not knowing colors and shapes, except a very "*dumb*" child. One teacher, trying to teach reading through a story about a snowman, was baffled to learn that some children assumed a snowman is a man who shovels snow from city streets; they had seen one of those, but knew of no other kind. No one had ever told them otherwise.

Conversation is not a highly developed art in the families of slum children. Suddenly the child, accustomed to learning through his

senses, is obliged to sit still all day before a talkative teacher, she can talk for hours without stopping. Moreover, she seems to think the most important thing in the world is to make out printed words on a page. About half the children surveyed by Dr. Deutsch came from homes that did not possess a single book. Instead of bringing the middle-class teacher and the impoverished pupil closer together, words may help only to alienate them, underlining the distance between their worlds.

To these psychological factors which affect the slum child's will to learn may be added, as even more important, the effects of his impoverished environment on his capacity to learn. There is considerable evidence that lack of fostering experiences keeps the slum child from maturing in the areas of perception, language, cognition, and interpersonal skills. Thus, his impoverished physical surroundings handicap him. Scarcity of objects to manipulate, colors and forms to appreciate and discriminate may well retard his development of skill in organizing figure-ground relations in the visual field. His crowded, noisy environment tends to develop in him a defensive inattention which cuts down his responsiveness to school stimuli and inhibits his development of auditory discrimination. Both of these lacks handicap him severely in learning to read. It has been noted that non-industrial groups generally, mountain children, American Indians, children from slums, do not regulate their lives by arbitrarily defined time sequences, a factor which makes it difficult for them to adjust to the tempo of the classroom and to perform well on timed tests.

His economically and psychologically harassed parents fail him. In the development of memory, the child needs parents who will link past to present for him by shared experiences continuously. In learning to complete assigned tasks successfully, he needs parents who have the time and patience not only to assign tasks, but to see that they are completed and rewarded. In learning to use adults as sources of information, the child needs parents who have time to answer questions and do not fear questions because they may be embarrassed by their own ignorance.

Finally, the slum child is handicapped by a lack of information and awareness about any part of the world except his own immediate environment. In every area in which his functional intelligence will be compared with that of the middle-class child, he is likely to appear inferior and tends to further prejudice his teacher against him.

Some mention must be made of the texts and materials that we use with these children. In most of our readers today, life is fun,

filled almost exclusively with friendly, smiling people, all white, mostly blond and North European in origin. Parents are always gentle and understanding; there are doting grandparents, generous and cooperative neighbors and warmhearted strangers. In one reader, there is mention of Indians, but in such a manner as to indicate that they don't really belong except for exhibition purposes.

A little story will point up this concern with the mother of a six-year old Negro girl. The mother relates how the child brought home her first reader, turned the pages looking at the pictures in bewilderment and finally asked, "*Mother, where am I in this book?*" After receiving a feeble explanation from her mother the child took her crayon and made some of the faces brown.

Reading textbooks are prepared to help children learn to read; i.e., to build vocabulary, to see relationships between ideas, to understand structure and form of grammar, etc.

Only recently have we *really* begun to understand that learning is made more difficult for the "brown face" if the language and pictures in the books are all for the "*pink face*." Furthermore, we now understand that a reading book teaches more than just reading skills. A science book teaches more than just science, a geography book teaches more than just geography. *They all teach attitudes*, about others and about self.

According to a recent article in the *Saturday Review*, only one out of every 10 books in the current crop written for children contains any pictures of Negroes. For the Negro child, such books tell him: "*You have no image today and no future tomorrow.*"

Such images are crucial. If Negro children go on finding themselves excluded from textbooks, their motivation to learn may be damaged further. It is difficult enough for millions of them, coming often from overcrowded slum flats where a quiet corner to study is rare, to pay attention in their overcrowded classrooms; but books which appeal to them, which tell them an integrated society is in the making, which hold further promises of an equal chance for them to become doctors as well as ditchdiggers, such books sow the seeds of a new self-pride.

The place to tell the story is everywhere: in the home, the community, on radio, T.V., and in the schools. A Negro child who sees Willie Mays hitting home runs out of a ball park has gotten a message about integrated baseball. But can he become a fireman or a doctor or a businessman or a diplomat tomorrow? If there are a few of these people around him, the images on T.V., still feeble and one-sided, may

be regarded by him as sheer fantasy, like commercials. One way to reach this child is through books. He must see himself in books, as he is, as he can be. Macmillan Co.'s Bank Street readers attempt just this. Other publishing houses, such as Follett, McGraw-Hill and Doubleday have taken similar steps. But progress has lagged tragically.

In our interaction with these children we need not only understand what makes the child tick but what motivates us to do things that we do at any given time. We all experience a self-confrontation and it has its pleasant as well as unpleasant facets. The very nature of our culturally pluralistic society imposes on us the necessity of preparing ourselves to accept our responsibility for helping children become adults who are free of irrational prejudices. We must accept our responsibility for helping children become adults who are free of racial, religious, and social class biases. Until we are able to accept ourselves, we will be unable to achieve warm, positive relationships with children and colleagues who are different from us.

James Michener, writing in *THE FIRES OF SPRING*, makes the quest for finding one's identity vivid when he says:

"For this is the journey that men make: to find themselves. If they fail in this, it doesn't matter much what else they find. Money, position, fame, many loves, revenge are all of little consequence, and when the tickets are collected at the end of the ride, they are tossed into a bin marked 'Failure.' But if a man happens to find himself—if he knows that he can be depended upon to do . . . the limits of his courage . . . the position from which he will no longer retreat . . . the secret reservoir of his determination . . . the extent of his dedication . . . the depth of his feeling for beauty . . . his honest and unpostured goals—then he has found a mansion which he can inhabit with dignity all the days of his life."

AND IT HAPPENED TO ME

Joe R. Chapel

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

You should know Ignacio, Maria, Petunia and Pedro—especially Pedro. Because of my involvement with the teaching of migrant children this summer I was able to become acquainted with them, to work with them, and to fall in love with them. Many of the people who participated in this program no longer abide by exigencies of the middle class, in utter oblivion to the migrant children's needs and to their worth.

This last summer Western Michigan University conducted a seven-week program in the Benton Harbor area, designed to give the migrant workers' children some help in learning to adjust to regular school life. Teaching reading and the necessary enhancement of experiential background made up the core of the program.

Pedro's eyes talk to you. They are enormous and black, and they say more than Pedro ever says. Not that Pedro is the strong, silent type. He is fluent in two languages—three if you count the emotional language of his eyes. Pedro is six and a half, and he wouldn't come up to your belt buckle, but his shoulders are out to here, and his whole body exudes a devil-may-care attitude that is typical of his family. He and his folks are members of a minority group known as Migrant Farm Workers. There are 500,000 of them in the United States, and the bulk of this group is, like Pedro, Mexican American. Lately the American Negro has flooded its ranks, however, the migrant farm worker and fruit picker is still more often from Mexico than from anywhere else.

Thus the children at our school were predominantly Mexican with a minority of Negro children and "Anglos." Apparently the Negroes who are leaving the southern cotton fields are finding a precarious niche for themselves in the migrant communities. They seldom live in the same camps. The Mexicans are the elite of the group usually but the children appear to accept each other with no evidence of "prejudice." In general, however, the Mexican children appear to have better self images than either of the other ethnic groups. They make friends more easily and relate faster—especially on a superficial level—with the teachers. However, there are more Negro children who quietly cling to a teacher.

The migrants live a sort of structured gypsy life. They own cars and wash tubs and balls and bats. Most migrants have one good outfit of clothes—even the children. They are clannish and fiercely

loving of members of their own families. The Mexicans especially are an anomaly. They will greet you as their equal, and they will not apologize for the usual squalor in which they live. They will chat with you—in *your* native tongue, since you cannot converse in theirs. They will hold your hand or pat you if they like you; in short they will act as though the world is giving them a fair shake, and yet on close, careful, examination you find that they think very poorly of themselves in terms of their ability to learn in our middle class educational system.

It was an emotional experience during the recruiting phase of the program to meet with the mothers and fathers in the camps. They greeted us with broad smiles that were somehow even more compelling because of all of their missing teeth. These parents were invariably courteous, and this courtesy warmed up into enthusiasm as we explained our purpose. It was also gratifying to see that the farmers and fruit growers, the migrant employers, were eager to help these people. In most cases they did all they could to make the physical facilities acceptable and to encourage formal education for all of the migrant children and young adults.

We made an attempt to enlist the cooperation of school authorities and the citizens of the district. Both of these groups were invited to our family night gatherings. Besides the children themselves and their parents, the farmers and their families came, as did many school administrators. The assistant superintendent, school principals, the elementary supervisor, and the director of transportation attended these family affairs.

More important even than this acceptance by the community was the effect our program had on the migrant children. They proved their interest by coming to school every day. They were proud of what they were accomplishing and so were their parents. We were proud of their successes, too.

One of the five centers conducted by Western Michigan University was at Pearl School, and a typical day there began at seven in the morning when two big yellow school buses began their morning runs. Covering a distance of 45 miles round trip and traveling within a radius of 20 miles from the school, each bus returned with a load of sleepy-eyed children ranging from six to ten years of age, eager to begin another day.

Breakfast was served to the children as soon as they arrived. Teachers were present during meals to chat informally with the children and to set an example for appropriate table manners. This

was also a time when the children talked about their families, what they enjoyed doing, and some of their experiences at home and at school.

Each of the three rooms was engaged in some form of reading or writing activity by 9:00 every morning. After lunch the youngsters were allowed to go outside on the playground for supervised games and individual play. A rest period followed this, and then in the afternoons there were varied activities. By 4:00 in the afternoon the buses were ready to take the children back to their camps.

The language experience approach for teaching reading was employed. During the reading and writing sessions every morning, each room had its own activity. The older children were divided into two groups according to their level of reading. During one session, one group discussed the pictures of characters in the story they were about to read—their expressions and possible reasons why they felt as they did. They read the first page to themselves, and the teacher asked questions and encouraged the children to find answers. Most of the youngsters in the front row responded readily and were anxious to answer questions; others were still. Reading aloud seemed to capture the attention of more children than when they were reading silently. After the story had been read, questions were written on the blackboard pertaining to it. More individual guidance and encouragement was given to the group at this time as they worked on their own. The children seemed eager to answer the questions correctly.

The more advanced group worked almost entirely alone at the outset of their lesson, looking up words in the dictionary that were most difficult from a story they had read. When they had finished, these words were written on flash cards and individuals were asked to use them in a sentence. Everyone wrote the words again. There was a brief discussion of each word in which the children eagerly participated.

Almost every child in the older group could write, so they were often asked to write stories on their own about trips they had taken, hobbies they enjoyed, or anything about themselves. Most of the children were busy and could work quite well individually, although some had to be encouraged and given ideas to write about. Then they were given manila paper on which to draw pictures of what they had written. Teachers helped with words the children could not spell. When everyone had finished their stories and pictures, teachers asked for volunteers to read. Some wanted to read in front of the class; others were hesitant and needed some coaxing. Reinforcement

was given by the teachers, and an obvious willingness to participate resulted.

On another occasion these children had a fellow classmate who was in the hospital, so they decided to cheer her up and send home-made get well cards. Papers were given to each child. They were shown how to fold them, and they were asked to use bright colored crayons to draw pictures and to write a message. The teacher in charge handled the children very well and instilled enthusiasm in them when they worked on this project.

Filmstrips also were shown which gave each child a chance to read aloud or to contribute to the discussion. "This Is You" and "Your Five Senses" which were produced by Walt Disney kept the attention of the entire group. Excellent question-and-answer periods took place, and it appeared that learning was taking place. The teacher showing these films was constantly on the alert for words in the film which were unfamiliar to these children, and she made sure they were understood. The "pre-primer" and "reading readiness" children had lessons which were geared to their age and level of achievement during reading and writing sessions. Emphasis was placed upon experience charts. The children at Pearl School were given instruction in arithmetic. The goal for all the age groups was one of practical application of simple arithmetic skills.

One of the primary objectives of the school was an attempt to enrich their inadequate mental content and experiential background. Many interesting and educational field trips were taken during the seven-week period of school. One of the most enjoyable was the result of an invitation from the Western Michigan University Campus School in Kalamazoo which was also involved in a program of teaching educationally disadvantaged children. When they arrived, the children were divided into groups according to age and were then escorted to separate rooms. Each child was introduced to a Campus School student who became his "buddy," and the children became acquainted with each other. After a mid-morning snack of popsicles, some of the Campus School children put on a play for the entire group. A songfest was held afterward, and the children from both schools shared songs they had learned.

Other trips included visits to Kellogg's in Battle Creek, Windmill Island in Holland, the Tip-Top Bakery in Benton Harbor, the Hartford Fair, and the YWCA pool in St. Joseph.

One of the teachers at Pearl School had a first-hand experience with her children which must be reported, "This morning I literally

lugged into class one weighty box of sand and my prize starfish, one that I had captured myself a few years back. Several of the boys had been asking about starfish and I happened to mention that I had one, so naturally I knew I would have no peace until I managed to come forth with it. As I was carrying everything into the room before the children arrived, I got one of my rare, spur-of-the-moment ideas. I thought that maybe instead of just showing the starfish, we could all have some fun with him and that the children could have an opportunity to be creative. With this in mind I took the box of sand, laid the starfish in the center, and then proceeded to cover the box with a huge blanket. I must admit it was most "mysterious." After all of the children were in the room I told them that I had something special and very "mysterious" but instead of just showing it, we were going to go up one by one and put our hand in and see if we could tell what the contents of the box were by just feeling. After each had had a turn they were given a sheet of paper and were to draw what they had felt—and not to say a word to anyone.

"The children reacted much more than I had anticipated. They were extremely excited and could hardly wait for their turn. As they came up, some of them were fearful but none could leave without trying at least once. Some of them would cautiously stick their hand in and immediately jump back. One little girl even said that something in there bit her; yet she wanted to feel it again. By this time, imaginations were running wild. Some of them carefully drew the texture they felt; others attempted to reproduce the shape. Almost all of the work was creative and very perceptive."

One general reaction throughout the teaching staff was that the children did not display any particular discrimination against each other. They played together and fought each other as all children do, without regard for race or color. We had our share of "scrappers," but many friendships evolved from the summer school experience between Negro, Spanish, and "Anglo" children.

It was evident that other definite changes took place in the behavior of certain individual students. For example, a little Mexican boy named Ricardo was extremely hostile during the first two weeks that school was in session. He seemed to be hyperactive, very uncooperative and misbehaving much of the time to gain attention and recognition. Apparently, Ricardo wanted to prove that he was a bad boy, after being told this by so many people. Ricardo felt he was not an American but "only a Mexican," and his self-concept suffered because of this belief. When he was convinced by the teachers that

he had good qualities which were acceptable and that his unacceptable behavior would be ignored and rejected, Richardo began to feel worthwhile. He still had setbacks, but he came a long way in the seven weeks of school.

Two family nights were held during the school session and both were successful. All parents and relatives were invited, and there was a large turnout both times. Many examples of the children's work decorated the school. There were murals painted of the trips taken, pictures of the school drawn by the students, interesting bulletin board displays, and other art work shown. As a follow-up to their trip to the bakery, one room baked bread the day before family night and served it to the parents who were present. The children were excited and pleased with their baking.

A program was presented by the children on both family night occasions. The youngsters sang songs they had been rehearsing for days. They recited poetry, did some choral readings, and showed a few tumbling stunts. The children seemed to enjoy showing their parents some of the activities of summer school, and the parents seemed proud and happy when their children were on stage.

The growth on the part of our Western Michigan University participants was in the most part spectacular. These people had read about the migrant child and had some notion of what these children were like, but really didn't know them until they were given the opportunity to be with them daily and to visit in their camps. Our teachers learned to love these children. As the day came when we had to bid farewell to them, all of us were sadly reluctant to see them go.

Growth in education is something we always talk about. This summer we saw it actually occur. It happened to everyone connected with the program—the children, their parents, the community, and the teachers. And it happened to me.

IS IT NEW?

Hazel Askin

GALESBURG-AUGUSTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Education by hard, cold definition is a drawing, or leading out process—a growing into, from the Latin verb “*educo*.” It would seem then, on the surface anyway, that any process or technique for teaching of reading or any other part of the curriculum would have been a gradual outgrowth of preceding techniques, philosophies or procedures. When news media and public communications systems, therefore, douse a reading and viewing public with buckets of intellectual baptism purported to be new and revolutionary, it would seem advisable for professional people to become acquainted with factual backgrounds of these so-called “new” techniques before becoming “band-wagon jumpers.”

“We need to use every approach we can, every tool available and all the vitality we can muster to start beginning readers on their way.”¹ Supplementary to this statement is the idea that children with a reading problem need all of these approaches for help of a remedial nature. Many times it obviously becomes a matter of the most valuable technique to use for *this* particular person, not whether it is the “newest” thing.

Writers of books on reading usually classify the practice of teachers as belonging to this or that “*method*.” The vagueness of the word *method* becomes apparent when one discovers that an alphabetic method was also called the spelling method, or the ABC method. A method called phonic was referred to as syllabic; a word method has been referred to as the look-say method and the sentence method was labelled the global method. There are some others, too: the phrase method, the experience-chart method, the story method, the phonic word method, the non-oral method, and even the gingerbread method. It did not seem possible or feasible to eliminate the word *method*, but it is necessary to keep in mind that each of these *methods* is amoebic in its power to change shape. There was no single alphabetic method, or phonic method, and the same is true of all the other practices which are called methods. Another difficulty was to make allowance for the difference between theory and practice; between what was advised and what was actually done.

The chronology is very loose, but it is there. From the earliest times of which there is any record until well into the nineteenth century, the alphabet method predominated. Phonic teaching in spite of

1. Helen S. Craymer, *The Instructor*, Vol. 76, No. 3, (November 1966), p. 147.

word method off-shoots dominated the second half of that century and continued into this one. Word and sentence methods have been the twentieth century orthodoxy. During the past decade or so, there has been a strong reaction, at least in theory, against word and sentence methods in their more extreme forms and this reaction is accompanied by a return to the late nineteenth century interest in a *form* of regular spelling as an aid in learning to read.

Sometimes even the diligent student of the history of reading is likely to get the impression from books on the subject that the pupil who was taught by an alphabetic method learned the names of the letters, but not their sounds. Emphasis was placed on the alphabetic method stressing the *names* of the letters and the phonics method, the sound of letters. Some authors neglect to point out that the teaching material of the simple hornbook, to say nothing of the early primer, while alphabetically oriented was designed quite precisely for the purpose of teaching the sounds of consonants when combined with vowels.

Alphabetic methods were subjected to many criticisms during the first half of the nineteenth century. They have the peculiar distinction, however, of not having been shown by some manipulation of statistics to be inferior to all other methods or combination of methods. They went out before statistics came in—went out as a recognized modern method, I mean. Horace Mann's powerful indictment of them in favor of a word method laid the basis for some experiment with word methods in the United States.

In 1908, Huey wrote on the nature of perception in reading, stating that the natural method of learning to read is just the same as learning to talk, i.e. by the method of imitation. Without special methods and devices the child grasps the meaning of words and sentences gradually, a little here and a little there, not troubling about the still obscure parts. A few years later he finds that he is in an environment of books. All of it has at first as little meaning as had the spoken sentences he had listened to. His scribbling is as little like writing or printing as his early babble was like speech. He begins to be interested in these printed and written "things" and to imitate them. The steps from this imitation to facile reading and writing are as certain and as natural as were the earlier ones toward spoken language. Huey suggested in 1908 "That the best way to get a reading vocabulary is just the way that the child gets his spoken vocabu-

lary, by having the new words keep coming in a context environment that is familiar and interesting.”²

Huey’s statement about the word being more than the sum of the letters and the sentence more than the sum of the separate words is somewhat of a reflection of an earlier book written by Farnham in 1881, reprinted in 1886 and 1895. In this work, Farnham wrote of the cognizing of things by wholes and working from the whole to the parts. Both of these works were written long before the rise of the Gestalt school and yet read as if they came from the pen of a Gestalt psychologist. The fact is, of course, that at the time Farnham and Huey were writing, the preliminary work and thinking that were later to develop into Gestalt theory was already being carried on.

In 1912 Wertheimer, who is regarded as the founder of Gestalt psychology, defined a *Gestalt* as “a whole, the behaviour of which is not determined by that of its individual elements, but in which the past processes are themselves determined by the intrinsic nature of the whole.”³ He called the type of thinking that builds from parts into wholes, “atomistic” or “brick-and-mortar” and insisted strongly that it was an unproductive activity of the mind. It was not the Gestalt idea that was new, but the matter of its formulation. Thirty years before Farnham had been writing about “cognizing by wholes” but was also going on to ask in the context of reading, “what is the whole, the important whole which should engage the attention of the teacher of reading at the earliest stages of instruction.”⁴

The configuration method developed as an outgrowth of Gestaltist belief that, generally from infancy we perceive the world in the complex, fully articulated way that we do as adults. Gestaltists advocated teaching reading by a method in which general shapes of words were recognized and compared or contrasted with others to note similarities and differences. One curious result of the configuration idea of teaching reading was to be seen in the design of books to fit the theory. These books were to release the teacher from the narrow restrictions of a regularly phonic vocabulary. The cat was no longer going to be on the mat. All that was necessary was to find the words that interested children most and that was easy. They would be the names of things and actions that the child showed the liveliest interest in.

2. Hunter Diack, *The Teaching of Reading*, Philosophical Library, New York, pp. 56-73, 1965.

3. *Op. cit.*

4. Huey, “The Nature of Perception in Reading”—1908—Reviewed by Diack in *The Teaching of Reading*.

Away back in the nineteenth century, Horace Mann had said that a child could learn to read twenty-six words in less time than it took him to learn the twenty-six letters of the alphabet. The reason he gave was that the words had meaning and interest very different from the queer algebra of letters.

However, in spite of the fact that most five year olds have a speaking vocabulary of 2,000 words (some authorities have given higher estimates), it did not follow that children would learn to recognize very easily the few hundred or more words necessary for the telling of an interesting story. So the compilers of reading books turned to the problem of designing books with as few different words as possible without spoiling the story. Thus was born scientific vocabulary control. From the selling point of view, it was better to say that the vocabulary was scientifically controlled than to say that the book contained as few different words as possible, or to claim that they were designed to teach children by keeping as many words from them as possible, but that *is what happened*.

Now, the pendulum swings again to try to correct the lack of vocabulary in a child's early reading experience. The feeling of many reading experts is that a quick, simplified alphabet or code to break the English language is essential if the early reader is not to become discouraged. The seeds of i/t/a were planted more than one hundred years ago (1825) when Sir Isaac Pitman, schoolmaster from Somerset, England invented Pitman shorthand which is phonic. In 1843, he met Alexander John Ellis, a scholar whose book, *The Alphabet of Nations* was the first serious work on scientific phonetics. Ellis wanted to create a new phonetic English, while Pitman applied phonetics to his shorthand.

In devising his shorthand Sir Isaac made a close study of the phonic basis of English. His phonotype was one of the early alphabets used to decode English for beginning readers. Experiments began in 1844, although the really large experiment with phonotypy did not take place until 1852. In ten schools at Waltham, Massachusetts, between 1852 and 1860, phonotypy was used for beginning stages of learning to read, followed by a transfer to conventional spelling. This two-stage technique set the pattern for subsequent experiments.

The notes Sir Isaac made on the phonic basis of English were preserved and came into the hands of his grandson, Sir James Pitman, publisher and member of Parliament. "Sir James points out what everyone knows, that our printed English is phonically phony. Our standard spelling is full of booby traps. Unfortunately our printed

English became fixed long before linguistic experts appeared on the scene.”⁵

Sir James claims no ambition to change the standard alphabet or English spelling. Reading his grandfather's notes, he wondered if the beginning reader might not make better progress if the alphabetical symbols could be made to represent exactly and distinctly the sounds used in everyday speech. His forty-four symbols include all but two letters of the regular alphabet. He tries to retain as much of the original spelling of words as possible to ease the transition to regularized or “grown-up” spelling.

To make a test in the schools, books were needed. These came from a number of London publishers. Already there are more than two hundred books (1964) transliterated into i/t/a or initial teaching alphabet. With books available, pilot test programs began in the schools under the watchful eyes of researchers. Classes using i/t/a were matched with classes taught by traditional methods. Among the most encouraging features of the i/t/a movement is the teaming of classroom pilot programs with research check, and the cautious claims of the proponents. There have been some implications of good results among the mentally disturbed and those who are being trained to use English as a second language.

No, the idea of a phonetic approach to teaching reading is not new. Several times it *has been* tried and has been dropped from the curriculum. Possibly this time, with improvements made, it will really catch fire. Let's keep a cautious, watchful vigil and an open mind. Maybe this time we have arrived. If so, it will be a very great innovation, for reading experts do not believe there is any *one right* way of teaching reading to everyone.

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PROMOTING APPRECIATION FOR LITERATURE

James A. Wright

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To accept the notion "A love of good reading is more likely to be caught than taught,"¹ is to contradict the claim "good books must be introduced to pupils in ways which help them to read with increasing ability to analyze and interpret and evaluate." Such a notion is also contrary to the statement, "The only ceiling on effective ways of bringing books and people together is the creative imagination of the adult who is the guide." Yet, these three quotes are taken from the same article—the first and third quotes having been juxtaposed and classified as a summary of "many books describing many techniques for reading guidance."

A further contradiction of the "caught" theory is the accepted attitude stated succinctly in a popular text on reading. "Interests are acquired and, like other acquired traits, are amenable to training or teaching."²

In addition to influencing interest directly, teaching affects interest through increasing the ability to analyze, interpret, and evaluate—mentioned by Dr. Schmitt. These abilities are pre-requisites to a love of good reading.

Since training a student to read literature involves enjoyment, study or analysis, on the one hand, and appreciation, on the other, become dual objectives to be pursued simultaneously. It is logical therefore to conclude that taste in literature can be nurtured by appropriate instruction. In fact, Broening³ in a summary of her research states, "There is a relationship between the development of literary taste and direct teaching of interpretive reading skills."

Gunn⁴ suggests that the three clusters of interpretive abilities which comprise the hierarchy of skills to be *taught* include (1) abilities

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1. Schmitt, Fanny. "Books Are for Reading," *Reading Horizons*, (Winter 1968), p. 71.
 2. DeBoer and Dallman. *The Teaching of Reading*, Holt, Rinehart, Winston Inc. 1960, p. 243.
 3. Broening, Angela M. "Development of Taste in Literature in the Senior High" *Development of Taste in Literature*. Champaign, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1963.
 4. Gunn, Agnella. "Promoting a Love Affair with Books," *Combining Research Results and Good Practice* Vol. 11, Part 2, I.R.A. Proceedings 1966.

needed for imaginative entry into a work of literature (2) abilities needed for perception of meaning or central purpose (3) abilities for perception of artistic unity and significance. A teacher concerned with these basic skills of interpretation is at once aware of the positive correlation between the development of skills and the love of good reading. Dr. Gunn states in the summary of her article "Continuing satisfactory interaction between a pupil and books is based on: (1) developing his reading power, (2) disciplining his tastes, and (3) deepening his view of the work." (I am caused to marvel at the vast difference between this summary and Dr. Schmitt's alleged summary.)

The teacher's role is stressed in the several thought-provoking discussions contained in the December 1961 issue of *The Reading Teacher*. The value of planned instruction in the sequential skills of a literature program is the underlying theme of the articles epitomized in Gainsburg's summary statement: "A dependence on the magic of the books themselves is inadequate to teach children the subtle mental processes involved in creative reading and the finer levels of appreciation." Gainsburg's insights are also reflected in a curriculum guide⁵ produced by a committee he directed. More than half of the 253 pages are devoted to the theme, appreciation is taught not caught. The two chapters in the section on appreciation are titled, "Scope and Sequence of Skills," and "Methods of Teaching Appreciational Reading." Teachers who read this guide are forced to recognize the distinctions between (a) learning the *content* of literature, and the more worthy objective of learning the *appreciation* of it (b) *reading* with appreciation, and *learning how* to read with appreciation.

As suggested by Gunn, above, attention must be given to perceiving the central thought or purpose, and young readers must be taught to recognize the author's "sign posts." Headings and subheadings must be noticed and evaluated. Topic sentences must be understood in relation to how the author's thought is being carried forward from the previous paragraph and how what is to follow is introduced. The reader should be taught to recognize the conclusion of one unit of the author's thought and the beginning of another. Recognition must be slighted. Extra comments must be ignored.

Another skill closely related to the recognition of topic ideas is that of sifting ideas. A reader must learn to distinguish between what

5. *Reading Grades 7, 8, 9*. Board of Education, City of New York, 1959.

is significant and what is not. The unimportant facts and details offered only as additional reinforcement of an idea already presented must be slighted. Extra comments must be ignored.

Relationships between generalizations, facts, and illustrations must be grasped. Good readers are trained to perceive relationships between main ideas and details. Failing to find these relationships, poor readers misinterpret the author's meaning and carry away wrong ideas and misconceptions.

Appreciation, then, is preceded by a searching out of meaning. A sifting, selecting, and evaluating of the ideas on a page is necessary. The reader must judge what is most relevant and discard what is unneeded. Further analysis is required if perception of artistic unity and significance, mentioned by Dr. Gunn, is to be achieved. There is no other way to find the essential qualities of a good work of art than by examining it. To understand and appreciate a piece of literature, a reader should attempt to discover what its parts are, how they relate to each other, and what binds them into one unified whole. An effective analysis seeks to discover purpose, style, tone, mood, and the logical, chronological, and spacial organization. For example, consider the Gettysburg Address. What percentage of those who have read or heard it appreciate the purpose, style, tone, and organization of this famous discourse? An impression of how an analysis adds to the appreciation of a selection may be gained from the following.

The Gettysburg Address

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather

for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave their last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Facts to be Appreciated

Purpose:

In the first and last sentence Lincoln defines the American democratic philosophy.

The middle of the speech is devoted to dedicating a cemetery.

Style:

Powerful (abundant use of active verbs)

Metaphorical “our fathers brought forth a new nation, conceived in liberty” (birth); “and dedicated” (baptism); “long endure” (life); “final resting place” (death); “new birth of freedom” (rebirth).

Tone:

Biblical “Fourscore and seven,” “our fathers,” “dedicated,” “consecrate,” “hallow.”

Mood:

Dignity

Sincerity

Logical Organization:

- A. This ceremony is appropriate.
- B. But the living cannot dedicate this ground.
- C. Instead, the living should themselves be dedicated.

Chronological Organization:

- A. Past
- B. Present
- C. Future

Spacial Organization:

- A. Continent
- B. Nation
- C. Battlefield
- D. Nation
- E. World

DID YOU SEE?

Dorothy J. McGinnis

Gerald C. Duffy's article, "Developing the Reading Habit" which appears in *The Reading Teacher* for December 1967? He shows that there is considerable evidence that "Johnny can read but does not do so." He maintains that this situation may be the result of almost exclusive concern with the reading skills and a neglect of recreational reading. He believes that the reading habit does not develop naturally, that time for recreational reading must be provided in classrooms, and that real efforts must be directed toward making reading a natural and enjoyable part of children's lives. This article should be read by all teachers who believe that developing an enthusiasm for reading is a fundamental goal of reading instruction.

A Critical Approach to Children's Literature? This book by James Steel Smith focuses on the critical analysis of children's literature and is intended to be used as a basic text for children's literature courses taken by elementary education majors. One of the significant features of this McGraw-Hill publication is the guidance given to the student in the formulation of key questions that should be asked about all children's literature.

The Mr. Bumba Books published by Lerner Publications Company? The series centers around a jolly man, Mr. Bumba, and the many adventures he has with his friends. The books are written by Pearl Augusta Harwood and are recognized by the Ohio Civil Rights Commission as the best integrated intergroup elementary storybooks available at the present time.

The third edition of *Good Books for Children* edited by Mary K. Eakin and published by the University of Chicago Press? It lists almost 1,400 books recommended for children by the Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books. It includes books published during 1965 and omits those published prior to 1950. This book is truly a welcome guide to the many children's books published in the last fourteen years.

Books and the Teen-Age Reader: A Guide for Teachers, Librarians and Parents? This book is sponsored by the National Book Committee and endorsed by the International Reading Association, National Council of Teachers of English, and American Library Association. It is available in hardback from Harper and Row, and in paperback from Bantam Books. Parents who want to promote more fruitful reading for their children will find this reference to be of real value.

The American Library Association's publication entitled *Books for Children, 1965-1966?* Selected books are listed along with annotations which present summaries of the plots or content. The unique features and outstanding qualities of each book are described.

WE SUGGEST

Eleanor Buelke

Van Gilder, Lester L., and Wasinger, Sister M. Lucy Ann
Achieving Maturity Through High School Reading
Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Book Company, 1967, pp 10+ 219.

In recent years, research has probed further, and more precisely, than ever before into processes of human development. Perhaps, one of the most exciting, yet frightening, implications of findings in this area is that the human being never remains the same, never stops changing, never really reaches completion. Piaget's discoveries and assertions concerning equilibration, the name he gives to the individual's own active regulation of, and accommodation to, experiences in his world, lead to the belief that human intellectual development "proceeds as partial understandings are revised, broadened, and related to one another."¹

In accordance with this theory, the authors of *Achieving Maturity Through High School Reading* believe that there is an almost unlimited variation of possible development in reading among students, that achieving maturity in this skill is a lifetime process, characterized by spiraling abilities, reinforced and perfected in height and breadth.

This paperback text is intended for use with high school students who already have had considerable success with reading. Selections with varied interest and readability levels are included. For the most part, they center on activities and problems beyond the reader's self, yet related to his personal experiences. They seem to lend themselves to continuation of thought, exceeding that of an involved reader in an initial reading. Appropriately, then, these readings qualify as bases for thoughtful group study, productive interaction, and critical evaluation.

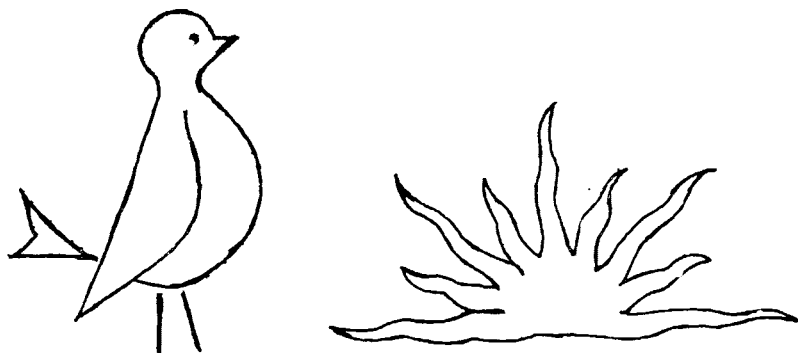
Apparently, it is also assumed by Van Gilder and Wasinger that the users of their book have already attained some measure of maturity. Structure and format of the book provide guide-lines for reading individual selections at varied rates, utilizing differences in procedures according to varying content, literary style, and purposes for reading. Comprehension checks and evaluations call for, and help to perfect, such skills as: thinking on varied levels of abstraction; categorizing;

1. Eleanor Duckworth, "Piaget Rediscovered," *Reading And The Cognitive Processes*, p. 32. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1967.

discovering relationships; substantiating inferences; accommodating personal experience to reported facts or opinions; skimming for pertinent information; identifying and using linguistic patterns, techniques, and methods; and sharing learnings in interaction between teacher and students, and among students. For students who care enough to pursue further reflection and study concerning a particular lesson, additional direction may be found under "Beyond The Lines" at the close of each reading.

An important goal of these two authors seems to be similar to what Gunn calls "continuing satisfactory interaction" between readers and what they read. Such interaction is based upon the development of reading power, discipline of tastes, and a deepening view of the world.² For students of any subject, for teachers of high school reading, or for teachers in any content area at high school level, this text holds much of relevant value. It might also be considered an excellent resource for similar pedagogy based upon self-selected materials by students as they grow into an ever-increasing maturity through reading.

2. M. Agnella Gunn, "Promoting a Love Affair with Books," in *Combining Research Results With Good Practice*, p. 44, Vol. 11, Part 2, Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Convention, IRA.



ROUND ROBIN

Dorothy E. Smith, Editor

Dear Readers,

Below are two letters which tell us of some important aspects of reading—and they do it much more vividly than chapters in a text-book can.

Dear Editor,

Have you ever been curled up in a comfortable chair for the evening for an arm chair tour through England after a trying day at school, only to have a shrill, small voice penetrate the air?

“Why did you do that, Dad?”

You realized that Johnnie and Dad were in the basement assembling the big red wagon that four year old Johnnie had received for Christmas. You turned again to the changing of the Guards at Buckingham Palace only to have another interruption.

“Dad, why can’t I ride around the living room in my wagon when it’s snowing outside?”

Would the *why* questions never cease? You thought you would at least get to Westminster Abbey that night.

Last night I was reminded of the above incident when our class was locked out of the classroom on the second floor at Kellogg Community College and had to meet on the first floor.

I stood guard in the entrance hall and told each student as he came in that we were meeting in a different place. Upon learning of this, I again heard the old familiar refrain from each and every one.

“Why are we meeting down here?”

There are thirty-six students in the class ranging in age from

twenty-two to sixty-five years of age. Each and every one had asked the same question.

I had the answer to my question, "Will the *why* questions never cease?"

No! At least let us hope they won't, for that is the way we learn about ourselves and the world around us, and build up mental content and the ability to think critically, qualities which are essential to reading proficiency.

Now I am perplexed!

Why were they all so concerned about *why* we were meeting in a different place?

It must be that lingering, insatiable curiosity of youth which we, as teachers, must foster and nourish until the bud becomes a flower with its own identity capable of identifying, interpreting and evaluating the written symbol.

Ruth W. Andrews
Coldwater, Michigan

Dear Editor,

Oh boy! Teacher's going to read to us from the "Tom Sawyer" book. I love to have our teacher read aloud to our class. Some kids don't have it so good. Do you know why? I'll tell you why. Their teachers don't read to them. They say they just don't have the time to read. Boy, not our teacher! She reads aloud to our class each day. She picks books that are interesting to all of us, books like "Tom Sawyer," "Jungle Book," "Silver for General Washington," and many others. We kids think that our teacher is just the greatest.

I guess I should tell you more about me. It might help you to know why I love to have our teacher read to us.

I am a fifth grader. I can't read. Teachers and college professors call me a non-reader. I've got a friend who can read, well at least some, but he doesn't remember what he has read. I hear that teachers call him a disabled reader. We can't read library books, even if we did want to. We can't read them because they are just too hard for us.

We've got a large family, so Mom says that she doesn't have time to read to me. I sure wish she had the time. Dad says that he has to work a lot to earn a living. When he is home he'd rather sit down and watch television. Dad says that reading is just a big waste of time. I guess one of the reasons is that he needs an excuse. You see, Dad only went through the eighth grade. He doesn't say so, but I know that reading is hard for Dad too. He never seems to read a newspaper.

Jeepers! Where would I be if our teacher thought that reading to her class was kid stuff? I wouldn't know anything about these great stories that she reads to us. I like to pretend that I am the main character in the story. I sure do get excited sometimes. I'm not the only one that gets excited though. Even the smart ones in my class get real excited. We sit real real still. Why, you could even hear a pin drop. Just the other day our principal came in to the room during the time that our teacher was reading aloud to us. We were so interested in the story that we didn't even hear him come in. I guess that he liked the story too, because he sat down and listened to the teacher as she read.

Now you know why I feel pretty lucky. I've got a great teacher, one who thinks that reading aloud to her class is not kid stuff. She believes that everyone deserves a chance to enjoy library books. If they are like me, they wouldn't have that chance if they had some uninterested teachers. Yes, even the non-reader, like me, can enjoy books. If it wasn't for my teacher, I'd miss out on a lot. Oh, one more thing. If you are a teacher and you are reading my story, please give your kids a break, a big treat. Reading aloud isn't kid stuff. Who says? My teacher does, and she knows!

Vergeleen E. Leonard
Fifth Grade Teacher
Bellevue Community School
Bellevue, Michigan

TEN-SECOND REVIEWS

Blanche O. Bush

One of the most crucial tasks in a reading program is the transformation of children whose attitude toward reading has been one of indifference and active dislike into avid readers.
—A. J. Harris

Barrilleau, Louis E., "Textbooks and Library Usage in Junior High Science," *Journal of Reading* (December, 1967), 11:192-200.

This investigation was an attempt to present some evidence in regard to the most effective use of printed materials in junior high school science instruction. A longitudinal study compared the effects of different basic reading and reference materials upon library utilization of eighth grade science students by the end of the ninth grade.

Beard, Jacob G., "Comprehensibility of High School Textbooks—Association with Content Area," *Journal of Reading* (December, 1967), 11:229-234.

The purpose of this study was to investigate differences in comprehensibility of textbooks associated with school subjects. Small and insignificant differences among content areas were found for the comprehensibility measures and for eight of the ten structural variables. These variables were unit length, nouns of abstraction, monosyllabic words, the "i" word, first person pronouns, second person pronouns, third person pronouns, different words, sentence lengths, complex sentences, and infinitive phrases. It was concluded that the comprehensibility of prose used in current high school textbooks is, on the average, about the same for American government, world history, biology, and chemistry.

Berger, Allen and Constance Kautz, "The Braille Informal Reading Inventory," *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1967), 21:149-152.

Although the informal reading inventory has become an important part in diagnosing the reading ability of sighted children, until recently no such instrument was available for blind children. An instrument has been developed and is being used with blind children in a small school system in the

Allegheny Mountains. This article cites the need for development of and the research possibilities with the Braille Informal Reading Inventory.

Bormuth, John R., "New Development in Readability Research," *Elementary English* (December, 1967), 44:840-845.

Researchers in several disciplines have developed research tools which have aided greatly the study in readability. Psychologists have developed the cloze procedure into an accurate and reliable method of measuring language difficulty. Linguists have developed descriptions of various features of language and these descriptive devices have been further adapted into new techniques for measuring the features of language that influence its comprehension difficulty. Finally, advances in our understanding of the mathematics used in our analyses have led to improved designs for readability formulas. Of greater long range importance is the fact that, with these disciplines, we will gain much more insight into the comprehension processes and into the processes by which language may be made more understandable.

Brown, Virginia L., "Out of the Classroom: Reading Instruction," *Exceptional Children* (November, 1967), 34:197-199.

This study determined to what extent children in special classes for the educable mentally retarded were experiencing success in the reading situation. Success was considered as 95 per cent accuracy in word recognition and 75 per cent accuracy in comprehension. A study of reading practices and of some of the conditions associated with these practices has yielded data which are relevant both to the success experience and to teacher education.

Calder, Clarence R., Jr., "Self Directed Reading Materials," *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1967), 21:248-252.

This study was undertaken to test the effects of self-directed reading materials on improving children's ability to carry out manipulative activities. The self-directed reading materials consisted of written instructions supplemented with illustrations which were designed to enable the reader to perform selected manipulating tasks. A second consideration was the importance

of developing materials which included the pupils' real world of perception and manipulation and were not limited to the two dimensional world of print. The results indicated that if pupils feel an immediate need and desire to read they will do so without concern for difficulty of words used.

Carter, R. Phillip, Jr., "The Adult Social Adjustment of Retarded and Non-retarded Readers," *Journal of Reading* (December, 1967), 11:224-228.

According to data resulting from this study, there exists a close relationship between reading retardation and social maladjustment. The analyses further support the notion that the personal and social maladjustments which were prevalent in school as concomitants of reading retardation persist into adult life. This would indicate that school personnel must not only consider the reading deficiency itself but they should also attend to the accrued emotional and social problems that this deficiency has created.

Davison, Mildred A., "Looking Ahead in Reading," *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1967), 21:121-125.

Cooperative research projects and rapid advances in automation promise to have influence on school curricula in the very near future. Areas discussed are (1) first grade studies that conclude that no one method of teaching is adequate and each method can be successful with certain pupils with the one essential element being a competent teacher, (2) professional standards which have been set up, (3) Head Start which provides experience and language not available in homes, (4) structural linguistics which the author feels has made a great contribution to the teaching of oral reading. Other factors are impact of federal funds, automation, and efforts of I.R.A.

Demko, Jeannete and Laverne Michener, "Reading Aids," *The Pointer*—for Special Class Teachers and Parents of the Handicapped (Winter, 1967), 12:8.

Teaching a slow learning child to read can be facilitated by providing a pleasant atmosphere in which he may feel easily accepted by the teacher and the other children. When he begins to react to his teacher as a helper and not as an overseer

of his many mistakes, then the struggle is half over. Activities and materials used successfully for various children are discussed.

Denny, R. Eugene, "The Listening Table Aids Reading," *The Pointer* (Winter, 1967), 12:10-11.

A combination of equipment which is useful in the teaching of reading is the listening table which is wired to provide for listening through the use of six pairs of earphones. Basically the listening table provides the student with meaningful study without requiring the immediate and direct supervision of the teacher. Although it does not supply the full reading program, it is used along with other sound teaching methods.

Dodds, William J., "Highlights From the History of Reading Instruction," *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1967), 21:274-280.

The teaching of reading is the major task of elementary education. Parents view reading as the most important single function of the elementary schools. Almost without exception the general view is that basic reading instruction is especially significant. The author traces reading instruction from the Old Testament days to current developments and projects.

Donelson, Kenneth L. and Sharon Fagan, "A Selected Bibliography for Non-Middle Class Children, Grades 6-10," *Elementary English* (December, 1967), 44:856-861.

The sole purpose of the authors was to present a list with brief annotations of books for non-middle class children. This list is made up of 75 titles which have proved popular with children and which have some literary merit.

Duffy, Gerald G., "Developing the Reading Habit," *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1967), 21:253-256.

There is considerable evidence, according to Duffy, that although Johnny can read he does not do so. This situation may be the result of almost exclusive concern with the reading skills and resultant neglect of recreational reading. Since the reading habit does not develop naturally, time for recreational reading must be provided in the classroom and real effort directed toward making reading a natural and enjoyable part of children's lives.

Elliot, Lee, "Montessori's Reading Principles Involving Sensitive Period Method Compared to Reading Principles of Contemporary Reading Specialists," *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1967), 21: 163-168.

There is a current revival of Montessori schools as a possible means of educating the individual so that he may realize full, personal, human attainment. Montessori met with rejection in 1917 and will meet with it again if her program is not brought into the mainstream of public school programs. The author has endeavored to delineate similarities and contrasts between Montessori reading principles and those of contemporary reading specialists in order that public school educators may thoughtfully appraise this system.

Elvove, Marjorie, "Teaching How A Poem Means," *English Journal* (December, 1967), 56:1290-1292.

Many philosophical articles have been written on the teaching of poetry to high school students, many on interpretations of specific poems but, all too few have been written on specific methodology and procedures in transmitting certain basic understanding to students. Certainly what most teachers are seeking are practical methods of imparting to students the *how* and *why* of poetry so that youngsters can enjoy and appreciate not only the literary work itself but the care and nurturing that is part of all good writing. To convey these objectives the author hit upon a way to demonstrate graphically to young people why a writer chooses the form, the rhythm, and the rhyme he does in a particular poem.

Emans, Robert, "When Two Vowels Go Walking and Other Such Things," *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1967), 21:262-269.

This paper reports some possible modifications in Theodore Clymer's 45 phonic generalizations which might increase their utility. Its purpose is not to encourage keeping those practices which may require only modification. In some cases the writer suggests the rewording of generalizations which already have a fairly high percent of utility.

Filmer, Henry T. and Helen S. Kahn, "Race, Socio-Economic Level, Housing, and Reading Readiness," *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1967), 21:153-157.

This study was designed to test the relationship of race, socio-economic levels and housing to the reading readiness of entering first graders. The most significant finding of this study was the high relationship of housing to scores on reading readiness. Non-white pupils from the lower socio-economic level living in low middle type housing demonstrated higher readiness scores than non-white pupils from the middle socio-economic level living in the same type of housing. This is a departure from results usually obtained from readiness investigations involving socio-economic levels alone.

Gillham, Isabel, "Self Concept and Reading," *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1967), 21:270-273.

If a teacher is to help free the pupil from his distorted picture of himself she must be significant to him. She must be able to see him as a more adequate person than others have seen him before. It is necessary to find the good in him and show it to him. Many studies are cited.

Glass, Gerald G., "Rate of Reading: A Correlation and Treatment Study," *Journal of Reading* (December, 1967), 11:168-178.

This study investigated 7 variables and their relationship to rate of reading. Hypotheses were constructed relative to the differential effect of the interrelationship of the 7 variables upon improvement in rate of reading due to training. If any generalized conclusions are to be made from the results of this study, the writer stated, they lie in the area of training to increase ability in the predictable variables and not in selection of students who should receive training.

Gould, Hinda, "Word Recognition Game," *The Pointer* (Winter, 1967), 12:9-10.

Using pantomime as a word recognition game is described by the author. The game involves several imageries and has been satisfactorily used in learning action verbs, specific blends and adverbs.

Guszak, Frank J., "Teacher Questioning and Reading," *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1967), 21:227-234.

This study was initiated in an effort to make determinations about the state of reading-thinking skills development as it occurred in the context of the reading group in the elementary grades. Observations and study were guided by these questions. (1) What kinds of thinking questions do teachers ask in the 2nd, 4th, and 6th grades? (2) How frequently are teacher questions about reading assignments met with congruent or correct student responses? (3) Do teachers employ certain questioning strategies as they question students about reading assignments? If so, what are the characteristics of these strategies? Results of the study are discussed in accordance with these three areas.

Hanna, Paul R., Jean S. Hanna, Richard E. Hodges, and E. Hugh Rudolf, "A Summary: Linguistic Cues for Spelling Improvement," *Elementary English* (December, 1967), 44:862-865.

The study summarized was undertaken to explore more exhaustively a series of relationships basic to the encoding of our language. The major purpose of the research was to account for the phoneme-grapheme correspondence of 1700 different American-English words and to analyze the phonological structure underlying the orthography.

Hall, Nason E. and Gordon P. Waldo, "Remedial Reading for the Disadvantaged," *Journal of Reading* (November, 1967), 11:81-92.

The Youth Development Project is a school based delinquency prevention program. It consists of specially designed classes conducted during the regular school day for delinquency prone seventh grade boys. One of the important aspects of this project involved the development, implementation, and evaluation of a remedial reading program.

Harvison, Alan R., "Critical Reading for Elementary Pupils," *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1967), 21:244-247+.

Probably the greatest need in the area of critical reading lies in the field of research to determine exactly what set of teaching techniques, published materials, and guided pupil

experience yield accomplished critical readers. The author recommends that the development of critical reading can best be accomplished through systematically planned experiences which encourage problem solving, inductive thinking, and frequent verbal expression.

Hawkins, Michael L., "Are Future Teachers Readers?" *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1967), 21:138-141+.

The results of this study indicate that future elementary teachers read an average of three books and four magazines during a three months period. Freshmen students recorded the highest number of books read followed in order by sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Illogical as it may appear, the longer the student remained in college the less recreational reading he did.

Higgins, Judith, "Great Paperback Mystery," *Top of the News* (November, 1967), 24:72-79.

The past two years have brought the great leap forward in paperback books for children. One of the big mental blocks about paperbacks centers around durability. Librarians say that they get dog-eared, lost pages, or, worst of all, need to be thrown out. A much more serious deterrent to paperback use is what might be called "The big distribution problem." If the physical problems can be licked, then the philosophical objections ought to be put to rest once and for all. Getting a good book to the child WHEN he needs and wants it is our job. Does it really matter if the cover is hard or soft?

Kantrowitz, Viola, "Bibliotherapy With Retarded Readers," *Journal of Reading* (December, 1967), 11:203-211.

The author has attempted to find the type of reading material that would have special meaning for the slower learner, the emotionally disturbed child, the child with learning problems, whether they stem from physical difficulties inherent in him or result from traumatic circumstances in his life. From her study the author concludes that carefully selected materials to motivate emotionally and socially deprived children can present rewarding results. There is no way of telling whether the results are temporary or long reaching.

Karlin, Robert, "Research Results and Classroom Practices," *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1967), 21:211-223.

Exploration into the research on reading, according to Karlin, produces no definitive conclusions. However, some trends appear sharper than others and some practices seem more promising than others. Through weighing and comparing plans and patterns for teaching, signs are likely to emerge which should lead to better teaching programs.

Krail, Jack B., "The Audio-Lingual Approach and the Retarded Reader," *Journal of Reading* (November, 1967), 11:93-104.

A great deal of time, effort, and money is currently being expended in the construction of reading materials for adults 18 and 19 years of age who are reading between the third and sixth grade levels. The author gives a few tentative suggestions for assisting these young adults. In building vocabulary, a list based on oral rather than printed words which reflect the interest of readers should be compiled. The presentation of materials would entail using some of the audio-lingual techniques currently employed in teaching modern foreign languages. The audio-lingual technique stresses the progression of language skills in the order of hearing, speaking, seeing, and writing. Another basis for audio-lingual presentation is that reading appears to be mastered more easily if the student can subvocalize correctly.

Lake, Mary Louise, "First Aid for Vocabularies," *Elementary English* (November, 1967), 44:783-784.

Interest in words can be taught independently of formal reading, and, in the process, the language arts program can be greatly enriched and stimulated. Almost every child responds to games and puzzles and there are numerous types which can be used to enlarge vocabularies painlessly. Several practical suggestions are presented.

Martin, Marian, Keith Schwyhart, and Ralph Wetzal, "Teaching Motivation in a High School Reading Program," *Journal of Reading* (November, 1967), 11:111-121.

Two requirements stand out in successful teaching. The

first involves an ordered set of learning tasks which present material to the student in units which he can grasp. The second requirement calls for sufficient motivation to ensure that the student engages in the tasks that are presented. Investigations of the teaching situation both of skill sequences and motivation have made productive use of the principles of reinforcement.

Mason, George E., "Pre-schoolers' Concepts of Reading," *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1967), 21:130-132.

Most of the pre-schoolers interviewed reported that they liked to read and that they wanted to learn to read. Apparently, most children believed that they could already read. The majority of the children reported that someone read to them but who and under what circumstances, varied widely. However, the comments of some revealed the paucity of reading that occurred in their homes. Teachers should remember this moral from the mouth of babes. "One can't be expected to like doing what one doesn't know how to do."

Newport, John F., "The Joplin Plan: The Score," *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1967), 21:158-162.

The plan now referred to by many as the "Joplin Plan" is one of inter-class ability grouping for instruction in reading in grades 4 through 6, and is based upon the philosophy that the more homogeneous the group the more successful will be the instructional program. Research has shown that inter-class ability grouping in reading to be as effective as ability grouping within the self contained classroom. While the results of most studies have not favored the Joplin plan, some reports have attributed significant gains to the plan. It may be that enthusiasm for something new was a major factor in the program in which gains were noted.

Nordstrom, Ursula, "Fall Books for Young People—The Joyful Challenge," *Saturday Review* (November 11, 1967), pp. 39-51.

The wonderful way children react to good books is one of the rewarding aspects of the author's life as a children's book editor. Children respond to what is fresh, original, and honest. Talent and honesty are the telling factors. Anything less is not

good enough for a child. Fifty books are reviewed and listed according to age levels.

Personke, Carl and Lester Knight, "Proofreading and Spelling: A Report and a Program." *Elementary English* (November, 1967), 44:768-774.

Research indicates that most spelling errors are highly individual. Solutions to the problem have generally involved some aspects of proofreading written work. Motivation to proofread, or what has been termed spelling consciousness, does not in itself seem sufficient. Evidence suggests that techniques of proofreading for spelling are not being offered to children in their regular spelling program. Results of this study indicate that boys who were taught techniques for checkguessing and proofreading in spelling made significantly fewer errors than those who did not receive such instruction. Evidence in regard to girls is not conclusive although there is some indication that they too profited from the instruction. Instruction in the use of the dictionary, unless specifically directed toward the correction of spelling errors, did not seem to be effective in the area of proofreading for spelling in written composition.

Root, Shelton L., Jr., "Books for Children—What is Wrong with Reading Aloud?" *Elementary English* (December, 1967), 44:929-930.

High on the list of reasons for teachers reading aloud to their children is that reading aloud is one of the most commonly shared, pleasure-filled experiences that can be provided by the schools. It can provide the right literary experience at the right time. It offers children a chance to hear and understand the nuances of literary style that are often basic to getting the full esthetic impact of the work. One of the most sure-fire ways of inducing children to read independently is to read aloud to them. Finally, reading aloud is vitally important if we want children to get so interested in literature that they will, as adults, habitually turn to books for recreation.

Samuels, S. Jay, "Attention Process in Reading: The Effect of Pictures on the Acquisition of Reading Responses," *Journal of Educational Psychology* (December, 1967), 58:337-342.

Pictures may be used as prompts when the reader cannot read a word in the text, but pictures may miscue and may divert attention from printed word. Investigations show that poor readers, with no pictures presented, learned more words. Among better readers the difference was not significant.

Schell, Leo M., "Teaching Structural Analysis," *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1967), 21:133-137.

To teach children how to figure out the pronunciation and meaning of an unrecognized word through the use of phonics and structural analysis is one important goal of reading instruction. Schell examines some of the problems concerning the content of structural analysis as found in both professional textbooks and basal reading series. There seems to be sufficient evidence, according to Schell, that some of the content of structural analysis is incorrect and seldom applicable and that some current methodology may be inefficient and questionable.

Sebesta, Sam Leaton, "The Neglected Art: Thought Questions," *Elementary English* (December, 1967), 44:888-895.

Amid a variety of devices and activities aimed at propelling literature from the dead page into living experiences, the "thought" question continues to offer excellent possibilities. Four avenues for examining these possibilities are suggested: disclosing imagery and inference, considering another person's point of view, relating story to one's own experiences, and identifying basic plots.

Thatcher, David A., "Reading Instruction, Creativity, and Problem Solving," *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1967), 21:235-240.

The success of children's reading may be measured in many ways. Most often, gains are measured on standardized tests. A different approach is reported here. An attempt was made to see if children learning reading by two different methods of instruction would differ in their performance on creativity and

problem solving tests. The two methods compared in the study were a basal reader method and the individualized reading approach. Results in general indicated that (1) the individualized reading students exceeded the basal reader students and (2) girls exceeded boys on these tests.

Wheelock, Warren H., and Nicholas J. Silvaroli, "Visual Discrimination Training for Beginning Readers," *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1967), 21:115-120.

The major aspects of the problem of this study were:

- (1) Will those kindergarten students who are trained to make instant responses of recognition to the capital letters show a significant difference in their visual discrimination ability from those kindergarten students who did not receive the training?
- (2) To what extent can instant responses of recognition to the capital letters be trained during the readiness stage of and prior to formal reading instruction? The authors stated certain limitations must be considered while learning to make instant responses of recognition to the capital letters of the alphabet. The children were learning to attend to these stimuli and to concentrate on them. While the pre-test results favored the children who came from environments characterizing the upper extreme of the socio-economic level within the district, the children from the lower extreme, seemed to profit most from training.

ANNOUNCING

The Journal of Reading Behavior

A Scholarly Quarterly in Reading

Purpose

January, 1969 will see the dawn of a new publication in the field of reading. On that date the National Reading Conference, Inc. will publish the first issue of a journal devoted to empirical-rational *inquiry* into reading behavior of individuals and to the dissemination of the results of such inquiry. It hopes to stimulate a persistent search for truth and to report the *insights* and *implications* of the quest in order to provide the reader information upon which to base critical decisions in reading.

Scope

Articles on the reading behaviors of individuals in junior college, college, university, adult education, and secondary schools will be published in the journal.

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The chief features of the 84 page journal are the body of scholarly articles, the Book Reviews, the Readers Dialogue, and the Editor's Page.

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Editor: Lawrence E. Hafner, University of Georgia

Feature Editor: George D. Spache, University of Florida

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