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METHODS OF STIMULATING READING INTEREST IN THE
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

A Problem Submitted to the Graduate Division in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Science

by

Ada Emerson Wade

KANSAS STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

Pittsburg, Kansas

July, 1958

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

There is good reason for strong interest in the reading that children do or don't do. In today's world reading is an essential skill. Efficient reading is important for success in school, on the job, and in personal life. Citizenship is dependent on knowledge and understanding of the world in which we live. That knowledge is in turn dependent upon reading and upon weighing, understanding, judging, and remembering what we read. The problem is to find and present methods for stimulating interest in reading in junior high school.

Need for the Study

Numerous studies are necessary to determine the various factors which influence the interests of pupils in reading and which lead to desirable tastes. Inasmuch as the pupils at each grade level differ radically in such matters as home encouragement, environment, experience, and capacity, studies are needed to determine the best methods to use in different grades in establishing permanent interests in reading. Children read more eagerly and push themselves to much harder materials when they are interested.

Limitations of the Study

Time was an important limitation in making a more thorough survey of the problem.

The size of the sampling used in the survey also was a limitation. The particular time of the year was a limitation because many teachers were not at their regular posts of duty, making it harder for the writer to contact them. The sampling was taken from the teachers who were enrolled in the summer session of 1958 at Kansas State Teachers College, Pittsburg, Kansas.

The answers to the questionnaires were of a yes or no type which was a limitation.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Reading is unique among school activities in being both a subject of instruction and a tool for the mastery of other phases of the curriculum. In the upper grades such studies as history and geography are seriously affected by poor skill in reading.

In today's world, reading is an essential skill. Efficient reading is important for success in school, on the job, and in personal life. Reading has many personal and social values, too. Citizenship is largely dependent on knowledge and understanding of the world in which we live. That knowledge is in turn dependent upon reading, and upon weighing, understanding, judging, and remembering what we read. Reading also promotes personality growth, by broadening an individual's interests. The "well-read" individual gains the respect and the approval of his associates and that is important to people of all ages.

One of the most important objectives in the teaching of reading, and one that must never be ignored or forgotten, is the development of a strong liking for reading. This problem deals with the stimulation of the reading interests of junior high students. The importance of this problem has been recognized for many years; as a result, about two hundred research studies concerning

reading interests have been published. If a teacher is to provide suitable reading material for his class, he should be familiar with the general trends as shown by previous studies. He cannot, however, rely on the assumption that the pupils will have exactly typical interests, and should therefore make definite efforts to discover the particular interests of his pupils.¹

Creating Interest in Reading

The basic principles of successful work in developing reading interests have been admirably summarized as consisting of a "lure" and a "ladder."² The lure may be any of a variety of ways of enticing children to begin pleasurable reading. The ladder involves providing suitable reading matter which will intensify the child's interest in reading and in which he can gradually progress to reading material of superior quality.

The first essential is to provide physical surroundings in the classroom that will create an atmosphere favorable to reading. There should be a "reading corner" in every classroom.

A good class library should contain at least fifty books. They should range in difficulty from some easy enough for the poorest readers in the class to others

¹Albert J. Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability. (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, Inc., 1947), p. 408.

²Ibid., p. 424.

which will interest the more advanced readers. There should be a special collection of books of varied difficulty relating to the activity unit which is currently engaging the attention of the class. In addition, there should be fairy tales and legends, animal stories, adventure tales, stories with foreign settings, humor and nonsense, nature study and science, and at least some poetry. Current and back issues of good children's magazines should find a place also.

A simple classification scheme makes it easier for the children to select books. The books can be arranged under a few simple headings--"make-believe," "real-life stories," "animals," "people and places," and other subjects.

A teacher who makes it a regular practice to read fascinating stories to his class usually has no trouble arousing interest in reading.

Another procedure that can be used at the upper grade levels is to devote some of the social studies time to current event periods, in which each child is expected to present a brief oral report about some interesting development in the news of the preceding week.

Some schools develop interest in news events gradually, through the regular reading and discussion of one of the weekly papers that are prepared for school use. Such

papers as Young America,³ My Weekly Reader,⁴ Current Events,⁵ Building America,⁶ and Junior Scholastic,⁷ make it possible to introduce reading about current happenings as early as the first grade, and to continue it with reading matter appropriate to each grade through the elementary and secondary school years.

Poetry has recently become somewhat neglected in reading programs. There are many ways in which the modern teacher can awaken and develop an appreciation of poetry. One of the most important is the reading of well-chosen poems to the class by the teacher. A teacher who loves poetry and can read it well can make poems come alive for children. A second useful approach is choral reading and speaking. A third way in which an interest in poetry can be developed is through encouraging children to prepare poems for presentation in class.

Mr. Harris also says it is futile, even if it were possible, to try to prevent children from reading comic books.⁸ Instead, one should attempt to help them to

³Published by Eton Publishing Corp., New York, New York.

⁴Published by American Education Press, Columbus, Ohio.

⁵Ibid., as above.

⁶Published by the Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development, National Education Association, New York, New York.

⁷Published by Scholastic Corp., New York, New York.

⁸Loc. cit.

discriminate between the better and poorer types and to use their comic book reading as a springboard toward the reading of stories and books that will satisfy the same interests at a higher level. The comic books of today may be pointing the way to the textbooks of the future.

In recent years there has been an increasing amount of outspoken criticism of the school's success in the teaching of reading. Within the past two or three years many articles have appeared in leading newspapers and magazines, as well as several books entirely devoted to attack upon the American school. Many high school teachers complain about the apparently increasing numbers of pupils retarded in reading coming from the elementary schools.

There are still many ideas and practices suggested by the great mass of research in reading which have not yet been adopted in the classroom.

G. D. Spache⁹ says that junior and senior high school teachers often claim that story-type reading is overstressed in the elementary levels and hence pupils do not learn to read effectively in the content fields. It is also claimed that elementary teachers show a slavish dependence upon basal reading materials with consequent lack of instruction in varied reading situations. Another complaint from the high school is that elementary books are too simple and children never learn how to read in

⁹G. D. Spache, "What's Wrong With Our Teaching of Reading", The Journal of Education, XXXIV (October, 1955) 19-27.

difficult materials. Only when methods and aims are in harmony and thoroughly understood by all teachers can the profession answer the criticism of lay groups, secure in the knowledge that it is making full use of the available information and research.

Dr. Willis L. Uhl says in his report on the "Teaching of Reading" that the fallacy, that has disrupted American education more seriously than any other until recent years, is the assumption that at the end of the sixth grade a normal child should be considered fully and completely to have learned to read. The doctrine that children entered the seventh grade as competent readers, able with occasional reference to the dictionary, to read almost any English book was reflected in the reading difficulty of subject matter texts in all fields. Histories and geographies made but slight concessions to reading immaturity. The assumption that difficulties of vocabulary and sentence could be safely disregarded, carried with it in many places, a callous disregard of conceptual difficulties also. As a result, textbooks in all subjects were badly overgraded.

When, as was once the case, high school pupils were a select group, the results were not so serious. Since secondary school education has become nearly universal the necessity for corrective measures is plainly seen. Today many forward looking schools are beginning to

provide a continuation of the specific reading period throughout the junior high school, and even in some instances the senior high school.

At this level, it is highly important that the child's taste in recreative reading be further developed. His social interests are relatively mature, although he may not be able to read books of mature reading difficulty. Therefore easy reading materials should be accessible along with those that are more difficult.

In the field of recreatory reading, in addition to recognized classics, whether in their original or in an adapted form there should be provided fiction, essays, and periodicals of varying degrees of seriousness and merit. Dr. Uhl says a child must be given an opportunity to participate actively in the development of his own literary taste. This he cannot do if all but the "best" are withheld from him. Modern teachers who seek to guide the reading tastes of junior high school pupils are reluctant to assume a censorious attitude toward any but positively degrading contemporary literature.¹⁰

Ranges of Reading Interest and Competence

The farther a pupil advances in school, the greater his range in ability and interest in materials outside his grade level. This range of ability reaches downward

¹⁰Willis L. Uhl, The Teaching of Reading, A Report, Prepared by the National Society for the Study of Education (Bloomington, Illinois: National Society for the Study of Education, 1937), pt. 1.

as well as upward. By the time pupils reach grade seven, some will have read a full-length novel written for adults and follow this novel by Anderson's Fairy Tales. A balanced reading for such pupils must extend beyond the limits generally indicated in classified lists of books. Within a given grade, many other pupils lack the ability and interest needs even for books of their own grade. Such pupils often respond better to materials intended for grades below their own than they do to the books usually recommended for their grade. In extreme cases, pupils of grade five and upward can read intelligently only the materials intended for two or more grades below their own. It follows that reading materials for any grade should include materials that are appropriate for three types of pupils: for pupils whose abilities and interests run below and above their grade, for pupils whose effective reading is only below their grade, and for pupils who merely conform with their own grade expectancy. Only by such a diversity of materials can the continuous development of all pupils take place.¹¹

Know the Library Interests of Your Pupils

A most important aim of the school library is to develop within the child the ability to read both

¹¹Ibid., pp. 225-226.

informational and recreational material according to Thomas E. Carson and Ruth Ann Davis of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.¹² The class recitation is an indication of his ability to read for information. The number of books voluntarily read is a basis for judging whether or not interest in recreational reading has been stimulated or developed.

The school curriculum is based on the library as the center of instruction. In order to meet adequately the functional needs of a library-based curriculum, a survey was made to determine pupil interests in reading. From this survey specific types of general fiction and vocational fiction were determined to be of paramount interest to the adolescent reader. For three years the number of books voluntarily read by each pupil in the junior high school had been recorded and correlated with his intelligence quotient and mark in English. The record was encouraging; it showed that the average pupil read thirty books during a school year of 180 days. This was not confined to any intelligence group or to a high or medium scholastic group. It was felt that more data were needed to give a complete picture of the pupil's reading. Through the cooperative efforts of the administration, the English department, and the library, a reading survey was developed. The survey

¹²Thomas E. Carson and Ruth Ann Davis, "Know the Library Interests of Your Pupils," School Review, LVII (January, 1949) 42-44.

was divided into two groups: general fiction and vocational fiction. Vocational fiction was divided into two groups, one appealing only to boys and one, only to girls.

The students were given a questionnaire and no time limit was set. They were told that it was not a test but a survey to show which books they liked best so the library could purchase books which they would enjoy. The findings were gratifying. Fifty-five per cent of the entire student body had had experience in reading all the general and vocational types of fiction. Eighty-five per cent liked the types which they had read. There were significant differences in the reading experiences of boys and girls in the general fiction types of reading, but all the differences were traditional. For example 18 per cent of the boys admitted that they had read romance and of this number, only one admitted that he had liked it very much. The other boys in this group said that they disliked it. The girls showed just the opposite reaction. Ninety-one per cent of the girls had read romance, and two per cent of that number expressed a dislike for it.

Of the general fiction, dog stories and short stories were read the most and liked the best by the boys. On the other hand, romance and short stories were read the most and liked the best by the girls.

The results of this survey have been used as a guide in the selection and purchase of books; for often a new

book is well advertised and yet does not have interest appeal for young people. They have been used also as a guide to what type of books to weed from the library's collection. The success of any recreational reading program is to have shelves well stocked with books having an active reading appeal and free from deadwood.

The following table gives the percentages of boys and girls who read various types of general fiction in the survey in the North Allegheny Joint Schools in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

TABLE I

PERCENTAGES OF BOYS AND GIRLS WHO READ VARIOUS TYPES
OF GENERAL FICTION

Type of Reading	Boys	Girls
Dog stories	93%	86%
Short stories	87%	89%
Sports	69%	46%
Sea stories	68%	30%
Aviation	66%	28%
Football	64%	9%
Baseball	60%	16%
Humor	54%	86%
Pirate	53%	25%
Hunting	46%	10%
College stories	22%	66%
Romance	18%	91%

The results have been satisfying because they indicate that a library-based curriculum in school has aroused interest in recreational reading to such an extent that all intelligence quotient groups and scholastic groups are reading all types of fiction and a manifestation of pleasure has been experienced in that reading. They indicate also that library books are in the hands of the pupils and are not just standing on the shelves.¹³

Teen-Age Reading Habits

Some light has been cast on the literary tastes of the teen-age group as a result of the information compiled by the Teen-Age Book Club, which recently completed its first year under the sponsorship of Pocket Books, Inc. In September, 1946, the club was introduced in high schools throughout the country in answer to the need for good books at a low cost. The program, steered by leaders in the library and educational fields and designed to encourage extracurricular reading by teen-age high school students, was welcomed by librarians and teachers. More than 4,000 letters praising the work of the club have been received from "T-A-B" organizers and educators throughout the country. More than 5,000 letters enthusiastic about the club's selections have been received from teen-agers themselves.

¹³Ibid., 45.

To insure that good books are offered to members of the Teen-Age Book Club, the selections are chosen by a committee composed of Max J. Herzberg, chairman, past president of the National Council of Teachers of English; Richard J. Hurley, past president of the Catholic Library Association; Mark A. Neville, chairman of the committee on junior and senior high school book-lists for the National Council of Teachers of English; Margaret Scoggin, librarian, Nathan Strauss Branch of the New York Public Library; and E. Louise Noyes, head of the English department, Santa Barbara High School.

The statistics, compiled by the Teen-Age Book Club for the purpose of helping the selection committee choose the most appropriate books for the club to offer, are based on the distribution of nearly 600,000 books to approximately 90,000 members in 2,700 units in cities located in all 48 states, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico.

Fifty selections were offered that school year. The first five titles averaged well over 20,000 copies each, the last five averaged over 5,000 each--a considerable number of a single title to be purchased and read by teen-agers. It is interesting to note that five per cent of the ten leading selections, from the teen-age standpoint, have appeared as motion pictures. This tends to confirm the judgment of many who claim that motion pictures have a definite influence on the habits of young people. However, Shakespeare was an

exception. Even the Laurence Olivier movie production and numerous Broadway plays seem to have little effect in endearing Shakespeare to the hearts of teen-agers.

Poetry generally seemed to lack interest as far as teen-agers were concerned. Proving the exception was the Pocket Book of Humorous Verse, which ranked thirteenth in popularity, indicating that boys and girls of high school age will read poetry for sheer entertainment.

Western stories, usually believed liked because of their high reader interest, did not receive as much attention as might have been expected. The time when westerns were among the most popular books apparently has passed. The Covered Wagon, the only really popular title in this category, is more a historical novel than a formula western.

Biographies and nonfiction were unpopular. Only Madame Curie, again a movie, rated fairly high. The T-A-B Club members, on the basis of the first year's results, seemed to prefer novels of adventure and romance.¹⁴

Lane E. De Lare,¹⁵ in his study of the reading interests of 319 pupils in the grades six, seven, and

¹⁴Martha Huddleston, "Teen-Age Reading Habits," Wilson Library Bulletin, Vol. 22 (September, 1947 - June, 1948), 53-68.

Lane E. De Lare, "What Do Your Pupils Read," Nations Schools, XLII (November, 1948), 45-46.

eight in Lincoln School, Alameda, California, says that ninety-two of every one hundred pupils in these three grades read comic books. Ninety-five read comic strips in newspapers. There were 167 girls and 152 boys in the group ranging from eleven to fifteen years of age.

The study showed the magazines the children read for pleasure, those they preferred for school work, and the sections of the newspapers they most enjoyed. In general, the pictorial appeal of the publication was the key to its popularity.

Comic books were by far the most popular magazines with both boys and girls. Life was read by seventy per cent or more of both boys and girls and was the only publication that challenged the comic book supremacy. The girls also liked Calling All Girls and Movie Screen, while the boys enjoyed Popular Mechanics and Popular Science. Ninety-two per cent of the pupils were comic books readers. Only twenty-six children said they did not read comic books.

This popularity of comic books is not a local condition for a recent report is that 50,000,000 comic books are published every month. This more than the combined circulation of the Reader's Digest, Life, The Saturday Evening Post, and Time magazines. Like it or not, the fact remains that comic books have an enormous reading public, and they are probably here to stay.

The magazines used most in connection with school work were National Geographic, The Saturday Evening Post, Young America, and Current Events. The sixth grade pupils made more extensive use of magazines in preparing various assignments than did either of the other two grade groups. The most used magazine was different for each grade level.

The parts of the newspaper most frequently read by both boys and girls in the order of their popularity are:

Comics	95%
Sports	63%
Movie section	38%
World news	34%
Local news	31%

The data collected in this study suggest three implications for educators. Twenty-five per cent of the pupils indicated they use the National Geographic for school work. The interest in this magazine is significant, since it is written expressly for an adult public. It appears safe to say that the pupils' interests spring from the excellent pictures found in this magazine.

Dr. John C. Almack, professor of education at Stanford University, in discussing this situation¹⁶ suggested that it would be a great service to school children if a junior edition of this magazine were published with the printed matter simplified so children could understand the explanation that went with the pictures.

¹⁶Ibid.

This study indicated that comic books are the most popular magazines read by this group of pupils. It is also evident that this interest is not local in character, since 50,000,000 comic books are being published every month in the United States. It is important that educators be aware of this and use it to further the cause of education.

Paul Gossard, Superintendent of Schools in Quincy, Massachusetts, capitalized on this interest by sponsoring a history of Quincy written in comic book form. A twenty-eight page booklet was published with the idea that a general reading for pleasure would give a good overview of local history. Gossard also believed that the material could be used to good advantage as supplementary reading in the classroom. His confidence paid off. The demand for the first edition of 30,000 copies was so great it became necessary to publish a second edition of 10,000 copies. This was a practical way to capitalize on the interest of children in behalf of education.

This study also indicates that pupils like the magazines and parts of the newspapers that are highly illustrated. A textbook made up entirely of sketches and in comic book and bound with a sturdy cover would not be expensive. A text of this sort would be wonderful supplementary material and since it would be in a form pleasing to children there is not much doubt that it would be read.

Voluntary Reading as an Expression of Individuality

How normal children respond to the invitation to read, how much they do in their spare time, how they feel about reading as a leisure activity, and what sorts of experiences preceded and accompany or rival their present reading habits constitute the major questions of this investigation of fifty-five readers aged twelve to fourteen years over the period of their junior high school grades.¹⁷

The Iowa Silent Reading Test and the Haggerty Reading Examination, administered to them in seventh and eighth grades respectively, indicated that all the pupils read with at least average ability, several of them at adult levels. This fact of their superior reading ability differentiates the study from those which have examined retarded readers.

The investigator observed the pupils' tastes and habits in voluntary or non-required reading. She visited the homes of twenty-six pupils, talked with their parents about early reading experiences, and collected as much information as possible on factors presumed to influence enjoyment of reading. Those boys and girls enjoyed discussing their reading: each of them wrote autobiographies of their reading lives, describing in detail their earliest

¹⁷Mary Hayden Bowen Wollner, "Children's Voluntary Reading as an Expression of Individuality," Teachers College Record, Columbia University, LI (April, 1950) 479-480.

memories of reading and their preferences and giving explanations of why they did or did not like to read in free time.

Certain trends were revealed in this study, for example, the trend toward decrease in voluntary reading during the junior high school years. Some pupils explained this on the grounds of pressure of other activities, especially homework. Other tendencies were implied in the material, as the mental hygiene implication that between the two extremes of reading behavior, the extreme of avoidance and the extreme of overindulgence, a happy medium may be found in the attitude of the boy or girl who can say, "I like to read, and I do read. But I like to do other things, too."

It is suggested that adequate opportunities and stimuli, rather than forcing or undue pressure, a balanced diet of other hobby pursuits and interests, and the attitude of healthy satisfaction rather than excessive reading or neurotic avoidance tend to produce what teachers, librarians, and parents consider good reading progress.

Library Standards

Adel Throckmorton¹⁸ says that books and periodicals shall be appropriate to the age of the children to be

Adel F. Throckmorton, Standards for Accrediting Kansas Elementary Schools, 1958, Bulletin 301. (Topeka, Kansas: State Printing Plant, 1958), pp. 10-11.

served. Library services in graded schools include both a central library and room libraries. The library should be under the supervision of a trained librarian or teacher-librarian who can help in the use of instructional materials. Books in the room library should be changed as the reading interest levels and units of the classroom change. Books not in use in the room libraries should be kept in the central library so that they will be available to other teachers. Adequate shelving and reading tables should be provided. There should be an attractive and frequently changed display of books and magazines representing a range of interest and difficulty as wide as the needs of the pupils.

Joy Elmer Morgan¹⁹ says that there are four good reasons for memorizing poetry in the schools. It builds and enriches the child's emotional and mental life. It gives training in attention and concentration. It develops an appreciation of beautiful language. It preserves our national heritage.

The habit of reciting favorite poems conditions the emotions and lives in the personality as long as life itself. The habit of concentration can develop only through constant practice. Mr. Morgan also says that learning takes place at the point of attention so that the control of attention is the basis of all learning

¹⁹Joy Elmer Morgan, "Poetry in Our Schools," The Kansas Teacher, XLIX (November, 1957), 10.

and mental growth. Only by learning to concentrate can youth be prepared to meet the tasks of adult life. There is no better training in attention and concentration than the memorizing of worthwhile material.

Our taste for literature and our feeling for language is developed by hearing, reading, and using good language. A nation lives in its poetry and its scripture. These are the carriers of its ideals. The more a community emphasizes truth, goodness, and beauty, the more civilized it is. The hope of the future is in man's desire to be better than he is and in his willingness to struggle to become better. This desire to be better is one of the constant themes of poetry.

Mr. Morgan concludes his article in The Kansas Teacher by stating that the teacher who has learned the gentle art of leading children to love poetry has achieved one of the dearest joys of the profession.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURE

The writer used the questionnaire and library method to gather materials to be used in solving the problem of stimulating the reading interest of junior high school boys and girls.

There has been a number of interesting studies made regarding children's reading interests and habits. As many of these studies were read as time would permit to find what had been done in this field.

The questionnaire was a set of twenty-five questions of the yes and no variety and was sent to students in the summer session of Kansas State Teachers College, Pittsburg, Kansas.

A questionnaire²⁰ is a form which is prepared and distributed for the purpose of securing responses to certain questions. Generally these questions are factual, designed to secure information about conditions or practices of which the recipient is presumed to have knowledge. The questionnaire is an important instrument in normative survey research, being used to gather information from widely scattered sources. The questionnaire procedure normally comes into use where one cannot readily see personally all of the people from whom he desires responses.

Carter V. Good, A. S. Barr, Douglas E. Scates, The Methodology of Educational Research. (New York: D. Appleton Century, Inc., 1936), p. 325.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Questionnaires containing twenty-five questions were sent to twenty people, ranging from college professors to elementary teachers. The questionnaires were necessary in order to bring together desired facts in so concise a form as to be easily interpreted.

The response was gratifying since 97.2 per cent of the questions were answered. The high school ^{teachers} left twelve questions unanswered and two were left unanswered by the elementary teachers.

Both college and elementary teachers were 100 per cent in saying that they were teachers of reading while only 60 per cent of the secondary and 67 per cent of the junior high teachers said they were teachers of reading. One of the high school teachers commented that all teachers are teachers of reading--or should be.

Ninety per cent of the elementary teachers and 80 per cent of the secondary teachers thought that reading should be taught as a separate subject. Sixty-seven per cent of the junior high teachers and 50 per cent of the college teachers thought that reading should be separately taught.

The use of workbooks was not very popular except with elementary teachers and 90 percent of them were in favor of workbooks.

TABLE II

RESULTS OF READING CHECK LIST

Question	College Teachers		Secondary Teachers		Junior High Teachers		Elementary Teachers	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Are you a teacher of Reading?	100	0	60	40	67	33	100	0
2. Do you think the teaching of reading as a separate subject is necessary?	50	50	80	20	67	33	90	10
3. Do you recommend the use of reading workbooks?	50	50	50	50	33	67	90	10
4. Do your students do regular vocabulary study?	50	50	40	60	100	0	100	0
5. Do you read to the class for their enjoyment?	50	50	20	80	67	33	90	10
6. Do you enjoy reading to them?	100	0	33	67	67	33	100	0
7. Do they select the book or story for you to read to them?	0	100	33	67	67	33	70	30

TABLE II (Continued)

Question	College Teachers		Secondary Teachers		Junior High Teachers		Elementary Teachers	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
8. Do you have a class of at least fifty books?	50	50	67	33	33	67	100	0
9. Do you have a regularly scheduled library period?	0	100	50	50	67	33	50	50
10. Do you feel that certain times of the day are better than other times for reading?	0	100	80	20	100	0	80	20
11. Do you display book jackets to awaken an interest in new books?	50	50	20	80	67	33	90	10
12. What types of reading do your students most often select when given a choice?	See TABLE III.							
13. Have you used the Teen-Age Book Club program and do you recommend it to others?	50	50	0	100	0	100	20	80

TABLE II (Continued)

Question	College Teachers		Secondary Teachers		Junior High Teachers		Elementary Teachers	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
14. Do your students participate in the William Allen White book award selections?	50	50	0	100	67	33	20	80
15. Do you believe that typical modern literature is unwholesome?	50	50	20	80	67	33	10	90
16. Should our textbooks contain more stories that teach morals and citizenship?	100	0	100	0	100	0	80	20
17. Do your children prepare poems for presentation in the reading period?	50	50	0	100	100	0	30	70
18. Do you feel that poetry has become neglected in reading programs in recent years?	100	0	60	40	100	0	100	0
19. Do your students do research on background material of poems and stories studied as a method of stimulating interest?	50	50	20	80	100	0	60	40

TABLE II (Continued)

Question	College Teachers		Secondary Teachers		Junior High Teachers		Elementary Teachers	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
20. Do you use weekly newspapers to enrich your reading program?	100	0	60	40	100	0	90	10
21. Do you devote some of the social studies time to the current events period in which each child is expected to present a brief oral report?	100	0	60	40	100	0	89	11
22. Do you use <u>Junior Scholastics</u> magazine?	50	50	40	60	0	100	30	70
23. Do you use field trips to enrich your reading program and to stimulate an interest in reading?	50	50	60	40	67	33	60	40
24. Have you used motion picture films as a means of stimulating reading interest?	100	0	60	40	100	0	70	30
25. Do you find a hobby club beneficial in stimulating reading interest?	100	0	50	50	100	0	90	10

Vocabulary study was stressed most by the junior high and elementary teachers. They were 100 per cent in saying that they did regular vocabulary study. Fifty per cent of the college teachers and 40 per cent of the secondary teachers said that they did regular vocabulary study.

Ninety per cent of the elementary teachers, 67 per cent of the junior high teachers and one of the two college teachers contacted replied that they read to the class for their enjoyment.

All the elementary teachers, 33 per cent of the secondary teachers and 67 per cent of the junior high teachers said they enjoyed reading to them. Both the college teachers said they did when they were in public schools.

About 50 per cent of all the teachers questioned allowed the children to select the story or book to be read to them.

Only the elementary teachers were 100 per cent in having a class library of at least fifty books. Fifty per cent of the college teachers, 67 per cent of the secondary teachers, and 33 per cent of the junior high teachers had a class library.

None of the college teachers, 50 per cent of the secondary teachers, 67 per cent of the junior high teachers, and 50 per cent of the elementary teachers had a regularly scheduled library period.

The college teachers did not feel that certain times of the day are better than others for reading, yet 100 per cent of the junior high teachers, 80 per cent of the secondary teachers and 80 per cent of the elementary teachers thought that certain hours of the day are better for reading than other times.

Ninety per cent of the elementary teachers, 67 per cent of the junior high teachers, 50 per cent of the college teachers and 20 per cent of the secondary teachers actually use a display of book jackets to awaken an interest in reading.

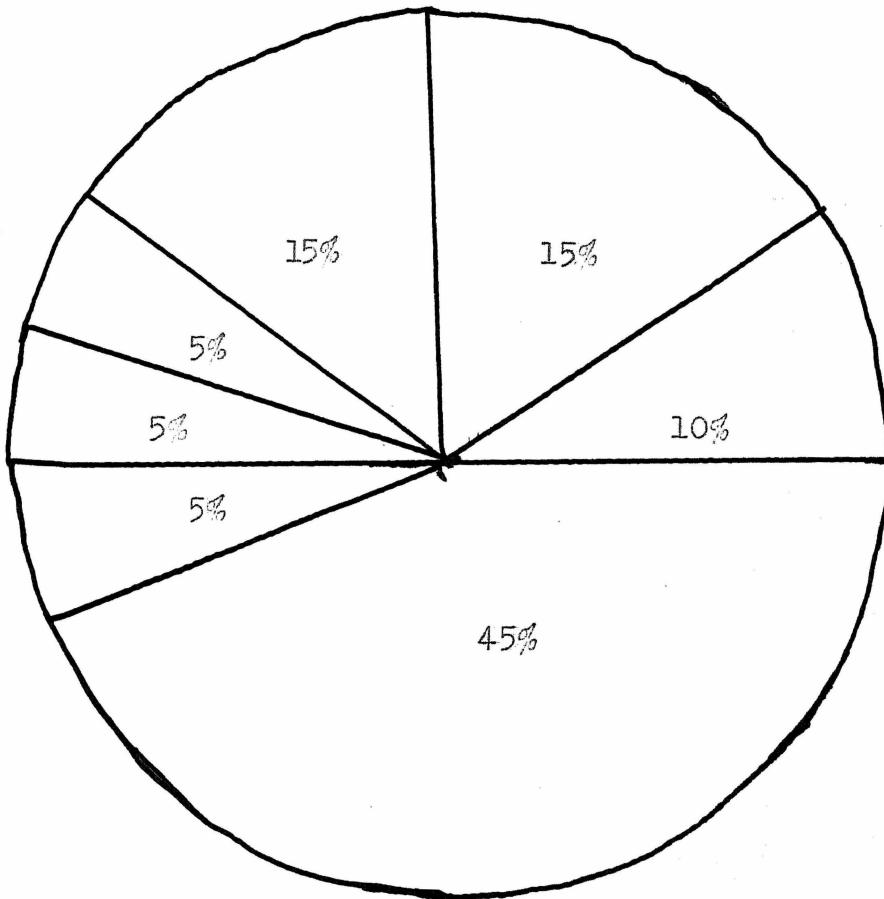
Adventure stories were the most popular with the students when they were given a choice interest. Forty-five per cent of the stories selected were adventure stories, 15 per cent science fiction, 15 per cent animal stories, ten per cent mysteries, and five per cent each for sports stories, classics, and biography. (See Table III.)

The thirteenth question was two questions in one. Have you used the Teen-Age Book Club program and do you recommend it to others? Consequently it is not clear just what the answer meant. It should have been two separate questions.

In the William Allen White book award selections 50 per cent of the college teachers, 67 per cent of the junior high teachers, 20 per cent of the elementary teachers and none of the secondary teachers participated.

TABLE III

RESULTS OF QUESTION 12



Adventure stories.....	45%
Mysteries.....	10%
Science fiction.....	15%
Sports stories.....	5%
Animal stories.....	15%
Classics.....	5%
Biography.....	5%

As to typical modern literature 50 per cent college teachers, 20 per cent secondary teachers, 67 per cent junior high teachers and ten per cent elementary teachers think it is unwholesome.

All the college teachers, secondary teachers, junior high teachers and 80 per cent of the elementary teachers questioned think that our textbooks should contain more stories that teach morals and citizenship. One college teacher commented that the stories that he remembered best were the ones that taught a lesson.

One hundred per cent of the junior high teachers, 50 per cent of the college teachers, 30 per cent of the elementary teachers and none of the secondary teachers had their students prepare poems for presentation in the reading period. Elementary teachers, junior high teachers and college teachers were 100 per cent in believing that poetry has become neglected in our reading program in recent years.

The junior high teachers were 100 per cent, elementary teachers 60 per cent, college teachers 50 per cent, and secondary teachers 20 per cent in having students do research on background material of poems and stories as a method of stimulating interests.

All the college teachers and junior high teachers, 90 per cent of the elementary teachers, and 60 per cent of the secondary teachers used weekly newspapers to enrich the reading program.

All of the college and junior high teachers contacted, 89 per cent of the elementary teachers, and 69 per cent of the secondary teachers replied that they devoted some of the social studies time to current events period in which each child was expected to present a brief oral report.

Junior Scholastics wasn't widely used among the respondents, as only 50 per cent of the college teachers, 40 per cent of the secondary teachers, 30 per cent of the elementary teachers, and none of the junior high teachers questioned had used Junior Scholastics.

Field trips were used by 67 per cent of the junior high teachers, 60 per cent of the secondary and elementary teachers and 50 per cent of the college teachers to enrich the reading program and stimulate an interest in reading.

Motion picture films were used by 100 per cent of the college teachers and junior high teachers, by 60 per cent of the secondary teachers and by 70 per cent of the elementary teachers as a means of stimulating reading interest.

One hundred per cent of the junior high and college teachers found a hobby club beneficial in stimulating interest in reading, while only 90 per cent of the elementary and 50 per cent of the secondary teachers found it so.

In summarizing the findings of the questionnaire there were two outstanding points. Nearly all of the teachers who answered the questionnaire felt that our textbooks should contain more stories that teach morals and citizenship. The second outstanding point made by 90 per cent of the teachers was that poetry has become neglected in recent years. Hobby clubs, motion picture films, and weekly newspapers ranked high with this particular group of teachers as methods of stimulating interest in reading.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There is no single method of encouraging and stimulating interest in reading. The common sense approach is to make use of any and all methods that will help the student. Suit the method to his needs. He should have a purpose in his reading, and the reading material should be interesting and not difficult.

The reason comic magazines rank so high with students is the action, adventure, excitement, suspense, and danger. They require no effort on the child's part and no premium is put on good reading ability. Also they are not followed by examinations and they are easily available.

Directing the reading interests of youth along worthwhile lines and providing abundant suitable reading material, is a cooperative job. It should be shared by parents, teachers, and librarians. Boys and girls should be offered reading materials of good quality, but the materials, in order to stimulate interest, should contain the elements of action, suspense, adventure, and excitement.

Help the pupils to be critical and to set up standards for judging comics, movies, books, radio and television programs. Help them to discover all the possibilities

for information and enjoyment that can be found in good books. The good reader enjoys reading.

Teaching effective reading is not the job of the elementary school alone. The high school also has a responsibility.

After having reviewed the literature presented in this study and the findings in the survey the writer wishes to make the following recommendations.

Textbooks should contain more poetry and stories that teach morals and citizenship. Since civilization is a state of mind, we need more stories that emphasize honesty, goodness, fair play, cooperation and consideration of others. The more one practices these characteristics the more civilization will be advanced.

The student who is interested in reading has a large vocabulary. There should be more practice in the use of study aids such as the encyclopedia and dictionaries. More work should be done in building a larger vocabulary.

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READING CHECK LIST

1. Are you a teacher of reading?
2. Do you think the teaching of reading as a separate subject is necessary?
3. Do you recommend the use of read workbooks?
4. Do your students do regular vocabulary study?
5. Do you read to the class for their enjoyment?
6. Do you enjoy reading to them?
7. Do they select the book or story for you to read to them?
8. Do you have a class library of at least fifty books?
9. Do you have a regularly scheduled library period?
10. Do you feel that certain times of the day are better than other times for reading?
11. Do you display book jackets to awaken an interest in new books?
12. What types of reading do your students most often select when given a choice? (Check one.)

poetry_____	science fiction_____
biography_____	sports stories_____
adventures_____	animal stories_____
mysteries_____	
13. Have you used the Teen-Age Book Club program? Do you recommend it to others?
14. Do your students participate in the William Allen White award book selections?
15. Do you believe that typical modern literature is unwholesome?
16. Should our textbooks contain more stories that teach morals and citizenship?
17. Do your children prepare poems for presentation in the reading period?

18. Do you feel that poetry has become neglected in reading in recent years?
19. Do your students do research on background material of poems and stories studied as a method of stimulating interest?
20. Do you use weekly newspapers to enrich your reading program?
21. Do you use Junior Scholastics magazine?
22. Do you devote some of the social studies time to the current events period in which each child is expected to present a brief oral report?
23. Do you use field trips to enrich your reading program and to stimulate interest in reading?
24. Have you used motion picture films as a means of stimulating interest in reading?
25. Do you find a hobby club beneficial in stimulating reading interest?