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# HORIZONS



## Spring 1967



# *Reading* **HORIZONS**

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## *Editorial Comment*

### ARE YOU GOING?

For conscientious teachers of reading and reading specialists, the IRA conference in Seattle is an opportunity for growth. Teachers who say they cannot afford to attend should ask themselves, "Can I afford not to attend?" Some complain that their school is unwilling to pay their expenses and, well, they are not going. Neither does the school pay their professional fees in learned societies or their life insurance premiums. Their expectation is somewhat unreasonable.

Alert teachers attend a conference for a purpose and plan carefully well in advance what meetings to attend and what meetings not to attend. As they participate in those of their choice, they ask questions of the speaker and contribute to discussions. They are active, not passive. They know when to spend time in the corridor and they know what people to see and what people not to see. They make new friends and seek new ideas. They are busy and have a well planned schedule.

Apt teachers of reading are frequently on the program because their associates recognize their contributions and leadership. They may go early and stay late in order to participate in conferences within conferences. As critical thinkers, they are stimulated by a conflict of ideas and consider objectively points of view which differ from their own. The conference for them is not "just a trip" sponsored by their school administration. It is an opportunity for growth and advancement.

Homer L. J. Carter  
Editor





# LOOK WHAT WE GOT

*Louis Foley*

Among people who speak the most careless English, certain *kinds* of mistakes unfailingly appear, whatever individual idiosyncrasies may accompany them. Almost always, errors of grammar are confusions between forms which have some relationship but should logically be kept distinct from each other. One of the commonest is the confusion between the simple past tense and the past participle of verbs. This can go either way; a person who makes the mistake in one direction is just as likely to do the opposite in another case. So anyone who says "I seen him," "He done it," "He come," or "He run," may be quite as capable of saying "have drank," "have rode," "have saw," "have swam," or "could of went."

Other deep-seated qualities of English on its least disciplined levels naturally go along. One of these is a reliance upon a very small number of all-purpose verbs adaptable to an extremely wide range of meanings. Another is a tendency to clutter up simple ideas with totally unnecessary words. Curiously enough, the word of least logical importance in a sentence will often be the one to be spoken with strongest emphasis.

The free play between past tense and past participle has had plenty of literary employment. One may remember, for instance, some lines from Lord Byron as well known as any he ever wrote, in his impassioned reference to the Isles of Greece, "where burning Sappho loved and *sung* . . . where Delos rose and Phoebus *sprung*." Manipulating the forms of words for the sake of rime was standard practice for centuries from Chaucer down, but here it was unnecessary. Byron could have had his rime just as easily with the correct forms *sang* and *sprang*.

Now it happens that *all* the various sorts of hit-or-miss looseness in careless English are plain to be seen in common ways of handling the verb *get*. To begin with, usage has long ago established for it beyond recall a lengthy list of quite idiomatic and legitimate meanings. From the basic idea of obtaining or acquiring, a clearly active sense, it has gone on to that of inactively receiving, as "to get a letter," and farther into that of becoming, as "to get tired," "to get sick." Then it can be pieced out with adverbs or prepositions to cover an amazing variety of concepts. So with this convenient means it is possible to "get along," "get through," or "get by" with a comparatively small

number of other verbs, and yet manage to express all sorts of ideas in an acceptable manner.

Consistently with the class of verbs in which *get* belongs, its natural form for the past participle is *gotten*. To see this as a matter of course in the older language one has only to read the King James Bible. The first verse of Psalm 98, for example, praises the Lord because "his holy arm hath gotten him the victory." Or in Jeremiah 48:36 we read: ". . . The riches that he hath gotten are perished." From a historical point of view, then, "have got" is the same sort of grammatical corruption as "have rode," "have saw," or "have went."

Some people in this country have a strange prejudice against the unexceptionably correct form *gotten*. In various "authorities" we find quite arbitrary statements about it. One widely-distributed "style manual," for instance, says that *gotten* "is still used to a slight degree in the United States." William Strunk's *Elements of Style* declares that "the preferable form of the participle is *got*, not *gotten*." Another handbook, giving the principal parts of irregular verbs, has simply *get, getting, got, got*, as if *gotten* did not even exist.(1)

A few years ago one of our leading newspapers published a letter from an exasperated reader who wrote: "'Gotten' is not even good American. In schools all across the land you will find English teachers indefatigably waging war on this horror."(2) It seems incredible that *any* "English teacher" in his right mind could so misdirect his energy, and the supercilious disposal of "not *even* good American" is silly in more ways than one. As a perceptive critic has pointed out, "the American language is far more accurate and concise than the variety of English that is spoken in the British Isles . . . and, let's face it, American grammar is often far superior to that found in Britain."(3) The latter part of this statement is admirably demonstrated by the respective ways of handling the verb in question.

An amusing example of befuddlement about "correct" usage appears in Edward Albee's play, "*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolfe?*" Martha and George quite naturally both use "gotten." Martha says, "My arm has gotten tired whipping you." In another place George says, "Well now, let me see, I've gotten the ice." At a later moment, however, after Martha has again said "gotten" as usual, George cor-

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- (1) Tom B. Haber, *A Writer's Handbook of American Usage*, Longmans, Green and Co., 1942.
  - (2) *Christian Science Monitor*, March 1, 1955.
  - (3) Ian McDonald, "An Anglo-Saxon Report," *Christian Science Monitor*, April 6, 1964.

rects her: "*Got*, Martha. *Got* is perfectly correct . . . it's just a little . . . archaic, like you." As if the truth were not just the other way around!

It is simply being realistic to recognize that it comes natural to any American to use "gotten" when the word has real *meaning*, as a true concept of something that one really *gets*. Only in its (exceedingly common) *meaningless* encroachment will he naturally use *got* as the past participle.

So Will Rogers, who could use *got* in the crudest way, "You got to [i.e. have to] work your way out," says quite as instinctively, "This country has gotten where it is in spite of politics." Ernest Hemingway, who was not interested in grammar, but who made his characters talk the way people naturally do talk, has a person say in *Fifty Grand*, "He'd never gotten fat." A normal 14-year-old girl writes home from summer camp that one of her cabin-mates "has gotten 2 boxes of cookies" and another "has gotten 2 boxes of candy." In a book about story-writing Alice Hegan Rice asked, "Is it something you have known and observed in real life, or gotten from someone else?"(4) Again and again newspaper writers, the most careful columnists and the careless alike, employ *gotten* from day to day when they really *mean* its past-participle idea. A thick folder of clippings at hand would demonstrate the point beyond the slightest doubt.

"They've finally gotten the word we've hit town," said Richard M. Nixon in Berlin.(5) "The difficulty here could be gotten around," says a speaker about school problems. Governor Connally told newsmen in Dallas that he "had gotten several letters from outside the state . . ." American airmen "had strayed across the dividing line in Germany and gotten over Communist territory." "Hitler had instinctively gotten hold of the most powerful, most destructive drives . . ." "We seem to have gotten to the place . . ." A union claims to be "entitled to this, that, or the other thing because the other union had gotten it." Mayor Collins "has gotten people stirred up to do things for Boston." "We in Maine would have gotten to know you folks and you would have gotten to know us." During his campaign for the presidential nomination Governor Scranton said, "I certainly had gotten the impression that they never were happy about my being a candidate." An editorial writer remarks that "the Morrissey nomination [for a federal judgeship] should never have gotten off the

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(4) Josephine K. Piercy, *Modern Writers at Work*, Macmillan (1930), p. 559.

(5) Associated Press dispatch, July 25, 1963.

ground in the first place.” (6) These random examples are thoroughly typical. To pretend that they are in any way “incorrect” is merely preposterous.

It is really rather rare, in fact, to find an American using *got* in such a case, as Anne Morrow Lindbergh did in the first paragraph of *Dearly Beloved*: “Even after all these years of married life, he had never got used to it.” We suspect that the lady’s language had been influenced by a long sojourn in England. Occasionally, however, a writer may have schooled himself in artificial (for him) expression as the result of influence by a teacher of arbitrary views.

For anyone really interested in cleaning out impurities from our language, the obvious enemy to be conquered is certainly not the perfectly correct *gotten* but the scourge of the ubiquitous unnecessary *got*. To those who cared about clean-cut speech, this has been apparent for a long time. Nearly a century ago, an honest manual laid it on the line: “The word *got* is frequently unnecessarily used, as ‘I have *got* the book’ should be ‘I have the book.’ ” (7)

The way this cluttered expression carries on is one of the curious phenomena of the English language. Its commonness on this side of the ocean, however, is as nothing compared to its prevalence in England. The British seem quite incapable of saying simply that someone *has* something; it has to be “he’s *got*.” But this is merely the start. They carry it over into compound tenses as no American could ever learn to do without great effort. “He went to London because he’d got [i.e. had] an uncle there.” In *The Walrus and the Carpenter*, “the sun had got no business to be there.” “He’d got [i.e. had] brown eyes.”

From an objective point of view, as curious as anything is the widespread otiose use of “has got to” or “have got to” to mean *has to* or *have to* or *must*. Always the superfluous “*got*” is made the emphatic word. “I’ve got to get back by Friday . . . he has got to go to Canada,” writes a London correspondent. “We have got to do fairly well in Oregon,” says a campaign manager. “We’ve got to be able to equate quality with quantity,” declares a college chancellor. “It’s got to work out. We’ve got to adopt a new system of credit . . .” said Alfred M. Landon in 1962. An advertisement warns us, “If you want economy, you’ve got to pay for it.” The late Robert Frost at his eighty-eighth birthday party told his hearers: “You’ve got to be sweeping and

(6) *Christian Science Monitor*, October 22, 1965.

(7) Thos. E. Hill, *Manual of Social and Business Forms: A Guide to Correct Writing*, Chicago, Moses Warren & Co., 1876.

you've got to be pointed. You've got to come out somewhere . . .” President Dickey of Dartmouth announced that “competence has got to be supplied primarily by higher education,” and that education “has got to have more active concern with being universal in its reach.”(8) “We've got to remind ourselves that there's got to be some concern for the physical health of our students,” says a prominent school superintendent. “We have got to begin at the bottom,” says a popular preacher, “and we have got to begin with good will.” Former President Truman has said that “a President has got to keep in touch with the people.” One could go on forever with such quotations.

As one might expect, the British carry this use of *got* into compound tenses where no American would. “If you told him that he *had got* to do so, he would immediately turn nasty . . .”(9) “In any case, you haven't got to be [don't have to be] clear,” said Agatha Christie in *There Is A Tide*. “I always knew we had got to [had to] face them,” wrote a London correspondent concerning certain current problems.

Anyone who wishes to see in complete array all the ways in which British people find *got* irresistible has only to peruse the novel by Arnold Bennett, *Imperial Palace*. Though of course this is not literally true, one may carry away the impression that *got* occurs in almost every sentence. The story is told mainly in dialogue, and since Bennett was a realistic writer, we may be sure that he is giving us authentic specimens of British conversation of all classes of people. The most cultivated speakers among the many characters in the novel use “got” just as freely, and in exactly the same ways, as those whose crudities of speech are faithfully reported to reveal their lower social class.

America seems to have a monopoly, however, on the most extreme and least excusable abuse of the single word *got* to mean indifferently *has* or *have*, *has to* or *have to* (must). Usually when foreign immigrants are blamed for corruption of our language, the charge is mainly unjust, but here we might suspect that it has some justification. A person who picks up spoken English by imitating what he hears said, and who is accustomed to the full recognition of syllables which is characteristic of other languages in general, might simply not *hear* the unaccented, almost imperceptible *ve* of “I've got” or “you've got.” In fact this phenomenon must have begun operating a long time ago. Negro slaves brought from Africa, with a language background ex-

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(8) *The Christian Science Monitor*, January 18, 1961.

(9) J. Desmond Gleeson, *G. K.'s Weekly*, July 2, 1932, p. 264.

tremely different from ours, were prevented by law in the South from receiving any education. Quite understandably, they developed dialects of would-be English with a quaintly simplified grammar of their own, and this elliptical use of *got* is always part and parcel of it; "all God's chillun got wings."

Of course this corruption is very much more common in speech than in writing. Not infrequently, however, it does appear in print, as when a newspaper report of an interview quotes exactly what someone said. "I got the horse right here," says a jockey who thinks he has a winner. "I got it," says a baseball player running to catch a fly. "What you got to eat?" inquires a patron in a restaurant. "We got a special on that right now," says a store-clerk. "They just got to see how much they can get away with," according to a man interviewed concerning traffic violations. A taxi-driver, discussing automation, says, "They got machines now that you just put steel in one end and out comes a cash register or a toaster." "I got to go out" were the last words spoken to his wife by a man who was soon to be murdered by gangsters. Occasionally advertisements endeavoring to appeal by folksiness adopt this crudity among others: "Mild . . . yet they got taste and plenty to spare."

Viewed in the perspective of history, this prevalent abuse of *got* seems a fairly modern thing. Nevertheless it appears to be deeply rooted in the everyday "usage" of far too many people for it to be likely to fade out in the foreseeable future. There are, however, as there have always been, those who appreciate, enjoy, and practice a disciplined language, *une langue châtiée*. Perhaps, if our civilization really advances, their number may increase. Certainly anyone who *cares* about the purity of his own speech can easily avoid this unnecessary blemish, let others do as they will.

# THE RECURRING ANNUAL PROBLEM

*Dorothy Towner*

The majestic strains of Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstance" being played on a rented organ from the stage of the beautiful new high school floated down the school halls. The joy and happiness of the girls and boys busily stepping into their earned places in the graduation procession were sobered only by the dignity of the blue caps and gowns to which they were feverishly giving last minute adjustment.

Robert, his face serenely triumphant, stepped into ninety-third place in the class of 200. "A MIRACLE," I thought, as the procession swayed in perfect, practiced rhythm down the center aisle of the school auditorium to the platform for the final ceremony which was to put a period (or exclamation point) after their high school careers, and would give them the right to answer "yes" to the ever-recurring question, "Did you finish high school?"

But who is Robert?

The next day, before locking my permanent record file for the summer, I reread Robert's folder to refresh my memory and to polish up my reasons for thinking this was a miracle. The following is what I read from a "running report" written following Robert's first year in the advanced special class in the large high school.

As certain as September, there appears on my classroom horizon each fall a pupil who has, among other problems, a hieroglyphic limp, no self-confidence, and very low self-esteem. Observed behavior, interest, and performance of this student does not 'true up' with measured achievement, or accumulated entries made in the 'job sheet' accompanying him. Such a student is always a challenge to sincere and competent members of the teaching profession, but equally puzzling. This year it was Robert.

His face was uncommunicative. He was silent and appeared frightened, especially when given books. Yet there was purpose and hopefulness in his face as he searchingly watched my face for a clue to my evaluation of him.

He was unusually well behaved and correctly dressed. He had none of the compensatory symptoms so often found in a pupil of this type in our urban school systems. I refer to eccentric appearance such as D.A. hair cuts, black leather jackets, gang boots, or Puerto Rican fence climbers. In other words, he had not supplemented his own deficiencies as a whole individual by becoming a fraction of a gang.



Robert was 16 years old. He had a brother one year older. He had a brother one year younger, and a sister two years younger. He had been transferred from a private school system in 1957 to a special class in a public grade school. The first entry in the record accompanying him is dated June, 1958; Robert was then 11—5 years of age. It lists as “helpful information”:

1. Not certain of himself
2. Needs reassurance
3. Day dreamer
4. Can count and write numbers up to 100
5. He has read “Ride Away,” “All in a Day,” and “Up the Street and Down” to page 100.

His scores on the California Achievement Test, Primary Form, are:

Reading vocabulary	2.0
Reading comprehension	2.2
Mechanics of English	2.5
Spelling	3.5

Following a conference, Robert’s mother volunteered to write her version of the history of Robert’s reading problem. She writes: “During 1952, I tried to help him read, but lost patience when he would know the more difficult words but didn’t know the simple ones. Anyway, I didn’t give him the help he needed, as I was quite busy with the younger sister who had a serious heart condition.”

The teacher in the special class helped him, but left to be married. The following year he had another teacher. I talked to her about Robert’s work, but she was hazy.

Robert’s scores on the California Achievement Test, Primary battery, at the end of the year were:

Reading vocabulary	3.7
Reading comprehension	3.5
Mechanics of English	3.4
Spelling	1.0

The mother’s history continues: “He was moved to another school—a Junior High School special class because of his age. He had to ride twenty-two blocks on his bike every day to get to school.” Again quoting from his accumulated record we found at the end of the year his scores on the California Achievement Lower Primary Test were:

Reading vocabulary	3.9
Reading comprehension	4.0

Mechanics of English	1.9
Spelling	3.9

Reading again from the mother's account: "I was informed that Robert thought he knew more than he actually did, and always wanted to read books way beyond what his scores on the test would indicate he was ready to read. Before the end of the second year at this junior high school, he was transferred to another school so he could ride on the bus." His California Achievement Test scores, Elementary Battery, that year were:

Reading vocabulary	3.9
Reading comprehension	4.0
Mechanics of English	1.9
Spelling	4.9

It is evident that his records were to be of little assistance, other than to spur greater effort to make up for past failures. Robert was squeezed in between two brothers and had a sister with a heart condition; a family who thought he should know little words before he knew the big ones; school personnel who felt his "scores" should be higher before he could read books he found interesting and wanted to read.

Now at 16, Robert, along with other members of the advanced special class, was issued all 9th grade books. This is the custom in the class no matter what the "earned" achievement score is. It has always produced immediate attention and appreciation. It is a high motivating factor to get students with reading problems to start anew—to try harder, and, most important, to stretch themselves. Our English books, or readers, were brand new. "Just for us?" the pupils asked. (All too often our books had been discards from the "regular" grades.) These had not been opened before. The books were beautiful, and after looking them over, Kipling's "Rikki Tikki Tavi" was chosen for the first story to be read. They were curious about the illustrations and from their comments and observations, it was felt each one could have a success experience from this story. After adequate motivation, the story was read to them until they were all "with it"—highly excited and filled with anticipation of what was to come. Some offered to read—others offered information about situations in the story. We had established a climate for learning.

They seemed to identify themselves with the plucky little mon-goose in the story, who showed such courage in the face of danger. They revelled in his outsmarting the predatory culprit in the story. Their

excitement and anticipation were enough to carry them over the difficult places so that words weren't "stumbling-block" ends in themselves, but were symbols that were a means to understanding a delightful story.

Robert listened. Frequently he looked in the front of his book, observed, but did not offer to take part. Now and then suggestions of smiles played across his face, and a new light came into his eyes, indicating he was silently joining the group.

After school, Robert "hung around" until the other pupils had gone. He asked, "Is this really a high school book?" Then he wanted to know if he could take the book home. During the following days, he remained after school each day and here began a one-to-one relationship which was to assist him in achieving a positive self-concept, and ready him to go adventuring into the realms of the gold of learning alone.

It has been said, "If you want to get a measure of a man or child, take a snapshot of what he is dreaming about, brooding over, and longing for way down inside." So we visited. He asked about the books in the bookcases. Would he be allowed to read them and take them home? "Is it all right for me to read this, even though my score is not beyond third grade level?" "Will I have homework?" Very informally, each question was phrased in a positive statement and written on the chalkboard, such as: "There are many books of all levels of reading in our classroom bookcases. They are there for me to read. I may take any of them home. I am trusted with these books. I may read any book that interests me, no matter what grade level. I will have as much homework as I can do."

This "new to him" permissive atmosphere toward trying anything that interested him developed a feeling of joyous confidence and released new energy for positive achievement. We had found his understanding level and his "I'd like to" level. The dialogue continued each day after school as the teacher's desk was being "straightened up," and then, one day, after the last maple leaves had raced across the school yard and nestled against the sub-floor classroom window, the wind came to our assistance, gave an attention-getting moan and hurled some early snowflakes against the window.

"Oh, I like winter," said Robert, and this was hurriedly written along with the following conversation on the chalkboard.

"There is a pond in the park near my home where I skate every day after school."

"It is fun to turn the sharp corners and hear the scraping sound my skates make on the ice."

"The ice sparkling in the sunlight is pretty too."

"It makes me feel good when the sharp cold wind blows on my face."

Here were clues, snapshot aids, to delight any teacher! He was sensitive to beauty and to sound. We could muster the total child to learn—to appeal to all of his senses at once; to intercept sight with sound; to use kinesthetic sense and visual imagery. "Would he like to hear one of the teacher's favorite poems about Winter?" We could play it on our record player and then he could read it.

After listening to Robert Frost's recording several times and following it in a book, he read, without hesitation:

Whose woods these are I think I know  
 His house is in the village though  
 He will not see me stopping here  
 To watch his woods fill up with snow.  
 My little horse must think it queer  
 To stop without a farmhouse near  
 Between the woods and frozen lake  
 The darkest evening of the year.  
 He gives his harness bells a shake  
 To ask if there is some mistake  
 The only other sounds the sweep  
 Of easy wind and downy flake.  
 The woods are lovely, dark and deep  
 But I have promises to keep  
 And miles to go before I sleep  
 And miles to go before I sleep.

Robert asked if the class could hear the recording and "study the poem." He was asked to help plan the lessons. Pictures of snowy woods—cutters, sleighbells, were taken from the file on Robert Frost. Robert selected those most meaningful to him. Maybe we could memorize it?

The group responded to the poem; read and reread it. They talked about the woods filling up with snow. Some who had seen it in the park or on their grandmother's farm but couldn't describe it verbally, helped themselves to art materials and drew pictures of it. There were snowflakes, huge ones—someone said, as big as "promises to keep." They felt the loneliness and anxiety of the little horse stopping without a house near. They discussed the longest night and shortest

day. They listened for a few seconds of stillness. They felt the sweep of easy wind and downy flake. They felt the moral obligation of leaving something so indescribably beautiful to keep a promise but they also felt the joy of being responsible persons. They ached at the idea of "*miles* to go before I sleep!"

They were asked if they would like to learn the poem. Robert said he had learned it already and could he say it. He stood before the class and recited the poem without error. He achieved admiration from his classmates. Another section of the mother's history shows how much improvement in status Robert had achieved in his home.

"Robert entered the special class in high school. From the first week in his new teacher's class Robert showed improvement. His father and I were thrilled to have him come from school one day and recite 'Stopping By the Woods,' by Robert Frost. It was as if a miracle had happened. In the next few months he learned eight more poems, many of Robert Frost's. This wasn't the only improvement we noticed. Robert was learning to read. He would read me long stories from a ninth grade literature book. He read slowly at first but we could see the steady improvement."

Robert's homework clattered across my desk every day. He was invited to come to regular English classes to "say" Robert Frost's poems. He was given a chance to say them before the principals and school guests. By this time all of his learning processes were "Go!" He had no trouble figuring out words. They were now tools for him to use in acquiring information he wanted. A few mistakes in pronunciation were no longer a tragedy in his opinion and in the established classroom climate, mistakes became stepping-stones.

Two years later, in October, it was necessary for the family to move to a suburb. Robert was to enter the suburban school as a Junior. On his last day in the urban school he gave a veritable concert of poems. His classmates clapped long and hard for him. Time was even allowed for an ice cream cone Farewell Party.

And so because of an awakened desire for learning, four years later Robert marched ninety-third in a class of 200.

# A CAUTION CONCERNING THE USE OF STANDARDIZED TESTS

*Ronald Crowell*

As teachers in the schools of this country, we pay lip service to the proposal that we must be concerned with the education of the *individual*. In our textbooks in college, we are reminded that the aim of good teaching is to bring about a change of behavior in the individual. In our classrooms, because of broad differences in individual reading ability and individual performance, we often find it necessary to group students into small, more homogeneous, groups so that we can meet the reading needs of the individual student.

In attempting to determine the ability level or readiness level of students in order to place them in the appropriate group, we often use scores from reading tests, achievement tests, and intelligence tests. However, in most practical measurement situations the only information available to us from a test is the score of the person measured. That sounds as though it should be a useful score since we have obtained scores from all of the individuals taking that particular test. But, is it? As every person who uses tests knows, no test is perfectly accurate.

Theoretically, the obtained or observed score of any individual on any given test equals his TRUE score on that test plus a certain degree of random error, over which we have no control.(1) This random error is due to the inaccuracy of the test itself.(3) We may also recall that the accuracy of our judgments depends upon the consistency or reliability of that particular measuring instrument. We read over and over that the higher the reliability of a standardized test, the better the test is as an evaluation instrument. This certainly is true for the group as a whole. The reliability of a test is one of the most important criteria by which we choose standardized tests for use in our school systems. However, the reliability of a test does not help us directly in evaluating the scores of an individual student.

I would like to discuss two points about test reliability which we often do not consider when making decisions regarding individual students in the practical test situation. The first of these concepts is the standard error of measurement, (SEm). The SEm is one way in which we can interpret the reliability of the test. It is a statistic which has been developed for estimating the margin of error we should allow for in test scores of individual students.

When a test is given to large numbers of students the scores of the test often fall into a normal or bell shaped curve. Now, suppose we take the score of any individual who has taken this standardized test and then administer a very large number of comparable forms of this test to this student. We would find that the student does not always get the same score. In fact, as the number of forms administered gets larger we would discover that the distribution of this student's scores also begins to resemble the normal curve, although the normal curve in this case would be much smaller than the normal curve for the total group taking the test. Suppose we gave this test to this individual 100 times and kept averaging the results so that no further repetition changes his average score. The average of this series of scores we can reasonably expect to be characteristic of the student's performance so we may call this an estimate of his TRUE score. We can see that the observed score of the individual on any given administration equals his true score plus a certain amount of error that makes his observed score deviate from his true score on that particular administration of the test. If you were to mark off two points on this normal curve that would enclose the middle two-thirds of all of the scores of the previous trials, you would call these points one standard error above the true measure and one standard error below the true measure. If you were to mark off the points that enclose 95% of his scores around the estimate of the true score, you would say that this was two standard errors below his true score and two standard errors above his true score. The problem is, of course, that we really do not have 100 repetitions of any given test and so we really do not know the TRUE score of any individual. Likewise, the standard error of measurement associated with each score is unknown. However, statistical theory permits us to compute an estimate of the standard error of measurement based on an individual's single obtained score and the reliability of that test.

The point of this discussion is that we as teachers recognize that if we give any particular test to our class the scores are going to vary from very low scores for certain members of the class to very high scores for other members of the class. However, we often ignore the fact that for a variety of reasons, a test score for any specific individual is going to vary from one administration of the test to the next or from one day to the next. For example, if we give a standardized reading test to our class and Johnny Jones gets a raw score of 70 on this test, we cannot make the statement that this score for Johnny is an especially accurate indication of his reading ability

measured by this one test. The most accurate statement we can make is to use 2 SEM in defining limits around the observed score within which we would be “reasonably sure” to find Johnny’s TRUE score 95 times out of 100.(3) *This number is not small.* For instance, suppose the standard deviation of a reading test taken by the group of students is 15 and suppose the SEM of any given individual taking the test is 5, that means that any person within the group is likely to shift over a large range of scores and we can be *reasonably sure* only that his TRUE score lies somewhere within plus or minus 10 points (+ or —2 SEM) of his observed score. Too often teachers make the judgment that because student A has a score of 104 on a standardized intelligence test and student B has a score of 96 on the test that student A is, in fact, “really” brighter than student B. On the basis of this erroneous judgment, student A is often placed in a more advanced group. This kind of judgment simply cannot be made.

Many of the recent revisions of standardized intelligence tests and other achievement tests such as the SCAT and the STEP tests(4) are calling attention to this concept of the SEM by reporting test results in terms of bands along a given scale instead of points on a scale. Manuals for these tests usually explain that the chances are 2 out of 3 that the TRUE score of an individual will lie somewhere in a given band and urge teachers not to regard scores as any more precise than that.

The smaller the number of items in any test, however, the smaller is the standard error that we may expect. For example, the estimated standard error of test scores for a test having anywhere from 48 to 89 test items is approximately four for a person who scores in the midrange of that test and slightly less than four for a person scoring at the extreme ranges of that test.(3)

Another concept which is equally as important as the SEM is the standard error of a difference (SEdiff). If we want to consider whether two scores on a given test are, in fact, different, we must consider the concept of the SEdiff which is larger than the SEM of an individual for one test score. For example, “think of the difference as a rope tied between two stakes, which are the two scores. Since there is a wobble in both stakes, there is bound to be more wobble in the rope than there is in either stake.”(4) If we find that on any given test the SEM is three we will find that the SEdiff between any two given scores is approximately  $4\frac{1}{4}$ . Therefore, if we are trying to make a judgment about the significance of a gain any individual has made over a period of time and if we want to be reasonably sure that his



two scores represent a *true* difference in ability, the difference between them should be twice the *SE*<sub>diff</sub> or at least 8½ points apart. Although this is an important concept, in practice it is close enough to consider two scores “really” different if the two scores are simply two *SE*<sub>m</sub> apart—or, as in this example, six points apart.

The second question to consider is what percent of the individuals would remain in the groups we have placed them in if their *true* scores were known? That is, what percentage of the students are we placing in the wrong group? For example, suppose we are going to divide the students in our classroom into just two groups of equal size on the basis of their scores on any one particular standardized test. Those in the half making higher scores will be placed in one group and those in the half making lower scores would be placed in another group. The answer to this question of incorrect placement also depends on the reliability of that standardized test.

If the reliability coefficient reported for that test was .96, a very high reliability, then 95% of the individuals in any one group would remain in that group on the basis of their observed or fallible scores, if the true scores on the test were actually known.(2) If the reliability coefficient is .85, a relatively common reliability coefficient, we will find that only 87% of our students would stay in the group to which we had originally assigned them and 13% of the students would move from the lower half to the upper half or from the upper half to the lower half. Although this does not seem like a very large percentage, it may be extremely important to any one person whom we have assigned to a group incorrectly. The teaching methods that we utilize might be totally inappropriate for that student of lesser ability who is assigned to the upper group and, likewise, might have a stifling or suffocating effect on the student of high ability who, by error, we have assigned to the lower group in our class. Now, this type of error is compounded in the class that we divide into three groups—which we typically do in any reading situation. If we divided a class into three groups on the basis of results from a test whose reliability was .90 we would make only 73% correct assignments. That is, we might expect more than 25% of our students to change from one group to another on any given administration of the standardized test.(2)

In this brief discussion of these two concepts, the Standard Error of Measurement and the percent of incorrect assignments, it should be apparent that if we are making judgments regarding the capabilities of individual students based on the scores from any one

standardized test, we are in danger of doing the student a great disservice by placing him in an incorrect group, making inaccurate judgments regarding his ability or by prejudicing our own view of that student's capability. This, however, is not to say that tests are not useful to us in the classroom. It does say that if we make judgments on the basis of scores of a single test the possibility exists (with a rather high probability) that we will be making incorrect decisions.

As teachers we must base our judgment not on one test score but on the basis of all data available to us. Such sources of information as informal inventories, academic histories and observations should be utilized. An awareness of the problems which can arise should make it clear that, until there are more adequate measures of the educational objectives we hope to achieve, we must be extremely careful in basing decisions regarding individual students purely on the basis of the results of one administration of one test. We must use all the tools at our disposal to assure us the most adequate picture of the student's ability.

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# PERSONALIZING THE DEVELOPMENT OF INITIAL READING VOCABULARY AT THE CAMPUS SCHOOL WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

*David W. Fraser and Ruth Bosma*

The Campus School at Western Michigan University recently has been experimenting with the Language-Master Machine as a means of developing initial reading vocabularies with children in the first grade. Realizing that the act of learning to read is unnecessarily complicated when the pupil is asked to deal with printed word symbols whose meaning and sound are foreign or uninteresting to him, the objective here is to identify a personalized *reading* vocabulary from the actual *speaking* vocabulary of each individual child. It is hypothesized that such a personalized vocabulary should be an even more effectual device for beginning reading instruction than the basal text which usually offers a controlled vocabulary designed for a specific cultural or socio-economic group.

Generally, instruction has proceeded in the following fashion. The teacher leads a "sharing time" kind of discussion with the children each day. As a pupil finishes sharing, the teacher asks him to summarize and to record his summary sentence on the strip of magnetic tape affixed to the bottom of a Language-Master card. At her earliest convenience the teacher writes the recorded words in the blank space at the top of the card and returns it to the child for his personal use. Now as he plays back the tape, he not only hears, but sees the exact words he has spoken. Children may make several such "audio-visual" cards each day.

After a number of cards has accumulated, a typed personalized word list is prepared for every child containing key words from his recorded summary sentences.

During the day, time to review the cards and work with his list independently is provided. When necessary he may replay a tape to check a word he is unsure of. However, a youngster soon learns to identify the visual symbols without referring to the sound track. When work with a card has been sufficient to insure permanent learning of its content, both writing and sound are erased and the card is reused.

Sometimes a youngster will exchange cards with a classmate, thus providing additional words for his list.

In one sense such personalization of basic vocabulary development is analogous to the experience chart method. Essentially both approaches capitalize on the same child-expressed interest and vocabulary ingredients with the personalized approach actually resulting in the daily derivation of one or more components of an individualized experience story. After mastering writing skill, the pupil is encouraged to take a further step; with his personalized vocabulary to work from, he can write stories related to the original experience, thus providing kinesthetic re-enforcement of the visual patterns of his own words.

Experiences with and analysis of the Language-Master Machine have revealed its functional versatility. Primarily, the auditory material recorded on the tape may be related to visual stimuli other than words. For instance, recognition of beginning and ending sounds may be developed by attaching appropriate pictures to the card; pictures may also be used as an added recall cue in establishing a basic sight vocabulary or for an audio-visual presentation of the rhyming concept; a child-drawn picture might result as a response to the instructor's taped directive.

Another feature of the Language Master card is that its dual track tape permits communication between the teacher and student without the actual presence of both. As the teacher makes preparation for a lesson, she asks a question on one track and the child listens and responds on the other during an independent work period. Following through, the teacher can listen to a response and make a return comment without the child's being there. Developmental skill experiences may easily be presented profitably to individuals, small groups, or the whole class.

Constant exposure to taped reproduction of his own voice tends to develop a substantial sensitivity on the part of the child to the quality of his vocal communication. Any speech defect becomes readily apparent to him and he is provided with a convenient means for comparing his speech with an acceptable model.

The simplicity of its operation makes the Language-Master Machine a very practical tool for the classroom. First grade children at the Campus School all work it with ease and confidence.

The overall experiment thus far leads to speculation that the machine is a source of unlimited opportunities for the creative teacher in planning individual and independent enrichment activities.

A personalized basic reading vocabulary, built from his own experience and speech patterns utilizes the child's natural interests and motivations. Its most obvious consequence would seem to be a flexible self-selection reading program throughout the elementary school that would keep abreast with the changing interests and needs of the maturing individual.

These and many other conjectures stimulate interest in this approach to beginning reading, and doubtless will serve to encourage further exploration in personalizing acquisition of the initial reading vocabulary.

# BOOK REVIEW

*Suzanne Thorsen Schoen*

Miller, Lyle

*Maintaining Reading Efficiency*, Revised Edition

Laramie, Wyoming: Developmental Reading Distributors,  
1966, 393 pages, \$4.50

*Maintaining Reading Efficiency*, by Lyle Miller, is the revised edition of his developmental reading text of the same title formerly published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston. The earlier edition is no longer in print. The revised edition is a collection of thirty new, updated, long selections and two standardized developmental reading essays, each approximately 4,600 words, with standardized comprehensive tests suitable for pre and post testing.

Miller asserts that most reading programs and books provide a structural sequence of reading drills to develop flexible reading skills and aid students in achieving maximum reading rates. According to Miller, Professor of Education at the University of Wyoming and author of several reading manuals, there is a serious need for "another type of reading exercise designed for more continuous reading for content." Thus, *Maintaining Reading Efficiency* is intended to increase and stabilize reading skills directly through reading long selections and through taking the accompanying comprehension tests. A test scoring key and a progress chart are provided at the back of the book and are removable. The perforated pages throughout the entire manual make it possible, at the teacher's option, to tear out exercises for tests or machine use.

The selections, each with a Flesch readability score, are divided into three sections and planned for sequential practice at all levels—junior high, high school, college and adult reading. For maximum flexibility, Miller categorizes each of the three sections into two classifications: easy level—exercises 1-5, 11-15 and 21-25; and the advanced one—exercises 6-10, 16-20 and 26-30. The readability scores range from 27 (very difficult) to 79 (fairly easy), and the two standardized selections have a readability score of 44 (average difficulty).

The selections, all non-fiction pieces from books, magazines and pamphlets, are primarily standardized adaptations of the most popular *Public Affairs Pamphlets*. Their infinite variety, from self-improvement articles to anthropology, offer the reader stimulating, high interest

level pieces. Moreover, the selections are not “standard ones,” but fresh, new and thought-provoking. Choosing essays to accommodate junior high through adult reading levels and selecting articles to cover a wide range of interests, maturity and sophistication are Herculean tasks, but Miller’s choices are excellent in these respects.

While primarily devoted to reading for content, the workbook contains two introductory chapters which afford a thorough, comprehensive survey of reading and some study skills. In these superlative chapters, the author stresses his “seek the ideas behind the words” and his reading efficiency score (words per minute multiplied by percentage correct on comprehension test). Ideally, this score represents “the amount of material comprehended per minute of reading.” A time budget sheet and hints on planning a better study schedule are provided at the back of the text.

Professor Miller’s developmental reading manual fulfills its stated purpose in providing content material for reading practice to stabilize and achieve optimum reading skills. Utilized with a supplementary book on basic reading drills and exercises and a variety of lectures and discussions on reading skills, this workbook, with its first-rate articles and flexible, sequential approach, is worthy of close consideration for various developmental reading programs or for individual use to maintain reading efficiency.

# ECHOS FROM THE FIELD

*Lois VanDenBerg*

The West Ottawa Public Schools, Holland, Michigan, are using the SRA Reading Laboratories on a rotating basis throughout our eight elementary buildings. The staff of each building may use this supplementary tool for one semester in whatever way seems most satisfactory in relation to the basic reading program.

One of the most effective uses has been developed in Beechwood School, a grade 3-6 building. All children use SRA immediately in the fall for a period of six weeks. The SRA placement test pinpoints the starting place for each student, and his progress in the Lab adjusts this point, if necessary. The teacher is not confronted with the problem of grouping her children for reading instruction until she has actually observed their performance.

After the six-week period, each teacher completes record forms which are returned to the Reading Consultant. On the basis of these data, two questions pertinent to grouping are answered: 1) What children could use the same instructional materials? and 2) Would our reading instruction be more effective if we crossed room or grade lines, and exchanged children for 45 minutes, three days a week? Sometimes only two grades or rooms exchange students, leaving the other children in their own rooms for instruction. Student achievement and teacher preference determine our action.

On Thursdays and Fridays when the children remain in their own rooms for reading, SRA or individualized reading is used. In this way, both the reading teacher and the home-room teacher are aware of the student's performance.

This plan considers the child's reading performance as of instructional time in the fall, and does not require sole dependency on last year's records. Since current information is usually the more accurate information, more effective grouping should be the result.

Joy Muehlenbeck  
Reading Consultant



# DID YOU SEE?

*Dorothy J. McGinnis*

*Reading for the Gifted: Guided Extension of Reading Skills* published by the Los Angeles City School System? The aim of this publication is to provide suggestions for teaching character development, plot development, and elements of style.

The article entitled "An Experiment on Homogeneous Grouping for Reading in Elementary Classes" by Berkun, Swanson, and Sawyer? In their study, children in 18 homogeneously grouped classes made greater gains in reading achievement than did children in 27 heterogeneously grouped classes in the same school system. The article is published in the May-June 1966 issue of the *Journal of Educational Research*.

Lawrence E. Hafner's book, *Improving Reading in the Secondary Schools: Selected Readings*? This Macmillan publication is based on the premise that all high school teachers must assume the responsibility of teaching students to read.

*Predicting Reading Failure* by Katrina De Hirsch, Jeannette Jansky and William Langford? This book reports the literature in the field of reading disabilities and offers a predictive index for identifying children who exhibit high academic risk. The book is published by Harper and Row.

"The Promise of i.t.a. Is A Delusion" by William B. Gillooly? According to this report which appears in the June 1966 issue of *Phi Delta Kappan*, many recent USOE-supported projects show no significant difference in reading progress between i.t.a. pupils and those using traditional orthography.

Sterling G. Ellsworth's report on "Building the Child's Self-Concept," *NEA Journal* for February 1967? The author maintains that many times children cannot read because they feel inadequate and inferior or because they want to hurt their teachers or their parents. He recommends that remedial reading teachers also be prepared to serve as personal counselors.

# WE SUGGEST

*Eleanor Buelke*

Almy, Millie

*Young Children's Thinking*

New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University  
1966, Pp. xii + 153.

In this book Professor Almy presents an unusual combination of some of Piaget's theories of intellectual development, cross-sectional and longitudinal studies of such development in young children, and fresh, educational insights into ways in which these theories and data may be related to education.

In the first part, attention is given to Piaget's studies of intelligence and his views concerning development of logical thought, or cognition, in early childhood. Included are descriptions of transitions from one stage of intellectual development to the next. Four main factors which influence and promote, or hinder, development and learning are also discussed. The first three of these: *maturation*, the increasing differentiation of the nervous system; *experience*, encounter with the physical world; and *social transmission*, involvement with other human beings and education, may be more generally known and widely accepted by teachers than the fourth. Piaget calls the fourth factor *equilibration* and, for him, this self-regulation is the fundamental factor.

Corroborative research by other developmental psychologists is also reported. In general, agreement among these researchers regarding a similarity between development of the physical self and development of the intellectual self is apparent. The essential conclusion seems to be that:

Development follows its own laws, as all of contemporary biology leads us to believe, and although each stage in the development is accompanied by all sorts of new learning based on experience, this learning is always relative to the developmental period during which it takes place, and to the intellectual structures, whether completely or partially formed, which the subject has at his disposal during this period.

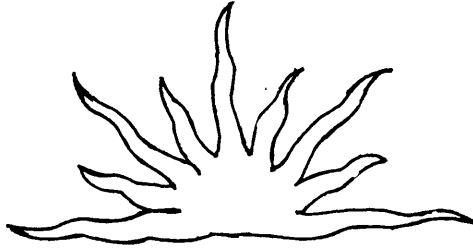
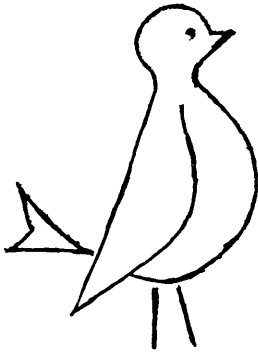
In the next part of this volume, Almy reports studies of intellectual development carried on by members of the staff of the Horace

Mann-Lincoln Institute of School Experimentation. Results of the studies support Piaget's findings and underscore the educational importance of the understandings he has investigated. The author raises the following pertinent, perplexing, educational issues, some more suspect and speculative than others:

1. Matching training procedures with the child's conceptual level;
2. The role of language;
3. Matching the child's conceptual style; and
4. The problem of transition from one level of thought to the next.

In the latter part of the book, the writer notes certain educational implications. For educators, or for anyone honestly involved in helping children to develop healthy, high-level, nonegocentric thought, Piaget's theory and method hold significance. It appears crucial that a child should not be permitted to learn an appropriate answer without making certain that he can retrace his steps or arrive at the same result in another way. Teachers need to be aware of a young child's mental confusions and to be able to recognize when he has moved ahead out of such confusion. Instructors can learn to conduct experiments with their pupils designed to reveal the nature of their children's thinking. Curriculums in our schools might well expand opportunities for manipulative activity and language, social interaction among children, and the child's role in "discovery." If the essence of Piaget's theory becomes basis for method, and then program, designed to nurture logical thinking, it may contribute positively to readiness for reading, and to teachers' expertise in pacing reading and writing skills to children's maturity and rate of learning.

Readers of this book will appreciate the fine contribution Professor Almy has made in helping teachers both to understand and to use the writings of Piaget. They may be so captivated by theory and findings presented here that they may never again view children in quite the same way.



## ROUND ROBIN

*Dorothy E. Smith, Editor*

It has become a tradition at The Western Michigan University Campus School to have an unusual kind of an annual book fair. The philosophy is not to have the typically commercial book fair but rather to give the youngsters a personal contact with a children's author. Each year they invite an author whom the children themselves have chosen. Long before the book fair is put on the children read the books of that particular author and each grade takes one character from the stories and constructs art exhibits pertaining to it. This year Jean Craighead George was the author chosen. She has written many books on both the child and adult levels. She has been published in such national magazines as *The Readers Digest*, and a book she wrote recently, *My Side of the Mountain*, is now being made into a movie. Miss George is a naturalist and most of her characters are bears, chipmunks and other kinds of animals.

The featured author each year has all of her books displayed at the book fair. The art exhibits pertain to her works specifically and the visitors may buy autographed copies. The book fair does include books by other authors. There are displays of these but they are not for sale. This book fair is perhaps unique and the Campus School has received many requests for information about it. Following are some letters that were written by visitors to this year's fair which perhaps will be of interest to teachers in other elementary schools.

Dear Editor,

In the course of pursuing a profession, one has periods of bewilderment when he doubts his directional goal. If one is in elemen-

tary education and such doubts occur, may I suggest a visit to a children's book fair to regain the motivation and enthusiasm. I arrived at the University Elementary School Book Fair around 11:15 a.m. to find children bustling around. The children were very excited and each seemed to be taking a personal pride in the book fair. Their interest and enthusiasm quickly captivates any visitor. They seem to have taken the attitude that this is their show and you are going to enjoy it and feel its importance.

I spoke with several children asking which books they liked or wanted to buy. One third grade boy named Mark told me that he had ordered the book, *The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle* (by Hugh Lofting). He had a copy on the display table in front of him, guarding it. When asked why he had chosen this particular book, he explained that it was thick and yet he could read it. I spoke with two fifth grade pupils who were managing a table. I asked the boy what type stories he enjoyed and he immediately answered space and adventure stories. Both the girl and the boy told me various things about the books on their table. I asked them if they had read all the books in class or at home. These two fifth graders laughed and informed me that they go through all the books while they were waiting for customers. They knew every picture and had figured out many of the stories by either reading parts of the books or putting various clues together. Both children were particularly interested in the book, *My Side of the Mountain*, by the visiting author Jean Craighead George. They explained the book to me in great length. In doing so other children gathered around to add comments which increased their excitement even more. Apparently this book is an adventure story about a 13 year old boy who runs away from home and lives on a mountain where he must capture his own food and build a shelter and a fire. There are illustrations in the book to show how the boy did these things and how the reader could also do them. The book was also written in first person singular which allows another means of close association.

I enjoyed extremely my visit to the book fair as well as talking with the children about the various books, the art work they had prepared and their excitement towards the author. One fourth grade child showed me a picture in the back of one of the author's books of the author. The child quickly added that Jean Craighead George was really prettier than that.

Brenda Kelly

Dear Editor,

I can't think of a more exciting way to interest children in books—to make books come alive for them—than this elementary book fair. The large cave (complete with hairy spiders!), the giant tree house, the delicate sea corner, these all depicted sections of different books. And, it wasn't merely something the children could see and associate with their reading, it was something which they had actually planned and created. Besides the construction and planning, children also served as salesmen. I feel the project is very worthwhile because the children can take an active part in relating their reading to other areas such as art, planning, or meeting an author.

Chris Alberti

Dear Editor,

As I looked at the attractive displays of books and art illustrations, I remembered something I had recently read. It stood so clearly in my mind that I had to find its source. Then in some church literature I found,

"I am the Printed Page. I can be made to speak any language, sing any song, show any picture. I have no barriers of race, color, or culture. I can do my work alone. I am available to both the rich and poor, for I cost very little. I can be used again and again by the same person or by many persons. I can attract and entertain, instruct and correct, guide and encourage, warn and reconcile."

These things were going through my mind as I admired the versatility and quality of books selected. I realized that this was more than selling and buying books, but this was also a means of influencing children to read through new experience. Meeting a "real live author," illustrating her books through displays and art, discussing stories, making out sales slips and other challenging experiences are helping children to see books not only as "school or study books," but also as a source of enjoyment and entertainment. I feel that the enthusiasm about the Book Fair will influence their reading in and outside the classroom.

It has extended and enriched experiences, broadened and improved tastes of reading, fostered personal-social activities, and provided uses of worthwhile recreational and art skills.

Geneva Silvernail

# TEN-SECOND REVIEWS

*Blanche O. Bush*

Reading is a purposeful process of identifying, interpreting, and evaluating concepts in terms of the mental content of the reader. It involves an integration of skills rather than an accumulation.

Carter and McGinnis

Amble, Bruce R., "Phrase Reading Training and Reading Achievement of School Children," *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1966), 20:210-218.

This study attempted to assess the usefulness of tachistoscopically presented phrase reading materials. In terms of procedures and techniques used in this study, findings indicate that tachistoscopically presented meaningful word phrases are an efficient approach to improving reading comprehension of intermediate grade children.

Baker, Carolyn C., "Individualized Reading With the Educables," *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1966) 20:148-149.

The educable classes in Fairfax County, Virginia, are planned for mildly retarded and slow learning children. The focal point of the academic curriculum is reading. After much deliberation, it was decided that individualized reading was a technique that could possibly be utilized. The library was able to provide the necessary books on high interest levels with preprimer vocabularies. A great deal of planning, the writer stated, is necessary to fit this reading technique in with other academic work, but it can be done.

Bixel, Gordon, "Vision—Key to Learning or Not Learning," *Education* (November, 1966), 87:180-184.

The author points out that extensive reading is a new activity for which man is not visually adapted and that this fact has resulted in many visual problems for children which teachers and vision experts have failed to understand. There are many visual skills, which if not adequately learned, interfere with the ability to read.

Bossone, Richard M., "Developing and Extending Reading Interests," *Education* (October, 1966), 87:103-106.

Bossone describes a program designed to help students extend their interests in order to improve and educate themselves. Too often the teacher forgets, the author points out, his principle responsibility: to develop and extend the student's reading interest so that he will continue to read with pleasure the rest of his life.

Boyd, Rae, "Rate of Comprehension in Reading Among Sixth-Form Pupils in New Zealand Schools," *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1966), 20:237-241.

Until 1964 when reading advisers were appointed to advise on reading instruction in primary and secondary schools, teachers in New Zealand secondary schools tended to regard reading as a skill that ought to be acquired in the primary school years rather than a developmental subject that required special nurture at advanced levels. Therefore reading research in New Zealand has been chiefly concerned with problems at the early stages of reading and the difficulties facing backward readers in the primary school. In this study results clearly point to the desirability of organizing reading improvement programs for sixth-form pupils.

Calvert, James J., and George F. Crones, Jr., "Oculomotor Spasms in Handicapped Readers," *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1966), 20:231-236.

The authors in this exploratory study with a number of handicapped readers have been concerned about the differences within the remedial group with emphasis upon etiology and treatment. The usual test battery consists of the Ophthalmograph, intelligence tests, personality tests, reading surveys or other specific tests as needed. Findings obtained from the Ophthalmograph records revealed that all of the subjects not making progress under treatment possessed an oculomotor characteristic uncommon to those subjects who made adequate progress. The pilot study relative to oculomotor spasms and treatment suggest important ramifications in the study of reading problems but much research, including long term follow-up studies, is needed before generalizations can be made.



Chambers, Dewey W., “. . . Let them Read,” *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1966), 20:254-257.

Chambers suggests that “perhaps,” along with teaching children to read, we should let them read, as well. We as teachers have the grave and responsible privilege of giving children the gift of reading. A large part of this gift must be accepted in the form of skills and controls that are taught in a developmental sequential manner. We are, however, as teachers, responsible also to see that this gift of reading is used. We are working to develop a literate society that will read, not just know how to read. It is time to evaluate our reading programs and find out what opportunities we are giving our pupils.

Cranney, A. Garr, “Selected Study-Skill References, *Journal of Reading* (December, 1966), 10:185-187.

The references were selected from a comprehensive list of study-skill texts and articles compiled at the University of Minnesota. The texts are most appropriate for college students and college-bound high school students.

Davidson, Dorothy L., “Books for Poor Readers in High School,” *Education* (November, 1966), 87:164-166.

The author reports the results of an analysis of bibliographies for poor high school readers. She concludes that present bibliographies are inadequate and that any successful bibliography must be based on the curriculum. The main need of the poor reader in high school is help in achieving success in his daily classwork, and the reading required in his daily assignments which is already more than he can handle.

Della-Piana, Gabriel, and Helen Martin, “Reading Achievement and Maternal Behavior,” *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1966), 20:225-230.

The study reported is the first in a series of studies to be concluded within the next few years directed toward providing parents with various kinds of assistance in facilitating the reading achievement of their children. The focus of this first report is on a comparison of the behavior of mothers of overachieving and underachieving sixth grade girls in two semi-structured

inter-action situations. Findings indicate that the underachieving girls and their mothers showed more disagreement in opinions than the overachieving girls and their mothers, but the difference was not significant. Mothers of overachieving girls exhibited significantly more positive social-emotional reactions. Other scores yielded differences that approached statistical significance but it would be hazardous to speculate on these.

Dobbs, Mary Carolyn (Editor), "Functional Reading," *The Pointer* (1966) Number 2, 11:13-16.

The source of the material presented in the article was from a collection of ideas on functional reading by teachers of mentally retarded children in Michigan. Many techniques were presented which would be helpful for any slow reader.

Fay, Leo, "Interesting Books for the Reading Teacher," *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1966), 20:261-265.

Fay's reviews of such books as "The Paperback Story," "Sources for Children's Books," "New Editions," "The Disadvantaged Child," "A New Proposal," "For the Fun of it" should inspire teachers with various reading problems to locate the book or article and read the material in full.

Folcarelli, Ralph J., "Don't be Afraid of Individualized Reading," *Grade Teacher* (November, 1966), 84:110+.

Close teacher-librarian teamwork is a must for an individualized reading program, but the effort pays off in the vastly increased scope and excitement of children's reading. Common elements in an individualized program include: (1) Prime consideration of each child's individual difference, his interest and abilities; (2) built in motivation as each child selects his own reading material; and (3) a teacher's knowledge of each child as an individual through frequent conferences and detailed reviews. Essential requirements for beginning an individualized reading program include: (1) support and leadership from the administration, (2) adaptability and willingness to change by teacher, (3) nucleus of a school library with plans for expansion.

Gans, Roma, "Aim at What They Can Do—Not at What They Can't," *Grade Teacher* (November, 1966), 84:96+.

Beginning readers need to be given many opportunities to appear successful. This encouragement will help them to do even better. Five things a teacher can do to diminish the negative aspects of instruction are: (1) Make pupils eager to learn to read; (2) Provide materials that can be used with a minimum of assistance; (3) Help students to know their strengths and weaknesses; (4) Give students concrete evidence of growth; (5) Provide many opportunities to read.

Gillispie, John T., "How To Be A Do-It-Yourself Expert on Children's Books," *Grade Teacher* (November, 1966), 84:84-108+.

There are many guides and annotated bibliographies to help you become a self made authority. The two guides to children's literature that have become classics in the field are *Children and books* by May Hill Arbuthnot and *Children's Literature in the Elementary Schools* by Charlotte S. Huck and Doris A. Young. Five annotated bibliographies, four texts on evaluating books and many good books containing suggestions on children's literature are included.

Glass, Gerald G., "Reading Improvement Course for Graduate Students," *Journal of Reading* (December, 1966), 10:161-167.

This paper discusses the course in reading improvement for graduate students at Syracuse University, including such areas as the student population involved, the course objectives, and a brief summary of the techniques, methods, and materials used.

Gosden, J. W., "They Played Cards and Learned to Spell," *Grade Teacher* (November, 1966), 84:18.

Faced with a class half of whom were habitual misspellers, the author designed a game that would compel the student to notice which letter in a word came after which. In this game they handled the letters, put them in the correct order and almost effortlessly memorized proper sequence. The game was popular, provided instant success and developed an interest in words while the number of spelling errors diminished.

Hawkins, Michael L., "Mobility of Students in Reading Groups," *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1966), 20:136-140.

There seems to be general agreement that the key to successful grouping for reading instruction is flexibility. Usually this flexibility is defined as it relates to method, materials, time, and mobility of pupils within the classroom. The writer observed that in many elementary schools the classroom organization for teaching had little provision for movement of pupils between reading groups.

Hunkins, Francis P., "Using Questions to Foster Pupils' Thinking," *Education* (October, 1966), 87:83-87.

The author points out that questions have always been an important part of a teacher's technique but have been used for testing the pupil's knowledge instead of stimulating him to think.

Kalamazoo Gazette, *The Newspaper in the Classroom. Suggestions for the News Period*. Pamphlet.

Included in this pamphlet are some ideas for organizing the news period, standards for news reporting, content of a news period, reasons for clipping and filing newspaper articles, and suggestions for using the newspaper in curriculum areas.

Knutson, Dorothy M., "I.T.A. Aids Reading Disability," *The Pointer* Number 2 (1966) 11:7-12.

Reading disability is of increasing concern to educators. The teacher of a pupil with reading disability has a concern to become as fully informed about that child as possible and then to evaluate methods and materials of instruction as they apply to him. Since most cases of reading instruction have evolved within the traditional framework of reading instruction, it would appear desirable to employ methods and materials that are as far removed as possible from the failure-producing one. The appearance of the Initial Teaching Alphabet (i.t.a.) adds a new dimension and a new hope for teachers of failure-frustrated children. The author summarizes some of the unique features found in i.t.a. for children with reading disabilities: (1) Its code appearance is excellent motivation for "allergic" readers;

(2) Its stability and relative simplicity afford greater chances for early and repetitive success; (3) It is free from the limitations imposed by a controlled vocabulary with attendant "level" stigma.

Levine, Isidore, "The Limits of Individual Reading," *Journal of Reading* (December, 1966), 10:156-160.

Some of our basic theories in reading instruction are predicated on the popular misconception that reading is a skill which can be applied universally to all printed matter. The numerous facets of reading in the subject areas should inspire sympathy for the multiple reading tasks of the adolescent. And this compassion Levine states, should yield a program in which each subject teacher, rather than a reading expert, is responsible for subject reading. Levine presents six questions that he believes should be investigated relative to reading: (1) Are there skills other than word recognition? (2) Can we postulate a list of reading powers which can be of practical use in every field? (3) Can a secondary school reading expert who has no special province of learning in subject matter prepare students for their reading responsibility in these various areas? (4) What is the value of teaching students reading skills? (5) Can we assume the existence of a subject area known as developmental reading? (6) Should subject teachers be alerted to the necessity of spending class time in silent reading of texts because no one else can provide such training?

McCormick, Nancy, "The Countdown on Beginning Reading," *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1966), 20:115-120.

Reading in the public schools has long been a subject of controversy. Despite the faults that have been found in our reading practices, the cry now is to place children in that questionable situation at least one year earlier than is necessary or recommended. The pressure of society will develop the child soon enough. Let us try to guarantee children an education relieved of pressures they cannot handle, especially when these pressures can only be detrimental to their educational growth. For first grade children, the author emphasizes that happiness is a child learning to read, security is allowing him to do it when he is ready.

McGee, Robert T., and Jean M. McClintic, "Early Instruction in Readiness: Who Speaks for the Children?" *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1966), 20:121-124.

This study was conducted to obtain answers to the following questions: (1) Can significantly greater gains in reading be achieved with groups of culturally disadvantaged elementary school children through the use of classroom self-directive dramatization of stories than through methods involving the traditional use of basal readers in small groups or in the whole class? (2) Can favorable changes in the self concept of culturally disadvantaged elementary school children be brought about through classroom self-directive dramatization of stories? Significantly greater gains in reading were achieved in the study by groups of culturally disadvantaged elementary school children through the use of classroom self-directive dramatization of stories which pupils selected and read than in the other approach. There is also evidence to indicate that through the use of self-directive dramatization favorable changes occurred in the self concept of the children. The results, according to the authors, may indicate a breakthrough in the effort to help disadvantaged children make more rapid progress in reading.

Miller, Richard B., "Program in Primary Readiness," *Education* (October, 1966), 87:107-110.

In recent years, studies have shown that the number of retarded readers, slow learners, and non achievers has not decreased despite the fact that new materials, methods, and techniques have been introduced into our schools. Research indicates that this lack of educational success begins in the primary grades. The author describes a program designed to provide children with the readiness experiences necessary to insure success in beginning reading.

Penn, Julia M., "Reading Disability: A Neurological Deficit?" *Exceptional Children* (December, 1966), 33:243-248.

In this article, medical studies of the causes of reading disabilities including dyslexia are reviewed and discussed. Results of epidemic diseases are compared and conclusions drawn on the causes of specific reading disabilities.

Rausen, Ruth G., "The Junior High Reader," *Top of the News* (November, 1966), 23:19-22.

The junior high age is the one in which the tastes of childhood and those of sophistication are often found in the same person. Any measure of influence of reading on their lives is bound to be pure speculation. Books and other reading have some power because we can hear changes in attitude and points of view in their remarks. Books do help give them insight into their own behavior and that of others. Reading can help them to find their way in school and assist with vocational goals. At this age, they are finding and setting the bases of their adult opinion. Many of these decisions and commitments to life which they make as a result of reading will depend on how well we, as librarians, know these young people and how intelligently we provide for their needs.

Rouse, John, "In Defense of Trash—Value of Popular Fiction," *The Education Digest* (December, 1966), 32:47-49.

The author states that if we are going to make readers of young people then we will have to turn to the fiction of contemporary writers. And this means not just the work of the best writers, but the work of popular writers of all kinds. The difference between poorly written and well written books is very often one of degree and not of kind. The great themes are not found only in the great books. The success of good teaching depends on finding books that will interest young people and that deal with matters important enough to provoke them to discussion. This is not easy. Good trash is difficult to find. But not quite as difficult to find as a good classic.

Robbins, M. P., "A Study of the Validity of Delacato's Theory of Neurological Organization," *Exceptional Children* (April, 1966), 32:517-523.

This report is a summary of a doctoral dissertation designed to test practical implications of a theory about neurological organization proposed by Delacato. According to the findings of the study, the program had no effect that could not be accounted for by chance. Although there are limitations in this research, it is one of the few attempts that have been made

to assess empirically some of the practical aspects of a theory that is becoming widely known.

Robinson, H. Alan, "Reliability of Measures Related to Reading Success of Average, Disadvantaged, and Advantaged Kindergarten Children," *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1966), 20:203-209.

This study attempted to find, develop or adapt test instruments which would give reliable results in the kindergarten. Specifically, instruments designed to identify visual, auditory, and visuo-motor abilities were tested. Readiness and intelligence tests were also administered. Robinson stated that it seems evident, from an inspection of some of the results of this study, that the socio-economic status of the kindergarten child needs to be considered in ascertaining test reliability.

Silvaroli, Nichoas J. and Warren B. Wheelock, "An Investigation of Auditory Discrimination Training for Beginning Readers," *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1966), 20:247-251.

This study is concerned with the extent to which children, especially those from lower socio-economic groups, have acquired the auditory signs for their language signals, and whether these children need auditory discrimination training. Results suggest that auditory discrimination programs helped children in the experimental group to discriminate more effectively thirty-three basic speech sounds. The post-test results of the experimental groups did not support the use of either known or nonsense words. Both presentations seemed to have equal effect on the experimental groups. It also appears that group tests are not appropriate for six-year-old children in lower socio-economic groups. This study is limited due to the fact that no attempt was made to evaluate the effect of this auditory discrimination training on the actual reading achievement of these groups.

Slobodian, June, "Practices in Teaching Beginning Reading," *Education* (October, 1966), 87:94-98.

The author suggests workable ways of teaching pupils not only to read but to enjoy learning to read: (1) Vary your approach, (2) Be positive toward contributions and supportive of individuals, (3) Guide pupils toward independence in read-



ing, (4) Provide readiness for all pupils, (5) Enrich and extend the reading activities for all groups in proportion to their abilities, (6) Provide skill development techniques to meet individual needs, (7) Continuously evaluate progress but beware of over-using one method such as oral reading. Pupils learn to read in a variety of environments. The time allocated various activities, the sequence of reading activities, the use of the basal reader itself are as varied as individual teachers and pupils.

Snipes, Walter T., "The Effect of Moving on Reading Achievement," *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1966), 20:242-246.

The present study was designed to test differences between pupils who have moved and those who have remained in continuous residence on certain selected variables of reading achievement. Conclusions justified in view of available data include: (1) The number of moves pupils make does not appear to have a detrimental effect on achievement in reading and often strengthens this variable; (2) Pupils who have had some experience in various schools tend to score higher on tests of reading achievement; (3) Pupils who have lived in other states and countries appear to be favored in reading achievement over non-movers or in-state movers; (4) No specific area of reading achievement (vocabulary or comprehension) appears to be favored in moving. The research lends weight to the idea, according to Snipes, that the problems of the mobile child are probably not academic. Further research, however, is needed in the area of mobility, achievement and adjustment.

Stauffer, Russell G., "A Vocabulary Study Comparing Reading, Arithmetic, Health and Science Texts," *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1966), 20:141-147.

This is a report of four different word counts made so that certain vocabularies could be compared. Word counts were made in seven different basic reading series, and in three series of each of three content areas—health, science, and arithmetic. Findings indicate that there exists little overlap of vocabulary between reading series as well as content area materials. The results point up quite clearly that pupils must be taught word attack skills that will permit them to read effectively in dif-

ferent areas of knowledge and that every teacher is truly a teacher of comprehension, that is reading. Concept development and vocabulary growth and refinement skills must take precedence over the auxiliary skills of word pronunciation with each teacher responsible in her area. In short, every teacher must be a teacher of reading and, beginning at the primary level, should teach the reading of arithmetic, the reading of science, and the reading of health.

Story, Suetta B., "Does Johnny Know More Words than Ivan?" *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1966), 20:131-133.

The author was prompted to make this study of what words Johnny can read compared to Ivan by Trace's book entitled "What Ivan Knows that Johnny Doesn't." The study was limited to first grade since her experience was there. Her findings indicate that the children knew at the end of the first grade, when they were six to seven years old, at least 2,500 words compared to 2,000 by Ivan who was just getting ready to start school.

Summers, Edward G., and James Laffey, "Doctoral Dissertation Research in Reading for 1964, Part I," *Journal of Reading* (December, 1966), 10:169-184.

This annotated bibliography includes doctoral research reported in Dissertation Abstract (Ann Arbor, Michigan) for 1964. This bibliography is a continuation of the annotated listings for 1961, 1962, and 1963. The annotations include as much as possible of the procedures, research design, and conclusions reported under the assumption that a complete summary is most useful to the reader.

Vanek, Edna (Editor), *The Booklist and Subscription Books Bulletin* (December 1, 1966), 63:383-424.

An annotated booklist of books and materials recommended for library purchases are included. Books are classified and an index is provided.

Vernon, M.D. "Ten More Important Sources of Information on Visual Perception in Relation to Reading," *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1966), 20:134-135.

Although accurate and detailed perception of form, and especially of the relationships of parts within complex forms, develops only gradually in children, there is little or no evidence to show, according to Vernon, that those who learn to read normally are much affected by perceptual difficulties. But in some backward readers, though not all, a variety of perceptual deficiencies appear. An annotated bibliography is included.

Williams, Wilma Jean, "Academic Achievement in a Graded School and in a Non Graded School," *The Elementary School Journal* (December, 1966), 67:135-139.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether there is a relationship between organizational structure and pupil achievement. To determine the relationship this hypothesis was tested: "There is no significant difference in achievement between comparative groups of pupils who have attended graded and non graded primary schools." The results seemed to indicate that there is little relationship between graded and non graded organization and pupil achievement.

Winkley, Carol K., "Which Accent Generalizations are Worth Teaching?" *The Reading Teacher* (December, 1966), 20:219-224.

As a technique of word identification, several reading specialists and authors of basal reader manuals have advocated teaching children to apply certain accent generalizations to locate the accented syllable in unfamiliar multisyllabic words. However, there has been no agreement among reading experts as to whether accent generalizations should be taught. Results of this study indicate that accent generalizations were helpful in the identification of unknown words. Winkley inferred that such generalizations should be taught to pupils of average ability at the intermediate grade level. Seven generalizations are proposed.

Wootton, Lutian R., "Triggering Reading Concepts," *The Reading Teacher* (November, 1966), 20:150-151.

Wootton stresses that experiences in the room which are on-going and sequential under the guidance of a capable teacher is an effective way of developing communicative skills at the best psychological moment. Through first hand experiences in the room, concepts necessary for beginning reading and writing were triggered and developed into individual stories. In using this approach the child has a tangible encounter, is encouraged to verbalize, then to recognize a reason for writing and reading. The child is led to appreciate reading and writing as tools which bring pleasant and rewarding experiences.

Zimet, Sara F., "Children's Interest and Story Preferences: A Critical Review of the Literature," *The Elementary School Journal* (December, 1966), 67:122-130.

In this investigation more than three hundred studies of children's interests and story preferences have been reported. In addition there are many articles of opinions derived from research findings and based on a psychoanalytic theoretical framework. The author suggests that what is needed is a more serious attack on the problem of providing the classroom with reading material that has a difficulty range and an appeal commensurate with children's abilities and interests.