

TEACHING READING TO A SELECTED GROUP OF SLOW-LEARNING
CHILDREN IN THE HIGH FIRST GRADE

THESIS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study is to determine by research and experimentation some workable methods and activities that can be used to teach reading to a group of slow-learning children on the high first level.

B. Importance of the Problem

American society is a reading society. Spoken communication may be sufficient in the simple forms of culture, but in the complexities of modern living mastery of the printed page is essential.

According to Albert J. Harris the importance of reading becomes very plain if one considers what happens to those who fail to learn to read well. The poor reader is handicapped by his difficulty. He is almost sure to repeat grades; and if he reaches high school, he is almost certain to leave before graduating. Thus many desirable occupations

which require high-school or college training will be closed to him.¹

The importance of reading is also recognized by the elementary schools. More time and effort are spent in teaching reading in the primary grades than in teaching any other subject. More money is spent on reading material than for any other type of school supplies. In the elementary school, poor reading is recognized as the most important single cause of retardation in the entire school program. At the first grade level, children are very rarely kept back for any other reason than failure in reading.²

There seems to be no doubt in the minds of educators as to the importance of reading. Arthur I. Gates says that the extensive literature written on the subject of reading, the great amount of time allotted to the teaching of reading, and the many activities used for teaching reading in the elementary grades indicate the importance of reading. Because reading is a tool subject, it is necessary to master it before the successful learning of other subjects can be accomplished.³

Since reading is so important and since some of the

¹Albert J. Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability, p. 1.

²Ibid., p. 2.

³Arthur I. Gates, Improvement of Reading, p. 3.

children enter school with a reading handicap, it seems important to the writer to give these children a good basic reading program through the use of approved methods and activities in primary reading.

C. General Procedure

The first step in this study was to make a survey of literature in the field of instruction in reading, giving special attention to the methods of teaching reading to slow-learning children.

The second step was to make an intensive search of this literature, dealing especially with the portion concerned with corrective reading. As there were in the group with which the study is primarily concerned some poor readers who did not profit from class work, some method had to be devised to help them. This was done by diagnosing the causes of reading difficulty and by applying specific corrective measures early in the school program.

The third step was to make a careful study of methods and activities advocated for use in the primary reading class.

The fourth step was to apply the above mentioned methods to a group of slow-learning children at the John B. Hood School, San Antonio, Texas.

D. Related Studies

The emphasis placed by educators on the importance of reading has brought forth much needed research. A large number of the studies concern themselves with teaching children to read and to overcome the difficulties which they meet. There is, however, a scarcity of books and information dealing directly with the reading problems of the slow-learning child in the high first grade. Some of the studies most closely related to the present study are Teaching Reading to Slow-Learning Children,⁴ Children Who Cannot Read,⁵ Methods of Teaching Beginning Reading to Slow-Learning Children,⁶ Methods of Teaching Primary Reading As Applied to A Group of Retarded Readers,⁷ A Study of Remedial Reading As Related to A Small Group in South San Antonio,⁸ and A Corrective Program for Retarded Readers in

⁴Samuel A. Kirk, Teaching Reading to Slow-Learning Children.

⁵Marion Monroe, Children Who Cannot Read.

⁶Rosa Kidd Reese, Methods of Teaching Beginning Reading to Slow-Learning Children, Unpublished Master's Thesis.

⁷Mozelle Faulk, Methods of Teaching Primary Reading As Applied to A Group of Retarded Readers, Unpublished Master's Thesis.

⁸Mary Belle Pratt, A Study of Remedial Reading As Related to A Small Group in South San Antonio, Unpublished Master's Thesis.

the Second Grade.⁹

Kirk states that ". . . two to five per cent of the juvenile population are mentally retarded and require a special curriculum for their growth and development."¹⁰

Harris states that

. . . about twenty-five per cent of the elementary school population are classified as dull, borderline, or feeble-minded depending on the extent of their mental retardation.¹¹

If this is true, it should be of considerable value to know just what methods and activities are best to use with the slow-learning child. None of the studies mentioned above, however, has dealt directly with methods and activities that work best with slow-learning children on the high first level. It is with such a study that this thesis deals.

E. Limitations of the Problem

This study limits itself to the reading problems of a slow-learning group of high first grade children. It attempts to present methods and activities that can be used in meeting the individual reading difficulties of

⁹Nella Lorene Tatum, A Corrective Program for Retarded Readers in the Second Grade, Unpublished Master's Thesis.

¹⁰Samuel A. Kirk, op. cit., p. 21.

¹¹Albert J. Harris, op. cit., p. 479.

children in the same class.

It is not the purpose of this study to evaluate the methods and activities given nor to imply that they are the only possible ones, but rather to suggest these methods and activities for future consideration by teachers with similar problems.

CHAPTER II

DATA ON THE SLOW-LEARNING CHILD

A. Subjects of the Observation

A regular high first grade of approximately thirty-six pupils in the John B. Hood School, San Antonio, Texas, was chosen for this observation and study. This was a slow-learning class, some of whom had been in attendance four and one-half months, beginning the low first section in September, 1947, and others who had been retained two and three times before being promoted to the high first section. The children ranged in age from six to ten years. The time of the observation was confined to four and one-half months, or one semester, beginning January 26, 1948, and ending May 28, 1948.

B. Definition of the Slow-Learning Child

Democratic society is committed to the task of educating all children regardless of the intellectual level. This does not mean that all children can be educated by the same method or to the same level of achievement. Children vary in the rate of learning, and some cannot profit from the regular curriculum offered. These children are usually considered to be slow-learning or in some cases mentally handicapped.

Kirk gives the following definition of a slow-learning child:

The slow-learning child is one of low intelligence, who is incapable of keeping up with his classmates in the regular public schools, and who therefore requires a modified curriculum for his maximum growth and development. . . . Any child who has an I. Q. below eighty and who is not progressing in school at the same rate as other children may be considered mentally retarded.¹

Harris defines the slow-learning child as:

Children whose I. Q.'s are between 90 and 110 are generally considered to have average intelligence. Those whose I. Q.'s fall below 90 are classified as dull, borderline, or feeble-minded.²

Monroe declares that a child may fail to learn to read and yet be of adequate intelligence. Until recent years teachers have assumed that any child who did not learn to read was either dull or stupid. This child may be regarded as having a special defect. If the defect is persistent, it usually causes slow-learning and prevents progress in school.³

For this particular study slow-learning children are defined as those who were retarded in reading for one or more of the following reasons: mentally retarded, physically weak, poor in attendance, lacking in experience and language background. Any reference to slow-learning children is to be

¹Samuel A. Kirk, op. cit., p. 1.

²Albert J. Harris, op. cit., p. 479.

³Marion Monroe, op. cit., p. 1.

thus understood unless otherwise indicated.

C. Grouping of Slow-Learning Children

A class is composed of individuals who vary in their rate of learning, in their abilities, in their achievements, and in their interests. Not until the teacher recognizes these differences is she ready to teach, ". . . because learning the child must precede teaching him."⁴

Usually the best method of meeting individual differences is through some form of grouping. Small groups permit more individual practice in oral reading than is possible in larger groups. The slow child is not embarrassed by comparison between his work and that of his faster classmates, but he is encouraged by gains in self-respect and security from work accomplished successfully.⁵

When admitted to the high first grade, children are usually divided into several ability groups. By so dividing the children, the teacher can give each group more time and attention according to need. Reading materials suited to the reading level of each group can be used, and varying amounts of practice can be given. Since children vary in

⁴Emmett Albert Betts, Foundations of Reading Instruction, p. 3.

⁵Donald D. Durrell, Improvement of Basic Reading Abilities, p. 67.

the rate of learning, each group can be allowed to proceed at maximum rate "where a child may learn at his own rate and in terms of his own interests."⁶

According to Dolch, grouping is a real opportunity for the slow-learning child, as the teacher is able to give him special help and attention, and the child can progress at his true level of achievement.⁷

Pennell and Cusack believe that the use of groups furnishes a good opportunity for the development of social habits. The child has to adjust himself to the interest of the group. The group also serves the child in that it allows greater opportunities for practice to correct reading difficulties, and gives greater opportunities for participation in discussions and oral reading.⁸

The following considerations from Durrell were kept in mind in organizing small groups in the high first grade at the John B. Hood School:

1. The groups should have common needs as determined by classroom analysis of the pupils' abilities.
2. Groupings should be flexible.

⁶Emmett Albert Betts, op. cit., p. 4.

⁷Edward William Dolch, A Manual for Remedial Reading, p. 135.

⁸Mary E. Pennell and Alice M. Cusack, The Teaching of Reading for Better Living, pp. 100-102.

3. Small-group work should begin gradually.
4. Small-group work should demand care in planning the assignments.
5. All exercises to be used in small-group work should first have been demonstrated by the classroom teacher.⁹

Upon admission to the high first grade, the children were divided into three ability groups. This was made possible by the report of the low first grade teacher on just how far each pupil had advanced. The high first grade teacher receiving the group divided it into three sections of fourteen, ten, and twelve pupils respectively, putting the best of the low first grade children in the first group, the next best in the second group, and the poorest in the third group.

The teacher then called the first group into a circle, in front of the room, and gave each child an attractive pre-primer from which to read aloud during a fifteen minute period. Groups two and three, at the same time, were doing seat work at the tables on material which the teacher had previously prepared. While the children in group one were reading, the teacher was studying them to see how much progress they had made. She then called to the circle each of the other two groups in turn and followed the same procedure. At the end of four days the teacher knew the reading ability of each pupil and proceeded to rearrange the

⁹Donald D. Durrell, op. cit., pp. 68-72.

grouping.

If the groupings are based upon the needs and interests of the child, the groups need not remain static. The teacher will have a flexible plan of grouping which may change whenever the need arises. For example, the grouping used for a given week will not necessarily be satisfactory in later weeks. If a child is absent because of illness, he will be able to return and take up his work with the group nearest the point where he left the class.

CHAPTER III

FACTORS RELATED TO THE READING PROGRAM

A. Nature of Reading

Reading is the basic subject in the elementary school, and the ability to read makes the difference between the literate and illiterate person. It is necessary to master reading in order to have a foundation for other subjects in the curriculum. For this reason it is essential that teachers should understand the nature of reading, in order that they may give to the pupil the greatest possible aid in the ability to master reading.

There is no definite point from which to start an explanation of the nature of reading, as any approach will be appropriate. No one can describe the process as a whole, since reading is a complex process in which vision, eye movement, memory, word knowledge, past experiences, and general intelligence all combine to initiate a program of reading activity. One must begin with a certain phase, proceed to other phases, and finally combine all the parts into a whole. The writer has chosen to begin this discussion of the nature of reading with a number of explanations and definitions from recognized authorities in the field of education.

The word reading is derived from the Anglo-Saxon "raed" and "raedan," which means "counsel" or "to counsel." To read, then, means to take counsel, and reading came to mean the double process of seeking counsel from writing and of passing this counsel on to others. Reading has been defined as the process of getting meaning from the printed page and of vocalizing the thought that was gained.¹

According to Pennell and Cusack, reading is the means by which one satisfies his desire to know, to increase his efficiency, to find enjoyment, to satisfy his suppressed desires, and to find ideals and standards for the guidance of his life.² "Reading has been defined as the act, practice, or art of perusing written or printed matter and ascertaining or considering its contents or meaning."³ The above broad statement implies that the act of reading involves all of the mental processes. It includes such items as the perception of symbols, the recognition of meanings, the recall of related ideas, the organization of experience, the formation of conclusions, and the arousal of emotions.⁴

¹Harry Grove Wheat, The Teaching of Reading, p. 5.

²Mary E. Pennell and Alice M. Cusack, How to Teach Reading, p. 93.

³James M. McCallister, Remedial and Corrective Instruction in Reading, p. 16.

⁴Ibid., p. 16.

Patterson agrees with McCallister's explanation as stated above, but in addition he believes that interpretation should not suffer from too narrow a definition. Even in the primary grades, it must be constantly kept in mind that it is not the symbol but what the symbol means that is of first importance. It is not enough for a pupil to pronounce a word correctly; he must know what it means in context. The meaning lying back of the written symbol is the important fact; therefore, the thought or feeling given is of more value than the symbols on paper or on the tongue.⁵

The two types of reading that must be taken into consideration are silent reading and oral reading. Silent reading is a universal daily experience, and instruction in this method should begin in the first grade. Whether silent reading or oral reading should predominate in the primary grades has been the subject of much controversy. It is contended by some teachers that increased attention to meaning is obtained through the exclusive use of silent reading and that oral reading merely gives practice in enunciation and pronunciation. The attention to voice, enunciation, and expression in oral reading is thought to interfere with the understanding of the material being read. The more general practice in the primary grades is to stress oral reading for

⁵Samuel White Patterson, Teaching the Child to Read, p. 8.

the slow-learning child, and to balance the two types of reading for the rest of the class. Oral reading in the primary grades is important for observing growth in word-recognition skills.⁶

Durrell points out that inattention is a common difficulty in silent reading. The habit of inattentive "word seeing" may become persistent and severe early in the primary grades. Usually it results from lack of interest in the materials used and lack of purpose in the activity. Another difficulty is lack of comprehension which results from lack of understanding of the words and concepts in the material.⁷

Better training in silent reading is now possible because of a greater psychological knowledge of the reading process and the wealth of good silent reading material. Educators are stressing silent reading because:

1. It gives training in the type of reading most used in life.
2. It affords more economy of time, eye, and voice strain.
3. It aids in comprehension.
4. It admits of selectiveness.
5. It allows one to develop his own rate of reading.

⁶ Donald D. Durrell, op. cit., p. 144.

⁷ Ibid., p. 145.

6. It gives training in the kind of reading most necessary for the development of other subjects.⁸

The first grade teacher should strive to develop certain habits, skills, and appreciations in silent reading in order that the child may become an efficient silent reader. The general objectives of silent reading are as follows:

1. To create a desire and love for reading.
2. To help the child through the process of thought-getting to master the mechanics of reading.
3. To develop the power to think clearly and to the point.
4. To read with the individual maximum degree of speed.
5. To furnish opportunities for the child to make use of ideas gained from the printed page.
6. To train in the effective use of books.⁹

While the importance of training in silent reading is being recognized, one must not ignore the fact that oral reading also has its value. It is a major consideration in the primary grades, and it is of special importance at any level for children with reading difficulties. It is important because faulty habits and difficulties immediately become apparent in oral reading in a way to reveal reasons for the child's lack of progress and difficulties in comprehension. Oral reading has other values for reading

⁸Mary E. Pennell and Alice M. Cusack, The Teaching of Reading for Better Living, pp. 94-95.

⁹Ibid., p. 96.

instruction in that it motivates reading, as evidenced by the desire of primary children to read aloud to the group. In a true audience situation, it encourages exchange of ideas and a feeling of group unity. Where carefully directed, oral reading widens speaking vocabularies and tends to improve speech and conversation.

Experiments have proved conclusively that too much oral reading decreases comprehension, as attention is largely focused upon correct calling of words rather than upon the interpretation of thought. Too much oral reading actually establishes fixed habits of word pronunciation and articulation of the slow oral reading rate and encourages lip movements, which later require remedial attention. Another obvious disadvantage of oral reading for class work is that only one child can read at a time. This disadvantage can be offset somewhat by the use of small groups where a child may read more often.¹⁰ While the dangers of oral reading must be kept in mind, the following values of this type of reading should be recognized:

1. When reading silently one often comes upon passages or ideas that one wishes to share with others. The ability to do this well is dependent upon good oral reading.
2. Certain types of material such as poetry, beautiful descriptive and emotional passages

¹⁰Donald D. Durrell, op. cit., p. 115.

can only be fully appreciated when they are read aloud.

3. Unfamiliar and difficult words are more readily fixed in consciousness when they are heard as well as seen. Therefore in primary reading more attention should be paid to oral reading than is necessary in the upper grades.
4. The human voice is one of the most effective instruments in life. Comparatively few people can use this instrument effectively. A good speaking voice, clear enunciation and pronunciation are assets in all walks of life. The school, then, should not neglect the opportunities which oral reading affords to develop desirable speaking voices.¹¹

The child must develop the following habits, skills, and appreciations to become an efficient oral reader:

1. To make the audience see the pictures.
2. To make the audience experience the humor, sadness, or excitement of certain passages.
3. To make the audience feel that the real character is talking.
4. To make the audience appreciate and love the poem.
5. To read with pleasing, easily understood voices.
6. To enunciate clearly and pronounce words correctly.
7. To read smoothly.
8. To stand correctly.¹²

Reading is recognized as essential in all school activities. It is introduced informally in the kindergarten and is used incidentally throughout the primary grades wherever it serves a useful purpose. Informal reading is used

¹¹Mary E. Pennell and Alice M. Cusack, The Teaching of Reading for Better Living, p. 131.

¹²Ibid., p. 132.

regularly as early as the first grade in obtaining information in connection with the various activities or units of work that are provided. The chief purpose of the reading period today is to cultivate right attitudes toward reading, to develop habits of good thinking and clear interpretation while reading, to stimulate interest in diversified reading, and to provide for good reading habits. The materials used during the reading period have changed in the past ten years in that they now relate directly to the child's experiences, which makes the interest more vital. Furthermore, the methods in teaching reading have been improved. Greater emphasis is now given from the beginning to the content of what is read, to the increase of silent reading, and to devoting less time to phonics as an aid in word recognition. Most important of all, however, is that provision has been made for individual differences.¹³

B. The Classroom and Its Equipment

The schools today are attempting to provide modern and comfortable classrooms in which children may engage in the democratic process of living and learning. The attractiveness of the environment was very important to the success

¹³William S. Gray, "Current Practices in Teaching As They Affect the Development of Desirable Types of Reading Achievement," A Better Beginning in Reading for Young Children, p. 9.

of this particular study, for some of the slow-learning children of the group under observation were extremely sensitive to their surroundings. The walls of the classroom were painted a light color, and the many windows provided ample light and fresh air. Four large ceiling lights furnished light for dark and rainy days. The room was equipped with movable tables and chairs, instead of the conventional desks. Colored pictures of children's activities, pets, and toys were found in picture books, cut out, mounted, and used as a border around the room. Growing plants, a bowl of gold fish, interesting bulletin boards, and a library corner helped to make the room cheerful and homelike.

The general equipment of the room included one large bulletin board, two small bulletin boards, a low black-board all around the room, one chart rack, one easel, toys of all kinds, one wooden rocking horse, a calendar, a clock dial, a thermometer, games, puzzles, paints, drawing paper, construction paper, paste, scissors, pencils, and tablets. The supplies were kept where the pupils could help themselves without calling upon the teacher. The children were guided to acquire correct habits of using supplies and of returning them to their proper places. When the children entered the room or when they were idle, they were encouraged to start working on some activity, or to play with the toys, or to read the library books, in order to establish

habits of initiative, self-reliance, cooperation, and industry.

The instructional materials for reading were a basal reader, many easy supplementary books, and library books. The materials also included chart stories, picture vocabulary cards, flash cards, phrase cards, action cards, silent reading cards, and many pictures to illustrate the reading and unit stories.

In this atmosphere the slow-learning child engaged in the process of living and learning to read. Here he lost some of his timidity and felt free to take part in all the activities. The teacher in this room tried to provide an environment suggested by Monroe, which fosters and stimulates a child's natural curiosity, which encourages or invites conversation and enlarges a child's vocabulary, which provides opportunity for handling and manipulating things, which is rich in good pictures, good music and good books, and which stimulates interest in reading activities.¹⁴

C. The Reading Program

It is important that the program of instruction during the initial period of learning to read be carefully controlled,

¹⁴Marion Monroe, "Aspects of Growth in Reading and Related Methods of Evaluation," Co-operative Effort in Schools to Improve Reading, p. 275.

since both the attitudes toward reading and the habits formed in reading during this period persist. Systematic instruction in reading is necessary if children are to achieve rapid and orderly growth in attitudes, interests, habits, and skills in reading. Research findings recommend regular daily periods of teaching to establish the fundamental habits and skills necessary to growth in reading, particularly for the slow-learning child.¹⁵

Since children vary in experience and rate of learning, the reading program must recognize the wide range of capacities, abilities, needs, and interests in a primary class. Some children come from the low first grade fully prepared for instruction in reading and have already made progress in learning to read. Others who enter the high first grade are not prepared for reading and must be given training to extend their experiences, to develop habits of good thinking, to improve their enunciation and pronunciation, and to stimulate a keen interest in reading. A large number of children enter the first grade unable to speak English. They should be given oral language training to build up command of simple English sentences, to develop an oral vocabulary, and to establish habits of accuracy

¹⁵Amelia Traenkenschuh, "Basic Instruction in Reading," Co-operative Effort in Schools to Improve Reading, pp. 47-48.

in pronunciation and enunciation before formal instruction in book reading is begun.¹⁶ The reading program in the first grade is further complicated by slow-learning children. These children can learn what normal children learn, but at a much slower rate. Their teaching should be characterized by a slower rate of introduction of new materials and a greater amount of repetition than is necessary for average pupils. In order that the repetition may be effective, it should be presented in such a way as to maintain the child's interest at a high level and to encourage accuracy of perception.¹⁷

Since children differ in capacity to learn, in experience and training, it is best for them to be taught in groups which are homogeneous; therefore, the reading program must make provision for the individual needs of the children in each group and provide them with appropriate training. Specific attention must be given to children who advance slowly in the regular reading periods. Those who advance more rapidly may be excused from many of the lessons to take part in independent reading in the library corner. In addition to provisions for individual differences, the reading

¹⁶National Society for the Study of Education, Twenty-Fourth Yearbook, Part I, pp. 31-32.

¹⁷Albert J. Harris, op. cit., pp. 288; 485.

program should include the following types of reading lessons:

1. Silent reading and oral reading lessons based on interesting experiences and activities of the pupils to insure rapid growth in habits of intelligent interpretation.
2. Directed silent reading for information or pleasure to establish habits of continuous, intelligent reading and study.
3. Directed oral reading following silent preparation to develop ability to recognize increasingly large units of thought at each fixation and to read effectively to others.
4. Dramatization exercises to aid in mastering the thought of a selection, as a means of realizing experiences more fully, and as an opportunity of giving to others one's own interpretation of the meaning of a selection.
5. Drill and exercises to establish habits of accuracy and independence in word recognition, rapid recognition, and a wide span of recognition.
6. Supervised seat activities to train pupils in habits of independent study and in thoughtful interpretation of what they read.
7. Self-directed seat activities, with appropriate check tests, to provide opportunity for pupils to read independently and to secure training in habits of careful thorough work.¹⁸

One of the important principles of a good reading program is a clear understanding of the objectives to be attained in primary reading. Poor teaching and faulty learning habits are often the result of vague goals. The

¹⁸ National Society for the Study of Education, Twenty-Fourth Yearbook, Part I, pp. 39-40.

teacher who has a comprehensive picture of the general and specific goals at which she is aiming can plan a definite reading program directed toward those objectives; therefore, certain general and specific objectives in reading should be kept in mind by the teacher. These standards of attainments should constitute a guide for the teacher in her work and become the goal of achievement for the class. The reading objectives for the slow-learning child are fundamentally the same as those for the average or superior child.

Pennell and Cusack list the following general objectives for reading:

1. To create a desire and love for reading.
2. To develop the ability to get thought with accuracy, facility, and reasonable rapidity.
3. To develop the ability to master the mechanics of reading.
4. To enable the child to read at his maximum degree of speed.
5. To develop the ability to give pleasure to others through oral reading.
6. To develop the power to read well silently.
7. To stimulate an appreciation of good literature.¹⁹

The specific objectives of the reading program adopted for use with the slow-learning group are as follows: to develop personality through experiences which promote reading; to develop a carefully chosen sight vocabulary so

¹⁹ Mary E. Pennell and Alice M. Cusack, The Teaching of Reading for Better Living, pp. 158-159.

selected as to promote reading as thought-getting rather than word recognition; to develop fluency in order to promote meaning and enjoyment of reading for leisure; to develop, as a means of promoting independence, the ability to analyze words; to develop ability to follow directions; to develop ability to master vocabulary and meaning in content materials; to learn to use those skills necessary for the organization and the presentation of units; and to promote interest in current materials.²⁰

The program of instruction should make provision for a good series of readers to be used in the basal reading program. The newer reading books for children in the primary grades attempt to make the child's task easier by carefully controlling the rate at which new words are introduced and by providing systematic repetitions of each new word a number of times. The contents of the books are in a series and are based on the idea of keeping to familiar experiences, in order to complicate the task of learning to read as little as possible with unfamiliar settings or ideas. The preprimer, the primer, and the first reader usually center around a single family which includes the mother and the father, a boy and a girl, a baby, the grandmother and the grandfather, and a dog and a cat. The stories

²⁰Willard E. Goslin, "Co-operative Selection of Reading Materials," Co-operative Effort in Schools to Improve Reading, p. 133.

in the book are planned with attractive illustrations which represent the entire story.

In the basal reading program, each day's work should be planned carefully so that the reading vocabulary for the day will be introduced orally and woven into the child's conversation in advance. A summary of the previous day's lesson should be included in the conversational exercises. Concrete teaching at all times is absolutely essential. Anticipated objects and pictures should be provided in the development of new words. Dramatization insures understanding of the new words and adds to the child's interest. The children gradually learn by experiences and imitation to express their thoughts orally. Whenever possible, first-hand knowledge through observation should be given the child. Multiple associations should be given through games, plays, dramatizations, songs, stories, pictures, and illustrations with pencil and crayola. Through discussion and questioning, a lesson may be developed at the blackboard. The story which is developed may be read by the children, who find sentences, phrases, or words in answer to the teacher's questions. The lesson developed at the blackboard should be slightly changed to prevent memorization, written in manuscript on a chart, and read later in the day as supplementary reading. The charts may be hung on the chart rack and read as review lessons each day. Repetitions are

necessary with slow-learning children in order to increase greater rapidity and naturalness in reading. The necessary phrase and word drill may be given in the form of games and exercises, while phonics drill should be given only when necessary for better enunciation and pronunciation. The initial consonants, not blends, should be taught.

Before the children read the lesson from the book, the teacher may show them a picture which illustrates the story, and then she may recall from the children's experiences a few incidents suggested by the picture. After this discussion, the children may open the book, look at the pictures, and try to tell what the story may be about. The teacher tells the children to read the story silently to find out. The story should always be read silently before it is read orally. When the story has been finished, the children should read various sentences in answer to different questions asked by the teacher. No page should be left until several children have read it.²¹

Stone suggests the following outline for better book reading:

1. Do not tell the story, but let the child have the joy of getting it in the group reading.
2. Do not use the same context for preparatory blackboard or chart reading.

²¹Edward William Dolch, Teaching Primary Reading, pp. 145-152.

3. Do not allow problems of word recognition or checking comprehension to interfere with the group cooperative endeavor and enjoyment.
4. Avoid the formation of undesirable habits such as finger pointing and word-by-word oral reading.
5. Use a brief effective approach, first for the complete story unit and second for each logical instructional unit.
6. In the earliest book reading, proceed in the group line by line and increase the length of the unit according to the growing ability of pupils.
7. Provide a motivating and helping question or suggestion for each unit.
8. Have pupils respond in various ways, including a considerable amount of oral reading.
9. Keep the thought connection before the pupils and proceed in a straight ahead fashion through a complete unit, and in a manner conducive to enjoyment of the experience.
10. Use various types of help on word difficulties according to the nature of the difficulties and the conditioning circumstances.
11. Conclude with a final synthesis or perspective view of the story.
12. Provide for special, short practice periods for motivated rereading to develop fluency in oral reading.²²

In the classroom where several divisions have been made, the reading program should provide essential follow-up work as seat work which is based on the reading vocabulary. Related creative activities should be given in which the children draw at the easel, work on booklets, or make models which relate to the reading vocabulary. This form of seat work should be silent reading exercises.

²²Clarence R. Stone, Better Primary Reading, p. 287.

CHAPTER IV

THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

A. Basic Principles of Diagnosis

Despite the fact that schools today are attempting to provide a program of reading that will make it possible for each child to succeed, a certain percentage of children are failing to make satisfactory progress. For such children, the teacher needs to set up a program that will find the cause of the difficulty and provide corrective treatment that will remedy the deficiency as far as possible. Although this study is not remedial in nature, it is well for the teacher to know the principles of diagnosis, the causes of reading difficulty, and the best methods to correct difficulties. This knowledge is useful when signs of difficulty appear during the regular reading period. With the proper preventive methods applied at once, many failures can be avoided; therefore, instead of waiting until the child has actually failed to learn to read, the teacher looks for early indications of difficulty and then applies preventive methods. Educational research workers agree that a careful diagnosis is important as a basis for effective corrective work in reading. Before a teacher can begin corrective work, certain problems must be solved; for

example, the teacher who expects to help the child with reading difficulties must be familiar with the most common causes of the disabilities in reading. It is not enough to know what reading disabilities retard progress; the teacher must also be able to diagnose specific cases in order to determine the classification into which each falls.¹

In analyzing reading disability, there are four main questions to be answered: the first is concerned with what the child can read, the second with what the child wants to read, the third with how the pupil reads, and the fourth with why disabilities have arisen. Before these questions can be answered, a careful diagnosis must be made to determine the reading difficulty. The task of the teacher is to find out, as well as she can, what difficulties are present, to use what is known of corrective procedure to overcome the child's handicap, and to teach him what he has not learned.²

The teacher may use general observation, informal tests, standard tests, and intelligence tests to detect the defects of children who have trouble in reading and to diagnose their individual difficulties. The use of the tests must be

¹Charles J. Anderson and Isobel Davidson, Reading Objectives, pp. 322-323.

²Albert J. Harris, op. cit., p. 131.

followed by a careful analysis of the results obtained in order that specific remedial measures may be applied.

B. Causes of Reading Difficulty

It is generally admitted that the most effective instruction in reading is done by primary teachers. In spite of the able service of the primary teacher, it has been found repeatedly that pupils of high intelligence, as well as the slow-learners, do not always learn to read satisfactorily despite every advantage given them. This is explainable by the fact that reading consists of highly complex abilities that are not easy to discover and observe. The children who do not learn to read well in the primary grades are less likely to learn in the intermediate grades when the reading materials become more difficult.³

There is no one cause of reading difficulty, but investigations made on the subject have revealed that there are many more disabilities found in poor readers than in good ones. No single disability, however, will in itself ordinarily prevent a child from becoming a satisfactory reader, but any one disability may interfere seriously with the child's learning.

³ William Kottmeyer, Handbook for Remedial Reading, p. 1.

Gates,⁴ and also Witty and Kopel,⁵ suggest that some reading difficulties, particularly in the case of beginners, may be due to failure to acquire primary techniques that might have been acquired had the right guidance been given at the right time. Recognizing that many difficulties arise in the face of keen desire to learn to read, it is apparent that any degree of misleading guidance is a serious handicap. In spite of the significant changes in educational thought and practice, instruction in reading is still dominated by routine measures such as vocabulary drills, phonetic exercises, and other artificial devices which seek to develop appropriate eye movements and mechanical perfection. It seems that the inflexible standards of promotion and the mechanically determined point of view governing the typical procedure inevitably result in reading failure for some children.

It must be recognized, however, that the causes of poor reading on the part of some individuals may be traced to various physical weaknesses and defects of the body organs and mechanisms involved in reading. Similarly, certain mental or emotional characteristics may cause pupils to develop difficulties. Despite the fact that physical, mental, and emotional obstacles are numerous and serious,

⁴Arthur I. Gates, Improvement of Reading, p. 17.

⁵Paul Witty and David Kopel, Reading and the Educative Process, p. 203.

it is believed that most children with intelligence quotients above seventy may be taught to read if the most favorable teaching methods are used.⁶

According to many educational research workers, the chief causes of reading difficulty may be said to lie in the child himself, in his environment, and in the school program. The difficulties inherent in the child may include low intelligence, lack of reading readiness, poor general health, visual, auditory, and speech defects, and temperamental and personality factors.

Upon entering school for the first time, a child should be given an examination to make sure he is not a general defective. If the child has an I. Q. below seventy-five, and consequently a mental age below six years, he will not learn to read for some years after entering school. When measured by intelligence tests, children of the same chronological age show a wide range of mental ages. Both Durrell⁷ and Gates⁸ agree that while intelligence is an important

⁶Arthur I. Gates, Improvement of Reading, p. 18.

⁷Donald D. Durrell, "Individual Differences and Their Implication with Respect to Instruction in Reading," National Society for the Study of Education, Thirty-Sixth Yearbook, Part I, p. 326.

⁸Arthur I. Gates, "The Measurement and Evolution of Achievement in Reading," National Society for the Study of Education, Thirty-Sixth Yearbook, Part I, p. 395.

factor in reading ability, it is not the all-determining factor that it is often thought to be. A child's brightness does not always determine a high reading achievement nor does a low mental age always indicate the limit of the slow-learning child's reading achievement. The outcome depends upon the teacher and the teaching procedure used in teaching the reading skills.

Many factors are involved in reading readiness. The child may be undeveloped in his sensory apparatus, in his muscular coordination, in his mental development, in his social maturity, and in his background of experiences that would arouse the desire for reading. Whatever the cause for his backwardness, the child who has not developed reading readiness will fail to make normal progress.⁹

Learning to read is a difficult task, and children who have physical handicaps do not always learn so easily as do strong boys and girls. The child whose physical stamina is low or who is suffering pain from malnutrition, lack of sleep, fatigue, infections, or other physical difficulties is almost certain to be handicapped in learning to read because any condition which lowers a child's energy and vitality may interfere with the learning process.

There is much evidence that defects of vision, hearing,

⁹ Albert J. Harris, op. cit., p. 15.

and speech are important and frequent causes of reading difficulty. The teacher knows that a child needs a normal pair of eyes if he is to learn to read without difficulty. This fact is so commonplace that it is often overlooked, and as a result many children fail to make progress in the primary grades because of faulty eyesight. The eyes of every child should be examined carefully before he begins his first year in school.¹⁰ It is also evident that defects of hearing are often a contributing cause of reading difficulty. Children who suffer from hearing defects are often incorrectly thought instead to be inattentive, indifferent, or lazy. If a child cannot hear well, he may find difficulty in associating spoken words with visual word forms in reading. He may also be handicapped by failing to hear accurately what the other children are saying or reading in classroom activities. In addition to vision and hearing difficulties, there are many kinds of speech defects which cause reading disability. The most common difficulties are stuttering, lisping, slurring, and generally indistinct speech. The child who has difficulty in articulation and pronunciation is handicapped in oral reading. In addition to the difficulties he encounters in reading, his mistakes and peculiarities may also be an embarrassment to him and

¹⁰Luella Cole, The Improvement of Reading, p. 27.

cause a dislike for reading.¹¹

The child who suffers from temperamental and personality factors has no desire to succeed in school and, therefore, needs special help from the teacher to overcome his difficulty. Although most children are eager to learn to read when they enter school, a few are indifferent and some are antagonistic. Many of the early attitudes toward reading have been built up outside the school, and it is the teacher's task to make an attempt to improve the child's self-confidence, and thus restore his mental and emotional stability.

The difficulties found in the environment may include a foreign language spoken in the home, unhappy associations in home and community, a background where ideas and reading materials are not cherished, and irregular school attendance. The child who comes from a home where a foreign language is spoken is at a disadvantage in learning to read. This child develops a limited English vocabulary, incorrect pronunciation, and faulty sentence construction. He often finds it hard to progress in school even though he has normal intelligence. If the child is slow-learning, he is doubly handicapped in reading.¹² A child is further handicapped by unhappy associations, in the home and the community,

¹¹Albert J. Harris, op. cit., p. 219.

¹²Ibid., pp. 34-35.

where friction may arise in the family between the parents, between the parents and the child, between the brothers and sisters, or when another child is held up as a model of all that is desirable. The child is also handicapped by a home environment which does not provide books and magazines to stimulate any desire or interest in reading. It is necessary to build this desire and interest in classroom reading. Frequent and prolonged absence from school during the first year is one of the most common causes of reading difficulty. Absence from school, at no other time, is so disastrous as it is at this period when mastery of reading is being developed through vocabulary development. The lesson is usually arranged in a carefully graded sequence; therefore, each absence from school deprives the child of the necessary basic skills. It is an obvious fact that many children do not come to school often enough.¹³ It is equally obvious that frequent changing of schools is unsettling to a child. Each time he enters a class in the middle of a term, he has a difficult adjustment to make. He can grasp only a few of the essentials of reading.

The difficulties found in the school program may include:

1. Failure to give physical and mental examinations to entering pupils to discover possible

¹³William Kottmeyer, op. cit., p. 38.

- sources of reading difficulty.
2. Lack of a sufficient quantity of reading materials which stimulate interest and have a light vocabulary load.
 3. Teaching methods which treat a class of forty children as a unit rather than as individuals, each with his own problems.
 4. Failure of the teacher to detect an individual's mistake, misunderstandings, and gaps in knowledge, and particularly the failure to correct them as they arise.
 5. Methods which require the teacher to explain everything orally to a class as a whole instead of employing workbooks and similar activities which free her for some individual work.
 6. Failure to give young pupils sufficient guidance in reading from left to right, in selecting familiar features of words, and in employing a versatile attack on new words.¹⁴

In addition to the poor teaching practices listed above, the child's response to the personal habits of the teacher must also be taken into consideration as a source of differences in reading achievement. The teacher's personality may or may not stimulate the child effectively, and the amount of learning will be increased or diminished accordingly.¹⁵

C. Specific Instructional Methods

Every child who is to become an active, understanding reader must learn ways of recognizing words. If the words

¹⁴David H. Russell and Others, Reading Aids through the Grades, pp. 5-6.

¹⁵Donald D. Durrell, op. cit., p. 328.

are familiar to him in conversation, he can identify them as soon as he unlocks their sound. The child learns to recognize words by the use of configuration clues, by the use of context clues, by the use of picture clues, by similarities and differences in words, and by phonetic clues. The first method used with primary children is remembering the words "at sight" because of their configuration or general appearance. As a first step in developing sight words, the child may be given much easy reading material.¹⁶ At the beginning of the new semester, the pupils may be given books they have read in the low first grade or new easy material of preprimer difficulty. This rapid reading which is done with a feeling of achievement gives opportunity for pupils to review and strengthen the vocabulary of the preceding semester because all reading, no matter how simple, is composed of words. Before a child can read anything, he must know some words. If he looks at a sentence or paragraph, he must recognize some of the words, or most of the words, before he can get meaning. That is, he must have a stock of sight words with which to work. The first grade must be spent, in part, in getting a stock of sight words with which sentences can be read.

A sight vocabulary is composed of words that the pupil

¹⁶Roma Gans, Reading and Literature in the Elementary School, p. 186.

has learned by sight through meaningful association. There are two main procedures which can be followed in developing a sight vocabulary. The first procedure teaches the words incidentally through repetition in connection with various reading activities. The second procedure involves the use of definite vocabulary exercises and drills. One common procedure is found in flash card drill. These drills are conducted in such a manner that the child is required to recognize rapidly single words or phrases. Additional exercises may take the form of seat work and informal tests in which practice is given in classifying words in terms of similarities or differences.¹⁷

Because a sight vocabulary is so necessary and because there has been so much doubt as to what that sight vocabulary should be, the problem is to find a reasonably small number of words that are so common in all reading matter that all children should know them instantly at sight. Dolch has compiled a sight vocabulary of two hundred twenty words. This list may well be called "basic" because it includes the "service words" that are used in all writing, no matter on what subject. This vocabulary includes conjunctions, prepositions, pronouns, adverbs, adjectives, and verbs, but no nouns, since nouns must change with the

¹⁷Paul McKee, Reading and Literature in the Elementary School, p. 186.

change of subject matter. Some experts believe that too much time has been spent in teaching nouns as sight words rather than in teaching the service words which are of constant and universal use.¹⁸

The teacher can build the basic sight vocabulary from the books the children actually read. Each story will add some of these words, and the teacher can make a list of them as she develops the lessons. Each child can be held responsible for knowing the list thus accumulated.

As the child slowly builds a stock of sight words, the old ones must not be lost by disuse; therefore, when a plan is made for steady learning of new words, a plan must also be made for continual reuse of old words. This process is called vocabulary control and is absolutely essential for maintaining and for increasing sight vocabulary in the most efficient way.¹⁹

The use of context or meaning clues is a word-getting technique which serves the child well and frequently. It is a rapid sort of recognition technique in which the meaning of the word is sometimes derived completely from its use in the sentence. The use of context clues limits this word to the few that would fit into the meaning of the sentence being read. It completes the meaning of a printed

¹⁸Edward William Dolch, op. cit., pp. 205-206.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 197.

sentence.²⁰

Picture clues also aid in word recognition in that the child may look at the picture to find out what the unknown word says. This method quickly gives results with some words which are readily guessed from pictures. These words are usually names of things, action words, and adjectives which describe things in the picture.²¹ Another aid to word recognition is that of word comparison or similarities and differences of words. The usual work of comparison has been divided into a comparison of beginnings, endings, and middle letters. A great deal of time can be wasted in word comparison exercises; therefore, care must be taken in giving these exercises only when necessary.²²

The teaching of word recognition through phonics is gaining in importance. The excessive amount of phonics taught in the past caused this subject to be discredited, but once more phonics has come into respectability. Care should be taken, however, that the mistakes of the past do not cause the discarding of a tool which, if used intelligently, will prove an asset in the teaching of reading.

²⁰Guy L. Bond and Eva Bond, Teaching the Child to Read, pp. 149-150.

²¹Edward William Dolch, op. cit., p. 153.

²²Edward William Dolch, "Growth in Recognizing Words Accurately and Independently," Adapting Reading Programs to Wartime Needs, p. 94.

There is general agreement that the development of phonetic elements should be given in a period apart from the reading period. Attention during the reading period should be centered upon the thought content and should not be shifted to the mechanics of reading. Many educators feel that if phonics is taught in a reasonable amount and if material selected has a direct bearing upon the reading, the child will be helped in both reading and speaking. When taught correctly, phonics is valuable in the identification of new words, in enunciation and pronunciation, and in the development of speech coordination.²³ Children who are good readers, those who readily connect the symbol of a word or a phrase with its sound and meaning, should be permitted to read in their own way. They should be taught to know what is meant by phonics, and they should be encouraged to make use of their knowledge; but they should not have phonetic drill. Such drill will slow down and hamper the good reader. This is the viewpoint of Betts,²⁴ as well as most other writers. Slow readers, on the other hand, should have drill in phonics. This does not prevent the use of word drill, phrase drill, or any other aids the teacher

²³Mary E. Pennell and Alice M. Cusack, How to Teach Reading, pp. 77-78.

²⁴Emmett Albert Betts, The Prevention and Correction of Reading Difficulty, pp. 209-211.

wishes to use. It is supplementary, but just as important. The slow reader must have phonetic drill because his subconscious mind does not have its own method of connecting the symbol with the word. He must be given a logical key that will help him work out new words and give him a start that will recall partly forgotten words.²⁵

Authorities, such as Smith,²⁶ Stone,²⁷ and McKee,²⁸ agree that the teaching of phonics should be deferred until the pupils have had enough experience with reading to realize that it is a delightful, thought-getting activity. They should have acquired a vocabulary of seventy-five to two hundred words and have begun to be interested in likenesses and differences in words. This would probably postpone the teaching of formal phonics until at least the last half of the first grade. Each first grade teacher, however, must be guided by the abilities of her pupils. Teachers of children with a foreign language handicap should delay such instruction until their pupils speak English fairly well.

²⁵Samuel A. Kirk, "The Slow or Mentally Retarded Learner," Adjusting Reading Program to Individuals, pp. 276-277.

²⁶Nila B. Smith, American Reading Instruction, pp. 221-222.

²⁷Clarence R. Stone, Better Primary Reading, p. 403.

²⁸Paul McKee, op. cit., p. 201.

While phonetic methods are no longer recommended for use as systematic procedures for first grade reading, it is desirable that children should learn how to figure out unknown words. The greater the emphasis that is placed upon wide independent reading, the more necessary it is for children to be able to attack new words when they meet them. It is also recognized that the use of phonics does not consist of one simple skill, but it is a complex process made up of several separate and distinct abilities. First, children must develop visual discrimination. They must become keenly sensitive to the appearance of phonetic elements within words. Second, they must learn to associate a certain sound with each phonetic element. In other words, they must develop auditory discrimination. Children must learn as a third step the art of blending sounds in working out the natural pronunciation of words. The final step is that of contextual application. This calls for the combined use of visual discrimination, auditory discrimination, and blending as applied in attacking new words encountered in context. According to Durrell, no word should be studied phonetically unless it is already in the child's hearing and speaking vocabulary. Otherwise, the child has only a meaningless combination of sounds as a result of his word study. Preferably the words chosen for work in analysis should appear in the day's lesson or in future lessons in the child's

reading. The vocabulary list accompanying primary readers may be consulted for suitable words. The specific word analysis skills to be taught depend upon the word elements that the child is likely to use in his later reading.²⁹ The list which appears below includes those which are commonly found to be used most frequently in primary reading. Only the most essential elements should be taught and those only in words which have meaning for the child.

Consonants: single initial consonants

Vowels: single

Prefixes: s, es, ed, ing, y

Initial sounds and blends: th, st, wh, sh, br, ch,

dr, tr, cl, fr, gr, pl, sm, tw, fl, sw, sp

Final blends: sh, ch, al, on, ck, ly, nk, lk, by,

nt, rk, se, ty

Phonograms: in, and, ike, is, ake, oke, ook, own,

ed, oy, ay, as, ed, ig, ouse, at, an, un, am, it,

ome, ack, ank, ut, un, ell, all, ill, ame, og, ee,

up, id, ool, en, oll, ot, op, ap, ing, ow

Games and exercises of many kinds may be used in word recognition. Slow learners benefit greatly by the extra practice or review provided by such games. The games and exercises suggested on the following pages provide variety

²⁹Donald D. Durrell, op. cit., pp. 199-202.

for children who need extra practice.

The Picture Dictionary.--The child makes a scrapbook that is indexed. Both capital and lower case letters are used. Illustrations are prepared or cut from old magazines or books. As soon as a word is learned, the child pastes on the proper page the picture which corresponds to the word. If the word is car, a picture of a car is pasted on the c page. Later the teacher may drill on words in the dictionary by giving the child small cards on which are printed the words he has learned. The child has to find the picture that tells the same story as the word, and place the word under the picture.³⁰

Finders (played like bingo).--Each player has a card marked off into twenty-five square blocks. In each block there is printed a word. The teacher shows a flash card of one of the words. The child who has that word on his card raises his hand, pronounces the word, points to it, and is given the flash card, which he places over the word on his card. The child who has five words covered in any direction is the winner.³¹

³⁰David H. Russell and Others, op. cit., p. 8.

³¹Ibid., p. 10.

Treasure Hunt.--The teacher places before the children a large box filled with objects or pictures. Printed word cards corresponding to the picture or object are arranged around the blackboard ledge. Each child closes his eyes and draws an object or picture from the box. Then the child must find the word corresponding to his object or picture.³²

Blackboard Exercise.--Give two pupils crayons of different colors. These pronounce the words, seeing which pupil can be first to underline each word called. Count to see which color underlined the greater number of words.³³

Card Race.--Hold up a card. Let pupils see who can pronounce the word first. Give the card to the one who does so. Continue until the cards are all given out. Then count to see which pupil has the most.³⁴

Individual Self Drill.--A teacher selects about fifteen common objects for which she can find pictures. One exercise may contain names of animals; another, names of flowers; another, trees; and so on. The pictures are cut from magazines and pasted on a sheet of paper. The nouns are printed

³²Ibid., p. 11.

³³Nettie Alice Sawyer, Five Messages to Teachers of Primary Reading, p. 69.

³⁴Ibid., p. 73.

on slips of cardboard, about an inch wide and four inches long. A child gets Exercise I and Picture I of this series. He studies both the words and the pictures. Then he places each slip on top of the picture it matches. When he has finished, the teacher checks the work. If the child has made mistakes in matching his set of pictures, the teacher corrects the errors, goes over the unrecognized words, shuffles the slips, and tells the child to repeat the exercise. If his work is correct, he returns the material and starts another exercise.³⁵

Topic Matching Exercise.--This exercise requires from eighteen to thirty small cards. Each pack of these cards should contain words dealing with three topics. For example:

<u>Farm</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Automobile</u>
pig	desk	tires
hay	teacher	horn
carrots	book	motor
horse	eraser	seat
barn	pencil	driver
corn	lesson	gasoline
farmer	class	car

The top card of the pack lists the three main themes. The pupil simply sorts the cards according to topic. If he is successful, he returns them to their proper place and gets a similar pack.³⁶

³⁵Luella Cole, op. cit., p. 178.

³⁶Ibid., p. 179.

Captured.--Children line up on two sides. A flash card is shown to the first child, who says it distinctly, and his side repeats it. The next card is flashed to the opposite side with the same procedure. If a word is missed and the opposite side can name it, the child who missed is captured by the other side. After the child has a turn, he goes to the end of the line.

Domino Game.--Use about twenty-four different domino-like cards, each card with a word at either end. The cards should be of the same length. Thus car may be at one end and cat on the other end of a card. Play like dominoes. Each child must pronounce the words. The player who gets rid of his cards first wins. Include many cards containing the elements to be emphasized.³⁷

Calling-Card Game.--Use twenty words and make two copies of each, forty cards in all. Deal out about seven cards. The players discard words for which they have matching cards. They should take turns in calling for words needed to match the cards in their hands. The remaining cards are dealt as is necessary. The child who matches all of his cards first wins.³⁸

³⁷ Arthur I. Gates, op. cit., p. 285.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 285.

Consonant Exercise.--Have the child show a word on the board that begins with a certain consonant sound. Let this child call on another child to give words beginning with that sound.³⁹

Phonograms Exercise.--Distribute a number of phonograms. Give one child a consonant. Have him get all the phonograms that he can use to make a word. Have the words made pronounced.⁴⁰

Blackboard Exercise.--Write phonograms on the board. Distribute consonants to the children. Have all children come to the front of the room and make words by adding their consonant to the phonogram indicated. The words made should be pronounced.⁴¹

The word recognition techniques have been considered as helpful tools in comprehension; although if a child does not comprehend what he has read, it can hardly be said that he is able to read, even though he may pronounce the words correctly. Reading implies meaning, and only in the sense of obtaining meaning does the child truly read. Recognizing the important place held by comprehension in the total

³⁹Mary E. Pennell and Alice M. Cusack, How to Teach Reading, p. 89.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 90.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 90.

reading process, teachers of primary grade children should try to develop this ability from the very first reading lesson. Satisfaction and a rapid rate of comprehension are more or less the end result in reading.⁴²

In guiding pupils' growth in comprehension, much emphasis has been placed on accuracy of comprehending and remembering details. The comprehension and recollection of separate details are essential to reading comprehension, but it must go beyond recognition and remembering details to an understanding of the meanings that come from the interrelationships and the implications of these details. To get satisfaction from reading demands more than the ability to understand details. It demands the ability to use details with which to get at the fuller meaning.⁴³

According to Bond and Bond, the ability to comprehend is composed of the ability to recognize words, to group them into thought units, and to give the proper emphasis to the thought units so that the sentences may be understood. Comprehension is also the ability to determine the relationships between the sentences in order that their meanings may be generalized into the meaning of the paragraph.⁴⁴ Dolch adds

⁴²Emmett Albert Betts, op. cit., p. 260.

⁴³Roma Gans, op. cit., pp. 47-48.

⁴⁴Guy L. Bond and Eva Bond, op. cit., p. 221.

another idea in that true comprehension means relating whatever the child reads with all of his past experiences, thus incorporating it into his thinking and his living.⁴⁵

Bond and Bond list nine comprehension abilities which they consider important in reading:

Skimming.--Skimming is a rapid type of reading to find out what the story is about. In the first grade after a story has been read, the children may skim to find certain words or phrases.

Reading to Get the General Significance.--This is reading to find out what the story is about. In developing this ability with primary children, easy reading material should be used.

Reading to Form a Sensory Impression.--This type of reading is often spoken of as reading for appreciation. Reading materials for primary children are rich in appeal to the senses. Children enjoy the pictures, the sounds, the tastes, and the smells, which the author suggests with words.

Reading to Predict Outcomes.--To develop this type of comprehension, the teacher may read part of a story and then

⁴⁵Edward William Dolch, Teaching Primary Reading, p. 166.

each child may tell or write what he thinks will happen next or the way the story should end.

Reading to Organize.--The simplest type of organization is that of sequence of happenings. This can be taught as early as the first grade. In telling or dramatizing stories, the child notices the order of events and tells the story in chronological order.

Reading to Follow Directions.--The teacher in the first grade develops this ability by writing on the blackboard directions for seat work such as: Draw a blue ball; or directions for group activities such as: Jim's group may play with the toys.

Reading to Note Details.--This type of comprehension calls for careful reading and for remembering each item in the passage read. In the first grade, the teacher may ask the children to find out all that a certain page tells about a character. Occasionally the teacher may select paragraphs for the child to illustrate.

Reading Critically.--Critical reading is an ability that enables the reader to evaluate material read as to the accuracy or truth and to decide whether the story would make a good play or whether it would be suitable to read before a group.

Reading to Generalize.--This ability in comprehension consists of seeing the relationship of various items in a story and combining them into a generalization. Pupils should be encouraged to draw conclusions, but they should be warned against reaching hasty conclusions.⁴⁶

If poor comprehension is caused by the pupils' lack of adequate background, it may be necessary to meet the situation by providing them with firsthand experiences through pictures, explanations, and suitable reading material. It is better for a child to read material that is too easy than to attempt what is too difficult. In some instances children fail to make satisfactory progress in reading comprehension because the material is not interesting and challenging. The competition which reading materials now face from the radio, the movies, and the comics is great. The child must be provided with really interesting material that will challenge his interest in order to convince him that learning to read is worthwhile. For the slow-learning child, efforts should be made to get material which in liveliness, humor, and adventure compares favorably with other available material. Rich returns may sometimes be obtained in comprehension by finding materials that are related to the child's interest or hobby. It is not

⁴⁶Guy L. Bond and Eva Bond, op. cit., pp. 221-238.

suggested that the reading material be confined to an area of special interest but only that reasonably full play be given to it.⁴⁷ The most important feature for improving comprehension is that of providing every possible inducement and opportunity for more extensive reading done on the pupils' own initiative. It is important to provide an abundance of easy and attractive supplementary materials and arrange a schedule to make free reading possible. Once the pupil has started reading voluntarily, he can be assisted to increase his ability to comprehend.⁴⁸

Even during the earliest stages of primary reading, there should be a library table furnished with a collection of easy, carefully selected books which serve as a stimulus to reading. The reading table should be placed in a corner, or wherever it will be apart from the location where the children usually sit and work. If the books are displayed attractively on the table, the child who cannot read will be likely to notice the books when they see other children looking at them. The table should hold simple books of Mother Goose rhymes, animal tales, fairy tales, poetry for children, and realistic stories. The material

⁴⁷Arthur I. Gates, op. cit., pp. 389-391.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 393-395.

should be interesting, with lively illustrations, and should be varied in difficulty. Not too many books should be placed on the reading table at once, and the selection should be changed often enough to keep the children's attention. A new book should be added every few days, and familiar ones taken away to be brought back later.⁴⁹

The pupils should feel free to look at these books in their leisure time. If, after some job has been completed, they have a few minutes to spare, they should feel free to go to the reading table to find a book that they will enjoy. Although the child is allowed freedom, this does not mean that the program should be unguided. Since the teacher knows the availability and difficulty of the reading materials, she can make suggestions about materials the child might find interesting. As the children gain independence in reading, a regular period should be set aside as a free reading period. The free period should be a time in which the child feels like exploring new avenues of reading interests and a time for leisure reading. If the materials are suited to the child's reading level and interests, the slowest child in the group will have the same chance as the brightest to select a book which appeals to him. As the child reads for recreation, he develops his reading abilities and

⁴⁹Grace E. Storm, "Developing Interest in Reading," The Instructor, Volume LVI, Number 1, (November, 1946), p. 27.

skills, he builds backgrounds of meaning and vocabulary, he extends and increases his reading interests, and he improves his reading tastes. Thus it may be seen that the reading which a child does voluntarily in the free reading period makes real and positive contributions to his reading development.⁵⁰

The following games and exercises may be employed to encourage, to guide, and to check on the pupil's ability to comprehend:

Carrying out Action Directions.--The class is divided into two sections. The teacher writes a command on the board and quickly erases it. She then calls upon some pupil to perform the action. If he carries out the direction correctly, he is given a score of one, which contributes to the total score for his side.⁵¹ Example:

Run to the door.
Get under the table.
Read to me.

Hidden Card Game.--The teacher prints on cards some directions which can be dramatized, such as,

Hop over a book.
Run to the table.

⁵⁰Guy L. Bond and Eva Bond, op. cit., pp. 197-199.

⁵¹Nila B. Smith, One Hundred Ways of Teaching Silent Reading, p. 29.

In playing the game, the children hide their eyes while the teacher hides the cards in various places about the room. A pupil is then chosen to search for a card. When he finds one, he reads it silently, then acts it out, while the rest of the class guess what his card said. One of the pupils who guesses correctly is then given an opportunity to search for a card and so on. When all the cards are found, some pupil may be chosen to hide them again.⁵²

Following Directions.--Draw the school.
 Make it red.
 Make the door brown.
 Draw a walk to the door.
 Draw a girl on the walk.
 Draw a boy near the walk.⁵³

Action Exercises.--Stand by the desk.
 Run to the window.
 Get your book.
 Open and close the door.
 Jump up high.
 Hold up your two hands.⁵⁴

Yes or No.--Do we live in trees?
 Do we go to bed in the morning?
 Can a dog run?
 Can a cat fly?
 Does a bird sing?
 Can you talk?⁵⁵

⁵²Ibid., p. 48.

⁵³Arthur S. Gist and William A. King, The Teaching and Supervision of Reading, p. 133.

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 133-134.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 135-136.

Riddles.--

I give you eggs.
 I say, "Cluck, cluck."
 I am a _____.

Completion Exercise.--Who _____ in the playhouse?

"I will call Dick," said _____.
 Dick and Jane found a _____.
 The _____ said, "Cock-a-doodle-do."

rooster, was, rooster, Jane

Two or More Action Exercise.--The ability to grasp and hold more than one thought in mind is increased by asking children to perform more than one act. Cards containing two or more actions are used. The child studies the card; then he hands it to the teacher and performs all that is required. Example:

Rap on the door.
 Stand by the window.
 Point to the flag.⁵⁶

Directions for Work at Seats.--The sheep said, "Baa, baa."

Draw a sheep.
 Color it gray.
 The cow said, "Moo, moo."
 Draw a cow.
 Color it brown.
 The hen said, "Cluck, cluck."
 Draw a hen.
 Color it red.

⁵⁶Arthur I. Gates, op. cit., p. 109.

CHAPTER V

PLACE OF UNITS IN THE READING PROGRAM

A. Unit Plan

In the first grade of the John B. Hood School a daily and systematic study of the basal reader constituted the main feature of the reading instruction. Six units were developed around the reading core and made subordinate to it because:

Reading activities which are closely tied into the varied activities in the school program constitute a natural approach to reading, develop through intimate experience a correct and adequate concept of reading as a meaningful process closely related to life-activities, and tend to maintain and increase the child's natural interest in learning to read. Such are the significant and important advantages of reading in relation to other activities of the school.¹

In keeping with this idea, the six units were developed to parallel the basal reader. The units considered most important in the life of the primary child were Street Safety, Good Health, The Home, The Farm, The Pet Show, and The Zoo. Street Safety was developed during the first three weeks of the semester in order that the children might become

¹Clarence R. Stone, Better Primary Reading, p. 230.

acquainted with the rules and practices of safety in crossing the dangerous streets near the school. Good Health was always important in the first grade; therefore, this unit on health was planned so that it could be developed and carried out over most of the semester. Each unit on The Home, The Farm, The Pet Show, and The Zoo paralleled a unit in the basal reader, and was developed during the time the unit in the book was studied.

The six units were beneficial to the slow-learning child in that the materials were closely related to the experiences and interests of the group, the basal vocabulary was used in many different situations, and the chart lessons were used to re-impress words already studied and to test the child's power to recognize, in a new situation, words already developed. The value of a unit of work for the slow-learning child lies in the opportunities it offers to him for vital and significant learning situations.

Christine P. Ingram lists five specific ways in which the unit of work will function to this end:

1. It brings real purpose into much of the child's work and play.
2. It enables him to experience things first-hand.
3. It gives meaning and interest to the commonplace in his environment.
4. It enables him to plan, execute, and judge in a simple way at the level of his stage of maturity.

5. It teaches him how to do things and how to conduct himself in actual situations so that behavior is integrated.²

The unit chart stories were developed during the first period of the morning, and the chart stories were re-read during the afternoon period. Word games and phonetic drill games were played during word study period, and booklets, pictures, and silent reading activities were carried out during the seat work period. Songs corresponding to the unit being developed were learned during music period. Thus the activities of the entire day were pivoted about a center of interest which furnished oral and silent reading vocabulary and made the children feel that reading was a pleasant thing because it related directly to something which was close to their interests and lives and because it gave them opportunity for satisfying creative activities.

²Christine P. Ingram, Education of the Slow-Learning Child, p. 206.

B. Units of Work

Street Safety

A. Objectives

1. To teach children to act safely on the streets.
2. To create right attitudes with regard to being responsible for the safety of oneself and others.
3. To prevent accidents.
4. To develop habits of carefulness and obedience to safety rules.
5. To study how traffic is controlled.

B. Approach

1. Discuss the safest route for the children to come to school.
2. Take children for a walk.
 - a. Stop at the crosswalk near the school and discuss proper ways of crossing.
 - b. Have the children practice crossing the street under the guidance of the School Patrol Boys.
 - c. Observe the traffic signals in action. The teacher should explain the meaning of each of the lights.
 - d. Have a policeman or traffic officer talk to the children.

- (1) The children should be told to give the officers absolute obedience.
 - (2) The officer's duties should be discussed.
 - (3) The officer should explain and demonstrate safe ways of walking on streets.
3. Have children make up a story about being careful on the way to school.

C. Activities

1. After the trip have the children develop activities and charts to tell about safety on the street.
 - a. Make a map of the best route to use in going to and coming from school.
 - b. Make a play street intersection with traffic lights and a policeman and allow the children to cross the street as the traffic light flashes.
 - c. Let children make street and highway signs for the bulletin board.
 - d. Draw pictures of the traffic officer and the lights.
 - e. Make a chart story about the trip to be used as a reading lesson. Example:

What We Saw on Our Trip

Policeman

Patrol Boys

Cars

Red Light, etc.

2. Drill to learn which is the left hand and which is the right and practice looking left and looking right.
3. Drill to learn the colors red, green, and yellow, and discuss when red means danger and when green means safety.
4. Learn to read quickly the words "stop," "go," "fast," and "slow."
5. Discuss going single file and double file and have the children tell when people should walk single file and when they should walk double file.
6. Teach each child to say plainly and correctly his full name, his address, his father's name, and the name of the school.
7. Bring pictures about safety from magazines to illustrate booklets.
8. Read safety stories.
9. Learn safety songs.
 - a. "Let the Ball Roll"³
 - b. "Remember Your Name and Address"⁴
 - c. "Stay Away from the Railroad Tracks"⁵

³Irving Caesar, Sing A Song of Safety, p. 19.

⁴Ibid., p. 26.

⁵Ibid., p. 29.

d. "An Automobile"⁶

10. Make a reading chart of safety rules and have the rules illustrated.
11. Draw pictures of unsafe and safe things and write the words "safe" or "unsafe" under each picture.

D. Culminating Activities

1. Arrange a safety program to be broadcast over a play radio.
2. Prepare an exhibit of the written rules, booklets, stories, and pictures.
3. On Friday after the unit is completed, arrange a program for the parents.
 - a. Certain children may explain the work of the class and the exhibit.
 - b. The safety songs may be sung.
 - c. A traffic officer may give a talk about street safety.

⁶Ibid., p. 10.

The Home

A. Objectives

1. To learn how to keep the home clean.
2. To learn the duties of the children in the home.
3. To learn the duties of the mother and the father in the home.
4. To learn the names of the furniture in a home.
5. To learn the names of the rooms in a home.
6. To learn to be polite, obedient, and dutiful.
7. To develop self expression.
8. To stimulate reading.

B. Approach

1. Place on the bulletin board pictures of father, mother, and children.
2. Have the children seated in a circle, and discuss the pictures and the duties of each member of the family, later developing an experience reading chart on this topic.
3. Put on the reading table picture books and story books related to home life.
4. Let the children read aloud from the experience chart and library books.

C. Activities

1. Plan an excursion.

- a. Take a trip around the neighborhood to see the houses.
 - (1) Kinds of houses.
 - (a) Different in size.
 - (b) Family homes or apartment houses.
 - (c) Building materials.
 - (2) Number of houses.
 - b. Visit a house under construction.
 - (1) Identify the workers by their jobs.
 - (2) Get samples of the building materials.
 - c. Visit a home.
 - (1) See the different rooms and learn their purposes.
 - (2) See the furniture and learn its purpose.
 - (3) See the flower garden.
 - (4) See the vegetable garden.
2. Cut out magazine pictures to make picture word cards of bed, bookcase, stove, radio, etc., and match these with labelled pictures of the rooms in which they belong.
3. Let the children tell what mother does in the home.
- a. List in manuscript writing on board and later transfer these sentences to a chart for a reading lesson.
 - b. Make a large class book entitled "What Our

Mothers Do," making pictures of mother's work and putting sentences under each picture.

4. Tell what father does.
 - a. Follow suggestions above.
 - b. Make a chart similar to the one below:

What Our Fathers Do

Dick's father works in an office.

Tom's father works in a store.

Jane's father works in a garage.

5. Tell what the children can do in the home.
 - a. Allow the children to tell what they can do to help in the home.
 - b. Use magazine pictures of children helping in the home on the bulletin board.
 - c. Use suggested chart:

How Children Help in the Home

Jane washes the dishes.

Tom goes to the store for mother.

Dick takes care of the baby.

6. Make chart.
 - a. Obey our mothers and fathers.
 - b. Be kind to one another.
 - c. Have a place to put everything.
 - d. Come to meals on time.
 - e. Say "Thank you" and "If you please."
 - f. Say "Good morning" and "Good night."

7. Make chart of table manners.
 - a. Talk quietly.
 - b. Eat slowly.
 - c. Sit nicely.
 - d. Thank mother for the good things.
 - e. Say "Excuse me" on leaving the table.
8. Table practice.
 - a. Have a table cloth.
 - b. Have flowers on the table.
 - c. Use a set of children's dishes, knives, forks, and spoons.
 - d. Give children practice in putting cloth on, setting the table, waiting on the table, using the napkin correctly, placing the silver, and pulling out chair for mother.
9. Make a playhouse.
 - a. Make a plan for the playhouse and make a chart. Example:

Our Playhouse

We will have a living room.

We will have a kitchen.

- b. Decide what materials will be used and make a chart. Example:

What We Will Need

We will need wooden boxes.

We will need saws.

We will need hammers.

- c. Let the children work in committees.
- d. Have some work rules and make a chart similar to the one below:

Our Work Rules

We will work quietly.

We will take turns.

We will put our tools away.

We will keep the room clean.

We will stay with the job until we
finish it.

- e. Build a house.
 - (1) Make it very simple.
 - (2) Make furniture from orange or apple boxes.
 - (3) Plan color for inside and outside the house.
 - (4) Make charts. Examples:

Our Living Room

We will have _____.

We will have _____.

Our Kitchen

We will have _____.

We will have _____.

- f. Dramatize activities in the playhouse.
- (1) Playing father, mother, and children.
 - (2) Serving dinner.
 - (3) Having a tea party.
 - (4) Getting father off to work.
 - (5) Getting the children off to school.
 - (6) Talking on the telephone.
 - (7) Greeting people at the door.
- g. Use suggested experience chart.

Our Tea Party

We had a tea party.

Ten children came.

We sat in the living room.

We had a good time.

We talked and talked.

The children said, "Thank you."

- h. Use suggested booklets.

This is Father.

Father works.

We love Father.

This is our home.

Our home is big.

Our home is white.

We love our home.

This is Mother.

Mother helps us.

We help Mother.

We love Mother.

i. Read stories about home.

(1) "A Broken Window"⁷

(2) "The Lost Dime"⁸

j. Learn songs.

(1) "Good Morning"⁹

(2) "The Clock"¹⁰

(3) "Clean Clothes"¹¹

k. Make a picture show of the home and home life studied.

D. Culminating Activities

1. Invite fathers and mothers to school.

2. Exhibit the following:

a. Booklets.

b. Charts.

⁷Gertrude Germond, "A Broken Window," The Instructor, LVI, No. 5, (March, 1947), p. 23.

⁸Marion Walden, "The Lost Dime," The Instructor, LVI, No. 6, (April, 1947), p. 20.

⁹Marion LeBron, I Love to Sing, p. 7.

¹⁰Satis N. Coleman and Alice G. Thorn, Another Singing Time, p. 11.

¹¹Ethel Crowninshield, New Songs and Games, p. 28.

c. Playhouse.

3. Give a tea party for the parents, and have the children serve punch and cookies.
4. Have the picture show which was made by the children.

The Farm

A. Objectives

1. To provide a happy homelike situation where cooperation is made to seem desirable.
2. To encourage initiative, experimentation, and curiosity.
3. To give the child an opportunity to understand and appreciate farm products and farm animals.
4. To provide opportunities for making and executing plans, checking results, keeping records, and composing stories.
5. To provide situations that will develop skill in reading.¹²

B. Approach

1. Discuss farm life and living in the country.
2. Talk about the source of the milk used during the morning recess.
3. Let the children play with toy farm animals during free play period.
4. Put pictures of farm animals on the bulletin board.
5. Put picture books of farm life on the reading table.

¹²Debbie Shaw, "Farm Study in the Fall," The Instructor, LV, No. 10, (October, 1944), p. 15.

6. If possible show slides, opaque pictures, and sound films about farm life.
7. Discuss farm life.
 - a. Kinds of farms.
 - b. Workers on the farm.
 - c. Fun on the farm.
 - d. How machinery makes farm work easier.
 - e. Stories of farm life.
 - (1) "Grandfather's Farm"¹³
 - (2) "The Foolish Chick"¹⁴

C. Activities

1. Take a trip to a farm.
 - a. Get written permission from the parents for the children to make the trip.
 - b. Discuss with the children what they hope to find out about a farm.
 - c. Discuss with the children safety and courtesy rules.
 - (1) Be sure that the rules are followed.
 - (2) Make charts of these rules.
 - (3) Later write a "thank you" note to the farmer.

¹³Ethel Hulslander, "Grandfather's Farm," The Instructor, LVI, No. 3, (January, 1947), p. 26.

¹⁴Catherine Blanton, "The Foolish Chick," The Instructor, LVI, No. 8, (June, 1947), p. 18.

2. Make butter and make a chart to illustrate the process.
3. Draw farm animal scenes.
4. Make a play farm and farm house.
 - a. Make orange-crate furniture.
 - b. Construct looms for rugs.
 - c. Dye cloth for rug making.
5. Make and paint a little wagon and a wheelbarrow.
6. Compose chart stories about the farm.
7. Make a farm booklet of stories and pictures.
8. Make a play about the farm.
 - a. Collect costumes for the play.
 - b. Collect materials for the play.
 - c. Compose invitations to the play.
9. Learn songs.
 - a. "The Rooster"¹⁵
 - b. "My Pony"¹⁶
 - c. "Mary Had A Little Lamb"¹⁷
 - d. "Higgledy Piggledy"¹⁸

¹⁵Jessie Carter, Twenty Little Songs, p. 7.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁷Leah Gale and Corinne Malvern, Nursery Songs, A Little Golden Book, p. 6.

¹⁸Henry Owen, "Higgledy Piggledy," The Instructor, LVI, No. 4, (February, 1947), p. 39.

D. Culmination

1. Give the farm play in the auditorium.
2. Give a party in farm house and serve the butter on crackers.
3. Exhibit the booklets, farm stories, charts, pictures, and farm house.
4. Sing the farm songs.

The Pet Show

A. Objectives

1. To encourage children to share experiences.
2. To encourage cooperation.
3. To encourage consideration for pets.
4. To encourage a sense of responsibility toward pets.
5. To instruct in the care of pets.
6. To improve reading.
7. To make reading come alive.

B. Approach

1. Have a child bring his little puppy to school.
 - a. Have an informal discussion of the children's pets.
 - b. Talk about how to care for pets.
 - c. Discuss what one should feed pets.
2. Put pictures of pets on the bulletin board.
3. Put picture books on the reading table.
4. Put story books about pets on the reading table.
5. Read stories about pets to the children.
 - a. "Talking Collar"¹⁹
 - b. "Fluffie Puff's Adventure"²⁰

¹⁹Theodore M. Rider, "Talking Collar," The Instructor, LVI, No. 6, (April, 1947), p. 20.

²⁰Catherine Blanton, "Fluffie Puff's Adventure," The Instructor, LV, No. 9, (September, 1946), p. 34.

- c. "Mischief's Week"²¹
- d. "Whose Dog Is Binky?"²²

C. Activities

1. Plan to have a pet show.
2. Discuss what to have in the pet show.
3. Make a chart. Example:

A Pet Show

We will have a pet show.

We will have a puppy.

We will have a kitten.

We will have a rabbit.

We will have a turtle.

We will have a fish.

We will have a bird.

We will have a frog.

4. Have the children learn to read the chart.
5. Have a separate chart for each animal listed above. Example:

The Puppy

This is a puppy.

Puppy is little.

²¹Marian Kennedy, "Mischief's Week," The Instructor, LVI, No. 1, (November, 1946), p. 22.

²²Marian Walden, "Whose Dog Is Binky?" The Instructor, LVI, No. 1, (November, 1946), p. 23.

Puppy is black and white.

He can run and jump.

He can say, "Bow-wow."

Puppy likes milk.

6. Illustrate each story.
7. Make cages for the animals.
 - a. Have children bring crates to make the cages.
 - b. Cover the top side with chicken wire.
 - c. Put legs on some cages.
 - d. Set some cages on the tables.
 - e. Put the name of the animal on each cage.
 - f. Put the name of the owner on each cage.

Example:

This is Robert

Brown's rabbit.

8. Let the children have an exhibit of the food the pets eat, placing the caption "What the Pets Eat" on the food exhibit table, and a caption such as "This is Puppy's dinner" on each pet's food.
9. Make booklets and illustrate them.
10. Make chart stories.
11. Make a frieze of the pets.
12. Let children make posters about the show.
13. Read stories about pets.

14. Learn songs about pets.
 - a. "Oh, I Have A Kitty"²³
 - b. "Spot"²⁴
 - c. "Sing Birdie Sing"²⁵
 - d. "Our Bunny"²⁶
15. On the day of the pet show, have the children bring their pets to school.

D. Culminating Activities

1. Have a Pet Show.
 - a. Invite the school children in groups.
 - b. Arrange the cages around the room, and above each cage have a chart telling about the animal.
 - c. After each group has seen the animals, have a child read the charts, explain the exhibit, and show the booklets.
 - d. Have a trick dog perform.
2. Have the children tell to other school groups their experiences with pets.

²³Ethel Crowinshield, New Songs and Games, p. 2.

²⁴Laura P. MacCarteney, Songs for the Nursery School, p. 29.

²⁵Nina M. Kenagy and F. M. Arnold, Musical Experiences of Little Children, p. 10.

²⁶Ibid., p. 12.

The Zoo

A. Objectives

1. To learn something about life at the zoo.
2. To learn more about the animals at the zoo.
3. To teach the child to express himself in making chart stories, pictures, and reading stories about zoo animals.
4. To learn to cooperate in making plans and in doing the work.
5. To gain skill in reading.
6. To have fun.

B. Approach

1. Discuss recent trips to the zoo.
2. Discuss pictures of zoo animals.
 - a. Names of the animals.
 - b. Food they eat.
 - c. Where they live.
 - d. Comparison of zoo animals with farm animals and pets.
3. Read stories about zoo animals to the children.
 - a. "What Sally Saw"²⁷

²⁷ William S. Gray, Fun with Dick and Jane, Basic Primer, Curriculum Foundation Series, Scott, Foresman and Company, pp. 140-146.

- b. "The Fierce Tiger"²⁸

C. Activities

1. Visit Brackenridge Park Zoo.
 - a. Get written permission from the parents to make the trip.
 - b. If it is necessary to go on the city bus, discuss and make a chart of the rules of conduct and safety on the bus.
 - c. Make a chart of the rules of conduct and safety at the park.
2. After the trip give many opportunities to re-live the zoo trip and make chart stories of certain zoo animals.
 - a. Tell where the animals came from.
 - b. Tell how the animals were captured.
 - c. Tell why the animals are kept in cages.
 - d. Tell how the keepers care for the animals.
3. Learn songs.
 - a. "An Elephant"²⁹
 - b. "Zoo Babies"³⁰

²⁸Virginia B. Bently, "The Fierce Tiger," The Instructor, LVI, No. 5, (March, 1947), p. 22.

²⁹Ethel Crowninshield, Sing and Play Book, p. 14.

³⁰Z. Hartman, "Zoo Babies," The Instructor, LVI, No. 4, (February, 1947), p. 39.

4. Make a booklet of zoo animals.
5. Dramatize stories about zoo animals.
6. Read stories about zoo animals.
7. Paint a zoo frieze.

D. Culminating Activities

1. Give a zoo party and invite the parents.
2. March to jungle music.
3. Sing about zoo animals.
4. Read the charts.
5. Exhibit the animal pictures and booklets.
6. Dramatize an animal story.

Good Health

A. Objectives

1. To encourage good health habits.
2. To give pleasure, exercise, and relaxation.
3. To teach proper food habits.
4. To teach personal cleanliness.
5. To improve reading through experience charts.

B. Approach

1. See that the classroom is neat, clean, and attractive.
2. See that the teacher has good health habits.
3. Have health posters about the room.
4. Have the children bring health pictures from magazines to put on the bulletin board.
5. Discuss health rules.

C. Activities

1. Make a chart of health rules.
 - a. Keep skin and clothes clean.
 - b. Do not chew pencil.
 - c. Eat good food.
 - d. Drink plenty of water.
 - e. Avoid drinking tea or coffee.
 - f. Drink milk every day.
 - g. Dress for the weather.
 - h. Go to bed early.

1. Refrain from putting fingers in the mouth.
- j. Brush teeth for cleanliness.
- k. Keep fingernails clean.
2. Have a daily inspection.
 - a. Personal appearance.
 - (1) Clean clothing, including shoes.
 - (2) Clean handkerchief.
 - (3) Clean hands, nails, face, and teeth.
 - (4) Neatly combed hair.
 - b. Room appearance.
 - (1) Child's table.
 - (2) Floor under the table.
 - (3) Cloakroom.
 - (4) Reading table.
 - (5) Blackboards.
3. Make health booklets and illustrate with free hand drawings or pictures cut from magazines.
4. Make health posters.

D. Culminating Activities

1. Have the school nurse talk to the children.
2. Invite the parents to visit in the first grade room.
 - a. Exhibit the booklets, pictures, charts, and stories made by the children.
 - b. Recite health rules.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The problem of this study was to determine by research and experimentation some workable methods and activities that could be used to teach reading to a special group of slow-learning children in the high first grade. It will probably never be possible for the primary teacher to solve all the reading problems of slow-learning children, but she can minimize the percentage of reading failure in the first grade by using methods and activities recommended by authorities in the field of primary education.

The first step was to examine the literature in the field of instruction, giving special attention to methods of teaching reading to slow-learning children, to methods of corrective reading, and to methods advocated for use in the primary reading class, and to select the best methods and activities for helping the slow-learning child to develop his reading to the best of his ability. The methods and activities giving the best results were retained for use with the primary class; the others were discarded.

The second step was to give the children a feeling of security and to encourage them to come to school regularly. To this end, the teacher established a comfortable, attractive

room where the children felt free to play with the toys, read the library books, and take part in the reading activities.

The third step was to develop a reading program which provided the framework through which the reading abilities, skills, and techniques were introduced and around which they were built. In this program the child was shown how to read, how to recognize words quickly and accurately, and how to comprehend what was read.

The fourth step was to develop six units to parallel the basic reader. Slow-learning children learn to read at a slow rate and need much drill to develop their reading to the best of their ability; therefore, the units were used as a supplementary activity to give extra drill and review of the vocabulary, to give added practice in reading, and to develop more interest in reading.

The results of this study indicate marked progress in the children's ability to read with a fair degree of independence the primers, first readers, and supplementary material of equal difficulty, ability in the recognition of new words, and a marked interest and appreciation of reading. It can be assumed that the program was a success, but, at the same time, it must be admitted that slow-learning children will always require more attention from the teacher than the quicker pupils, if they are to achieve the greatest amount of success in reading.

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