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Reading Materials Appropriate for Seventh and Eighth Grade Ability Groups

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READING MATERIALS APPROPRIATE FOR SEVENTH AND EIGHTH
GRADE ABILITY GROUPS

A Problem Submitted to the Department of Education in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Course
in Research Problems 390b

By
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Pittsburg, Kansas
July, 1955

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Any errors or omissions are, of course, the responsibility of the writer.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Democratic society is committed to the program of educating all children of all the people regardless of their intellectual level. Every child would be educated to develop his fullest capabilities so that he can live a happy, useful life. This does not mean that the educational system can educate all by the same methods or to the same levels of achievement. Through appropriate education, however, even those at the lower level can be aided.¹

Problem

The problem is to select printed reading materials which may be appropriate for use in teaching reading to seventh and eighth grade students who are divided into three groups: slow, average, and fast learners.

Need for the Study

For many years, the writer has felt a need for finding solutions to this problem. In most schools, all students have been classified by grades according to chronological age, and given the same material, regardless of need, interest, or ability to assimilate information. The entire program has often been "geared" below average, in order to accommodate a very small per cent of the slow-learning pupils;

¹Samuel A. Kirk, Teaching Reading to Slow-Learning Children (Chicago: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1940), p. 13.

thereby causing less efficient work to be done by most students, a general lack of interest and attention, incentive and ambition.

The writer believes that merely dividing the children on the basis of ability serves no particular purpose unless, at the same time, the material taught is suited to those abilities.

One method employed to meet this situation is the plan of maintaining separate schools; one school offering a wide range of terminal courses including special courses with educational material adapted to slow learners; the other school limiting its curriculum largely to traditional classic courses.

Another method is to divide the children into groups called accelerated groups, but use the same material, covering the same work more rapidly in the accelerated groups than in the slower ones.

A third method is to attempt to deal with individual differences, with students of all levels in the same classroom. The writer contends, however, that merely giving the "brighter" students more work to do while the teacher gives more time to the slower students, is unjust, and that it tends to wear out the incentive for achievement before college education can begin.

In answer to the argument that the slower pupil learns from the superior student, the writer is concerned about

what effect this uninspiring atmosphere has upon the superior student. He may become bored; sit impatiently through a slow and perhaps dull recitation, do most of the reciting, and be given extra work to do, as an incentive. His whole attitude toward work and toward life may be altered. If he is a sincere intent child, he may burn up his nervous energy and incentive for accomplishment. If he is a talented or interested person, full of enthusiasm and eager to learn, he may quickly lose interest and become disgusted with school if he feels that he is constantly being held back. Another student, seeing how little the rest of the class does, may feel that it is not necessary to do more than the minimum amount of work. Soon he may become a disciplinary problem, even though he is a very capable person. This procedure denies the gifted or superior child's developing his potential abilities, and consequently, may be penalizing the leadership of our country. Dolch¹ concludes, "The most unfortunate results, perhaps, of our neglect are the poor work habits that the bright child usually learns during his school life."

The needs and interests of the accelerated or average student may be met when he can value the humanizing influence of literature.

¹Edward Dolch, Helping Handicapped Children in School (Champaign, Ill.: Garrard Press, 1948), p. 292.

Questionnaires¹ sent to students who had completed their high school careers in the last ten years revealed that:

(a) "they are poor readers; (b) they are not critical thinkers; admit they do not know the difference between facts and propaganda, opinion and prejudice; (c) they have little understanding of the world scene and their relations to it; (d) they wish their spelling and English, in general, were better; (e) their need for research is zero; (f) they seem to have no thought of literature as being a part of English.

However, results obtained from college students revealed that they "read for their professions, not for the idea of how to understand themselves or their neighbors, or for life enhancement."²

The average child, the writer believes, needs to have his interests stimulated, too, as he is usually capable of making greater progress than his school work may indicate. Perhaps, he is accustomed to having to sit back and listen to the better students do most of the reciting, since teachers are prone to depend upon superior students to make the class recitations more interesting.

We may conclude, then, the writer believes; that under the usual system of placing all students of different levels in the same classroom, all students may develop poor work habits and poor attitudes which may carry through school and throughout life.

¹National Council of Teachers of English, A Report of the Committee on English in Terminal Secondary English, "Terminal and Preparatory," The English Journal, XLIII (December, 1954), 489.

²Loc. cit.

Kirk¹ says, "The slow-learning child is incapable of keeping up with his classmates and therefore requires a modified curriculum for his maximum growth and development." Experiments show that the "...mentally retarded child learns more slowly and retains less than normal children."² Observations indicate that his interests and abilities are similar to normal children of the same mental rather than chronological age, and that he prefers younger children for playmates.

The slower student, who is constantly being reminded of his inferiority and failure, in many cases, may have already become a disciplinary problem, because his defensive mechanism demands that he get attention in some way. Kirk³ says, "A behavior problem has been defined as the discrepancy between the capacity of a child to perform, and the requirements of the environment."

Moreover, the slower student, the writer believes, if placed in a group on his own level, will gain confidence in himself. He will be encouraged by seeing his own progress and "feeling" of success, instead of constant frustration and failure; and he will, in time, become a more resourceful and responsible citizen than he might otherwise be.

In each of the groups mentioned, many individual differences will still be found which will require the teacher's

¹Kirk, op. cit., p. 1.

²Ibid., p. 9.

³Ibid., p. 103.

skill and ingenuity in helping each child to develop his abilities to a much higher degree. Mr. Floyd¹ states:

In any fourth, fifth, or sixth grade class, pupils will be found who are able to read only second grade material, while others are able to read eighth or ninth grade material.... Obviously, it is impossible for any teacher to teach thirty-five to forty-five children effectively in a period of forty or fifty minutes a day when such great ranges of achievement exist.

Therefore, reading programs on different levels have been instituted in several elementary schools in Joplin. Two accelerated groups in English are now under experimentation in the senior high school. Since these experimental groups have shown marked improvement, a similar reading program seems to be needed on the junior high school level.

Methods of Research

In attempting to find a solution to this problem, the writer conducted studies and research of various kinds. First of all, investigations were made to further establish the need for this problem. Then a search for the choice and kinds of materials was the next step in the procedure. These investigations included: reading of professional and current magazine articles; examining of textbooks, manuals, work books and reference books; having discussions and conferences with the assistant superintendent in charge of curriculum,

¹Cecil Floyd, "Meeting Children's Reading Needs in the Middle Grades: A Preliminary Report," The Elementary School Journal, LV (October, 1954), 99.

other teachers, parents, and children; and evaluating results and progress of published and unpublished experiments. Some of the books listed were chosen by pupils of Eastmorland Elementary School, who are divided according to reading ability; some books were designated by students of East Junior High School as their choice of reading material. Recommended book lists were consulted by the writer, and additional reference material was sought.

Consideration of the writer's own teaching experience was a basis for some of the material. The pupil's need, interest, and ability to assimilate information on the different levels was the most important factor in determining material that may be appropriate for use in the teaching of reading in the seventh and eighth grades.

Scope and Limitations

It would be impossible to include in one problem all of the material needed in the teaching of reading to all seventh and eighth grade students on three levels. This problem, of necessity, will be limited to the listing of suggestions for many types and examples of materials that may be appropriate for use in the teaching of reading on three levels: slow-learner, average or normal, and accelerated students.

In preparation for such a program, careful consideration of the following items are used in some Joplin elementary schools for dividing children into the three groups

mentioned:

1. Results of I.Q. tests.
2. Results of previous I.Q. and achievement tests.
3. Previous school records.
4. Teachers' knowledge of children.
5. Cumulative record data.
6. Standardized tests over basic reading skills.

New tests over basic material given at the end of the semester aid in determining progress, evaluating the program, and making recommendations for improvement.

The material in this problem is being planned in an attempt to help meet present and future needs in local schools. However, it is hoped that it might prove useful in similar situations.

CHAPTER II

RELATED RESEARCH

Importance of Vocabulary Training

The following quotations from Beery and Strang seem to show that the acquisition of an adequate vocabulary is necessary in order that the reader may comprehend and interpret what he reads. Therefore, various reference materials are listed by the writer in the following chapter, as well as some basic and recreational reading on the different levels.

Althea Beery¹ states:

The possession of a rich fund of word meanings is a prerequisite to adequate comprehension and interpretation in reading. An adequate meaning vocabulary is essential to intellectual maturity...and the entire school program should be examined to determine how it contributes to the acquiring of vivid, accurate concepts.... Factors determining vocabulary growth are: general capacity and level of maturation of child, nature and variety of his experience, child's curiosity about words, and instruction in vocabulary which the child receives.

A basic vocabulary, according to Strang,² represents the "key to important concepts in all subjects." Therefore, a knowledge of key words, technical or general, is "essential to comprehension." "The reader's understanding is blocked by unfamiliar words." The extent of his vocabulary and his

¹Althea Beery, "Development of Reading Vocabulary and Word Recognition," Forty-Eighth Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press), p. 172.

²Ruth Strang, Problems in the Improvement of Reading in High School and College (Lancaster, Pa.: Science Press Printing Co., 1940), p. 77.

reading ability are "interactive factors limiting or extending each other."

Strang¹ says,

Thought is likewise facilitated by a wide and precise vocabulary and races through familiar fields, anticipating words and phrases.... Interpretations, criticisms or conclusions are anticipated. Reading becomes swift and skillful. The extension and refinement of word meanings not only aid thinking and increase reading efficiency but also open to the student wider fields of knowledge.

The dictionary definition is not sufficient to give a "functioning knowledge" of a word. "To be fully understood, it should become a part of our experience by being pronounced, written, read, and used in a variety of contexts."²

"This ever-increasing reading vocabulary enlarges the individual's environment, widens his experience of the unknown, supplies food for thought, and becomes part of the process of thinking."³

The writer thinks that sufficient study to acquire a basic reading vocabulary and an understanding of its many "interpretations, criticisms, and conclusions," does not seem possible under the present system of placing all children of varying degrees of ability in one classroom.

¹Ibid., p. 78.

²Loc. cit.

³Loc. cit.

Appreciation of Literature

Since questionnaires¹ show that terminal students "seem totally unaware of the value which literature offers throughout life," Louise Bennett² believes that "teachers must not fail to get pupils to know and feel and value the humanizing influence of literature."

"In order to grow in reading power," Miss Bennett³ declares, "pupils need guidance and stimulation." For instance, in teaching Silas Marner, she suggests asking the pupils if they have ever felt "unjustly punished or wrongfully accused." Then by further explanation that Silas Marner suffered such an injustice, "a link is established between the lives of the pupils and that of the book character." To arouse further interest, describe the book as a "mystery story," containing "robbery, horse-racing, sudden disappearance of one of the leading characters, and a love story." Scenes from the story may be dramatized. "Later in a panel discussion, pupils may decide whether Eppie's choice of a father was right or whether Godfrey Cass was punished sufficiently for his wrong doing."

¹Supra, p. 4.

²Louise Bennett, "Experiences with Literature," The English Journal, XLIII (December, 1954), 501.

³Loc. cit.

As a part of literary appreciation, the writer thinks that the normal or accelerated students should understand that often-times a "story links historical background with the setting and development of characters.... The elements of style, however, such as: foreshadowing, symbolism, and figurative language" may receive more emphasis in an accelerated group of students. Films are often available which may later be evaluated by panel discussion, "sharing with others their experiences in the book and pictures."¹

The writer believes that if the needs of different levels and varying abilities are to be met, children should be surrounded with many kinds of books.

Elizabeth Rose² says:

Junior high school is a transition period from juvenile children's reading to adult reading. Yet the anthologies are filled with poems that have nothing to do with the affairs of young adolescents; with great short stories that deal with important crises of life, calling for the reader's ability to generalize far beyond the understanding and experience of most adolescents.

Margaret Edwards³ is quoted by Rose as saying, "'Until the coming of the teen-age story, such books as Sue Barton, Student Nurse, The Iron Duke, and Seventeenth Summer, the young adolescent had little to read.'" A boy who has "outgrown Tom Sawyer may not always be ready for Mutiny on the

¹Loc. cit.

²Elizabeth Rose, "Literature in the Junior High," The English Journal, XLIV (March, 1955), 142, 143.

³Loc. cit.

Bounty'." Many young people enjoy reading Double Date or Going on Sixteen or Elizabeth Gray's Sandy, according to Miss Edwards.¹

"Some accelerated teen-agers from literate families, girls of twelve or thirteen with good minds but unawakened emotions...wish to become adult readers." For them there are "some good uncomplicated biographies and travel books'," also some "stories of girls who have dates'." For boys, there are "teen age, interesting stories of sports and adventure'," placing the "emphasis on character'."²

Clues as to what a student may be led to read can be found through discussion of reading experiences by inquiring about his favorite books, television programs, and comic strip characters.

"One of the teacher's most difficult problems," Rose³ feels, "is that of helping young people learn to discuss their books with insight and understanding." It is important that they learn to do two things: first, that they "learn ways of finding time and place of the story" and that they understand characters in the setting, against the backdrop of time and place."

The reading program should provide not only for class group and small-group discussion, but "it should also include

¹Ibid., p. 143.

²Ibid., pp. 146, 147.

³Ibid., p. 147.

time for the teacher to have a private conference with the student about his book instead of time spent on book reports," Rose¹ declares.

"Finally, reading guidance requires reading records. The classroom should contain files sufficient to keep a continuous record of what the student is reading in social science, science, and other subjects," so the person will eventually feel that he is "becoming educated through reading."²

In order that the reader understand and appreciate literature, the writer agrees that the teacher should provide sufficient background of facts so that the student may have some concept of time and place.

Dwight Burton³ thinks:

Time and place concepts, which remain perennial reading problems, may be sharpened and enriched through reading imaginative literature. The events in American history or the Revolutionary War will seem much less remote if some carefully selected novels are provided.... A wealth of American regional writing, at all levels of maturity, and literature set in other countries, provide opportunity for vicarious contemporary living which no amount of textbook material can supply.

"One superior group of students also reading "literature for social development," developed a unit around the theme "The Effect of Environment upon Personality and Thought." Another group, rural high school students, during a presidential

¹Loc. cit.

²Loc. cit.

³Dwight L. Burton, "Literature for Social Development," The English Journal, XLIII (May, 1954), 231-234.

campaign wondered about the talk about "rural vote" and the way of looking at things as distinguished from "big city moods." This group organized a "unit around rural-urban life and led students to find what literature had to say about differences between culture of small towns and large cities."¹

Arthur Giddings² describes another method of using the social approach in teaching literature by classifying the material under the following headings: "loyalty, honesty, industry, love, humility, pioneering, cultural improvement, and plain life."

Giddings³ believes that a "serious novel can be... the most successful approach in making students aware of what good literature can do for them in a practical way," although he also believes that "it is still necessary for every class to form its course around an anthologic core."

"Few of us are equipped to do a good job with beauty; nearly all of us are equipped to do a good job with social approach to literature," according to Giddings.⁴ "We can bring more life to the classroom and be more alive ourselves if we approach literature as a fascinating and clarifying reflection of life as seen by people who are really looking for it."

¹Loc. cit.

²Arthur T. Giddings, "Notes on Teaching of Literature," The English Journal, XLIII (May, 1954), 240-243.

³Loc. cit.

⁴Loc. cit.

Another teacher offers his plan for meeting what he calls the "failure in teaching literature." Roy McCall¹ says:

Our first point of failure in teaching literature lies in the incompetence of teachers of literature to read aloud. Not one in ten (teachers)...can make literature come alive through the instrument of voice.... Poetry in particular is written to be read aloud. Both its beauty and its meaning are dependent on the proper use of sound to bring it into full being.

"This failure," McCall² believes, "is due to the fact that teachers are not properly trained to read literature, and also that they spend all their time talking about literature, analyzing the forces which made it, and noting the characteristics which cause it to be good, great, weak, or strong." "Or they read it badly" and thus cause the pupils to develop a dislike for it (particularly poetry).

The selection of works to be studied is also an important factor. McCall³ says, "Often teachers exclaim about the beauty of literature as seen from intellectual heights" forgetting that the pupils have no preparation for this appreciation unless simpler, more interesting or dramatic selections are introduced first.

McCall⁴ believes also, that ample opportunity is not provided for students to read aloud, to "show through intelligent reading to their classmates their appreciation of selections studied."

¹Roy McCall, "Taking Literature Out of Cold Storage," The English Journal, XLIV (January, 1955), 30-32.

²Ibid., p. 30.

³Ibid., p. 31.

⁴Ibid., p. 32.

Reading for the Slow Learner

The writer believes that studies by Kirk and results of experiments by Monroe show that it may be unjust to the retarded readers to place them in the same classroom with students of varying reading abilities.

Kirk¹ says, "It would be futile to prepare mentally retarded children for appreciation of better literature and scientific materials, since these children will not attain the level of literary appreciation or scientific thinking reached by mentally normal adults."

Free reading should be provided for the mentally retarded, consisting of simple but interesting stories on a "variety of topics and varying degrees of difficulty." These pupils "should not be forced to answer a variety of questions related to the books as it may halt the interest."²

"Most mentally retarded children are not in special classes but are in the regular elementary schools. They are considered laggards or lazy children, because they are unable to keep up with the requirements of the grade." They are usually passed on to the next grade because of age and "consequently are denied the opportunity to progress."³

¹Kirk, op. cit., pp. 137-143.

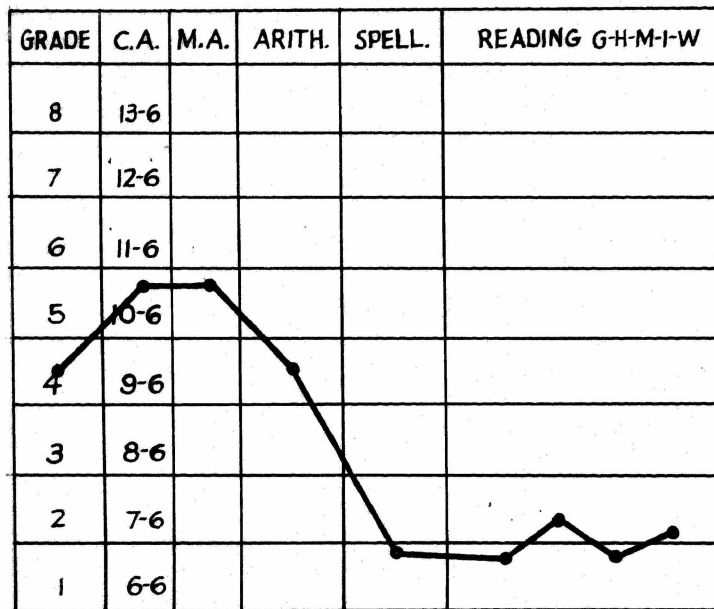
²Ibid., p. 131.

³Ibid., p. 141.

Monroe,¹ as quoted by Kirk, has found a "method of determining whether or not a child is a reading disability case" regardless of whether the child is mentally superior, normal, or retarded.

The following figure "gives a graphical representation of the relation of reading to the other factors."

FIG.1 EDUCATIONAL PROFILE ^a



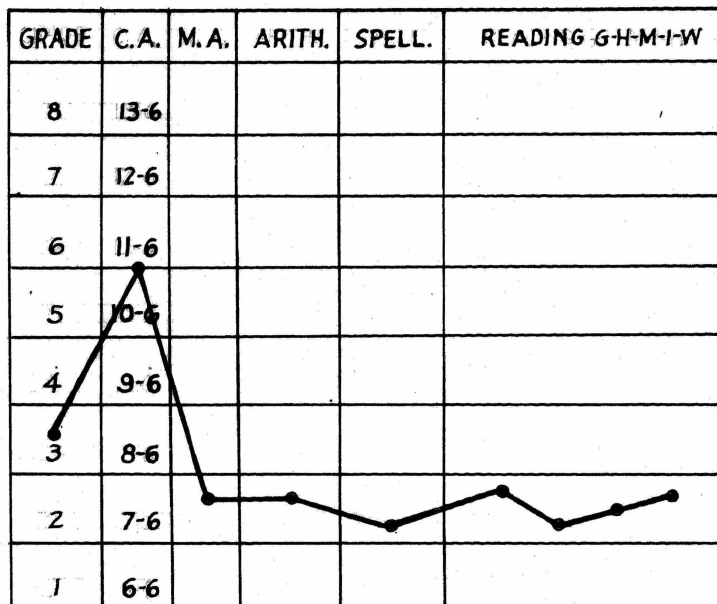
^aCase A-4th grade boy, 10 yrs and 8 mo. old. I.Q. 100 and M.A.-10-8. In arithmetic computation he is in the fourth grade. In reading and spelling he is in high first or beginning second grade. The average child with I.Q. of 100 and mental age of ten is usually

¹Ibid., p. 145, quoting Monroe, Children Who Cannot Read, Ch. II.

²Ibid., p. 146.

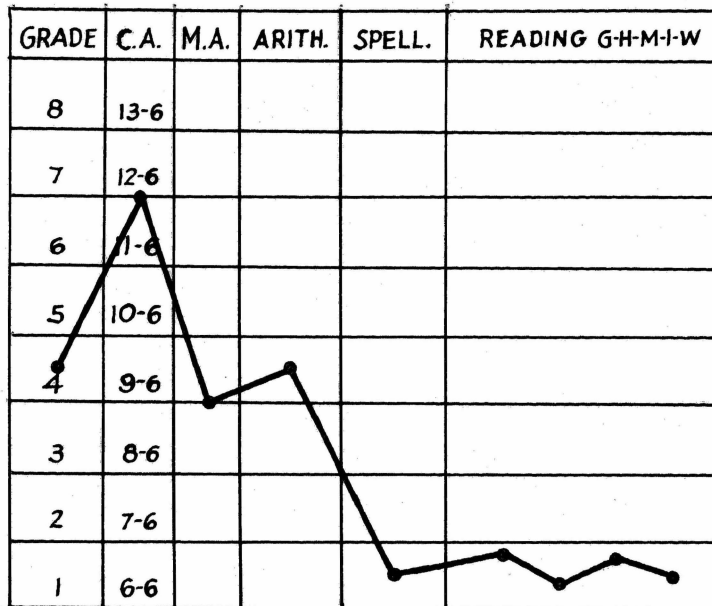
in the fifth grade in reading. This boy's reading ability is three years below his mental capacity and he is therefore considered a severe case of reading disability.

FIG.2 EDUCATIONAL PROFILE ^a



^aCase B.-Boy in 3rd grade, 11 yrs. old. M.A.-7-8, I.Q.-70. Arithmetic also second grade level. In spelling and reading tests, he scored second grade. Children seven years and eight months old are expected to be in the second grade. Therefore, although this boy is retarded in reading as compared to calendar age, he is not considered a reading disability case because his mental capacity does not warrant more than second grade reading achievement.

¹Ibid., p. 147.

FIG. 3 EDUCATIONAL PROFILE ^a

^aCase C-boy 12 yrs. old with I.Q. of 75 and mental age of 9 on Stanford Binet. He was promoted to the fourth grade because he is capable of fourth grade arithmetic. His reading and spelling are consistently in the first grade. Although this boy is mentally retarded, he is considered a reading disability case because his mental age and his arithmetic warrant fourth grade achievement. His reading ability is two and one half years below his other capacities.

Kirk² continues:

It should be remembered, however, that special classes for mentally retarded children are usually small, consisting of 15 or 20 children. Special classes have been reduced in size to enable the

¹Ibid., p. 148.

²Ibid., p. 19.

teacher to give individual attention to the children. Consequently, much remedial work can be done in a special class if it is properly organized.

Experiment in Ability Grouping

The writer believes that research, teaching experience, and experiments conducted by local schools, also seem to justify the division of pupils into various groups according to reading ability.

The following experiment in grouping pupils according to reading ability in one of the Joplin elementary schools is described by Cecil Floyd.¹

"During the past four years," writes Mr. Floyd, "we in the Joplin public school system have been diligently at work on the reading curriculum." Even though modern materials and methods of instruction have been used, it was "realized that all children were not being given the opportunity to progress according to their potential rates and abilities. Some were not being sufficiently challenged, while others were still reading or attempting to read, on the frustration level."

It was "decided to conduct an experiment during the second semester of the 1952-53 school year in Grades IV, V, VI of the Irving Elementary School," Mr. Floyd² relates.

¹Floyd, op. cit., pp. 99, 100.

²Ibid., p. 100.

Several planning sessions were held by the principal and teachers to select the materials and methods to be used.

It was decided that the first important step was to "determine the reading levels." This was accomplished by the following methods:

1. Administering of Iowa Every-Pupil Test of Basic Skills, Test A, Silent Reading Comprehension, Form L. Grades 3-5 and Grades 5-9.
2. Administering of I.Q. tests.
3. Considering information obtained from the following sources:
 - a. previous school records.
 - b. teachers' knowledge of children.
 - c. results from previous tests.
 - d. cumulative record data.

The second step was to plan a "basal instructional period." In order that "all pupils fall into a narrow reading range," it was determined that nine groups were needed although only five teachers were available for instruction. The following table shows the division of fourth, fifth, and sixth grade pupils according to reading levels.

The third step of the experiment was to establish a "recreational reading period" of an additional twenty minutes spent in the regular classrooms where the pupils received guidance from the teachers in the selection of books; they drew illustrations, and took part in class discussions.

Step number four was to purchase new reading material for the pupils from grade one through grade seven, in order to avoid frustration from former reading experiences.

TABLE I¹GROUPS ESTABLISHED ACCORDING TO
READING-GRADE LEVELS

Teacher and Group	Grade Range
Teacher 1	7.92 - 9.2
Teacher 2	
Group 1	5.6 - 6.4
Group 2	6.5 - 6.9
Teacher 3	
Group 1	4.4 - 5.2
Group 2	5.3 - 5.5
Teacher 4	
Group 1	3.0 - 3.9
Group 2	4.0 - 4.3
Teacher 5	
Group 1	1.1 - 1.7
Group 2	1.8 - 2.9

¹Ibid., p. 101.

Fifth, the parents were invited to a meeting to be given an explanation of the plan, and they were asked to "cooperate and help evaluate the results."

As a sixth step, an assembly was called for an explanation to the pupils of the new reading program as a "new and interesting plan" that was to be tried.

In conjunction with this experiment, it was decided that instead of using the usual mark given in reading, to experiment

with report cards. The card used in Floyd's¹ experiment provides for space for the teacher to write comments concerning the pupil's progress in the following areas.

1. Word skills.
2. Oral reading.
3. Silent reading.
4. Number of recreational and supplementary books read.
5. Suggestions and remarks.
6. Space for signature and comments by parents.

Throughout the experiment an attempt was made to "evaluate objectively and subjectively," Floyd² states.

The results, after four months of experimentation, show that the "reading grade levels ranged from 2.2 to 10.5." The average gain in grade levels for the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, are computed in the following table.

Favorable comments were received from pupils and parents alike. The teachers' reactions were also favorable.

As a result of Floyd's³ experiment, pupils were "noticeably interested and enthusiastic, and work in the various content subjects also improved." Perhaps more important is the following remark by the author: "The progress and enthusiasm of those who possessed superior reading ability were

¹Ibid., p. 102.

²Loc. cit.

³Ibid., p. 103.

marked. Often these pupils are the most retarded in the terms of ability, and their acceptance of the challenge was gratifying."

Further experimentation followed, and results now are being tabulated.

TABLE II¹

AVERAGE GAIN IN READING-GRADE LEVEL FOR EACH GRADE
AFTER FOUR MONTHS OF INSTRUCTION

Grade	At Beginning of Experiment	At End of Experiment	Gain in Months
4	4.25	4.9	6.5
5	5.3	6.17	8.7
6	6.3	7.65	13.5

¹Ibid., p. 102.

CHAPTER III

SUGGESTED MATERIALS FOR SEVENTH AND EIGHTH GRADE READING ON THREE LEVELS

Materials for Slow Learners

Basic Readers:

(Grades 2 and 3)

Russell, David H. and Wulfing, Gretchen, Friends Far and Near.
Chicago: Ginn and Co., 1953. 322 pp.

(Grade 4)

Bond, Guy L. and Cuddy, Marie C., Meeting New Friends. Chicago:
Lyons and Carnahan, 1950. 408 pp.

(Grade 5)

Russell, David H., McCullough, Constance M., and Gates, Doris.
Trails to Treasure. Chicago: Ginn and Co., 1953. 479 pp.

(Grade 6)

Gray, William S. and Arbuthnot, May Hill., People and Progress.
Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1947. 480 pp.

Work Books:

(Grades 2, 3, and 4)

Phonics We Use, Book C. Chicago: Lyons and Carnahan, 1951.

(Grade 5)

Developing Reading Skills, Book A. New York: Laidlaw Brothers,
1953.

(Grade 6)

Developing Reading Skills, Book B. New York: Laidlaw Brothers,
1953.

Materials for Special Instruction in Reading for
Mentally Retarded, 13-16:

Road maps.
 Telephone books.
 Time tables.
 Graphs.
 Newspapers and magazines.
 Necessary reference material.

Recreational Reading:

(Grade 4--Easy Reading)

Chandler, Edna Walker, Cowboy Sam and the Indians. Chicago: Beckley-Cardy Co., 1954. 127 pp.

Kean, Edward, Howdy Doody and Clarabell. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1951. 30 pp.

Werner, Jane, Alice in Wonderland. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1951. 30 pp.

(Grade 5--Easy Reading)

Becker, Charlotte, A Chimp in the Family. New York: Julian Messner and Co., 1953. 63 pp.

Becker, Charlotte and Others, Stories for Fun. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941. 28 pp.

Brown, Mitchell, Farm and City. Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1944. 174 pp.

Brown, Paul, Pony School. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950. 60 pp.

Kepes, Juliet, Five Little Monkeys. Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1952. 33 pp.

Justus, May, Hurrah for Jerry Jake. Chicago: Albert Whitman and Co., 1945. 64 pp.

(Grade 6--Easy Reading)

Distorius, A., What Horse Is It? Chicago: Wilcox and Follett and Co., 1952. 24 pp.

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CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In attempting to find solutions to this problem, the writer used mainly the interview and documentary methods.

The findings of this study are summarized below. Most schools classify students by grades according to chronological age and provide the same material, regardless of need, interest, or ability to assimilate information. The entire curriculum has often been based on a standard below average, in order to accommodate a small per cent of slow-learning pupils, thereby causing less efficient work to be done by most students, a general lack of interest and attention, incentive and ambition. The writer believes that merely dividing the children on the basis of ability serves no particular purpose unless, at the same time, the material taught is suited to those abilities. Since the slow-learning child cannot keep up with his classmates, he therefore requires a modified curriculum for his maximum development. It would be futile to attempt to teach the better literature and scientific information to mentally retarded children, since they do not attain the scientific thinking or literary appreciation reached by mentally normal adults. The acquisition of an adequate vocabulary is necessary in order that the reader comprehend and interpret what he reads. Such a program does not seem possible under the present arrangement

of placing pupils of all levels in the same classroom. Because of neglect of the bright child, he not only is denied his right to develop his potential abilities, but he usually acquires poor work-habits during school life. The normal or average reader also needs to have his interests stimulated as he is usually capable of making greater progress than his school work may indicate. Results of experiments in an elementary school seem to prove that some readers are not being sufficiently challenged while others are still reading on the frustration level. Further experiments showed that after a four-month period of having children divided according to reading ability, that pupils in the fourth grade gained an average of 6.5 months, fifth grade pupils gained 8.7 months, while sixth grade children gained 13.5 months. More gratifying was the progress and enthusiasm of all students and the improvement in the different content subjects.

The writer feels that the need for this problem has been established through successful experiments and research of various kinds, and she has attempted to find solutions to this problem.

Since the mentally retarded children do not attain the reasoning ability or the literary appreciation reached by mentally normal adults, while superior students are capable of grasping material far beyond their grade, the writer believes that it is unjust to all groups to place them together in one classroom. Under such a plan, the slower

pupils become failures, the average pupils lose interest and the superior students feel no challenge or interest. As a result, all pupils are apt to form poor work habits and attitudes, and none may develop his potential abilities. On the other hand, the writer believes, that if the pupils are divided according to reading ability and given an opportunity to progress at their own rate of speed and comprehension, that all students will attain a much higher degree of efficiency and satisfaction.

Therefore, the writer recommends, not only that the pupils be divided according to reading ability, but that they be given more practical and appropriate materials suited to the need and the ability of each pupil to assimilate such information, so that each pupil will have an opportunity to develop to a fuller capacity and thus become a happy and useful citizen.

The writer further recommends that a similar plan of organization be adopted in other fields of study, particularly in grammar, spelling, and mathematics.

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