Ten-Second Reviews

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Blanche O. Bush

Reading without purpose is sauntering, not exercise. More is got from one book on which the thought settles for a definite end in knowledge, than from libraries skimmed over by a wandering eye. —Bulwer


According to the results of experiments by Mazurkiewicz (1966) and Mazurkiewicz and Lamana (1966) children taught by i.t.a., as compared to t.o.—taught children, seemingly drop precipitously on their word study skills from mid term to the end of the year in the first grade and are poorer in punctuation and capitalization in a creative writing sample at the second grade. The i.t.a. children seemingly are superior in word reading and word study skills at mid term in the first year and are inferior in spelling at the end of the first grade while superior in number of running words, spelling, and number of polysyllable words at the end of second grade. There seems to be no theory to account for these phenomena.


More important than setting an age at which children should be taught to read, is establishing a philosophy which allows for individual differences. Acceptance of each child as a unique individual and adapting educational procedures to meet his needs, rather than attempting to make him fit the mold, will likely result in earlier teaching of reading to many children. The nongraded elementary school seems to offer the best opportunity to meet these highly idealistic and difficult goals.


This article reports on a new and interesting alternative in which the visual modality is deliberately suppressed or blocked, initially at least, instead of being reinforced. The basic theory
involved is that, in some cases, learning to read may be literally cut off or short-circuited by the visual modality rather than merely obstructed.


Chall’s study concentrated on the methods of beginning reading instruction. It includes definitions of methods, interviews with leading proponents of the different approaches, observations of these methods being used in schools, and analyses of readers, workbooks and instructional manuals from the two reading series most widely used in the United States in the late 1950’s and early 1960’s.


Research in the field of creativity is still new and doubts exist as to the validity of some findings but most authorities agree that certain practices can encourage creative thinking. The following are examples of such practices: (1) Less emphasis on conformity, (2) Flexible scheduling, (3) Provision for time, (4) Less emphasis on group work, (5) Less dependence on panaceas, (6) Wise use of tests, (7) Less stress on sex role, (8) Reasonable use of the closed question, (9) Flexible teacher attitudes.

Colvin, Charles R., “A Reading Program that Failed—Or Did It?” *Journal of Reading* (November, 1968), 12:142-149.

Is “failure” a relative term? This article gives an account of an investigation which tried to avoid contamination of the subjects under study but failed. The author’s view is that reading research of the experimental control type should constantly be checked for group contamination (Hawthorne effect) before implications either positive or negative can be made.


An in-service education program geared to the needs of teachers can have a salutary effect upon teachers, can develop
a positive attitude toward reading supervision and teachers will not resist change. Desirable effects upon pupil attitude toward reading and interest in reading did occur as an outcome of the behavioral changes effected by teachers in an in-service education program. Improvement in teaching of reading in the intermediate grades did occur with the better interpretation of instructional materials in current use in the school district.


Puberty seemingly is the point at which average readers finally have to make a transition from juvenile to adult books if their reading interests are to continue. Stories concocted for juveniles are rejected as kid stuff but a surprising number apparently cannot make the jump to books written for adults. The most obvious difficulty is the vocabulary. Also adult books are full of non-literal statements and the young reader who takes them literally must often feel that what he is reading is nonsense. Other difficulties in adult books are long and complex sentences, complex characters, literary forms and devises, interrupted time sequences, and views contrary to one's own.


The stories read aloud by the teacher are an important part of the primary literature program. Care must be taken in the selection and presentation of these stories if they are to serve their intended educational purposes. Some ‘Read Aloud’ titles are listed in the order from the simplest to the more complex.


Classroom teachers often find it difficult to locate books for children which they can read independently. Most teachers do not have the time nor the experience to apply formulas to check the readability of large numbers of books. One solution to the problem is to use the standards defined in this article for an informal reading test and, in light of the test results, to assign
grade-level ratings to books. By cooperating with the school librarian, classroom teachers can give books markings that can be seen at a glance.


An increase in our understanding of the nature of skimming is essential. Studies are needed wherein materials representing a variety of content are presented to several age-grade levels of youngsters who themselves represent equally diverse backgrounds, aptitudes and levels of achievement. A thorough and systematic investigation of some of the issues raised in this article should substantially increase our capacity to assist in the development of a basic reading skill—a skill which to date has received little more than abundant lip-service, and little less than total neglect.


The research reported describes the construction of a non-verbal test of children's story preferences and explores in a tentative way the use of the instrument to disclose story preferences among kindergarten, first, second, and third grade children, one group from an upper-middle class suburban school system and another group with a predominantly Negro, urban school district.


Probably one of the most important products of this project is the sudden awareness of how much literature is available to everyone at all times if he but searches. This survey may help to eliminate frustration teachers feel when they must teach in schools with inadequate libraries or in schools where, all too often, textbooks are the only available source of information. The survey also makes the pupils aware of the tremendous number of sources for learning surrounding them. Because the sources are outside of the school, the students may well use them in accomplishing a lifetime education.

The purposes of this experimental program were: (1) To provide planned correlation between the on-campus pre-service preparation in teaching reading and the student teaching; (2) To present student teachers with a variety of experiences in teaching reading at all grade levels in the elementary school; (3) To provide situations for observations, discussion, demonstration and participation with selected materials and techniques; and (4) To effect improved communication between the university and the public schools concerning students’ preparation.


Research on rate, flexibility and study skills has been conducted over several decades. Harris selected several significant studies for review. Reportedly it is evident that rate and comprehension vary according to groups tested, kinds of reading matter used, the measuring instruments, and purpose for reading. Most correlations have been positive but quite low.


The facts cited in this article confirm the conclusion that Soviet children learn to read their native language rapidly with ease, during the first year in school as the result of well organized lessons in textbooks supplemented by other forms of practice and reading experience. For teaching beginning reading, a consistent alphabetic code has the same advantages as an unambiguous numbers system or simple scheme for musical notation. With a consistent alphabetic code in which the letters and syllables “say their sounds,” learning the mechanics and their application in meaningful, interpretive reading can proceed simultaneously. Methods of teaching beginning reading in the U.S.S.R. remain remarkably constant year-by-year.


Remedial programs at the secondary level inside the Yakima
Indian Reservation, even when they are well-financed, and well-staffed, leave much to be desired. The author raises serious questions about recent efforts to alleviate the reading problems of disadvantaged secondary students.


The purpose of this article was not to praise nor to condemn but to analyze and compare, to see where reading teachers and linguists might agree or differ and to suggest the reasons for their individual viewpoints.


This article reports an investigation of the relationship between reading and automatic sequential level skills. Even though the results were negative, these data are reported to (a) invite criticism of the procedure, (b) head off a line of investigation which does not appear to be fruitful, and suggest problems of sampling to other investigators who wish to pursue similar projects.


Informal tests, based upon the reading materials used in the classroom and charts of faulty habits and difficulties observed when the child is reading, can provide the best basis for planning effective instruction. Tests, both formal and informal, represent a substantial part in diagnosing reading difficulties, but unless they are used in conjunction with observation, oral evaluation, cumulative records, and other evaluative techniques, serious error may and probably will result.


In general the purpose of this conference was to understand the nature of reading. The following questions were discussed by various authorities: (1) Are we on profitable and sensible tasks in our research on reading? (2) What are the promising
lines of evidence? Are there some congruences among our findings? Or, are we asking such diverse questions and using such different methods that our results are not comparable? and (3) Finally, can we discover new questions and new directions for future research on reading?


The physical facilities of the school must provide optimum conditions for all children to read and learn. Children with slightly defective vision, especially if uncorrected, as well as those who are partially seeing, must often expend real effort to distinguish the reading matter. This article discusses the provision of adequate physical conditions in the classroom for all children, the normal and the partially seeing, identifying children with defective vision, and making special provisions for the partially seeing. Many school systems provide no special supervisor or other staff member to give assistance to partially seeing children. In such systems, this responsibility must be assumed by the regular teacher.


A major program for the diagnosis and treatment of specific dyslexia was established in the Maralhon County (Wisconsin) Child Guidance Clinic. This paper reports the experience of the first year of operation of the Clinic and analyzes the first fifty completed cases.


In British Infants’ Schools, i.t.a. has been integrated successfully with modern progressive teaching methods associated with an eclectic approach to beginning reading. The most common practice with i.t.a. in British classrooms is an i.t.a. eclectic basal reading series with a definite look-say beginning, plus a language-experience approach and careful consideration of individual difference in the learning style of children.

This study is based on the results of a questionnaire sent to over 3,000 high school students in the United States, the Philippines, Guatemala and Tanzania in both public and parochial schools. The questionnaire covered these points: a listing of three books read, with “character liked best—why?” “character liked least—why?” and “did you like the book—why?” “What books or magazine or books have had a good effect on you? a bad effect?” This book not only correlates the information received but quotes many of the answers directly. The author concludes “we do have evidence that reading can effect socially acceptable or anti-social behavior.”


This glossary is not considered by the author to be comprehensive, but is offered as a guide for the classroom teacher to use in his perusal of journal materials and/or teacher’s manuals accompanying some of the newer publications being used in the classroom or college course. This list should at least serve to introduce the user to a linguist’s basic vocabulary.

McCallum, Carol, “Non Graded Team Teaching,” *Science and Children* (September, 1968), 6:42.

Another attempt to integrate team teaching into the curriculum has been undertaken by the Village Height Elementary School in the Cherry Creek School District near Denver, Colorado. For the first year of non-gradedness each teacher was relieved of teaching one subject matter area and each of the six teachers involved was a team leader or resource teacher in one subject area. A key part of the planning was that all children would have the same subject at the same time so that a child could be moved up or down the ladder of difficulty. There was no attempt to put “alikes” together.


The purpose of this study was to evaluate the potential
value of each of the developmental reading programs in the local school and to investigate the question of selective criteria which might be valuable in selecting students for one or both of the levels (Freshmen and Seniors) of the program. Nothing, according to the authors, from this study would provide any selective criteria upon which to exclude any student from participation in a developmental reading program. This program as presented to both the samples of seniors and freshmen was highly successful and the programs as initiated seem worthy of continued support.


For the community college to have an effective reading and study skills program, the program must have some very clear-cut objectives. The authors suggest that the program should be designed to accomplish the following: (1) Identify pupils who can profit from the services offered; (2) Provide for faculty-wide cooperation and involvement; (3) Improve reading rate; (4) Provide appropriate instruction in spelling for those who need it; (5) Include instruction aimed at improvement of comprehension skill; (6) Include instruction aimed at improvement of listening ability; (7) Provide instruction in use of library and resource materials; (8) Provide instruction in basic writing skills; and (9) Work in cooperation with counseling services.


The purpose of this paper is to discuss and attempt to clarify the role of auditory perception, especially the functions of auditory discrimination and auditory memory, in the process of learning to read. The findings of this study support the theory that perception is a developing process in the early school years.


This report is concerned with findings of teacher-pupil be-
behavior occurring in three types of classroom reading situations: (1) The use of the same (single) reading or subject area text by the teacher and all pupils; (2) The use of multi-level texts in reading groups or ability-subject groupings; and (3) the use of supplementary and/or individualized reading materials by teacher and pupils in classrooms of elementary schools. The findings indicate that the use of multi-level and supplementary reading and subject area materials showed the greatest number of significantly positive aspects of classroom interactions in classroom activities. These findings support the knowledge that reading methodology must provide for the needs and interests of students to attain the goals of reading instruction—the desire and ability to read.


The conditions of alexia, dyslexia, mixed-lateral dominance, and strephosymbolia are but a representative group of the types of disorders having a neurological basis. They have been found to coexist frequently with more broadly classified neurological categories, such as cerebral palsy which may be accompanied by dyslexia, nystagmus, and/or mixed dominance (Kirk, 1962). The problem with these conditions lies in the inability to screen and to diagnose accurately. Diagnosis without prognosis and treatment has been a major criticism of the clinicians who attempt to determine the nature of a disability.


This study was concerned with the values reflected in children's readers at the primary level and the relationship of these values to educational philosophy. The findings seem to indicate that a more pluralistic value structure in children's basal readers is in order, and that teachers need to be more critical of values presented in textbooks as perhaps reflecting only one point of view. This study also serves to highlight the pervasiveness of values throughout basal readers, and the need for educators to become more aware of the value structure and its philosophical implications.
Pauk, Walter, "Focus on Study Skills—Do College Students Use Short-hand?" *Reading Improvement* (Fall, 1968), 5:46-47.

The results of this survey point strongly to the inadvisability of learning a system of shorthand for the purpose of taking notes on college lectures with the intent of using the notes for immediate or later study.


Tape recorders and listening posts are becoming more and more available to the classroom teacher. To fail to use these valuable tools in the advancement of reading instruction, particularly in the primary grades, is to neglect an important tool of instruction. Meaningful independent activities, long the bane of the primary teacher who groups her reading classes for instruction, are made possible in a manner never before attempted. Furthermore, the activities provided, since they are related to understanding and conceptual growth, are more firmly supported by the research in language learning.


Understanding what is read is not always easy for elementary children, especially those who are slow learners or underachievers. Obviously, one reason for poor comprehension is that the reader has not learned to visualize. Teachers aware of the importance of background experiences in reading can provide more frequently many types of visual aids and activities, since children cannot easily visualize what they have not had the experience of seeing. Also teachers will help children "see" what they are reading about by asking them to illustrate the ideas in pictures, murals, homemade movies, or pantomime. Other ways of helping are to have children follow directions, organize the facts in graph or tabular form, and make and read maps and charts.


The most important benefit which can be gained by administering this oral reading test lies in the original purpose Gilmore
set out to accomplish when he established this test. He wanted to provide those people concerned with reading instruction with a reading instrument by which to measure oral reading strengths and weaknesses for one individual. After determining the reader's oral reading ability the teacher can then continue the diagnosis and then employ appropriate techniques and material to aid this reader in improving his reading and comprehension ability and lessening, or removing, his weaknesses.


The writer has attempted to show some of the effects stemming from the terminological confusion about "learning disabilities" and has recommended uses of the term "minimal brain dysfunction" as defined in the Task Force One Report. It is believed that this would eliminate some existing confusion and would stimulate and encourage the kinds of inter-disciplinary thinking, research, treatment, and organizational efforts which will benefit children with these particular kinds of learning problems.


The primary purpose of this study was to try out a method of measuring interests in published reading materials, which might be useful for future research. Will first grade children merely give socially acceptable responses to an adult concerning questions about school related materials? Can they make meaningful discriminations among different questions and materials? Can they verbalize the reasons for their likes and dislikes? A secondary, but related, purpose was to see if there is a better reaction of first graders to a story from a phonics reading series than to a story from a basal reading series. In general, it may be concluded that first grade children can make meaningful discriminations indicating interests in first grade reading material.


The author states that there is nothing new in this county
program. It is the attempt of one school system to develop a total reading program with the focus and emphasis on prevention and not remediation. There will undoubtedly be numerous changes in concepts, approaches, and techniques in the next few years. Constant objective evaluation and flexibility in programming will result, it is hoped, in providing every pupil with a better chance to achieve to his fullest potential.


When junior high remedial students use the tape recorder to assist lower grade students, their own skills are improved. The use of the tape recorder has proved to be a strong motivating factor in the junior high school remedial reading classes.


Games can be used to reinforce many different reading skills. They are an incentive for learning vocabulary, phonics, word structure, and sight words. There are many things that a teacher can do in connection with games. She should encourage the creative efforts of the children to help them develop original games, riddles or puzzles to aid them in remembering certain words or principles in reading. If games are kept interesting and challenging, they can contribute a great deal.


The most glaring and the most dramatic proof of educational disaster is the failure of ghetto children to learn to read. The language of the ghetto is a highly dialectic, highly colorful version of English. The language of the school is formal standard American English. If the language the child brings to school differs from that which he is asked to read, he has trouble learning to read. The school has not as yet been able to adapt its program to meet the needs of ghetto children. The right teaching is a triple play—the right teacher, the right materials and techniques, and the right environment.

This study found that using writing tasks at different cognitive levels to set purposes for reading did not result in differences in attitudes toward what was read or differences in retention of facts. Therefore, the implication is that teachers who use writing tasks at different cognitive levels to influence either of the two variables investigated in this study may be operating from a false assumption. The findings of this study do not support the notion that involving students with creative writing tasks about a reading selection has a negative effect on their retention of specific facts. Nor do the findings support the notion that students enjoy a selection more if they engage in creative writing about it than if they engage in noncreative writing about it.


Appropriate and available books plus a coach's salesmanship may be powerful stimuli in developing lifetime habits of reading. The author describes the theory on which Coach Sanford Patlake at the University of Chicago Laboratory School operates. Far from viewing his project as an added responsibility for a far-too-busy teacher, Coach Patlake regards it as an integral part of teaching physical education and coaching.


The authors report a study to evaluate different creative-aesthetic approaches to learning among preschool children in such basic areas as reading and mathematics.


When an adequate amount of reliable information about the books has been assembled, the next step is that of determining the general excellence of each book. For this purpose a
method is needed that will lead to critical evaluation and intelligen
tient choice. First, each book may be given a general rating in light of careful and impartial consideration of all its ratings on specific characteristics. In making final choices, it would seem that a majority vote would not be as good as a consensus of judgment reached through discussion. Conflicting views which are expressed can usually be resolved through reexamination and further discussion.


Underachievement, say these authors, is a result of poor assignments based on unreadable texts. They offer familiar solutions that bear reiteration. Establishing a worthwhile purpose for beginning the assignment, providing readable materials, developing vocabulary and word attack skills, and building study skills are the factors in a successful assignment.


During the 1965-66 school year, each pupil (except one non-reader) in a class of twelve educable children wrote two "books" as a culmination of a year-long writing program. The stories in these "books" were written in the children's own unique and unrevised wording and speech patterns. After the children had written their stories, they were typed on ordinary lithography paper, altered only by corrected spelling and punctuation and separating them into "chapters." The children then illustrated the stories, and a plastic spine was inserted to form them into a "book." While it cannot be said that a writing program such as this is a cure-all for poor readers, it can be said with certainty that elements of the program should be useful to any teacher, regardless of the group.