

REMEDIAL READING IN THE SECOND GRADE

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REMEDIAL READING IN THE SECOND GRADE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENTS OF THE PROBLEM

Too many pupils in all grade-levels in the schools cannot read at all well. While Strong (30, p.146) claims that the children of today are reading more effectively than their elders did and that teachers are giving better instruction than their predecessors did; and while Betts (4, p.585) admits that there appears to be some evidence to substantiate the belief that reading instruction is more effective today than at any other time in the history of American education: Betts (4, p.585) also admits that children enter school with a wide range of language and conceptual developments and that three groups of entering pupils can easily be distinguished. These are (4, p.585) the pre-reading readiness group, the reading readiness group, and the initial reading group. By the time that these pupils have advanced to the third grade, the achievement levels range from the pre-primer readiness stage to the sixth- or seventh-grade reading level.

By the time these same pupils have reached the fifth-grade, their achievement levels range all the way from the reading readiness stage to the twelfth-grade level. Sheldon (26, p.52) paints just as gloomy a picture. He states that many pupils beyond the first, the second, and the third grades cannot read at all well; and some pupils at the junior high school level not only cannot read well but they do not know the sounds of some of the consonants nor the long and short sounds of some of the vowels. A distressing proportion of senior high school pupils cannot read as well as the average pupils in the fifth and sixth grades; in fact, the only way in which some of these pupils can grasp new words at all is that of having them pronounced several times by someone else. They cannot identify new words from the context in many cases because they do not know one or more of the other words in the sentence. Although these pupils may be attentively alert to what they see and hear in other subjects and are normal or even superior in general mental ability, they are incapable -- with their present training -- of learning material from the printed page through their own efforts.

Where there is so much criticism from employers of high school graduates and from college and university teachers about the poor reading ability of high school graduates, and where there is so much criticism from high school teachers about the lack of suitable reading skills in the pupils whom they receive from the junior high schools or the eighth grades, and where there is so much criticism from the teachers in the upper levels of the poor preparation in reading of the pupils whom they receive from the lower grade-levels, it is evident that something somewhere is badly wrong.

While a part of the blame for this condition may be placed on poor teaching of reading at all levels, this writer believes that most of the blame may be placed squarely in front of the educational philosophers and the administrators who insist on the annual promotion of children whether they meet the minimum standards of accomplishment by grades or not. These inevitable promotions not only cause an annual movement of pupils who are illy prepared or not prepared at all in reading but they remove much of the incentive to learn well from most or all of the other pupils. These advocates of automatic promotions do little or nothing to determine the effects of these promotions, nor do they seem to be

aware of the fact that the teachers receiving these pupils must begin with the child "where he is" regardless of the grade classification.

These same individuals, to a considerable extent, have discouraged the use of the phonics method in the early teaching of reading. In contrast, Dolch (12, p.71) has written that the schools should give to all pupils the means of pronouncing for themselves the new words they will meet and, at times, will have to learn without aid from others. Baker (2, p.45) has made the statement that the phonics method implies the ability to generalize upon words and to build up numerous complicated associations. He has qualified this, however, by stating that while this type of teaching may produce effective results with bright pupils, it is very doubtful that dull pupils will receive any benefit from it as they cannot make the needed associations. For this reason, he (2, p.45) holds phonics to be usually an extraneous and confusing technique for them. With this latter point of view, the writer of this thesis disagrees heartily.

It has been well established (11, p.39) that pupils even at the high school level do not know the principles of word analysis, that is, phonics, nor the ways in which to apply these principles to the new words which they meet. In addition, many of these pupils are so accustomed to

naming each individual word which they meet and know that they are not aware that this is not reading. As a result, they do not establish any continuity of meaning or of thought from word to word even in a single short sentence. This negates any values that might have been derived from extensive or "free" reading.

The definition of "reading" has changed over the years. In the Colonial days, it frequently involved not only analysis of the meaning but diagramming, parsing, and paraphrasing. Many "gems of thought" were memorized for quoting in conversation, speeches, and writing. In contrast, Gray (13, p.539) stated that some investigators -- among whom was Otis, in a work published in 1916 -- restricted "reading" to the mental processes involved in the perception of words. Any additional processes in the total reading complex, according to Otis, including the recognition of phrase and sentence meaning was to be called "supra-reading". Thorndike and other investigators of the same period, however, stated that reading is all that Otis implied, but that it included in addition a clear understanding of the meaning of what was read. Cole (10, p.195), in 1938, stated that reading is a highly synthetic process whose end-result is comprehension. She stated that the lowest level of comprehension is a reasonably accurate summary

of the story without interpretations, comments, or insight; and that no real insight is shown until a child is in the third grade. Smith (28, p.548) wrote, in 1950, that reading is concept development. She defined a concept as a crystallized experience and stated that concepts are built from experiences as self-starters and from conclusions drawn from several experiences which have been classified and summarized, and then added to the new experience. Gray (13, p.540) wrote that it is difficult to grasp all that is understood by the word "meaning" but that the word has two aspects, the literal and the supplementary. The two aspects of the term are implied both by the language of the passage and its broader context. It is assumed that a good reader not only perceives words accurately and grasps the literal and broader meanings, but he also takes such additional steps as may be necessary to achieve his purposes for that particular bit of reading on different occasions in terms of association and application.

Reading, according to Cobb (9, p.10), may be defined as the power to absorb accurate impressions from the printed page and to give these impressions adequate expression in oral or written form. The usual dictionary definition is that 'reading is the observation and apprehension of something printed or written'.

Andrus (1, p.3) wrote: "Children who are pushed into activities which are beyond them become sick of heart, body, and mind or develop the feeling that education is a 'guessing game' as did a five-year-old boy who was taught 'reading' in the first grade. That the meaning of these written words is determined by the experiences of the individual is a fact that many people are beginning to realize."

Horwich (19, p.112) has noted again that physical, social, and emotional readiness for learning grow out of happy relationships with other children and with adults, both at home and at school, and that many first-grade children are forced to "read" before they are ready. Some cannot focus their eyes on the lines, while others need months to learn to live with other children and to establish friendly relationships with the teacher and the other pupils.

Brady (8, p.18) found that many young children are disturbed and puzzled by their experiences in the school society. This is particularly true of the children who come from the so-called minority groups in our society -- groups whose cultural patterns differ from the popular or dominant culture; yet many teachers of second- or third-grade pupils from these groups will find, at the beginning of the school year, that many of their pupils are just

ready to begin to learn to read; in other words, they are already one or two years behind the grades in which they are located in terms of actual accomplishment. Other pupils in these same classes will be able to read at end-of-the-year first-grade, second-grade, third-grade, or even fourth-grade levels. Those teachers not only face a severe problem in teaching such a heterogeneous group, but they are entitled to question the adequacy of any such method of grade placement in its suitability to either teachers or pupils. The situation does not build either self-confidence or happiness in the pupils who are less advanced in their reading skills.

In any case, the purpose of learning to read is the gaining of information from the written or printed page as a quicker and broader means of gaining knowledge and experience than is possible by direct personal experience. Neither is exclusive of the other, and they should supplement each other.

Reading is an absolute necessity for every normal adult in our society as it is now organized. There is no field of endeavor in which men and women do not have to read many things for themselves every day. These may include, to name only a few, notices pertaining to employment, directions about work to be done, labels on food or clothing to be purchased, sales slips, entertain-

ments that may be attended, newspapers, magazines, and letters. Unless one can read accurately, he will not get the full and complete meaning of what he reads and may lose money, time, and prestige. Unless he can read with at least average rapidity, he will fall behind the others of his group and suffer loss of prestige and, possibly, of employment.

To a well-educated public, there is no need to prove the importance of excellent reading skills. To the uneducated public and to many of the pupils in the elementary schools, there is a very real and a very great need of impressing them with its importance.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

The program in remedial reading, as planned and carried out by this writer, had the following reasons for its tryout: the working out of a practical and effective plan for teaching reading to a second grade group, with special attention to be given to the slower and more backward individuals and with special work to challenge the abilities of the more capable pupils; and the cultivation of reading for thought by the presentation of lessons to build up backgrounds of understanding, to clarify unfamiliar words, and to increase the usage of these words.

GEOGRAPHICAL AND SOCIAL LOCATION OF THIS STUDY

The place in which this study was made is a small and rather isolated lumber town in Oregon. It has a population of approximately thirty-five hundred. Most of the inhabitants of the town and community are native-born Americans. When the management of one of the largest employing organizations hired a group of foreigners at one time to work in its mills, a few of the citizens of the town incited others to action, with the result that the aliens were removed from the community. The citizens claimed that they feared a reduction in wages below those they believed to be the minimum necessary to insure healthful living. The father of practically every child included in this study is employed in some way in the logging or in the lumber-manufacturing industry. The fathers of most of these children work in the two saw-mills in the town, but some work in the portable saw-mills nearby. These people are somewhat less transient than the majority of loggers and truck-drivers connected with these industries, but much more transient than the population of the nation at large. Most of the officers of these mills and those in clerical positions have high school educations, and a few have attended college; but many of the workers have less than eighth-grade educations. Many

of the children expect to engage in the same occupations as those in which their fathers are now engaged. A few of the families live in house-boats on the river, a few live in trailers, but the majority of the workers live in rented homes or apartments. Many of these places of residence are crowded, and some of the children play in the streets a great deal. Recently, a public playground with play equipment and a swimming-pool was provided by the community. Quite a few of these children attend moving-picture shows very frequently, and are more or less listless the following day. The pupils in the group studied by the writer of this thesis were fortunate -- far above the average for members of this kind of family -- in that there were no gains or losses in the membership of this class from the time the project was started in October until the latter part of March when two pupils moved from the district.

The habits of quite a few of the parents of the children of this group are not conducive to good mental and emotional health in the children. While the rates of pay of these workers are average or high, the semi-monthly wages are frequently spent on pay-day or the day following; and there is often actual want in the homes for some time preceding the next pay-day. Much of the money is spent for liquor. When the mills or the woods

are shut down for seasonal or transportation reasons or when there are walk-outs or strikes, many of the children show marked symptoms of feelings of insecurity that are evident not only in their work in the class-room but in their personal relationships among themselves and with their teachers. During normal times, the children generally play together with little quarreling and fussing; but, during times of insecurity, they quarrel more with each other. There are more fights, and the children seem more restless. There is considerable petty thievery also in the form of taking of pencils and other supplies and even articles of food from lunch pails. Small children are sometimes not so prompt in obedience, and some of the older children at times seem inclined to question the teachers' authority.

While it is probably true that most of the children included in this study will follow the same occupations that their parents do, it is reasonable to assume that some of them will not. A considerable number of different occupations, even some professions, may be potentially represented here. Most of these occupations will have their technical vocabularies and all, or nearly all, will require some skill in reading. Unless these pupils who have the mental ability are equipped to read both the general and the technical material necessary, they will

be handicapped in their entrance into vocations in which they are capable of succeeding.

OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

This study was made with a group of children in the second grade of a small public school in a small Oregon town. Thirty-one pupils were enrolled on the first day of school, September 6, 1949. This number remained constant until the twenty-fourth day of March, when two of the pupils moved from the district.

Within a few days after school was begun in September, the pupils were divided into two groups, mainly on the basis of their scores on the California Test of Mental Maturity (Primary, Grades One to Three) and the Lee-Clark Reading Readiness Test. These tests had been given during the previous year. This division was made in order that the pupils might work with others of about the same mental and educational abilities. Fifteen pupils were included in the slower group and sixteen in the quicker group at first, but the number of pupils in the slower group was soon reduced to twelve in order to allow additional time for more individual help for those remaining and also because the two who were moved to the quicker group seemed ready to work with that group.

Each morning, the slower group worked by themselves, individually or in groups, on word-study or some type of seat-work for comprehension. While they worked, preparations for the study of the lesson were made with the quicker group. These preparations included the building up of back-grounds of experience, real or assumed, for an understanding of the reading content of the lesson and for clarifying the meanings and usages of new words or terms.

While the quicker group studied their lesson and prepared seatwork pertaining to it, the slower group had class-work. At times, help was given to the pupils, individually or in small groups, according to their needs. Several in the class needed help even in looking at pictures, interpreting them, and composing short stories about them. Some of the pupils had great difficulty in making sentences about the pictures. When they were asked to tell what they saw, they would answer by using only one word. They needed help in noticing actions, distinguishing facial features and likenesses and differences in them, sequence of ideas, and other elements in the pictures. They also needed help in answering questions in complete sentences and in telling short stories of three or four sentences each about the pictures. After they could interpret a picture quite

well and could tell a short story about it, they dictated short stories about it. The class members read the story and had phrase and word drills in connection with it. Following this class period, the slower pupils had various types of seat-work for comprehension; while the quicker group had class work. Two reading classes were held daily for the slower group. They began the use of the pre-primers of a supplementary reading series at the beginning of the second semester. When the members of the quicker group were unable to complete their work during the regular class period in the forenoon, they, too, had another class period in the afternoon. The slower group, thus, gave twice the usual amount of time to reading and activities related to it and the quicker group approximately a third more than the usual amount of time.

The next chapter takes up what the writer believes to be many of the most important studies about reading. Since there are so many hundreds of studies and since so many of these are repetitious and innocent of any new material, the writer has endeavored to select those which appealed to her as having the greatest worth.

CHAPTER II

A SURVEY OF THE PROBLEMS OF BEGINNING READING
THAT AFFECT ITS LEARNING

PROBLEMS OUTSIDE OF READING THAT AFFECT ITS LEARNING

That the problem of learning to read well is important in the lives of many people may be shown in several ways. In many small communities, adults, intelligent in other ways but unable to read even a newspaper, may be found. In the community in which this study was made, a man -- intelligent enough to make an honest living for himself and his wife -- was unable to read the daily paper. After the death of his wife, this man marked the news items he thought he desired to have read and took the paper to a neighbor who read the articles to him. In some communities, adults who would like to belong to various community organizations refuse to become members for fear of being called upon to read something aloud in a meeting. Their inability to read is also likely to cause them to feel inferior in other ways, and they usually show this either by being solitary or by overcompensation in the forms of undue aggressiveness, blustering, or antagonism when neither the solitariness nor the blustering represents the real personality or the desired social relationships of the person.

The following single illustration does not demonstrate much by itself, but it could be multiplied -- with small variations -- hundreds or even thousands of times. A boy, living in a rural community, was intelligent and possessed excellent qualities of leadership. He wanted to attend high school, but his father refused to permit this even though the boy would be able to live at home, drive back and forth to school, and help with the chores. The father's attitude was that, although he had not attended high school, he owned his own well-equipped and well-stocked farm while few of his neighbors, even though they had attended high school or college, were as well off financially. The father did not admit that the farm had been given to him by his father. Feelings of over-compensation, jealousy, and fear were evident in the father's statements that "all high school pupils are smart-alecks and think they know more than anyone else". While, unfortunately there is a little justification for this attitude, it was not at all an adequate basis for the father's position nor for his refusal to permit the boy to take correspondence courses or take full-time courses in an agricultural extension program. Obviously, the situation made for tension between the father and son.

A long time was required to discover the cause of the difficulty another boy was having. He would say the

words on his word cards, on the board, and in the reader when pointed out individually, but -- when some of the same words appeared in a sentence he was reading -- he would become confused and stop. When the word was pronounced for him, he would become even more confused. His embarrassment worried the other children. Several different things, among them defective vision, were thought to be the cause of his trouble, but each, in turn, was ruled out. His mother visited school often and cooperated very well. The discovery was finally made that fear of making a mistake worried the boy until he could not think. He felt everything he did must be perfect. For a time after this discovery, he was removed from class participation. He was taught at home by his mother, and was helped at school by two or three of the pupils and the teacher. By these means, he was gradually brought back into the class successfully.

Another emotional problem was that of a little boy whose father had met his death in an accident the previous year. Due to the excitement at the time, the boy had looked upon the badly mutilated body of his father. The mother reported that the boy had appeared normal in every way before the accident but, following the loss of the father, the boy had just sat and stared straight ahead.

as though in a daze. He always appeared rigid and expressionless. If he were asked to respond, he would; but on the following day, he remembered little, if any, of what he had recited previously.

Several of these children spoke often of severe punishments at home. When some child was guilty of misconduct, the children felt that child should be whipped hard. On one occasion, practically all, if not every child, had violated a hard-and-fast rule laid down by the principal. They asked the teacher to whip them all hard. When she asked them who would receive the greater punishment, they or she, they suggested that the principal whip them. Then they suggested that the teacher and the principal take turns at the whipping so that neither one would become too tired. They seemed to believe that whipping for an offense "washed the slate clean, and they could start anew again".

One day one of the boys said, "When my daddy straps me", then he trembled and said no more. Some mornings he came to school trembling so badly he could scarcely hold anything in his hands. When he was asked to tell what he saw in a picture, he would answer with one word. When he was urged to tell more, he might respond, "He got hat". By way of encouragement, he was promised a new book if he completed the book he was then reading by the following

Friday; but the principal changed the afternoon schedule, and the promise was forgotten. When the teacher realized this, she called the mother to explain why the boy had not received his book. His mother stated the boy had come home, crying bitterly. He had wailed, "She promised me a book, but I knew I wouldn't get it. I knew I wouldn't." When he did stop crying, he just sat in a daze and would not go out to play until he was told by his mother that his new book was in his desk at school.

A girl who cared for her three little brothers at home was so anxious to please others that she often acted impulsively. She was so sensitive that, at even the mildest word of reproof, she would burst into tears and cry for some time. This worried the other children, and upset her even progress.

Another little girl, not of the white race, was forced to try to conform to two opposing standards of conduct, one at home and the other at school. Often she became sullen and stubborn, refusing to take part in any activity.

One boy could not see why he should learn to read. He was "just going to be a farmer anyway". Two girls whose mothers were employed away from home did almost anything to gain attention from others, especially adults and older children. On the play-ground, each tried to

hold the hand of the teacher most of the time, saying, "My teacher".

One little boy who was very inattentive was cold, hungry, undernourished, insecure, and possessed diseased tonsils. Even when the weather was cold, the child wore only a shirt, a pair of trousers, and a pair of shoes. For outside wear, he added a jacket. The buttons which held his suspenders in place were gone, and, occasionally, he lost the pin which he used for this purpose and had to hold his trousers up by hand. His older brothers often took part of his personal possessions, such as a string from his shoe or a pencil, when either brother did not have what he wanted. It did him no good to try to persuade his brothers not to take his belongings or to fight to recover them. His mother gave each of her several children the same amount of food, but this boy needed more than he received. He coughed almost constantly. The school nurse said his cough was due to the diseased condition of his tonsils, but they could not be removed until the weather became warm. After enough clothing had been supplied to keep the boy warm, and after he had had enough nourishment to build up his body, he was able to pay attention and was ready to begin to learn.

More than half of the children rode to school on buses and, during bad weather, were absent much of the

time. One of the big problems of the school was that of discovering ways of helping the pupils who had been absent to make up the work missed when they returned to school.

READING AND DELINQUENCY

The relationship between retarded ability in reading on the one hand and truancy and delinquency on the other is receiving much attention from school authorities and juvenile court attaches at the present time. It seems to this writer, that there is considerable confused thinking about this relationship. Keliher (20, p.6), among many others, shows that there are large numbers of poor readers among truants and delinquents. One cannot well state, however, that the poor reading ability is more a cause of delinquency than delinquency and truancy are causes of poor reading ability. While the latter (20, p.6) has been shown to bring about emotional involvements that foster truancy and delinquency, it is much more probable that poor home conditions, poor general emotional adjustment, and poor mentality are the causes of both.

Delinquent children often feel rejected and unworthy. Unless this feeling can be overcome during childhood and youth, it is carried over into adult life.

The rejected persons, and often the rejection exists only in the minds of the persons who feel it, feel resentful toward others who do well in anything. They may, and often do, think the successes of others are due to the fact that the other persons can read well and they can not. They often feel the school has cheated them because they cannot read well, even though it is their own deficient mentality, lack of effort, poor attitude, and frequent absences that are the real causes of the trouble. The attitude often taken is that, "since the school has not played fair with me, I will not play fair with the school"; and such pupils will refuse to try to learn to read or to do any other school work well. They often rationalize that other and older people have done well without educations and that there is no reason for "their wasting their time and effort in school".

IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING TO READ WELL

Every normal young child wants to learn to read. When difficulties present themselves, he cannot diagnose these difficulties and apply the necessary means of correction. Unless help is given very soon after a trouble presents itself, the difficulty usually becomes greater and more widespread and, eventually, becomes serious. Each stage in the total reading program presents

new activities and new problems. Because a child reads well in the primary grades, there is no assurance that he will read well in the intermediate or upper grades; neither is poor progress in reading in the primary grades an absolute indication that the child cannot learn to read at all. Each stage of reading presents new problems and difficulties which must be met as they arise.

Individual help for each child needing help in learning to read, even though it may be only encouragement and approval, is necessary. Just as a physician would not think of writing one prescription for all of his patients, a teacher should not use one method of procedure in teaching reading to all of her beginning pupils. Teachers must realize that all "beginning pupils" are not in the first grade. Pupils who cannot read at all are often found in the second grade. A lesser number is found in the third grade; some, even, are found in the fourth grade. Some of the non-readers are especially sensitive about their failures, and when some other child makes some remark about the child's sore spot, he becomes antagonistic toward the offender -- and difficulties arise.

It is true that each elementary teacher has, or should have, prepared herself to recognize and correct the problems arising in the teaching of reading. The main responsibility for the teaching of her pupils does rest on

her, but not the entire responsibility, contrary to some published statements, e.g., that of Gray (14, p.9) who wrote: "But the school alone is responsible for the teaching of reading; and, if it does not teach reading well, it may be held strictly and severely to account for its failure. School patrons are, perhaps, in a better position to judge the effectiveness of the reading program than any other phase of school work. Parents may observe the interest their children take in reading, the degree to which they use reading around the home, the types of materials they want to read, the satisfaction and the enjoyment they get from reading, and their general attitude toward the place of reading in the social order." While Gray's position appeals to this writer as extreme, none-the-less, the schools and the teachers should do all that they can with the means available and the time during which they have the pupil.

Gray (15, p.13) wrote further, however: "Parents should not only be interested in the progress of their children in school but they should consult with the teacher about it, be ready to have necessary physical examinations made to help the children, and assist in the actual teaching of the children at home if they can and will do this to the improvement of the children's progress. If this is done well, it not only assists the

child in school but brings parents and children closer together."

Some parents and even some teachers are inclined to believe that lack of attention on the part of the pupil is the chief cause of his inability to learn to read, but it is possible that the child cannot pay attention because of inability to see -- sometimes even the pictures shown -- or to hear what either the teacher or the other pupils say. Perhaps the child has poor general health and is too tired to concentrate on the task at hand. Perhaps he suffers from malnutrition. He may have poor speech equipment or poor speech habits or speak a foreign language at home. The child may suffer from emotional instability caused by worries at home over financial or other problems or he may feel insecure or rejected. He may even have poor intelligence and be utterly incapable of grasping the meaning of the reading material presented. Even when the pupil has none of these obstacles, he may be naturally slow in development. Hurrying such a child generally leads to emotional problems.

Bock (6, p.195-7) wrote that the teacher who is quietly observing the children at work may not only be learning about their habits, attitudes, and abilities but may also be participating in the group activities for she is there when needed. She may give a word of encourage-

ment, or ask a question which gives a pupil confidence in his ability to continue what he has begun. Her interest may be the sustaining factor that carries a project through to successful completion.

SIGNIFICANCE OF SOME OF THE PROBLEMS OF COMPREHENSION IN READING

The teacher realizes that every child is a unique individual, ready for learning at a different time from every, or probably every, other child of his chronological age. She also knows that some children will apparently be just sitting in school, taking no particular interest in anything there and, suddenly, will awake and read. Keliher (20, p.149) has written: "The apparent suddenness with which reading comes to many children indicates that it is akin to the Gestalt, the readiness to put a complicated combination of factors together and have them spring into a concept that makes sense". The teacher also realizes that this sudden awakening may not take place for a year or more and, in some cases, never even though the child's intelligence quotient is high and he takes an active interest in other phases of school work.

It does not appear to the writer of this thesis that many teachers or supervisors can have assumed, as sometimes charged, a "laissez-faire attitude" about the teaching of reading; many actual teachers know that many

children who are not ready to read have been forced to try to read. The principal of the school in which the writer of this thesis taught a few years ago said to her, "It seems to me to do justice to this group of pupils, you should have at least a dozen different reading groups here. What will you do with the eleven groups while you work with the twelfth group?" Teachers are, however, confronted with pupils -- in town schools, generally from thirty to fifty in a grade -- whom they are supposed to teach to read or to guide into the basic skills which they may or may not have acquired. The teacher cannot possibly know just when each child is ready to read nor can she teach each child when he is ready, should she know when each one is ready. She is forced to place several children together in each of several groups, trying to make each group as homogeneous as possible.

Certain changes in the school curriculum, wisely or unwisely established as they may be, have made the problems of teaching reading more acute now than they were in the past. In many schools, reading is no longer a subject in itself beyond the fourth grade. It is held to be taught incidentally and as a means of gaining information and understanding in other fields of learning. A child must be able to read if he is to be successful and happy, but less provision than in decades past is being made to teach him to read.

Changes outside of the school, too, have made it necessary (15, p.11) for children to read more widely. Once, many activities were carried on within the home and the children had first-hand experiences with various activities about which they now must read if they are to build up the conceptual background necessary to know many things and to read with understanding. When the school program was more limited and the pupils' lives outside of the school were much richer than they now are, the school did not have quite the problem of reading-readiness that it has today. With less motivation and less background experience outside of the school today, the school itself must make more provision for these valuable factors in reading experience.

The situation is further complicated, however, in that today practically all children have access to the radio, movies, comic books and strips, and other means of entertainment and information of a sort which often contributes little or nothing to their interest or skill in reading. Witty (33, p.109) stated all of these forms of amusement are actuated by the same motives and that no one of them can be dealt with singly. North (23, p.16-17) has written that much of the best selling fiction is based on the principle of identification, the strongest attraction in literature, and that children are more

likely to identify themselves with fictional characters than adults are. According to Muhlen (22, p.83-86), some psychologists believe that certain children from early childhood to adolescence identify themselves with the characters about whom they read, especially irresponsible "stooge" characters who have handed all their powers and hopes to a superior human being. Others claim that the reader identifies himself with the hero or the protege of the hero. The crucial question in this controversy is whether these forms of amusement present fantasy or fact, dreams or reality, play or lessons. Muhlen reports (22, p.80) that Viscount Samuel has stated that "Crime is now entertainment, and murder a parlor game". Judging from the present-day books, radio programs, and "comics", it seems "as if we were all engaged in a slightly hysterical parlor game, the object of which is to scare the living day-lights out of the assembled party".

The battle of the comic books has developed into a civil war among psychologists and psychiatrists, since both the accusers and the defendants are psychologists and psychiatrists. Comic book publishers have retained as advisers many of the psychiatrists, educators, and child psychologists most active in defense of comic books. Clinical and social observations are scarce and theoretical

interpretations are usually based on general assumptions and, as a rule, are restricted to non-representative numbers of cases. Contradictory conclusions are delivered with a certainty based on conviction rather than on verifiable truths.

Bender (3, p.223-6) concluded that the "comics", like the folk-lore of other times, stimulate the children's fantasy lives and help them solve the individual and sociological problems inherent in their living. Muhlen (22, p.85) stated that the analogy between these two forms of entertainment does not hold for two reasons: first, because fairy tales are removed both in time and dimension from the world in which the child actually lives while the stories of mass entertainment take place in his present-day world and are acted by apparently realistic characters in the child's environment; and, second, children tire of fairy tales repeated too often but the present-day media, repeated with variations again and again, become part of his daily living.

Bender (3, p.226) admits that, in the "comics", good ultimately triumphs over evil; but Muhlen (22, p.85), in answer to this statement, cites the case of a pig-woman, who in sixty-two different cartoons, slew men for money and was herself executed in the sixty-fourth cartoon. In another "comic" series, a half-naked girl who looked like

the poorest man's pin-up girl was crushed by an airplane, whipped by men, attacked by beasts, and was finally rescued by a blonde man in a bathing-suit. He remarked, "Pah, you silly woman, this lumbering rhino stalks better than you". In another instance, a wounded man begged his comrades to wait for him. One wished to "let him croak"; another said that "he would squeal if taken"; a third said "he would tell enough to fry us if taken, so 'let him have it'". Conflict and aggression, through repetition day after day, (22, p.85) become too permissible and a child may either feel guilt on account of his own hostile impulses or replace guilt with an underdeveloped conscience. One may wonder how "ultimately" is Bender's (3, p.226) "ultimately".

Tide Publishing Company (31, p.43) reports a study, allegedly probing more widely and deeply into the readership of comic magazines than any previous research, and made on a representative cross-section of the population of Dayton, Ohio. In the age-group above thirty-one years, 35.4% of the males and 25.6% of the females regularly read "comic books"; in the age-group between 21 and 30, 42.9% of the males and 51% of the females were regular readers of this type of book. In the age-group between 15 and 20, 81.7% of the males and 70.7% of the females read the "comics" regularly. In the age-group between

8 and 14, 96.5% of the males and 94.7% of the females were regular readers of "comic books".

Witty (33, p.82) described a study made on two groups of children in one school, one group composed of children who read the "comics" regularly and the other group composed of children who seldom read the "comics". Surprisingly to some of us, the reading patterns of the two groups showed little difference in the amount or the nature of the reading, other than the amounts of time given to their reading of the "comics". One cannot yet generalize about the needs of children from a single factor such as maximum or minimum amounts of reading in this area, or any area, however. The problem of creating desirable reading habits can be solved only after appraising each child's reading program and progress. For some children, a small amount of reading of the "comics" may be excessive. With others, and when viewed in terms of an otherwise well-rounded program, a large amount could scarcely be considered harmful. Advisement about desirable reading habits and the "comics" should be based upon a more extensive and thorough study of each child's needs in reading and his attempts to satisfy those needs.

Wertham (32, p.48) accused the "comic" books of suggesting criminal or sexually abnormal ideas to children;

of creating an atmosphere of deceit, trickery, and cruelty; and, in some cases, of promoting racial hatred. Although he called for action against the "comic books", he did not advocate censorship.

Young (35, p.5-39) wrote that "since 'comic books' do have a far-reaching appeal to children, greater use should be made of them in the teaching of reading". She suggested the following uses: reading readiness (Blondie and Gasoline Alley), remedial reading, vocabulary use, discussions, recognition of colors, art work, clubs, music appreciation, and dramatization; but North (23, p.16), on the other hand, wrote -- with almost complete justification -- that the "comics" are badly drawn, badly written, and badly printed. Their crude reds and blacks spoil the child's natural sense of color and they are a strain on young eyes and young nervous systems. Gruenberg (16, p.205) wrote -- rather gently -- that, as art, many of the "comics" are crude. They are chiefly drawn in blacks and whites, reds and greens for 'go and stop signals', and make little attempt at gray, to say nothing of subtler tones and tints.

North (23, p.17) called attention to the fact that, if the use of comic strips is to be discontinued or lessened, a good substitute must be provided. The antidote, he believed, can be found in any good library or

book-store. He believed that experiences shared by adults through reading aloud in the family circle, through family theatricals, and through family group study could lead children naturally into the great works of literature. Later (23, p.36) he wrote that the substitution without adequate explanation and substantiation of good books for cheap "comics" had not achieved desirable results in some cases. He, therefore, suggested the natural discipline imposed by the handling of materials, for example, showing that clay dishes structurally defective will collapse. A sandpile, weaving, finger-painting, art-gum blocks, and other materials will help children to learn that Nature has certain inexorable laws which cannot be broken without harmful consequences. From such a discipline and challenge, he believed, children can be taught to move into the fields of art and literature which will provide more satisfactory lives than the "comics", radio, and television will by themselves.

Gruenberg (16, p.185-9) wrote that scarcely a home has been left untouched by the radio, and that family relations have been and will continue to be affected by this intruder. Boys and girls of all ages listen regularly to it and select chiefly the programs in which mystery, horror, and slap-jack comedy predominate. Some parents say that the programs are emotionally extreme and that

the children are made nervous and develop fears as a result of taking these emotionally nonsensical programs seriously. Complaints are made, too, about the poor language of many of the programs, the sentimentality, bad taste, false ideals, unsound teaching, and the substitution of passive entertainment for activities which are wholesome and helpful. Many problems arise in this connection; whether parents shall forbid the objectionable programs; what shall be done when listening interferes with routine duties; and what shall be done when different members of the family cannot agree on the choice of a program. Neither the radio nor the children's listening to it can be eliminated by force or other similar control.

Blumer (5, p.1) has written that students of human behavior state that motion pictures are a means of satisfying in a vicarious and harmless fashion pent-up impulses which otherwise might take a more dangerous form of expression and that they occasion a sort of mental catharsis; but others hold them accountable for acts of crime, delinquency, and a general weakening of moral standards. It is generally conceded that the same picture will have different effects on the strong and on the weak persons who see it.

Hedges (18, p.35-6) believed that since it is a part of the teachers' job to teach pupils to discriminate

among good and poor reading materials, they should teach their pupils discrimination in their choices of motion pictures. She believed that there should be better cooperation between the home and the school and between the movie proprietors and the social agencies.

Many teachers are finding the movies, the radio, and the "comics" a real hindrance to the child and to the school. Some children think they "must" see every change of show and, thus, do not get the required amount of sleep and, as a consequence, are sleepy, listless, and inattentive at school. Quite a few children carry their "funnies" to school with them as regularly as they themselves come. Their "comics" are regularly exchanged for those of other children, and most children have access to all of the books circulated about the schoolroom. Even though a child cannot read enough to obtain the content of his "treasure", he will slip it from the desk and look at the pictures when he should be studying his lessons. He takes the book to older children or even adults to have them read to him, laughs at the adventures of the so-called heroes, and imagines that he is one of them. The vocabulary used in many of the comic books is not that of his real life, either inside or outside of school. As a result, the words he is learning from them become a hindrance to his progress in school. When the child comes

from the world of over-strenuous action and impossible adventure -- with its thefts, hair-splitting escapes, and even murder -- into the more placid atmosphere of the schoolroom, he finds little to arouse and sustain his interest. Instead of trying to become interested in the activities there, he often dreams of the adventures of his "hero" and may allow the years of opportunity to acquire an education to slip from him. Many children never become weaned from the "comic" books. They are their "intellectual" diet and continue to be, even after adulthood is reached. If nothing else in the daily paper is looked at, the "comic" strips must be absorbed. As parents, they are likely to have little, if any, understanding of the school or sympathy with its problems in connection with their own children.

From the foregoing discussion it is evident that the problem of the "comic" books and strips, the radio and television, can be and often is a real problem -- a manifestation of an attempt to solve feelings of unrest within the individual himself. While some persons would place the burden of this problem upon the school, others would place it upon the home; but it is not the sole task of any individual or of any group of individuals. It is a challenge for every adult, especially every educator and every parent. It can be met only through a systematic

and scientific study of the needs of children and the ways of successfully satisfying those needs.

In addition, since so many homes are equipped with modern conveniences, many children do not have opportunities to learn to work at home. Some person or some modern appliance has always done their work for them, and they do not expect to have to work when they come to school. They come to be entertained, and great is their disappointment when they find that work is expected of them. Since the need for work is not felt by the children, the teacher must try to help them find a motive for work. The children expect to pick up a book and tell a story about a picture, thinking this is reading, but, often, when they find that reading means memorizing words, groups of words, and sentences, recognizing each whenever they see it and getting meaning from the printed page, their interest wanes. They find learning to read dull and tiresome. Keeping each of so many different individuals interested and trying to put forth their best efforts often require more ingenuity than the most skillful teacher possesses. Quite a few of the children are willing to work but, lacking any experience in it, they do not know how.

At present, all of the children of all of the people are allegedly in school. More than ever before, there is

a strong tendency to push the less linguistically able pupils along with others of their own chronological ages. This is held to be justifiable on the basis that children of the same ages have many interests in common. As it now is, when children of widely different mental and emotional ages are in the same classroom, the less linguistically able children, pushed along with the more capable children, are usually willing to sit back and allow the other pupils to do all of the reciting and other work of the classroom. There is grave danger in promoting a child who has never attained anything through his own efforts. When a child has accomplished something himself or has achieved his goal, he feels a just pride in his attainment. He feels the joy of success, an elation which spurs him on to greater accomplishments. He is often willing or even anxious to study out something else for himself and to attack new problems. When he cannot accomplish his purpose, he seeks help; but he does not want someone else to take away his chance to do that on which he has set his mind. Smith (27, p.52) wrote:

"Children must be closely associated with other children in order to learn to work with them. Most people must work with others, and each individual should be guided in learning how to adapt himself to group work. A small child tires of one activity carried on by himself and

either lags or quits. When there is harmony in the group, each child produces more and better work." On the other hand, the pupil who fails to attain on a parity with the rest of the class is likely to expect more and more from others and less and less from himself. As more and more is done for him, he fails to appreciate the efforts of others. He takes their gifts for granted and, sooner or later, not only accepts but demands service from others. He frequently gets to the place where he actually believes the services and commodities he needs or desires are due him. A pupil, passed from grade to grade, merely to be with others of his own chronological age and who has depended upon the efforts of others, runs the grave danger of never being a producer. When the time comes for him to maintain himself, he is comparatively helpless in terms of training and emotional maturity.

One of the weaknesses in the thinking of the advocates of automatic annual promotion is that children on the playground play only with the pupils in their own classrooms. Obviously to any observer of children on a playground, this is not the situation. Another weakness in their thinking is that, when older children are in the same classroom with younger children, the former have feelings of inferiority or antagonism against the school.

It is questionable whether or not this is more probable or more provocative of greater emotionality than being hopelessly out of the activities of the class and not understanding what the class is doing unless the disparity is very great and unless the children have been allowed to make adverse comments without being restrained. Moreover, if proper grade placement is taken as a matter of course and if all of the teachers attack vigorously any attitude or remarks unfavorable to older children in classes with younger children, the emotionality of the situation can be reduced to such a small amount that it is of little real importance.

Each state, generally through its own state department of education, determines the minimum educational standards for the elementary and the secondary accredited schools of the state. These standards are necessary for the well-being of society itself. The school must provide not only for teaching the individuals the requirements of the present age, but it must help those individuals to determine measuring sticks for future progress. The schools sometimes do not let their left hands know what their right hands are doing. The state or other unit sets up minimum standards of accomplishment for each grade, and individual schools disregard them entirely by automatic promotions.

Since many children have not attained the standards set up for the grade in which they are placed, they are frequently divided into A and B, or A, B, and C groups according to their several abilities and interests.

The teacher often makes more groups than she can teach well, and the problem of a better grouping of pupils for instructional purposes must be considered. Every grade has some slow-learning pupils. Children must, or should be, grouped according to their abilities in learning and their willingness to work and to learn; but there is a limit to what any teacher can do.

Robinson (24, p.16) somewhat glowingly wrote: "The schools of America are dedicated to the task of educating all children of school age, whether they are the so-called 'normal' or the 'atypical' learners. To this end, provisions have long been made for special education of the blind; the deaf; the physically handicapped; and those with health, nutritional, and other deficiencies. However, there is a much larger atypical group composed of boys and girls, most of whom are intellectually average or superior, who fail to learn to read or whose reading is so inadequate that learning through reading is impossible. Estimates of the number of these retarded readers vary from five to twenty per cent of the school population, depending upon the definition adopted. Such

pupils have significant potentialities for learning if proper conditions are provided. Unfortunately, however, educational facilities in a large number of schools are entirely unsuited to these learners and, as a result, they make little or no progress in academic learning."

During the first decades of this century, poor readers were considered to be intellectually dull, and many of them dropped out of school rather than face continued failure. Between 1920 and 1940, the use of intelligence tests showed clearly that some bright pupils were not learning to read. At first, psychologists and educators were unable to accept the fact. As a result of early studies made by physicians and ophthalmologists, the belief became popular that the discrepancy between intelligence and reading achievement was caused by alexia or word-blindness. Unfortunately, this diagnosis served only to relieve many teachers of their responsibilities for teaching these pupils to read. This view, however, was short-lived because experimentation with methods of teaching poor readers soon demonstrated that the majority of them could learn to read if proper learning conditions were available. Schmeiding (25, p.37) stated: "Dyslexia, (inability to learn to read) in its broadest sense, embraces all impediments that keep children from learning to read.

The staff of the institute has carried on its activities in behalf of children or adults who have an intelligence quotient of eight-five or higher but who have failed to learn to read or who were so retarded in reading that this retardation interfered severely with an adequate and normal life in home, school, and society. They have taken a broad view of the matter and believe that the question of a competent staff for the diagnosis and recommendation of treatment is one of great importance. Such a staff has immediate and direct need of a person skilled in internal medicine; specialists in the diseases of eye, ear, nose, and throat; a psychiatrist skilled in determining parent-teacher relationships; a psychologist trained in psychometry; a social worker skilled in advising families of all levels of economic and social status; a voice teacher, who is an artist rather than a drillmaster; and educators and teachers who have special interest in and experience in remedial instruction."

This institute was, of course, a special school with a larger percentage of problem cases than the public schools; but the public schools could study the organization and purposes of the institute to find the parts which they could use advantageously.

ANALYSIS OF THE SKILLS REQUIRED IN BEGINNING TO READ

Boney (7, p.169) has stated that: "The public has come to believe that entrance to the first grade means learning to read". Few people would wish to change this view. A few years ago in many schools, the child was presented with a new word, a group of words, or a sentence which he was supposed to memorize on the first day of school. Each succeeding day more words or sentences were added to this list. Now, in many schools, no attempt is made to introduce the child to formal reading on the first day of school. The first six weeks in the first grade, ordinarily, are devoted to various activities that determine the state of pupils' reading readiness or the fact that he is or is not ready to begin to read from the printed page. Most authorities (17, p.16) (14, p.8-31) on reading seem to agree that the following are highly important in pupils' degrees of readiness to begin to learn to read:

"(1) The child should have good health so that he can give the attention necessary for guidance in learning to read. He should be physically alert and able to resist fatigue as well as others in his group. He should be well developed and have good posture. He should be well nourished and free from all physical handicaps

which can be remedied. Each child expecting to enter school in the fall should be given a physical examination the preceding spring. This gives parents a chance to have physical defects corrected. Occasionally, in a group of children a teacher will find one or more who tire easily and who, by the end of the day, appear utterly exhausted. Such children are too tired to pay attention, and can not learn as well as those who can concentrate on the activities of the school.

(2) He should have at least average social adjustment and emotional stability so that he can work and play with other children, assuming responsibilities and respecting the rights of others.

(3) He should be able to recognize ideas, see simple relationships, perceive sequences, and take part in simple problem-solving activities. He should be able to hold to a topic under discussion, and not ramble in relating an observation and experience.

(4) He should be able to grasp the meanings of pictures seen and passages read. He should be able to talk freely about pictures in his books and to tell some of his own experiences. He should be able to ask questions about new things he sees. Often, even though the picture presented contains only things familiar to all children in the group, there will be several who

apparently have never noticed similar objects and who can not relate any of their own experiences to the group. Sometimes, even the more alert pupils fail to ask questions about things they do not understand in a picture or story.

(5) He should understand the language of the beginning reading books and use the words found in the text in his own sentences. He should not be confused by various types of simple sentences. He should be able to enunciate clearly and to pronounce accurately the words he uses. He should attempt to use new words and varied forms of simple sentences. Using varied forms of simple sentences seems to be one of the most difficult things for children at second grade level to do. He should have few infant preservations of speech, and his English should be reasonably grammatical and free from slang. Vocabulary problems, with some groups, seem to be the main difficulty. Many pupils will pronounce a word readily but, when questioned about it, will have no idea of its meaning. In one second-grade group, only two pupils could compose their own sentences using the word "both". Objects, drawings, pictures, explanations, action, and other devices are often necessary in helping the child to get the meaning of the word. Words which have caused difficulty should be listed by the teacher

and reviewed often. Many children have difficulty in understanding a sentence in which the subject is not given first, followed by a predicate. Sentences, such as "How large the dog is!", "'Oh, good, good!', said Mary", or "'A cinder!'" said John, "'A cinder! What is a cinder?'" confuse them. Before such sentences are encountered in the book, they should be presented on the board by the teacher during conversation periods. Few children voluntarily attempt to use new words or varied forms of sentences. These should be used in various types of activities and in seat work until the pupils are familiar with them. Correcting infant preservations of speech is usually an individual matter.

(6) He should be able to concentrate on the activities involved in learning to read for a reasonable length of time. He should be able to understand and follow simple directions and work with reasonable independence on simple projects. Concentration is hard to achieve. Beginners can concentrate for only a few minutes at a time. Their study periods should be short, and a study period should be followed by a period in which there is some muscular activity. Gradually, as pupils learn to concentrate, the periods can be lengthened. Directions for work to be done by the children must be very simple and easily understood.

(7) He should have sufficient sensory ability to insure accurate visual and auditory discrimination of words. Words such as "want" and "went", "saw" and "was", and "where" and "there" are easily confused by children. When words are presented orally, the teacher should be careful to pronounce the word distinctly and enunciate it clearly in a sentence. She should listen to see that each child pronounces and enunciates each word correctly, helping those who have any difficulty. If the word "want" is given first, it is a good plan to show the pupils the difference in sounds when the word "went" is presented. The difference should be shown in both the printed and the written forms. Both should be reviewed together often.

(8) The child's motor control should be sufficient to make the adjustments necessary in learning to read. He should be able to coordinate hand and eye movements with reasonable skill; should be able to keep his place in reading; and should have a reasonable amount of rhythmic ability in moving his eyes from left to right and back again. Some teachers do not allow children to use place-markers under the lines being read at all. Some allow only first grade pupils to use markers, but some children seem to need markers even longer than that. If a child makes an honest effort to keep his

place and seems unable to do so without a place-marker, he should be allowed to use it as long as he needs it. Some children will read phrases and sentences from the board or from cards very well, but, when they try to read from the printed page, seem to lack in rhythm. Drills in phrase and sentence reading should be continued as long as the child really needs them. Often, the child who lacks rhythm is not getting the meaning of what he is trying to read. He needs more explanation, questioning, and directions-to-follow to insure that he is getting the meaning.

(9) He should enjoy handling books, looking at pictures, and listening to stories read or told to him. He should be interested in learning to read, be curious about the meaning of symbols, and should try to identify words. He should be able to read lines from memory or from picture clues. He should make up simple stories about pictures, and should enjoy stories told by a sequence of pictures.

(10) He should have a degree of maturity represented by a mental age of six or more, and sufficient mental alertness to make reasonable progress in reading. The reading readiness period may be delayed in terms of chronological or emotional age. When this is the situation, even though the mental age is sufficient, the child should

be placed in the most suitable grade or group. He should be interested in simple reading activities and should be thoughtful when he is reading. He should acquire skill in interpreting the pictures and relating what he has seen. He should learn to recognize fifty or more words as words and in thought units. He should try to follow directions and to apply the ideas given in reading. These things should be learned during what is termed the pre-primer period. When he can do these things reasonably well, he is ready for the primer stage in reading. Quite a few children seem to need more time for interpreting pictures and relating stories about them, and it is advisable to have an extra number of pictures for such children. Most children seem to require quite a few exercises in following directions, and more yet in applying ideas given in the reading material. Time spent in such activities in the pre-reading and pre-primer stages is not time lost. It will yield large results, especially as children must become more independent in their reading. Many and varied forms of exercises in which the children learn to recognize the words of the basic vocabulary are necessary. The teacher should have access to some form of duplicating machine so she can make the necessary copies for the children. It is difficult to find books which employ the same words as

those of the basic text."

During the primer period, the child should acquire greater ability in those skills already partly developed during the preceding two periods of time in the first grade. He should be interested in learning to read better, and should find more pleasure in the material read, should pay better attention to the content of the story, and should follow the sequence of ideas better than he did previously. He should be able to use the words of the primer with more ease. He should acquire a larger reading vocabulary, and he should begin to notice the initial consonants and the more frequently-occurring elements in words. He should establish more accurate left-to-right eye movements, move more accurately and quickly from one line to the next, and begin to decrease lip movement.

During the first-reader stage, he should want to read more widely, and to interpret longer sentences. He should learn to find statements to support a point under discussion, to read silently for enjoyment, and to follow directions commensurate with his age and experience. He should acquire more skill in reading words in thought-units, and should acquire greater ability in recognizing new words from the context.

During the second and third years he should improve all of the basic skills in reading acquired during the first year. He should find, and try to read stories for himself. He should bring clippings from newspapers to read to the children or to put on the bulletin-board. He should be able to explain the speech and action of characters in simple stories and to compare the activities of story characters with his own activities. He should be more skillful in simple types of word analysis, and increasingly more independent in word recognition. He should read silently with few or no lip movements, and he should read orally with reasonable accuracy, ease, and expression.

The primary grades are often known as the period of rapid progress in reading. Reading instruction in those grades is intended to arouse interest in books; to give the pupil mastery of the elementary mechanics of reading; and to establish the desirable habits, attitudes, and skills. It is also known as the period in which pupils learn to read, whereas, in the higher grades they read to learn. The pupils should extend their experiences through wider reading. They should establish interest in worth-while material, and should learn to use reading skills effectively in study. In each succeeding grade, they should develop further their basic reading habits

and skills, reading with an increasing rate in silent reading and making appropriate adjustments in rate to the type of material being read. They should develop greater general ability in using books.

During the intermediate grades also (34, p.4-6), the principal purpose in the improvement of reading skill is the development of greater interest in worth-while reading material and the fostering of habits of reading for both pleasure and information. A second purpose is that of enriching the child's experiences and enlarging his vocabulary so that he can build concepts from the materials read; recognize some words; and be able to pronounce, to spell, and to give at least some correct meaning to each word he uses. A third aim is the promotion of study skills, such as locating information; following more complicated directions; remembering both important ideas and significant details, and being able to support these ideas; and adjusting his reading rate to the purpose for which the material is being read and to the difficulty of the material.

A fourth purpose (34, p.4-6) is that of improving the child's oral reading abilities. While oral reading in the intermediate grades is not given the emphasis that it is in the primary grades, it should not be ignored to the extent that is so common today. A fifth

purpose is the development of the child's ability to make effective use of the indexes, glossaries, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other study helps. If the child is to become a successful independent student, he must learn to use reference material and other study helps and must become accustomed to using them. A part of the responsibility for this rests with the intermediate grade teachers, and the training should be systematic and extensive.

When a child enters the intermediate grades, he is usually faced with several new experiences. Instead of a few textbooks, he often has two or three for each of several subjects. The situation may be bewildering and discouraging unless he is given sufficient guidance to enable him to make successful adjustments to the new situation.

DIAGNOSIS OF DIFFICULTIES IN BEGINNING TO READ

Probably, the greatest difficulty encountered by any teacher of reading in either the primary or the intermediate grades is the lack of attention on the part of the pupils. Some pupils do not listen to the explanations given by the teacher. This inattention on the part of the pupils may be due to their physical conditions. Some children do not pay attention because

of lack of a sufficient background of experience. They have not been in the habit of listening to stories, looking at books, or observing and talking about things seen. Class discussions go "right over their heads" and, as a result, such children can not do very well in comparison with the average children of the group. They should, if possible, be segregated in another group in which they can be given the more elementary work needed. Sometimes the pupils do not pay attention because the explanation is not clear to them. There may be words or expressions or directions to follow which they do not understand. Sometimes they do not pay attention because of frequent interruptions by other pupils in the group or from sources outside their own schoolroom. Some pupils are socially immature and feel ill at ease others who know more and can tell more with greater ease than they can. They may feel insecure and afraid to try. Some pupils pay attention as long as they are allowed to do the talking and the performing but, when some other pupil is reciting, they pay no attention. Some have formed the habit of not paying attention at home until pressure is brought to bear on them in some way.

In every class of any size, there are always some who seem incapable of following directions. This may be due to lack of clearness on the part of the teacher in

giving directions, to pupil failure to comprehend the meaning of the instructions, or to laziness and inattention on the part of the pupil. A pupil who is in the habit of having everything done for him at home does not expect to do things for himself at school. Some pupils who get very little attention at home often try to get attention at school by not following the teacher's directions, thinking they will get individual attention. At times, this is carried to the point where the pupil is willing to take punishment to gain attention. Perhaps a child does not follow directions because of inability to hear what is said or to see the work presented. Many small children are far-sighted and can not focus their eyes on objects near at hand. Since they have, probably, never seen nearby objects clearly, they do not know that they are not seeing as well as the other children. If the teacher herself can not find the cause of the difficulty through observation and testing, it is a good plan to consult the school nurse or the parents. A few children are too tired or too weak to follow directions for any length of time. Some do not get enough rest and sleep, and some have so much excitement before retiring that they do not rest well. There may be other causes due to the physical condition of the child, but it is always a good plan for the teacher to try to eliminate such

causes before attempting to teach the children much about reading.

Most children want to take part in the activities of other children, but there are generally a few in the group who are willing just to sit and allow the others to do everything, often echoing parrot-like what has been said or done.

Some children do not read because they can not gain meaning from the context. Often, this is due to lack of recognition of a large number of words before attempting to read. Some pupils encounter so many unfamiliar words in the sentence that they can not gain any meaning from the context, in other words, their vocabularies are too limited for any reading. Children, during the first two or three years of school, should not meet more than one or two new words in any sentence. There should be many sentences with no new words. If the child is following the thread of the story or is reading for meaning, he can often guess what the word should be if only one unfamiliar word is found; but there are dangers of confusion and discouragement when many unfamiliar words are met not only in a sentence but in the whole lesson unless the lesson is prepared far in advance and studied several times. Some children seem naturally to group words which belong together, but some pupils develop the habit of

"calling words" and do not know that this is not reading. This is often due to the fact that the pupil does not readily recognize the "sight words" he should have learned previously or he has not reviewed them often enough. Some children resent any interference with "word calling", thinking that when they have said every word on a page they have read that page even though they cannot tell one idea expressed on it. Their goal is to say every word on the page and, when they have done that, they think they have attained their goal.

Some children do not read because they fail to observe. Practically every page in every book used in the primary grades for reading has one or more pictures to clarify the meaning of the words on the page, yet some children do not look at the pictures at all and some who do look see only objects -- each object a unit in itself. Such children cannot or will not see more than objects in a picture, and can not see the distinguishing features in the words or the object presented in the picture or an action represented by a word in its contextual setting. They cannot see any relationship between or among words, and have difficulty in memorizing a stock of "sight words" because they have so little meaning of any kind. Often, they become discouraged and express their feelings in such terms as,

"I am just too dumb to learn to read". They probably will not make such remarks, however, unless they have heard them from an adult or other child; but their own expression, at least, tells the way in which they feel.

Sometimes children fail to learn to read because of discouragement. They feel their own failures too keenly. They may have been advanced too rapidly. If they can not keep up with others in the class, they should be given more review in different forms or more reading in which the same vocabulary is used over and over, and they should be commended liberally for any work well done. Slow-learning children who really try should be praised for their efforts and accomplishments whenever it is possible to do so. Most children respond with increased effort to praise given for honest effort.

REMEDIAL READING

Many teachers of remedial subjects maintain that remedial teaching is only intensified or superior teaching, with much repetition and much drill work, which must be varied often in order that the pupils do not tire of it. At times, it may be necessary to seek the advice of other specialists in medicine, psychology, social work, or education. When a remedial plan for a pupil has been worked out, it is essential that all concerned with the

case know and understand the proposed plan and that each know his part in the plan as well as its step-by-step success or failure. If success is achieved, the methods employed may be used with others; if failure is encountered, other plans should be worked out.

(According to Dolch (11, p.21-23), poor readers retard the work of their classes and suffer great loss in happiness, self-confidence and security from their repeated failures. Failure in reading is especially damaging because everyone is expected to read. Children usually show a sense of failure by withdrawal, escape, self-assertion, boasting, belittling others, compensation, antagonism, resentment, belief in "I'm too dumb to learn to read", and even more serious disorders, such as marked anxiety, fear, and neuroses. Schmeiding (25, p.28) has stated that the result of failure is a flood of primitive and useless emotionalism in both child and parent.

Kirk (21, p.38) wrote that children who read at much slower rates than their classmates can be taught to read through understanding the vocabulary used, through re-establishing their confidence, and by drill. The period of each stage must be prolonged until the child is mentally ready for the particular stage into which he is advanced.

Dolch (11, p.24-25) has written that there are five steps in a remedial reading or remedial teaching procedure: (a) a return to the present actual reading level of the child; (b) the acquisition of a stock of sight-words to work with; (c) the ability to sound new words after an adequate sight-vocabulary has been acquired; (d) the development of comprehension when it is unsatisfactory; and (e) quantity reading of interesting material at the reading level of the child. Improvement can be made only at the present level and, if too difficult material is presented to the child, his learning is blocked. The size of the child's stock of sight-words can be determined by testing him with a basic list of sight-words. Dolch (11, p.205) gives a list of 220 words which make up from fifty to seventy-five per cent of all ordinary reading matter, and these words should be recognized instantly and at sight by all school children. The size of the sight-vocabulary is gradually increased by class oral reading, by individual help, and by specific word drill. If sounding is to be taught during reading, the teacher should call attention to one thing at a time, such as the way a word begins, and then supply the rest herself. If sounding is taught separately through sounding practice exercises, what the child has learned in the exercises should be put to use in the

reading. Sometimes (11, p.371) it seems, after trial, almost impossible to teach an adequate sight-vocabulary to some children, especially those of low mentality. Complete sounding without regard to sight vocabulary may be employed with such children. A child who can not tell what he has read must read short easy units and gradually work up to the regular textbook material. After the child is able to give the thought of what he has read, the teacher should help him select the more important things and show him that some ideas rather than others are more worth remembering. The child should be shown that reading can be fun, and he can be shown that reading is fun only when the material is interesting at a level at which he can read. Quantity reading develops ease by speeding up word-recognition, developing skill in using context, and improving comprehension.

Even the best (11, p.42-3) school systems will always have some remedial reading problems. There will never be an adequate supply of the ideal type of teacher. It is impossible, even when the reading program is motivated to the best of the teacher's ability, to secure the full pupil cooperation necessary if each child is to attain his maximum achievement. Other factors, for example, extensive absence from school due to sickness, moving of parents, and physical ailments

which do not yield to treatment, are almost always present also.

The problems of learning to read are many in number and varied in types. They arise from many causes. They may be mental, general physiological, special physiological, emotional, home background, prior experience, habits such as inattention, or inadequacies of the classroom itself. Where second-grade classes (for the purpose of this thesis) are of suitable size, e.g., twenty-five or fewer pupils, the skilled teacher can do a great deal to correct these faults. With the more complex or severer faults, the child may have to have assistance which is more skilled along certain special lines.

CHAPTER III

AN EXPERIMENTAL TRIAL OF CERTAIN REMEDIAL AND
STIMULATING METHODS OF TEACHING READING
IN THE SECOND GRADE

PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

The purposes of this study were: (a) to determine the status of each individual pupil in a second-grade class in various phases of the reading program, as measured by comprehension of words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and total comprehension at the beginning of the study period, (b) to find the areas of weakness and of strength for each individual pupil and to provide individual help which could be given to each pupil by himself, by other pupils, and by the teacher, (c) to determine the status of each member of the class at the close of the study period, and (d) to discover whether the methods used had helped and, if so, to what extent.

DESCRIPTION OF THE METHODS USED

The first part of this study was that of giving to each of these pupils the Chicago Reading Readiness Test, Form A1, at the beginning of the study period, October 11, 1949 and, second, at the close of the testing period to ascertain what changes, if any, had occurred in the

reading skills of the members of this group under the conditions under which they had been taught during the study period by administering of the Chicago Reading Test, Form A2, at the close of the period and comparing the results from the two tests.

The first six weeks of the school year were employed principally in helping the pupils to become adjusted to school after the summer vacation and in reviewing the work of the previous year. No reading was attempted during the first day of school, but on the second day the pupils were divided into two groups -- one with sixteen pupils, the other with fifteen. This was done to secure better attention from the pupils and to give more opportunity to watch the reactions of individual pupils. While one group was reciting, the other group was engaged in various seat-work activities. At the beginning of the term, various activities were generally assigned to the pupils. One of the activities was that of drawing objects mentioned in the reading lesson and coloring each as they wished to color it. Later the children were asked to color each picture according to specific directions. Another seat-activity was that of copying words, either from short lists written on the blackboard or from mimeographed sheets handed to each child. When words were written on the blackboard, several copies

were made so that no child would have no difficulty in seeing the words. When the children could recognize several words, they were given written directions to follow, such as, "Draw 'Spot'. Color him black and white." A fourth type of seat-work consisted of written questions. Below each question were several answers. Pupils were directed to read the question and the answers and to underline the correct answer.

The group reciting sat in little chairs at one side of the room. They faced the blackboard, with their backs toward the children at their seats. A large picture of a little girl, for example, was shown to them. She was running, and in her arms she carried a teddy-bear upside down. A black-and-white dog was standing nearby, watching them. The children were encouraged to talk about their toys and their pets. Then they were asked whether or not they would like to write a story about the picture. The title "Spot" was chosen because the dog really seemed to interest the children more than anything else in the picture and also because they had read about a dog named "Spot" the previous year. The children decided to call the little girl "Sally" and the teddy-bear "Tim". A related story with a vocabulary limited to the words known by the pupils had been previously planned by the teacher, but she

drew from the children the responses she wanted them to give. The title was read, after it had been written on the board. Four sentences were dictated by the pupils. Each was read as it was written and, after all of the sentences had been read, the whole story was read. Each word used was found in one of the three pre-primers of the basic reading series used in the first grade. This was done to give the pupils confidence in their ability to read. Only one sentence contained more than four words. The same procedure was followed with the second class except that a different picture was shown and a different story composed. The stories were left on the board until after the class periods the day following. Each child was allowed to go to the board to read the story after he had finished his seat-work assignment.

Examples of early stories composed by the pupils are:

Spot

Look, Spot, look!
See Sally and Tim.
Funny, funny Tim!
See Sally run and play.

My Dog

Spot is my dog.
Spot is little.
Can Spot run?
Run, Spot, Run.

At the beginning of the class period on the third day, the children remained at their seats and read the story from the board. Each child then received a

mimeographed copy of the story in which one sentence was placed directly beneath the preceding sentence, with no blank space between sentences. The children read the stories silently from their papers. They answered questions orally, such as "Who ran and played?" or "What is the name of the little girl?" When a pupil answered by means of a word, he was questioned until he gave the answer in a complete sentence. A part of the time, the children followed directions, such as, "Read the sentence which tells what kind of a bear Tim was". Pupils then cut the sentences and the title apart and read each in answer to a question asked. Then each child placed the strips at the top of his desk and received a second copy of the story. A space had been left vacant just below the title and below each sentence of the story. The children were asked to find the title strip of paper and place it directly beneath the title of the story. In each row, a pupil who had put the title of the story correctly in its place inspected the work of the other children in the row. Each child then read the first sentence of the story and placed the strip of paper corresponding to it directly beneath it. The entire story was read again. Each child then placed his copy of the story and the strips of paper containing the title and the sentences in a large envelope, and put them away

until the following day. All mimeographed papers were hand-lettered with the letters approximately a half-inch high and of corresponding width.

On the fourth day, the children again read the story from their copies and placed each word-and-sentence strip in its correct place; then they cut each sentence into word groups, commonly called phrase groups, as, "See Sally" and "run and play". When three words occurred in a sentence, one remained alone. The groups of words were read by the children, in response to such directions as: "Find the words which say, 'Run and play.'" Again a monitor in each row assisted by inspecting the phrase strips of each child to be sure that each had the correct strip. Then the children placed each strip in the correct place. Each strip was then taken in order from the story on the desk, beginning with the title, and placed on the desk, one strip below the other. As each strip was read, the word or words composing it were used in an original sentence by the child who had read it.

On the fifth day, the story was again read from the board and from the papers on the desks. Phrases were read, again used in original sentences, and matched with the correct phrase-groups in the mimeographed story. After this, the phrases were cut into words and a short drill was given, such as, "Lay the word 'see' on your

desk". When a child remarked that he had found two words which said "See", the children were asked to find the number of times each word could be found. When some child discovered that two examples of the words "funny" and "look" did not appear exactly alike, another child stated that the large letters were capitals and the other letters small ones. The seat-work consisted of practice in the matching of the words on the small slips of paper with the words in the sentences on the large sheets of paper. When each child had completed his work, he was allowed to go to the board and copy a sentence which had been written there by the teacher. Monitors assisted in inspecting the seat-work. The children who had gone to the board, but who had made mistakes, came back to their seats for help.

During the remainder of the second week, a story about a kitten was presented in the same way as the previous story had been presented; and the first story was reviewed several times.

DIVISION OF THE PUPILS INTO TWO GROUPS

At the beginning of the third week, the children were redivided into two groups, the first group containing nineteen children and the second group twelve. In making this division, three things were taken into consideration:

the results obtained from the "California Mental Maturity Test, Primary Form", the "Lee-Clark Reading Readiness Test", and the abilities of the children to pay attention and to remember and to grasp the meanings of materials presented to them in class. It was very noticeable that some of the children paid better attention than others did, that some remembered better what they learned, and that some learned more easily. The larger group contained the pupils whose test scores were highest and whose powers of attention, recall, and learning were highest and who, consequently, needed less individual attention. The slower group was made the smaller in order to have more time for individual attention and to have each group as homogeneous as possible.

During the third week also, the pupils were given the first pre-primer of the basic first grade series of readers for review. The pupils discussed the pictures and told short stories about them. Some of the stories which the pupils had told in this class before were written on the board and were read by all of the pupils. Word drills, especially with those words with which the children were having trouble, were given daily. Sometimes the words to be reviewed were listed in a column, and the words with which the children had had the most trouble were included several times. Each pupil was

expected to name the word given to him when his turn came. At other times, a child was asked to point to a word or some words named by the teacher. A favorite game was "The Flood". Words were written on make-believe stones in an imaginary pond of water. Due to an excessive amount of rainfall, the water in the pond was rising and each child, in turn, was trying to cross the water by jumping from stone to stone. When he failed to call the name of "the word on the stone", he was stranded there until a rescue boat could get him. The boat came only after each child included in the group had had a chance to cross the pond. Only a few of the children took part in this game at any one time as children tire easily of one form of activity when it is prolonged.

Another word game was played in various forms, a different form for each special day observed at school. At Halloween time, the game was called "The Witch". Rickety steps were said to lead to and from a dilapidated-looking house in which an old witch was imprisoned. The witch was trying to break down the walls of the house so that she might make any children she could catch her prisoners. A word was written on each step and all children who succeeded in naming correctly each word on the ascending ladder were permitted to look

through the window at the witch; but when they looked in, they aroused the witch from her sleep. The children were said to try to run away, but the ones who miscalled a word on the descending steps became prisoners of the witch. At Thanksgiving time, the children who failed to name words written on the board became prisoners of a large Thanksgiving turkey. During the few days preceding Christmas, words were written on cards which represented presents on a Christmas tree. Each word named correctly became a present for the child who had named it. At the end of the game, the scores were counted and the pupil who had the highest score had received the most gifts. The game was also varied to suit several of the nursery rhymes. Many other devices were used for word drills, but all drills were short and varied from day to day.

During the fourth week, the second pre-primer was given to the children of the faster group. The children of the other group used the first pre-primer and experience stories. The pictures were discussed, and the pupils dictated short stories about the pictures. The stories were read from the board for comprehension, but no special drill was given on words, phrases, and sentences from the stories because the drills were given from the material in the primer. Several of the children in the

slower group, and even a few in the faster group, began to have real difficulty in recalling words quickly (at sight) and in getting the meanings of the sentences. Some of the words with which they had trouble were "away", "can", "not", "my", "up", and "down". As a rule little difficulty was experienced with nouns or action verbs.

During the fifth week, some of the children who had difficulty in remembering some of the words began to show noticeable symptoms of emotional disturbance. One girl especially, and others to a lesser degree, would hesitate when she came to a word she could not recall. When she was told the word, she would immediately close her eyes, repeat the word again and again, each time more loudly than at the previous time, and sway back and forth. One boy stamped his foot on the floor whenever he came to a word he did not know. When told what the word was, he made a peculiar grimace and continued calling words. One boy blushed continuously during reading classes, but seldom did at other times. He also appeared frightened. One boy would say, "What's the use?", throw his book on the desk, and add, "I'm just too dumb to learn to read". Then he would sit down, apparently in despair, and not even try to pay attention for a while. Several of the children remembered the stories from the previous year, and would try to read, composing their own

stories as they read but when they failed to recall the story, they would give up. So the use of a reading text was discontinued with the better group until the beginning of the eighth week and with the poorer group until the beginning of the second semester. A story composed by the pupils was more meaningful to them than the story in the book anyway. Each story was new and was read for thought, not to recall something which the pupils had had previously. When pupils were again ready to read for thought, they were again given readers.

Keliher (20, p.149) has asked, "Remedial -- Remedial for what?" "The growth of remedial reading in our country is an item for special study. What must we remedy? How was the ailment that now needs treatment caused? Did reading anxiety on the part of some force children who were not ready? Did someone make frightening demands on minds that became confused by strange symbols and strong expectations? Or did some assume a laissez-faire attitude that children would read when they were ready, regardless of the help needed in the complex process? What attitude toward a life-long interest in reading does a particular remedial plan generate? Does it develop children who can, but who won't read?"

Since it seemed likely that even the better pupils could profit from the use of experience stories, the pupils in both groups were again allowed to compose their own stories. On Monday of the sixth week, each child received a mimeographed copy of a boy carrying an armful of hay to a horse tied in a stall. The entire period was spent in relating the experiences the children had had on a farm. The next day the children composed a short story which was written on the board, and read by them. Since such words as, "do", "did", and "some" caused much confusion for many of the children, a word drill in which the words confusing to them were used was given to the children every day. Some of the words with which they had little or no difficulty were interspersed among the words with which they did experience difficulty because the pupils became discouraged when they missed several words in succession. The third day the children were given two copies of the story, one of which had blank lines between the sentences. They read the story which did not have blank lines between the sentences, then cut it into sentence strips, and placed each sentence strip directly under the one which it matched in the story on the paper which had not been cut. The sentences were then cut into phrases, and matched with the phrases in the story. Then the phrases

were cut into words, and matched with the words in the story. Some of the phrases and words were written on the board, and the pupils used each in original sentences. Other sentences, in which a phrase or a word from the story was used, were written on the board and the pupils read them. Occasionally, it was very evident that a pupil was just calling words. When a pupil read "Peter" -- the name of the boy -- "was a horse", he was asked, "Was Peter a horse?". Sometimes a pupil would substitute a word, which had no meaning in this particular situation, for another word, as "Prince are much hay" or "Prince ate took hay" for "Prince ate much hay".

Three other stories about Peter and the horse were composed by the children. Copies of the stories were given to each child; and sentence, phrase, and word matching, and drills in each one were continued. Phonics was taught during another period of the day. The main emphasis during the reading period was on comprehension and word recognition.

At the end of the sixth week of school, the Chicago Reading Tests were given to the pupils. Test A, Form 1 was used at this time.

During the seventh week, the pupils composed stories about the experiences of Betty, Peter's younger sister, on the farm. Time was taken throughout the whole period

to appraise the needs of each child and, at the beginning of the eighth week, a slight revision was made in the membership of the two groups. This was based on the results of the test and on class performance. One class was composed of the nineteen more skillful pupils; the other, of the twelve weaker ones. These twelve pupils composed other stories about the farm, which they were allowed to read; but the better group received copies of an easy second grade health book which was new in the school. Some of the pupils memorized easily, and would probably have recalled stories or parts of stories read previously had they been permitted to use a book which they had read during the preceding year. Some would have substituted words, phrases, or even sentences for those given in the text and would have been confused. Pupils like to have new books, and even this better group was not yet ready for the basic second reader.

Much individual work and work in small groups was done, especially with the twelve weaker pupils. These twelve pupils generally did various types of seat-work described earlier in this thesis during the time the lesson assignment for the day was made to the faster group.

On Monday of the eighth week, the pupils of both classes talked about picnics. The first lesson in the

health book which the more skillful group had read was about a picnic. All of the children in the more skillful group could tell about what they had read, some better than others. Part of the pupils could select the more important things, but very few of them could tell what they thought about what they had read. They talked about the clothes they wore when they went on a picnic, about the food they would like to have for a picnic, about eating too much, about playing hard after eating, and other things about picnics. The more skillful group was helped with the pronunciations and meanings of the new words in their lesson. The assignment was to look at the pictures in the book, to see the way the children were dressed, to find out what they had for lunch, to see what they did, and to make up their minds whether they would like this kind of a picnic better than, or as well as, the kind of a picnic each one of them had had, and why. Getting children to tell "why" is usually difficult. They then read the story again.

While the faster group studied, the slower group composed a story about "The Picnic on the Farm". This was written on the board, and the five new words used in it were listed in a column nearby. The words were used in original sentences. There was no time for the faster group to recite that morning, so they recited after lunch.

While the faster group had a discussion of what they had read, the pupils of the slower group had word study, both individually and in pairs. When they had finished, they either wrote words on the board or drew pictures about a picnic.

Practically every day the pupils in the less skillful group were divided into groups of two or more to help each other. They seemed to work best in groups of two. They named words from their word cards to each other. They went to the board and wrote words they had failed to recall during word study. They read orally to each other, whispering the words softly. They talked about pictures. They named words beginning with certain sounds, as "m". Once a week, each pupil reviewed all of the words he had miscalled during the previous week. These are only a few of the activities the pupils carried on among themselves. Often a pupil from the more skillful group gave individual help to a pupil of the less skillful group. The "more skillful" helped the "less skillful" in word study, in phonics, and in oral reading.

The pupils in the slower group continued to compose their own reading stories until the beginning of the second semester. At the beginning of the twelfth week, they were given a first grade social studies reader, but they were not interested in it. For that reason, its use

was discontinued. Their own stories were first written on the board, and then mimeographed copies were made of most of the stories. The pupils read the stories, and each pupil added his copy to his booklet of stories for future use. Word, phrase, and sentence drills were continued. The sentences were gradually increased in length. In the first story, only one sentence had as many as five words. In the last story, several sentences contained eight, nine, or ten words each. The first story contained four sentences, and the last one fifteen. The stories were about things which interested the children, and contained much action. Pupils showed they understood the meaning of a story by telling it, by answering questions about it, and by following directions in connection with it. They learned to pick out the important things. They learned to recognize words readily and to use each word in original sentences. They developed some ability in guessing what a word was from the context. Riddles, such as this one, were often used:

"I am black.

I am hard.

Men dig me from the ground.

What am I?"

"Ground" was the new word. This was given after the

pupils had talked about coal in "science class". They knew the sound of the digraph "gr".

The pupils in the faster group had read all of the stories in the health book by the close of the first semester. They were encouraged to "react" in some definite way to each story. At one time, they were divided into four subgroups. The pupils in each subgroup read the story silently, then discussed it, and decided on the way they would dramatize it. Each group hunted up its own properties, and assigned parts. The pupils of the other second grade room in this school were invited to attend the entertainments. The guests expressed pleasure in each dramatization, but voted one performance "outstanding" because more originality was shown and because the pupils spoke more loudly, clearly, and with good expression. No jealousy was shown; but, rather, the pupils profited by their own mistakes. They read selections from their readers to the fifth grade, and several pupils in the group told the stories from some of their reading lessons to that same grade. The fifth-grade teacher stated that the presentations by the second grade had helped her pupils. The fifth grade pupils, to express their appreciation, invited the second-grade pupils to see their ant-house and explained their project to the children. Before school closed, the pupils of

the faster group had trained most of the pupils in the slower group to take part with them in various activities and they had presented some form of their work in every grade but one in the school building. The activity which nearly all of the children in the building seemed to enjoy most was the one in which the children had drawn large pictures on the board to illustrate each of the five scenes in a story, and then told the story. The most self-conscious boy in the group volunteered to tell the story of one scene, and showed no signs of self-consciousness in telling the story. His mother was really happy about it.

During the second semester, the less-skillful group of pupils read the three pre-primers, the primer and the first reader of a supplementary reading text without harmful worry or emotion. They were not permitted to read any of the basic texts they had used the previous year, as some of them had memorized the words or the thought of the texts. When they saw a picture in one of the basic texts, if they had not memorized the text, they tried to read a story which they told as they "read". During the last two weeks of the school term, the slower pupils read eight stories in the basic second reader used by the more skillful pupils.

The suggestions for teaching given in the manuals for the supplementary texts were carefully followed. In addition to this, the pupils composed many stories about the lessons read. These stories were mimeographed and made into booklets and the children had access to them often. Drills in word, phrase, and sentence recognition and usage continued. Almost daily, there was one or more exercises to test comprehension of material read. The pupils dramatized several of the stories. Vocabulary tests were given often. Each pupil kept cards on which he wrote the words he had failed to recognize, and these words were reviewed often.

The more skillful pupils read both readers of the basic text used in the second grade. The suggestions given in the manuals for improving comprehension, word recognition, word meaning and usage, phonics skills, and reading for pleasure were followed closely. Exercises to test comprehension and word recognition were given at regular intervals during the second semester, but not so often as to the less skillful group. The pupils did considerable reading for pleasure. All of them read from a health reader, a number book, and a science book. Several of the pupils completed these books. They also read many library books and some of them composed short stories of their own.

METHODS OF OVERCOMING READING HANDICAPS

To return to the teaching devices, however, when the use of the pre-primers was discontinued, each child received a large envelope which contained a set of word-cards, one for each of the words he had had in the stories composed up to that time. A row of rectangular spaces was drawn at the top of the envelope. In the left hand space, the number of word cards was written. Each day, the number of words the child had failed to recall correctly was written in the space following the last space previously used. Four children from the more skillful group, called "helpers", who knew all the words and could concentrate on the task at hand were chosen to help the pupils of the less skillful group. Each helper took one pupil at a time and assisted him or her individually. The "player" or less skillful pupil took his cards from the envelope and laid them in a pile on the table. He picked up one card at a time, and named it for the helper. If the word was named correctly, the helper laid the card on the table; if it was not correct, he named the word and had the player repeat the name as he looked at the word on the card. When the game had been completed, the helper put a rubber band around the words miscalled, wrote the number in the proper space and replaced the cards in the envelope.

While he was putting away the cards, the player sent another player in his place, took his own seat, and resumed his seat-work. Dolch (11, p.29) states that the speed with which one recognizes the sight words is very important for, if a child recognizes his sight vocabulary slowly, he will be a slow reader. Large flash cards for the entire group were seldom used. At times, they were placed on the ledge of the blackboard and various games were played, such as the following: Two children stood with their backs to the words. A word was named and the child who found it first was allowed to say it. While the other children looked away, he changed the position of the card he had named. Two more children came up, and the game proceeded as before. Sometimes sentence and phrase cards were used in the same way, except that the child must first act out what the card said. The directions were of the following nature: the pupil might be directed to comb his hair, to wet it, or to pull it; or to close the door or open it.

Many different types of exercises for comprehension were used as seat-work during the playing of the card game and after the regular lessons had been prepared. Some types of these exercises are listed below:

1. Sentence completion. Write the correct word from the list given in the space.

I am a _____ . school
 I go to _____ . boy
 I like to _____ . girl
 sing

2. Underline the correct word.

I am a boy, horse, red, like, girl.

This type of exercise may also be used for phrases and sentences.

3. Written directions to execute.

Color the apple red. Write apple under it.

4. Saying the words on cards of opposites to another pupil.

hot	large	new	black	go	above
cold	small	old	white	come	below

5. Phonics cards containing lists of phonograms from which the children were to think of and say words, as gr, in, ca, ou, en.

When a vowel was given, the short sound was the one to be used, unless designated in some other way. When the children saw $\ddot{a}r$, they recalled the story about two people in a car. $\hat{A}r$ made them think of the roof over their heads to keep out the cold air when the wind blew hard. Very few discritical marks were used, however.

6. Two children working together, each taking his turn at doing something, as each saying words from a word list to the other.
7. Teacher-helper exercises or work:
 - (a) A pupil who had difficulty in recalling words and needed much individual practice named words in a list on the board or on a mimeographed sheet of paper. Each word he failed to recall was checked and the "teacher" helped him study his words.
 - (b) One pupil read orally to another.
 - (c) The teacher helped the pupil build up a background of experience for something to be studied later.
8. The use of frequent tests to determine areas of class and individual weaknesses, followed by remedial work or reteaching. Tests were considered "games", and not something which children should fear.
9. Mimeographed copies of seat-work to be used while pupils studied their lessons.
10. Dramatizations of stories read to encourage interpretation.
11. Reading of stories in audience situations.
12. Telling of stories in audience situations, the

story to be first told to oneself and then to another.

13. Drawings to illustrate the story read.

Because adults (21, p.123-8) read silently, they think children should read silently also; but the child must gain meaning through the association of the visual image, the auditory associations, and the meaning. Adults who have already gained meaning through the association of auditory and visual symbols can gain meaning directly and with a minimal use of association of visual and auditory perceptions. Complete pronunciation (10, p.35) is necessary for early word learning, and pronunciation (10, p.49) is the chief method of getting hold of new words.

Informal or unstandardized vocabulary tests and comprehension tests were given often during the second semester and concepts which were not clear to the children were clarified.

TEST RESULTS

In order to measure the improvements in reading that might have been made by these pupils during the year, the Chicago Reading Tests, A1, were given on October 11, 1949, and Form A2 of the same test was given on May 19, 1950.

These tests are widely used and generally favorably regarded, although the Mental Measurements Year-book (8a, p.478) contains the following: "The Chicago Reading Tests, Test A, Grades 1 and 2, purport to measure comprehension of words, sentences, stories, maps and paragraphs, and a pupil's rate of reading, and follow the usual testing procedures in such measuring. The samples of materials provided in each subtest are inadequate to measure either validly or reliably the status of a pupil in any of the aspects of reading. The samples of materials for measuring comprehension of paragraphs are limited almost exclusively to getting the main idea and noting details in the paragraph. Other aspects of reading comprehension obviously can not be measured without an extension of the test. The phases of reading comprehension measured in the test are not adequately defined or explained. No data are provided upon the validity and reliability of these tests. Such tests, however, might well be used in a survey of undifferentiated aspects of reading. It may be presumed that the reliability of scores on subtests is reliable for group interpretation purposes only. For individual diagnosis more carefully constructed reading tests are recommended."

The forms used by this writer were designed for use in first grades after some degree of ability to learn to read had been attained and for use with second grade pupils. The tests are easily administered, easily scored, and easily interpreted in terms of grade standing. A score of 2-4, for example, means that the pupil has accomplished as much on the test as the average pupil in the fourth month of the second grade. The total test score is made up of subtest scores that show, to at least a fair extent, word knowledge, phrase knowledge, sentence understanding, ability to follow directions, and paragraph understanding. TABLE I, showing the word knowledge scores of all of the pupils in this group who took both tests, follows.

TABLE I

SCORES ON WORD KNOWLEDGE TESTS

Pupil No.	1st Test	2nd Test	Gain or loss in school-months
1*	1-7**	2-9**	11
2	2-4	2-9	5
3	2-4	2-9	5
4	1-7	2-9	11
5	1-7	2-9	11
6	2-4	2-9	5
7	2-9	2-9	0
8	1-8	2-9	10
9	2-9	2-9	0
10	2-9	2-9	0
11	2-4	2-9	5
12	2-4	2-3	-1
13	2-4	2-9	5
14	2-4	2-9	5
15	1-7	2-9	11
16	1-7	2-9	11
17	2-9	2-9	0
18	1-7	2-9	11
19	1-2	2-3	10
20	1-8	2-9	10
21	1-2	2-3	10
22	1-7	2-9	11
23	1-8	2-9	10
24	1-7	1-8	1
25	1-6	2-9	12
26	1-5	2-3	7
27	1-7	2-9	11

*arranged in rank order from highest to lowest IQ
 **1-7 means a performance equal to that of the average pupil in the seventh month of his first year in school

The average grade-placement in word knowledge according to the tests for the twenty-seven pupils who remained in this class for the entire period and who took both tests was 2-4 on the first test and 2-8 on the

second test. The range on the first test extended from 1-2 through 2-9. The range on the second test extended from 1-8 through 2-9. The average gain in word knowledge was 6.9 months. This may be compared with the seven months which actually elapsed between the two tests. The range of gains extended from minus one month through thirteen months.

The largest gains were made by pupils who were below standard when they entered the class. The smallest gains and no gains were made by the pupils who were already at 2-9 or near it on the first examination. All of these had I.Q.'s of 105 or more, and had been (a) used as assistant teachers, and (b) were not carried over into the third grade work either by the teaching or by opportunity for self-study. The pupil who lost a month had an IQ of 116. He was absent from school for several days at a time on different occasions during the year, his absences totaling almost three months. He was subject to colds and appeared tired and listless most of the time. He was thought to be anemic.

TABLE II, which shows the phrase knowledge scores of all of the pupils who took both tests, follows.

TABLE II

SCORES ON PHRASE KNOWLEDGE TESTS

Pupil No.*	1st Test**	2nd Test**	Gain or loss in school-months
1	1-9	2-9	9
2	2-8	2-9	1
3	1-6	2-9	12
4	1-6	2-7	10
5	1-6	2-9	12
6	1-5	2-7	11
7	2-6	2-9	3
8	1-3	2-9	15
9	2-9	2-9	0
10	2-1	2-9	8
11	2-4	2-9	5
12	1-9	2-9	9
13	1-9	2-9	9
14	1-6	2-7	10
15	1-6	2-9	12
16	1-5	2-9	13
17	2-8	2-9	1
18	2-2	2-9	7
19	1-4	2-4	9
20	1-4	2-2	7
21	1-3	2-4	10
22	1-6	2-9	12
23	1-4	2-7	12
24	1-5	2-7	11
25	1-4	2-7	12
26	1-9	2-9	9
27	1-6	2-4	7

*arranged in rank order from highest to lowest IQ
 **1-7 means a performance equal to that of the average pupil in the seventh month of the first grade

The average score in phrase knowledge for these twenty-seven pupils was 1-8 on the first test and 2-8 on the second test. The range on the first test extended

from 1-3 through 2-9. The range on the second test extended from 2-7 through 2-9. The average gain in phrase knowledge was 8.7 months over the seven months between the first and the second tests. The range of gains extended from no months through fifteen months.

The largest gains were made by the pupils who were below standard on the first test. The smallest gains and the one no-gain were made by the pupils who ranked 2-8 and 2-9 on the first test. The pupils who ranked lowest on the second test had IQ's of 82, 100, 101, and 102. Intelligence was probably not the principal factor in these low scores on the second test. The pupil who had lost a month on the word knowledge sub-test gained nine months in the phrase knowledge sub-test and ranked at 2-0 in it. Seventeen of the twenty-seven pupils had scores of 2-9 on the phrase knowledge test, that is, they were "at grade" at the end of the school year.

TABLE III shows the scores of these pupils on the sentence meaning tests.

TABLE III

SCORES ON THE SENTENCE MEANING TESTS

Pupil No.	1st Test	2nd Test	Gain or loss in school months
1	1-4	2-3	8
2	1-9	2-9	9
3	1-2	2-9	16
4	1-4	2-3	8
5	1-2	2-6	13
6	1-9	2-9	9
7	2-1	2-9	8
8	1-7	2-6	8
9	2-9	2-9	0
10	1-9	2-9	9
11	1-7	2-9	11
12	1-4	2-9	14
13	1-5	2-9	13
14	1-4	2-9	14
15	1-5	2-9	13
16	1-2	2-1	8
17	2-9	2-9	0
18	1-9	2-9	9
19	1-2	2-3	10
20	1-4	1-9	5
21	1-2	2-6	13
22	1-5	2-6	10
23	1-4	2-9	14
24	1-5	2-6	10
25	1-2	2-6	13
26	1-2	2-9	16
27	1-2	2-3	10

The average score in sentence meaning for these twenty-seven pupils was 1-6 on the first test and 2-7 on the second test. The range on the first test extended from 1-2 through 2-9. The range on the second test extended from 1-9 through 2-9. The average gain in sentence meaning was 10.4 months over the seven months between the first and the second tests. The

range of gains extended from no months through sixteen months. The two pupils who made no gains were already at the 2-9 level in the first test. The boy who lost a month in word knowledge gained fourteen months in sentence meaning, and stood at 2-9 in the second test in sentence meaning. The girl who gained sixteen months stood at 1-2 in the first test and at 2-9 in the second test.

TABLE IV shows the scores of these pupils on the "following directions" tests.

TABLE IV

SCORES ON THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS TEST

Pupil No.	1st Test	2nd Test	Gain or loss in school months
1	1-7	2-7	9
2	2-8	3-2	3
3	1-4	2-2	7
4	1-2	2-0	7
5	2-1	3-2	10
6	2-6	2-7	1
7	2-1	3-2	10
8	1-4	2-2	7
9	2-9	2-9	0
10	2-4	2-7	3
11	1-7	3-2	13
12	1-4	2-9	14
13	1-4	3-2	16
14	1-4	2-9	14
15	1-2	2-5	12
16	1-7	2-9	11
17	2-9	3-2	3
18	1-7	3-2	13
19	1-2	2-2	9
20	1-4	2-0	5
21	1-2	2-2	9
22	1-7	2-9	11
23	1-4	2-9	14
24	1-2	2-9	16
25	1-9	3-2	11
26	1-4	2-5	10
27	1-4	1-7	3

The average score in following directions for these twenty-seven pupils was 1-7 in the first test and 2-7 in the second test. The range on the first test extended from 1-7 through 3-2. The range on the second test extended from 1-7 to 3-2. The average gain in following directions was 9.0 months over the seven

months between the first and the second tests. The range of gains extended from one month through sixteen months.

The boy who gained only one month moved from 2-6 to 2-7. He always became confused when he had to read and follow directions by himself. The boy who gained sixteen months moved from 1-4 to 3-2, and the girl who gained sixteen months moved from 1-2 to 2-9. The boy who lost a month in word knowledge moved from 1-4 to 2-9, for a gain of fourteen months.

TABLE V shows the scores of these pupils on the test of "paragraph meaning".

TABLE V

SCORES ON THE PARAGRAPH MEANING TESTS

Pupil No.	1st Test	2nd Test	Gain or loss in school months
1	2-3	3-8	14
2	2-5	3-2	6
3	2-0	2-8	8
4	1-7	2-4	6
5	1-3	2-7	13
6	1-9	4-0	18
7	1-4	4-0	23
8	1-4	2-6	11
9	3-8	2-3	-14
10	2-4	4-0	14
11	2-2	3-6	13
12	1-2	1-8	15
13	1-8	3-6	16
14	1-6	2-8	11
15	1-3	2-7	13
16	1-4	2-7	12
17	4-2	3-6	-5
18	1-7	2-9	11
19	1-3	2-1	7
20	1-3	2-5	11
21	1-3	2-1	7
22	1-9	2-5	5
23	1-4	2-8	13
24	1-9	2-5	5
25	1-8	2-8	9
26	1-9	2-8	8
27	2-2	2-4	2

The average score in paragraph meaning for these twenty-seven pupils was 1-9 on the first test and 2-9 on the second test. The range in the first test extended from 2-1 through 4-2. The range in the second test extended from 2-1 through 4-0. The average gain in paragraph meaning was 9.3 months. The range of gains

extended from minus fourteen months through plus twenty-three months.

Both the boy who lost fourteen months and the girl who lost five months in paragraph meaning made excellent scores on the first test, i.e., 3-8 and 4-2 respectively in paragraph meaning and 4-0 and 4-0 on the whole test. Both had been absent for some time, due to illness and both had been the main assistant teachers. Besides working with any pupils who needed their help, both had concentrated quite largely on two or three of the weakest pupils and the girl, especially, watched her special pupils too closely during the test and forgot her own test to some extent. Although they made lower scores on the second test than on the first, the boy finished at grade level (2-9) and the girl finished above grade (3-6). While this was the only sub-test on which either lost, neither gained much on any sub-test during the year. It appears that their work as student teachers did not operate to their immediate advantage.

The girl who made the largest gain on this sub-test during the year (23 months) moved from 1-4 through 4-0, by far her largest gain in any sub-test. Her IQ was 117. The boy who lost one month in word knowledge gained fifteen months in paragraph meaning, going from 1-2 through 2-8.

TABLE VI shows scores on whole test or the total scores of these pupils and their intelligence quotients. The reading scores were obtained from the Chicago Reading Test, Forms A1 and A2, given seven months apart. The intelligence quotients were obtained from the California Test of Mental Maturity.

TABLE VI

TOTAL SCORES AND INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENTS
OF THESE PUPILS

Pupil No.	1st Test	2nd Test	Gain or loss in school months	IQ
1	1-9	2-8	8	148
2	2-5	3-2	6	130
3	1-8	2-8	9	122
4	1-6	2-4	7	120
5	1-7	2-8	10	118
6	2-0	2-9	9	118
7	2-3	4-0	15	117
8	1-5	2-6	10	117
9	4-0	2-9	-9	116
10	2-3	3-2	8	114
11	2-1	4-0	17	112
12	1-8	2-8	9	112
13	1-8	3-6	16	111
14	1-7	2-9	11	111
15	1-5	2-8	12	109
16	1-5	2-7	11	106
17	4-0	3-6	-3	105
18	1-9	3-2	11	104
19	1-2	2-3	10	102
20	1-5	2-4	8	101
21	1-2	2-3	10	100
22	1-7	2-7	9	99
23	1-5	2-9	13	94
24	1-7	2-5	7	93
25	1-6	2-8	11	91
26	1-7	2-8	10	87
27	1-7	2-4	6	82

The average total score for the whole test for these twenty-seven pupils was 1-9 on the first test and 2-9 on the second test. The range on the first test extended from 1-2 through 4-0. The range on the second test extended from 2-3 through 4-0. The average gain for the whole test was 10.4 months. This may be compared with the seven months which actually elapsed between the two tests. The range of gains extended from minus nine through plus sixteen months. The average standing of the whole group on the second test shows them to be at grade at the time of the second test, i.e., 2-9. Seven pupils were above grade; four exactly at grade; seven at 2-8; and the lowest, at 2-3.

The boy who lost nine months on the second test in comparison with the first test was still "at grade" (2-9) where in the first test he was above grade (4-0). The girl who lost three months on the second test in comparison with the first test was still above grade (3-6) where on the first test she had been still more above grade (4-2). Both suffered their only losses on the paragraph meaning sub-test, but they made small or no gains on the other sub-tests. From the test results shown, it appears that the two main pupil-teachers spent too much of their time teaching the weaker pupils and, as a consequence, did not have enough time to

devote to self-improvement.

The average IQ for these twenty-seven pupils, as found on the California Test of Mental Maturity was 109. The range extended from 82 to 148 inclusive. Eleven of these children were in the average or normal group, with IQ's between 90 and 110. Only two were in the dull group, with IQ's of 82 and 87. None was below dull normal status. Eleven were in the bright or superior group, with IQ's between 111 and 120; two were in the very bright or very superior group, with IQ's of 122 and 130; and one was in the genius group, with an IQ of 148.

While a correlation involving only twenty-seven cases and based on tests of reading ability and of intelligence of second-grade pupils can have only indicative value, a correlation was found between the intelligence quotients of these pupils and their standings on the second of the reading tests by the use of the formula $1 - \frac{6 \times \text{the sum of the differences squared}}{n(n-1)}$. The resulting figure was found to be $R = .39$, which indicates "some degree of relationship" but not enough to base predictions on.

The correlation between the amounts of gain made by these pupils in the second reading test in comparison with their intelligence quotients was found in a similar

manner. The resulting figure was found to be minus .15, which indicates "practically no correlation" but that little lying in a negative direction -- or, to a very limited extent, the brightest pupils made the smallest gains in reading ability between the two tests.

The purposes of this study have been: (a) to present definite plans for teaching second-grade reading in order that the less efficient readers might make such gains as they were able to make and the more efficient pupils be challenged to do their best; (b) to improve the abilities of the pupils to read for thought; (c) to familiarize the pupils with the words suitable for their grade-level; and (d) to give these pupils skill in the usage of these words.

The average gain of this group of pupils of 10.4 months in the seven-month interval would seem to show that, in general, these plans for the teaching of reading have been effective. That the slowest pupils made the greatest gains in the tests was probably due to the fact that they received a great deal of individual help and much of that help was given by the brighter pupils. The two pupils who helped the others the most showed no gain or a minus gain on some of the sub-tests. The fact that the brighter pupils made smaller gains in the tests given was doubtless due to the fact that they devoted time which

they could profitably have used for their own advancement to the weaker pupils. This indicates that these plans did not include sufficient time or adequate plans for the improvement of the reading abilities of the more able pupils. To this extent, the purpose of this study was not fulfilled although the more skillful pupils were still at grade or above grade at the end of the school year. In any further use of these or similar plans, the advancement of the more skillful pupils in reading ability would need to be safeguarded.

The second part of the purpose, that is, the improvement of the pupils in reading for thought, was accomplished satisfactorily in that the average gain of these pupils in the second reading test in comparison with the first in sentence meaning was 10.4 months, in following directions was 9.0 months, and in paragraph meaning was 9.3 months in comparison with the seven months that actually elapsed between the two tests. Again, unfortunately, the more skillful readers made smaller gains than the less skillful readers in this group.

The fourth purpose of this test, that is, the giving of these pupils greater skill in the usage of words, is not shown clearly by any of the specific sub-tests of the Chicago Reading Tests which were used. The average improvement of these pupils in word knowledge in the seven

months between the two tests was only 6.9 months. The average improvement in phrase knowledge was 8.7 months. These, however, are tests of word recognition and not of ability in word usage. It is possible that the sub-tests involving meaning, as shown in the last prior paragraph would be better indicators of ability in word usage; but even these are not satisfactory word indices. The ability of these pupils to tell stories, to answer in whole sentences, and to compose and present small dramatizations in the classroom are better indices but ones for which there are no objective measurements at hand.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY

Reading is not, as many people seem to be inclined to believe, a simple process. It is a highly complex process whose end result is comprehension. In order to succeed in learning to read, the child must have reasonably good health and must be mentally and physically alert. He must possess at least an average degree of social and emotional stability so that he can take part in the regular schoolroom activities and enjoy them. He must be able to carry on simple problem-solving activities. He must have a background of experience adequate for grasping the meaning of pictures seen and of passages read. He should understand the language used at school and in the books he is to read. He should be able to concentrate on the different activities necessary in learning to read. He should have good sensory ability so that he can discriminate visual and auditory symbols accurately, and he should have the motor control necessary to learn to read. He should be able to move his eyes across the printed line, but pause between movements and fixate upon a word or group of words so he can comprehend the meaning of what he reads. He should be able to make active movements from the end of one line to the beginning

of the next line. He should recognize each word instantly or be able to sound out words not known.

Giving individual help to each child as he needs it is probably the most outstanding problem of the primary classroom. This is partly solved by the practice of having pupil-teachers to help the weaker pupils in the class. The right type of pupil-teacher is an invaluable help in the crowded schoolroom in which many pupils are considerably below average in attainment but are of average intellectual ability or above as measured by one or more standardized intelligence tests. A pupil-teacher must possess the knowledge he is trying to impart to the pupils he is attempting to teach. He must not guess at something he himself may not know, but must get help from the classroom teacher. The pupil-teacher must recognize his own weaknesses and limitations. He must have sympathy and patience with those whom he is endeavoring to help, and he must possess some ingenuity in changing the methods he is trying to use when he sees the pupil is losing interest or is not comprehending what he is trying to learn.

On the other hand, the pupil who is being helped must realize some of his own deficiencies and must desire to improve. He must appreciate what the pupil-teacher is doing for him and must cooperate to the extent of paying

attention, responding to suggestions given, and informing the pupil-teacher when he does not understand his directions. There must be a friendly relationship between the pupil-teacher and the pupil. In fact, there must be friendly relationships among all of the pupils in the group. It is not desirable for one pupil always to have the same pupil-teacher. The regular classroom teacher may not appear to be paying attention to the pupil-teacher groups, yet she must always be on the alert for any irregularity in the proceedings of the group.

There should be cooperation with the parents of the pupils and with the supervisor or principal. Occasionally, a parent objects to having his child helped by another pupil in his class but, when that parent realizes the need of his own child and the help the child is receiving, he is generally willing to have his child receive help, especially when he knows his own child is helping another classmate. There is never, or seldom, a child, no matter how deficient he appears who cannot help in some way, for instance, one little girl who had great difficulty in reading always noticed facial expressions and was a real help in interpreting a reading lesson, sometimes even to the so-called good readers.

Some supervisors and principals expect to find a

schoolroom under the direct supervision of the teacher at all times, but when the supervisor or principal finds that each small group is a working-group under the indirect supervision of the teacher at all times and under her direct supervision when necessary and when he can see that good results are being accomplished, he too will usually cooperate.

There is probably no such thing as perfection anywhere, and pupil-teaching has its drawbacks. One of the purposes of the school is to give to each pupil his chance to develop his potential abilities to the greatest degree possible. There is great danger that the pupil-teacher will devote too much time to the teaching of the pupils in need of help and, thus, have too little time for his own development. Provisions must be made for extra activities for the pupil-teachers and also for times in which they can help themselves.

Lack of reading skill may be due to any of several of many causes. These include lack of mental ability, or lack of ability to pay attention or concentrate on the activities needed in learning to read. Inattention may be due to physical conditions, such as inability to see or hear, poor speech equipment, poor general health, or malnutrition. Emotional disturbances lead to difficulties in reading. These include worry, lack of a feeling of

security, rejection, antagonism, and others. There is seldom, if ever, just one cause. Many causes are often interrelated in the failure to learn to read up to the average standard.

The twenty-seven second grade pupils who were given the reading tests at the end of the first six weeks of school and again near the close of the school year improved in reading skill in each of the items tested, i.e., word knowledge, phrase knowledge, sentence knowledge, following directions, and paragraph meaning. The largest gains were made by the pupils who were below standard when they entered the class. The smallest gains or no gains were made by the pupils who were already at the upper limit or near it when the first test was given. While the standardized tests were highly recommended, they did not have enough spread between the lowest and the highest scores to give a true picture of the accomplishments of the better group of pupils. This writer is of the opinion, however, that all of these pupils were better readers than they would have been without this training.

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