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AN IMPROVED READING PROGRAM IN THE
CARVER HIGH SCHOOL,
FRANKSTON, TEXAS

EWELL

1948

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AN IMPROVED READING PROGRAM IN THE
CARVER HIGH SCHOOL,
FRANKSTON, TEXAS

BY

MARJORIE MORRIS EWELL

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A thesis in Education submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Science in the
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DEDICATED TO
My Husband,
Mr. V. O. Ewell;
My Children,
Yvonne,
Jenelle,
V. O. Ewell, Jr.;
and
My Parents,
Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Morris.

BIOGRAPHY

Marjorie Ewell was born in Jerome, Texas, December 9, 1907, to Charles and Mahala Morris. After her elementary school life in Jacksonville, Texas, she entered the Lincoln High School, Palestine, Texas, from which she was graduated.

She received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Texas College in August, 1938.

Her present position is an instructor in the Carver High School, Frankston, Texas.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Today all of the children of all of the people are being taught in the elementary school, which results in a number of undesirable situations. The popular one hundred per cent promotion plan sends into the secondary school many who will fail in some subjects.¹

In many cases reading stops at the end of the sixth grade and students enter classrooms without adequate background for comprehension and interpretation of subject matter. This indicates that they do not have the reading ability that is necessary in the occupations and life situations into which they will go.

This is no effort to emphasize the fact that a democracy in which many students fail is in need of change, a point is that the gap between what has been done and what can be done should be bridged.

The ability to read is the most important means of gaining knowledge and the only means of self-instruction. Therefore, the degree to which it is possessed determines the success attained in the various high school courses.

Before the last decade there was apparently little concern for the teaching of reading in the secondary school. The social issues, economic progress and the tension which comes from that progress have so changed the lives of people that the period which has lately begun must mean for most social agencies a re-examination and reformulation of plans and practices. Secondary schools have a particular need for re-examination and reformulation in the light of the grave deficiencies revealed in

¹ Edward William Dolch. A Manual for Remedial Reading. p. 91.

high school students' abilities.

Teachers in all the fields are aware of the poor study habits of students who lack the ability to read, and are in some cases accepting the responsibility for ameliorating these woes.

The Problem

The problem of this study is to diagnose the reading level of students in the Carver School and to discover ways of helping the students solve the problems pertaining to reading in the performance of duties both in and out of school.

The perfect plan for the teaching of reading does not exist.¹ It is obvious that this effort cannot be conceived as approaching this ideal, but it is presented in the hope that it may help to make the Carver School the teaching and learning center it should be.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to formulate a plan designed to improve several phases of reading in the interest of economy of time, instruction and student performance.

To this end these purposes are envisioned: (1) To determine the reading proficiency of the students in the Carver School; (2) to stimulate a desire and an interest in self improvement; (3) to improve comprehension and interpretation by directing attention to content; and (4) to increase the rate of reading.

The data secured may aid in making a comparison of the grades be-

¹Ibid., p. 109.

fore and after the proposed program has been executed. It may also serve as a basis for continuous improvement on the secondary level.

As disseminators of learning, it is the teachers' task to direct critical reading. The teachers of English and all subject-matter fields must become teachers of reading in order that these purposes may be, if belatedly, realized.¹

Scope of the Study

This study includes the twenty-five students from grades nine to eleven. Each student was given the same testing, diagnosis and evaluation of reading ability. Emphasis was placed on the improvement of reading skills and abilities in the high school.

The time period of this study was from September 10, 1947, to May 21, 1948.

It is hoped that the principles and practices presented will be equally valid in any situation where reading improvement is being studied.

Method of Procedure

A conference with the principal and teachers was the first step taken in the plan. It was assumed that the principal recognized the world wide significance of reading and its place in the school.

The initiation of this program of reading was endorsed by the principal. The teachers accepted certain duties and subscribed to the theory that every teacher should be a teacher of reading.

¹M. L. Goetting. Teaching in the Secondary School. p. 349.

Health examinations were given by a nurse from the office of the local doctor and the results were recorded. Observations and simple devices for the testing of sight and hearing were given in the class room.

The reading abilities of the students were partly determined by three standardized tests, namely: The Metropolitan Achievement Reading Test¹; The Iowa Silent Reading Test²; and The New California Short Form Test of Mental Maturity.³

The Metropolitan Achievement Reading Test measured vocabulary and paragraph comprehension. The New California Test of Mental Maturity measured eight different areas of ability including spatial relationships and logical reasoning. The Iowa Silent Reading Test measured nine areas including rate of speed, comprehension, poetry comprehension, selection of key words and location of information.

The results of these tests were tabulated and recorded for the investigation.

In addition to the standardized tests, informal inventories of the students' reading ability were taken and the students' responses in social situations were observed.⁴

Definition of Terms

According to Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, "improved" may be de-

¹John G. Darley. Testing and Counseling in the High School Program. p. 105.

²Guy L. Bond and Eva Bond. Teaching the Child to Read. p. 334.

³Albert J. Harris. How to Increase Reading Ability. p. 131.

⁴Emmett A. Betts. "Foundations of the Reading Program." Educational, Vol., 67 (March, 1947) pp. 399-411.

defined as, to make useful addition to; to bring nearer perfection.

The definition for "program" is a brief outline or explanation of the order to be pursued.

It follows that the term "Improved Reading Program" means a brief explanation of the order to be pursued in bringing the reading ability nearer perfection.

Survey of Related Reading

A survey of similar and related studies was made in order to benefit by the thinking and findings of other investigators interested in problems corresponding to the present study.

Nothing has been previously mentioned of the reading ability of the Negro students of Carver School; however, other studies have been made and Negro children have been included in them. These studies are in the form of monographs that have been conducted since 1943.

Some surveys of the reading abilities of students have been made by Johnson¹, Vaughn², and Crawford.³

Johnson⁴ made a study of one hundred senior students in the Wheat-

¹Bessie Hallowell Johnson. "An Investigation in Progress in Reading Ability of One Hundred Senior Pupils of Phillis Wheatley High School, Houston, Texas." An unpublished master's thesis, Prairie View University, Prairie View, Texas. 1943, p. 74.

²Florence E. Fowler Vaughn. "A Reading Program for the Ninth Grade of the St. Paul High School, Greenville, Texas." An unpublished master's thesis, Prairie View University, Prairie View, Texas. 1943, p. 73.

³Bertha Olivia Crawford. "A Study of a Remedial Reading Program and Its Effect on the Improvement of Reading in the Bruce Elementary School, Houston, Texas." An unpublished master's thesis, Prairie View University, Prairie View, Texas. 1944, p. 72.

⁴Johnson, Ibid., p. 74.

ley High School, Houston, Texas, having as its objectives the development of the desire for the use of reading and stimulating interest in the improvement of reading abilities. The students were divided into two groups which were called preliminary and experimental and were composed of fifty rapid readers and fifty slow readers, respectively. The same testing program was administered to each group and the experimental group received special method of instruction to improve rate of reading, comprehension, interest, oral reading, and general efficiency in the use of books.

Reliable specific gains of 1.4 average in reading abilities were recorded for the group receiving instruction while the group which had no corrective instruction showed gains of .6. This indicated that the degree of progress in reading of students exposed to a definite corrective program exceeded the progress in reading of students who were given no definite corrective reading instruction.

Vaughn¹ made a study of remedial instruction in the St. Paul High School. She included a report of the study made by William S. Gray of 6,000 ninth grade students of a Chicago suburb in which five per cent were reading at sixth grade level, six per cent at fifth grade level, five per cent at fourth grade level, and four per cent at second and third grade level. Vaughn administered tests and inventories to get the index of the St. Paul students' abilities and groups were formed according to their interests as shown on the inventories. An extra period each day was used for remedial instruction. Aims for the reading class were established. An attractive reading atmosphere was provided and material for remedial work was acquired.

¹Vaughn, Ibid., p. 73.

Positive gains were reported on the students who were tested, diagnosed and given therapy in reading instruction.

Crawford¹ made the statement, in her study of the fifth and sixth grades, that "unless boys and girls leave the elementary school with a well-developed taste for reading, with the ability to read understandingly and with a first hand knowledge of the best literature, the school has failed to meet the needs of growing and thinking children."

She made an analysis of each case and adapted remedial measures to improve the reading abilities of the pupils. Pupils who had failed in some subjects were assigned to three laboratory reading classes. Deficiencies were found and a remedial program was administered which resulted in average reading scores of 1.8, 1.61 and .11.

An all school reading program, as given by Harris², is one in which all teachers stress the improvement of one reading skill (such as selecting the main idea) for two weeks and another skill during the next two weeks, etc. Thus, a well-rounded program of reading could be covered during a school year.

Dr. Stella Center³ declares that America is a nation of sixth graders, that high school graduates should read from three hundred fifty to four hundred words per minute. Most people read from one hundred fifty to two hundred words per minute. Dr. Center is credited with having taught over five thousand children and adults to read well. Her method is to check for eye trouble, jerks, regressions, speed, vocabulary and

¹Crawford, op. cit.

²Harris, op. cit.

³Stella Center. "New York University Reading Clinic." Time, Vol., 49 (March, 1947).

comprehension. Intelligence and psychological tests are given to find maladjustments such as blocks, right and left dominances and mixed dominances (which causes one to call "was" "saw"). Her method included touching the lips to find vocalization, frequent use of the desk dictionary, vocabulary drill, spelling and phrase study. Some of her devices for learning are flash cards and the metron-o-scope, which flashes sentences in phrases rhythmically on a screen.

Hunnicut¹ described a functional program in reading education at the Syracuse University, based on three purposes -- service to university students in improving their skills, assistance to students and adults in the surrounding geographic area and teacher education, both graduate and undergraduate. In the second major function, the secondary students were given appropriate tests and analyses. The data were studied and possible plans for improvements were proposed. Teachers-in-training in the remedial reading courses helped to carry through the program of therapy.

Early in the article Hunnicutt forced the issue that secondary students should be taught as children on other levels are taught. Provision must be made at each stage for students who cannot be adequately reached in the normal program.

Dolch² discusses methods of teaching sounds, division of words into syllables and calls attention to the fact that one cause of poor comprehension is due to the fact that a poor reader's attention is taken up with word difficulties. He suggests the use of easy readers of unknown grade level to the student and vocabulary building of life words and fam-

¹C. W. Hunnicutt. "A Functional Program in Reading Education." School and Society, Vol. 1, 67, (May 22, 1948).

²Edward William Dolch. A Manual for Remedial Reading. pp. 74-110.

ily words. Dolch is of the opinion that any teacher of content subject, history, science, or what not, should help students learn to work out words as they will have to work them out later in life when there is no one to give them the pronunciation. Activities should be directed toward having pupils understand content, and experience a reaction to what is read. Dolch observes that "much reading leads to better reading"; on the other hand, "no reading" obviously leads to nothing. Schools need to provide books for wide differing interests and many juvenile magazines. A suggestive program is included in the book: Monday, rapid reading; Tuesday, oral or written compositions; Wednesday, grammar usage; Thursday, word study and spelling; Friday, literature. The assignments were to prevent encroachment by the other and also to add variety which maintains interest.

Dolch avers that individual work yields the greatest progress in reading ability and closes the chapter on remedial reading in the high school by directing attention to the use of the library period during which each student reads steadily in a book of direct interest to him and is of difficulty suitable to his reading level as a practical device which results in benefit to all.

Bond¹ envisions a developmental reading program which begins with the freshman class the first year and extends to other levels and to the whole school as a gradual process. He mentions an experiment in Negaunee, Michigan, in which wide reading on any subject was encouraged. It was found that as the amount of the students' reading increased their reading tastes improved. Bond treats reading techniques, interests, methods, di-

¹Guy L. Bond and Eva Bond. Developmental Reading in the High School. pp. 131-275.

agnosis and appraising. His ideal program is one in which the remedial program augments the developmental one with both under the direction of a coordinator who has ample time periods for improvement in reading.

McCallister¹ discusses fully reading disability in the high school, the character of the reading activities required in studying content subjects, techniques for identifying the difficulties which students encounter in performing activities and methods of overcoming reading difficulties. It is pointed out by McCallister that high school teachers frequently overlook opportunities for developing skills in reading because their attention is centered quite naturally on the contents of their subjects and not on reading.

Helen M. Robinson², Instructor in Education and Director of the Reading Clinic at the University of Chicago, studied causes of severe forms of reading disability and considered the nature of improvements. The study shows clearly that a large proportion of children who are considered unteachable may learn to read when adequate diagnostic and corrective steps are taken.

The Robinson study, according to William S. Gray, is considered a significant contribution to research.

Gorman³ says that the movement for improvement in reading is of vast importance. He places emphasis on positive procedures in teaching the student to read and re-emphasizes the fact that reading must be continued in all grades and in all areas of the curriculum. Gorman is of

¹James M. McCallister. Remedial and Corrective Instruction in Reading. pp. 44-105, 189-202.

²Helen M. Robinson. "Why People Fail in Reading." Education, Vol., 67, (March, 1927).

³Frank Gorman. "Teaching High School Pupils to Read." School Review, Vol., 51, (September, 1943).

the opinion that there is no reason to assume that a superior reader at one level of difficulty will be capable of reading efficiently without direction at a different level. Instruction must begin at the learner's level for it to be effective. The steps as outlined in making assignments are: (1) arouse interest, (2) lead pupils to set up intrinsic purposes for reading, (3) provide for individual differences in range and variety, and (4) insist on reading for comprehension and interpretation.

Kirk's¹ program of reading encompasses only the best in literature and graphic representation of student progress. An experiment in reading is related in which two hundred fifty dull-normal high school students with intelligence quotients below eighty-nine were given treatment in reading that resulted in a gain of two grades in reading ability.

In an article in School and Society Paul Witty² challenges George H. Henry's statement that one-third of the students from grades nine to twelve were incapable of mastering the stock tools of learning well enough to make any appreciable difference in their literacy. Henry contends that these high school pupils could not read on a fifth grade level or write a coherent passage reasonably free from errors. He is of the opinion that remedial reading has failed and guidance unremunerative.

Maude Greene Fox³ believes that students can develop in interest in reading and by planned effort become better readers, and, that their minds and interests can be broadened and deepened when they are convinced

¹ Samuel A. Kirk. Teaching Reading to Slow Learning Children. pp. 174-187.

² Paul Witty. "Reading Problems in Secondary Schools." School and Society, Vol., 65 (February 15, 1947).

³ Maude Greene Fox. "An Experiment in Promoting Interest in Reading." Elementary School Journal, Vol., 47 (April, 1947).

that more and better ideas exist in books.

Cole¹ states that by positive instructional procedures, regular class room teachers through regular class room activities can most satisfactorily overcome many deficiencies in high school reading. For the techniques of diagnostic procedures of instruction and the principles of teaching reading do not differ greatly from those employed in a program of corrective reading. The essentials of the desirable training are that it should be systematic, of adequate length and so clear that students always know what they are looking for.

Research reveals that most students have the ability to attain the objectives of the curriculum for their grade levels.²

If the intelligence quotient is above 70 the student can learn to read.³ This was shown in the Kirk study.

¹Luella Cole. The Improvement of Reading. pp. 195-253, 309-326.

²Fay Adams. Educating America's Children. p. 134.

³M. E. Bloom. Effective Reading Instruction. p. 454.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND OF THE COMMUNITY

The Carver High School, which motivated this study, is located three miles northeast of Frankston in Anderson County, Texas, which is between the town of Athens and Jacksonville in the section of the State known as East Texas.

The Neches River forms a boundary between Anderson and Smith Counties and Anderson and Cherokee Counties. This section is served by the Southern Pacific Railroad and Highway 75 runs near the school making it accessible at all times.

The district was formerly composed of four one teacher schools in as many adjoining communities. The school, which was consolidated in 1937, is composed of four rural areas and one urban area. It formerly consisted of twelve grades, four teachers and one hundred fifty pupils. It now has twelve grades, eight teachers and two hundred fifty students.

The school site of four acres was purchased by donations from parents and friends of the five communities. The faculty, with the aid of friends, added, in 1938, a classroom and a lunchroom. In 1946 an agricultural building was erected by the same group. The faculty borrowed money from the local bank in 1947 and built an auditorium. A homemaking cottage is now under construction.

The homes range from cottages with kerosene lamps, wood stoves, uncovered wells and surface toilets to fairly modern homes containing running water, bathrooms, gas, washing machines and other electrical appliances.

A fair standard of living is maintained by 65 per cent of the fam-

ilies. Thirty-five per cent have a low standard which is probably due to illness, inability to budget the income and to a broken home. Ninety-five per cent of the families raise gardens and grow approximately fifty per cent of their food. Hogs are grown by eighty per cent of the families, while 76 per cent own cows.

The occupations represented in the community are those of a barber, store porter, beautician, carpenter, nursery man, truck driver, and mechanic. About three-fourths of the families engage in farming; and, although this occupation predominates as an industry, most of the families derive their incomes from a number of other sources.

The incomes in this community range from \$500 to \$10,000 a year.

The Mt. Olive Baptist Church, with its several auxiliaries, two lodges, a Boy Scout organization, and two eating places are the main gathering places for the people of the community. These organizations and businesses, the local theater, and the school form the nuclei around which the recreational life of the community revolves.

Too early responsibility has been placed on the shoulders of awkwardly growing boys and girls. This responsibility accounts for, or in part, the small percentage of delinquency that is found in the country and the close knitting together of family ties.

Some of the factors that adversely affect the progress of the high school students are mobility, invalidism, a broken home, the world of work, inadequate family incomes, early marriages and poor roads.

Because of these factors and others which are similar, there is general agreement that a far from satisfactory situation exists in rural America.

CHAPTER III

INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The diagnostic tests which were administered to the twenty-five high school students determined specific difficulties of pupils in reading. The results of these tests are shown in Tables I, II, III, IV, V, and VI.

The tests were not relied upon alone to show improvement. Marked improvements were noticeable in students who had attended school regularly and had done extensive reading.

Test marks did not over-influence or under-influence the data as it is generally known that there are areas which tests cannot measure.

The intelligence quotient means little until the separate factors that are added to produce it are known. These factors may be difficult to grasp, but they are analogous to the parts of the body as the hands, eyes, or ears which perform their duties independently of each other, yet they cooperate in the total behavior of an individual.

The Iowa test, a rather difficult one, identified areas in which students were low or high and furnished data on specific skills which may aid reading ability. The Metropolitan test, which was of medium difficulty measured general reading ability and vocabulary.

For the purpose of interpretation the raw scores obtained from the Metropolitan Reading Achievement Test have been converted into grade levels in Table I.

The results of the tests disclose the fact that the range of the grade level of the first test, given in September, was from 4.3 to 10.6; the second, given in May, was from 5.3 to 11.3.

TABLE I. INDIVIDUAL GAINS IN READING ON THE METROPOLITAN ACHIEVEMENT TESTS OF TWENTY-FIVE CARVER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Student's code letter	Actual grade placement	September grade equivalent	May grade equivalent	May gain
A	9	7.7	10.7	3
B	9	6.7	9	2.3
C	9	5.6	7.2	1.6
D	9	5.5	8.3	2.8
E	9	4.4	6.5	2.1
F	9	4.3	5.6	1.3
G	10	9	10.6	1.6
H	10	8	10.1	2.1
I	10	6.7	8.3	1.6
J	10	6.2	8.7	2.5
K	10	5.6	5.6	0.0
L	10	5.5	7.4	1.8
M	10	5.4	8.1	2.7
N	10	5.4	5.8	.4
O	10	5.2	5.3	.1
P	11	4.4	5.6	1.2
Q	11	10.6	11.3	.7
R	11	9.1	11.3	2.2
S	11	9.1	10.7	1.6
T	11	9	11.3	2.3
U	11	8.4	8.2	-.2
V	11	8	10.3	2.3
W	11	8	10	2.0
X	11	6.7	8.9	2.2
Y	11	6	7.4	1.4
Average	10	6.8	8.6	1.8

The average reading ability of the students in the first test was on the 6.8 grade level. The second test showed that the average reading ability of the students was on the 8.6 grade level, a gain of 1.8 grade. Individual gains ranged from .1 grade to 3.0 grades. The average individual gain was 1.6 grade.

Eleven students made gains of more than two grades in reading and seventeen made gains of more than one and one-half grades. Positive gains were made by twenty-three students; one student showed no change in score; one student showed a loss of .2 grade. This loss may be due to the fact that the student was absent from school for more than one half of the term.

Table I also shows that on the first test none of the students read at standard grade level; the second test shows that 20 per cent read at or above the grade level.

TABLE II. ACTUAL INDIVIDUAL SCORES OF THE METROPOLITAN TEST SHOWING THE PROGRESS MADE BY THE TWENTY-FIVE STUDENTS

Student's code letter	Actual grade placement	September raw score	May raw score
T	11	41	48
Q	11	45	48
A	9	34	46
R	11	41	46
S	11	41	46
V	11	41	45
W	11	35	45
G	10	40	45
H	10	35	44
B	9	28	41
X	11	35	40
J	10	24	39
F	9	8	37
D	9	19	37
I	10	28	37
U	11	38	37
M	10	18	36
N	10	17	35
Y	11	22	33
L	10	19	32
C	9	20	31
E	9	10	26
K	10	20	20
P	10	10	19
O	10	16	18

TABLE III. PROFILE OF DEFICIENCIES SHOWING NUMBER AND PER CENT IN THE IOWA SILENT READING TESTS (By Green and Others)

Skill in reading	First Test		Second Test		Gain	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Rate of speed	3	12	1	4	2	8
Comprehension	20	80	7	28	13	52
Directed reading	14	56	9	36	5	20
Poetry comprehension	13	52	6	24	7	28
Word recognition	19	76	6	24	13	52
Sentence meaning	13	52	8	32	5	20
Paragraph meaning	20	80	5	20	15	60
Location of information	2	8	2	8	0	0
Selection of key word	8	35	6	24	2	8
Gains in number and per cent					6	25

An examination of the results in Table III of the Iowa Silent Reading tests shows that rate, comprehension, directed reading, poetry comprehension, word recognition, sentence and paragraph meaning show a gain in student number and per cent.

The total average gain for the entire group is 6 in number and 25 per cent. It is noticeable that the skill, location of information, shows no gain nor loss. It is possible that drills in this particular skill were not as thorough as they should have been. Comprehension, word recognition, and paragraph meaning were the areas in which the greatest number of deficiencies were diminished.

Table IV contains the intelligence quotients of the twenty-five

Carver High School students by grades. The I. Q.'s are ordinarily interpreted as follows:

I. Q.	Description Classification	Number of Students	Per cent of School Included
130 and above	Very superior	2	8
115-129	Superior	7	28
100-114	High average	5	20
85- 99	Low average	11	44
70- 84	Inferior	0	0
Below 70	Very inferior	0	0

TABLE IV. I. Q. DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT SCORES ON THE CALIFORNIA TEST OF MENTAL MATURITY

Intervals	Grades			Total
	9	10	11	
130-134	1		1	2
125-129	1		1	2
120-124	1		2	3
115-119			2	2
110-114	2	1		3
105-109				
100-104		1	1	2
95- 99	1	1	1	3
90- 94		4		4
85- 89		3	1	4
Totals	6	10	9	25

An examination of Table IV shows that 83 1/3 per cent of the stu-

dents in grade 9 were above 110 in intelligence; 66 2/3 per cent of grade 11 were 110 and above in intelligence. Two students were rated as very superior.

TABLE V. CHRONOLOGICAL AGE AND INTELLIGENCE RATING ON THE CALIFORNIA TEST OF MENTAL MATURITY

Student's code letter	Chronological age	Actual grade	Intelligence quotient
W	18.1	11	120
Y	18	11	87
U	18	11	98
J	17.8	10	93
N	17.8	10	87
R	17.5	11	118
Q	17.4	11	127
A	17.2	9	132
E	17.1	9	110
S	16.11	11	118
V	16.9	11	120
O	16.2	10	88
I	16.2	10	97
T	16.2	11	132
B	16.2	9	121
G	16.2	10	104
F	16.1	9	98
P	16	10	88
R	16	10	93
L	16	10	93
X	15.9	11	103
H	15.4	10	111
M	15	10	92
D	14.9	9	110
C	13.9	9	121

A perusal of Table V shows that the chronological age range of the twenty-five students included in the study was from 13 years and 9 months to 18 years and 1 month. The I. Q. range was from 87 to 132.

Student Y, who had the lowest intelligence quotient, was in the upper bracket of the chronological age grouping; student T, who had one of the highest intelligence ratings recorded, is near the center of the age grouping; student C, who had a superior intelligence quotient, is in the lowest place in the chronological age grouping.

Students A and T were members of the ninth and eleventh grades, respectively, who read widely, thereby increasing their vocabularies.

A record of the physical examination showed that student F had defective vision, student V had a syphilitic infection and students E, K, U, and Y had defective tonsils. Student F was fitted with eyeglasses, and student V was cured through the school health program. The students with defective tonsils have not been treated.

The testing program revealed student disabilities in each of the reading skills; therefore, a plan encompassing improvement in all areas of reading was envisioned and designed.

CHAPTER IV

PROPOSED PROGRAM

The curriculum of the school in a sense limits the work of a school to a great degree. Outmoded and inflexible programs hamper the educational processes in many instances. Somehow, a reading program should be instituted that would meet the approval of sanely progressive principals and supervisors to the end that students and teacher would become more reading conscious and thereby decrease mortality, increase attendance and contribute to the educational development of the home, school and community.

Philosophy

Education should enable the students to participate successfully in all the wholesome activities of life. To this end students should engage in satisfying school experiences and find vicarious opportunities for living and growing as a school and community member. Further, these experiences in the school should be motivated by the effect they will have on the intellectual, physical, moral and social life of the student. They should be pupil-centered but definitely teacher directed. Over and above all the teacher should have a sense of obligation to the students and to the community.

In the attempt to see the obligation of a teacher, not only in terms of subject matter, but in relation to educational deficiencies of the school and the requirements that life impose, some needs were recognized and an attempt was made to meet them through classroom activities.

High school students need wider reading vocabularies and more power

of interpretation. They need the ability to do certain kinds of reading better, form independent reading habits and acquire more interest in reading. They need training in facility and accuracy in word recognition.

Objectives

In the formulation of a plan of improved reading, these objectives were offered as goals:

1. To improve reading ability in several areas.
2. To increase the reading and speaking vocabulary.¹
3. To improve comprehension and interpretation.
4. To develop independence in reading.
5. To inspire a love and an appreciation for reading.
6. To develop the thinking powers of students.

To attain these objectives it is fundamentally true that the teacher must have an active interest in pupils as individuals. The small school and the tenure have provided the teacher with the opportunity to be thoroughly familiar with the home, background and personality of each student.

Older children are more set in their habits, making corrective measures more difficult; and, the public misconstrues special education, looking upon it as something to cast suspicion on the students' ability. Besides, groups tend to become fixed and so dramatically far apart that the upper group becomes smug. Therefore, the twenty-five students engaged in similar work. The better students completed the assignments quickly and entered other interesting activities.

¹Guy L. Bond and Eva Bond. Developmental Reading in the High School. p. 259.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Time	Minutes per day	Grades		
		Ninth	Tenth	Eleventh
8:30- 9:20	50			History III
9:20-10:10	50		English II	
10:10-11:00	50	English I		
11:00-11:45	45		History II	
12:00- 1:00	60	Noon	Noon	Noon
1:00- 1:45	45	Library		
1:50- 2:40	50			English III
2:45- 3:30	45		Library	

The teacher's schedule included five teaching periods and two library periods. This dual role of the teacher made possible the suggesting of the right book for the individual reader. Opportunities for teaching reading existed in each period. For daily convenience a flexible list of skills to be taught accompanied the schedule. The exercises were applicable to each grade.

Monday - Rate and comprehension practice

Tuesday - Vocabulary drill and planning assembly programs

Wednesday - Oral reports and locating information

Thursday - Skimming, following clues and locating topic sentences

Friday - Free reading

A stream of attractive books high in adolescent content was secured and displayed. These books had student interest and satisfied the craving for action and adventure and the desire for entertainment that characterized this age group.

Simple book reports were checked by the several classroom teachers to discover how well the student understood the book that was read. The order of the report was as follows:

1. Name of the book
2. Author
3. Publishing company
4. Setting
5. Characters
6. Summary
7. Reaction (Optional)

Colorful magazines, including Life, Ebony, Negro Digest, Reader's Digest, American Magazine, Ladies Home Journal, Home Beautiful, and National Geographic were placed on convenient shelves. Articles from these magazines, the Dallas Morning News, Call, Informer, and the local newspaper were used as class material.

To create the proper atmosphere, flowers were attractively arranged in places and comfortable chairs were provided.

In selecting instructional measures it was found helpful to be familiar with those which remedial teachers have found effective for overcoming certain types of deficiencies. The list can be augmented when it is practicable or necessary.

Reading Disabilities

Limited comprehension. -- Improvement measures: provide practice in selecting titles for paragraphs.

1. Train students in getting the main idea of a paragraph or selection.

2. Provide practice in reproducing the contents of short selections.
3. Assist students in selecting titles for paragraphs.
4. Train in an understanding of sense meanings, the mood and intent of the author and the shift or multiple meaning conveyed.¹
5. Lead students to reread parts of misinterpreted selections.
6. Direct students in locating descriptive or humorous passages and character sketches.
7. Provide periods for oral reports.
8. Assist students in examining words or concepts peculiar to a selection.
9. Lead students to find arguments for or against a given conclusion.
10. Ask thought provoking questions.
11. Train in locating the topic sentence.
12. Direct attention to clues as: There were three things --
13. Direct students in the study of synonyms, antonyms and homonyms separately.
14. Assist students in using analogies for training in relationship of words.²

Meager vocabulary and poor word recognition. -- Improvement meas-

ures:

1. Teach a list of selected words.
2. Encourage students in presenting word pictures.
3. Provide wide reading on different grade levels.³
4. Provide short drills on special vocabularies.
5. Compare unknown words with familiar ones.
6. Train students in making words.
7. Provide practice in dividing words into syllables.
8. Direct attention to phonetic elements in words.
9. Encourage word games.

¹Ruth Strang. "Helping Students Build Their Vocabularies." Secondary Education, Vol., 13 (June, 1948).

²Albert J. Harris. How to Increase Reading Ability. p. 277.

³Frank Gorman. "Teaching High School Pupils to Read." The School Review, Vol., 51 (September, 1943).

10. Assist in the study of root words, suffixes and prefixes.
11. Provide experience in oral reading to classmates and lower grades.
12. Assist students in examining words and concepts peculiar to a selection.

Inability to locate information. -- Improvement measures:

1. Give practice in using the index.
2. Provide practice in giving references on a given topic.
3. Train students in the use of chapter titles, paragraph headings and marginal notes.
4. Direct students in compiling bibliographies.
5. Give guidance in evaluating sources in differing points of view in dates, etc.

Poor comprehension of poetry. -- Improvement measures:

1. Read the poem for understanding.
2. Help students to learn that all persons have poetic tendencies for brief moments.
3. Direct in the study of the figures of speech and notice that poets speak figuratively.
4. Guide students in the clearing up of difficulties related to the inverted order in poetry.
5. Explain the setting and tell the story of poem.
6. Build up an appreciation for the poem by giving some facts of the author's life and the characters in the poem.
7. Explain mythological references.
8. Reread the poem.

Low interest. -- Improvement measures:

1. Conduct surveys to find the reading interests of the students.
2. Tell briefly the story of unfamiliar selections before they are read.
3. After a part of a story has been told allow the students to complete it.
4. Arrange silent reading periods which are followed by discussion periods.
5. Arouse interest by questions and suggestions.
6. Provide books of movies that have not been shown.
7. Provide graphic evidence of progress.¹
8. Provide a free reading period.

In our class rooms today are children who are struggling to find themselves through work which is far too difficult. There are children who have ceased to struggle, who just sit placidly by. There are children who feed their egos in idleness and mischief.

These are our forgotten children, our misplaced children, who through little or no fault of their own, are misfits in their class room society.²

A report of a reading experiment begins with these words but does not end with them. The final paragraph echoes the thinking and feeling of the Carver High School teacher: "The task is not completed, for learning is a continuous process. . . . Non-readers now read. . . . All past ideas of failure and discouragement have been wiped away."³

¹ Samuel Kirk. Teaching Reading to Slow Learning Children. p. 185.

² Bess C. Brannen. "Successful Experiment in Remedial Reading." The Texas Outlook, Vol., 32 (July, 1948).

³Ibid.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A diagnostic study of the reading abilities of the Carver High School students was made by the use of a testing program administered at the beginning of the first semester and at the close of the second semester of the school year 1947-1948.

Reading deficiencies were discovered in comprehension, word recognition, paragraph meaning, directed reading, location of information, selection of the key word, and rate of reading. It was found that a majority of the students failed to understand and appreciate poetry.

The tests furnished impressive data. Forty per cent of the students had not attained sixth grade reading ability and none were able to read with any degree of proficiency at their grade level.

The continuation and extension of a program to promote growth in reading must continue through the high school since students are required to read material which becomes progressively more difficult to interpret.

Every teacher is responsible for teaching the vocabulary and concepts needed for understanding in his field.

A teaching program was planned in the light of information received from tests, related readings and research. Interesting materials, motivating interests, and a variety of activities illuminated the program.

The students were taught, tested and retaught in reading skills for approximately twenty minutes of each period during the day and students who desired it were permitted two periods in the library each day.

The range of individual gain in reading ability was from .1 to 3 grades. The group showed an average reading gain of 1.6 gain at the

close of the school term. At the end of May, 20 per cent of the students were able to read on and above their grade level.

These data indicate definite conclusions which may be drawn that are pertinent to a systematic program for the improvement of reading in the secondary school. Many students are unable to read well enough to master material at their particular grade levels. It is evident that there is need for further training in reading methods.

Standardized tests furnish valuable data for diagnosing most reading difficulties.

An improved reading program revealed that there are reading deficiencies in the secondary school that may be remedied or corrected. The reading disabilities require analysis and interpretation by a teacher who has the vision and imagination to see the possibilities of a program designed to raise students to new levels of perfection.

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