

AN EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM OF PHONETIC
INSTRUCTION IN RELATION TO READING
IN THE SCHOOLS OF PANOLA COUNTY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study is to evaluate the program of phonetic teaching in the Panola County schools in terms of criteria developed from current literature on the history, theories, and studies relating to the teaching of phonics in connection with the reading program in the elementary grades.

Origin of the Study

This particular study was chosen because of the alarming number of slow readers and poor spellers who are entering our junior and senior high schools wholly unprepared for the advanced work required of them. This fact has been mentioned time and time again by the teachers in the secondary schools. It has been the writer's privilege to observe various groups during their reading activities and to interview numerous teachers who have likewise expressed their concern over the deplorable situation in regard to the poorly equipped and inefficient readers. For these reasons

the writer has felt the need of a study of the problem of phonics.

Sources of Data

The general information was secured from current educational periodicals and books pertaining to the various theories, practices, and experiments in order to establish a definite criteria which might be followed when tabulating and evaluating the special data from Panola County. The special data were secured from a questionnaire which was mailed to all elementary reading teachers in the Panola County schools. These schools are as follows:

DeBerry	Midyett
Horton-Shady Grove	Bethany
Deadwood	Mt. Pleasant
Brooks	Yarnell
Clayton	Mitchell
Alsup	Alpine
Murvault	Liberty Chapel
Byfield	Pleasant Ridge
Gary	Old Center
McCoy	Galloway
Antioch	Fairplay
Reeves	Carthage
Beckville	Longbranch

Limitations

This study is limited to the phonetic program of teaching in the schools of Panola County, which is the writer's home county. It can readily be seen why this subject would necessarily have to be confined to a particular place, since a discussion of the phonetic program in the schools of the nation in general would be unlimited as well as incomplete.

Reliability of the Data

It is obvious to all concerned that the only reliable and accurate data pertaining to phonetic instruction must, of necessity, be derived from the numerous experiments carried out by the better-known reading authorities and by individual research workers and not from mere books on theories or opinions. There is, in short, a very noticeable lack of conclusive evidence through scientific research regarding the teaching of phonics or its significance. This study will report only the findings which are based on research techniques.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF PHONETIC INSTRUCTION

Many definitions have been offered for the term "phonics," but they are all more or less similar. Perhaps one of the simplest yet best definitions is the one given by Cordts and McEroom: "Phonics is the term usually applied to the study of sounds as they are related to reading and speech."¹

The history of phonetic instruction is much too long to be discussed here. It should be pointed out, however, that the entire history of phonetic instruction is one of inconsistency and controversy. Ever since early in the nineteenth century when Noah Webster's Blue Back Speller was used (1789-1846) and the sounds of letters and syllables in reading and spelling were stressed, phonetic instruction has had numerous periods of popularity and unpopularity.

In 1846 J. Russell Webb startled the country by declaring that children could learn whole words from the beginning without first having memorized the names and sounds of letters. About that time he published a new primer

¹Anna Cordts and Maude McEroom, "Phonics," Classroom Teacher, II (1938), 389.

called The New Word Method, which was the first reader to advocate the word method of teaching beginning reading. Only a few schools adopted the word method at that time, and the majority continued to teach the names and sounds of letters as the first step in beginning reading.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century the phonetic method and content became highly organized and elaborated. In 1889, Emma Pollard, a well-known educator of the time, published a manual advocating an elaborate phonetic method stressing the memorization of long lists of "families," each family embracing a list of words containing a similar phonogram, such as: ill, hill, fill, bill, and mill. The sound of each consonant was to be drilled upon and memorized as an isolated element. This highly systematized and isolated drill type of phonics predominated for a long period of time. Early in the twentieth century, however, some educators began to question this method of teaching phonics and numerous scientific investigations began to be conducted.²

Late in the nineteenth century various kinds of phonetic instruction, such as the syllable method, the alphabet method, the word method, and a specially combined modification of these methods were used in different sections of the nation. During the first thirty years of the twentieth

²Nila Blanton Smith, "Shall We Teach Phonics?" Elementary English Review, XX (February 24, 1943), 60.

century the following methods were added: the analytic-synthetic method, the intrinsic method, and the informal method. In brief, these various methods of phonetic instruction may be explained as follows:

The syllable method is the method by which the children are taught to recognize and spell words by breaking the words into syllables and sounding out each syllable separately.

The alphabet method is the method by which the letters in the word are analyzed separately and sounded out (spelled) and memorized by frequent repetition. Each letter is a symbol representing only one distinct sound. In short, the pupils learn to spell the word before they learn to recognize it.

By the word method of teaching phonics only the whole word is presented. Letters are never seen apart from the words to which they belong. The unity of the word is, therefore, always preserved in phonics as in reading.³

A special modification of all these methods is the method by which both the words or sentences are taught or a combination of any of the three is used.

The analytic method of teaching beginning reading is that method which emphasizes taking larger units apart and developing the ability to think and read in terms of words,

³Anna D. Cordts, The Word Method of Teaching Phonics, Introduction, p. iii.

then sentences, then paragraphs, and finally the total composition. The synthetic method differs from the analytic method in that it emphasizes the putting of smaller units together and does not sufficiently stress the importance of reading as first and last a thought-getting process but emphasizes more fluent oral reading and more rapid silent reading.

The intrinsic method may be simply explained by saying that the pupil sees the visible parts of the word and readily transforms it into sounds in situations that make it necessary to translate them.

The informal method, which seems to be one of the most popular of all these methods, gives the pupils an opportunity to learn to distinguish sounds by using very simple devices such as games, rhymes, and informal drills. There is no place for long tedious word drills and rote memory work in the informal method of instruction.⁴

There has been a great deal of controversy as to the value and proper place of phonetic instruction in the early grades of the public schools, during the past fifteen years. The views expressed by many of the leading educators of today, on these subjects, have been both confusing and inconsistent. Some have expressed a firm belief in the importance

⁴Charlene Hennen Smith, "Critical Evaluation of a Method of Teaching Beginning Reading" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Education, North Texas State Teachers College, 1942), p. 12.

of, and the need for, phonetic instruction in the reading program, while others are equally positive that phonetic training is unnecessary and only makes for confusion and inefficiency in reading.

Paul McKee, one of America's leading authorities in the field of reading, summarizes the situation with respect to the attitudes of various educators toward the problem as follows:

The question of instruction in phonics has aroused a great deal of controversy. Some educators have held to the proposition that phonetic training is not only futile and wasteful, but also harmful to the best interests of the reading program. Others believe that, since the child must have some means of attacking strange words, instruction in phonics is imperative. There have been disputes also, relative to the amounts of phonics to be taught, the time when teaching should take place, and the methods and elements to be used. In fact the writer knows of no problem around which more disputes have been centered.⁵

Again, in noting the numerous differences of opinions, we find that the attitude of the textbook authors is of interest, too, because since 1930, the pendulum of phonics teaching has been slowly swinging back to normal; that is, in the late nineteenth century phonics instruction was often so formal and excessive that the pupils were made word conscious to the extent that they failed to grasp the meaning of what they read. Then, early in the twentieth century, phonics instruction was almost abandoned by all so-called

⁵Paul McKee, Reading and Literature in the Elementary School, p. 191.

progressive schools. During the last decade the pendulum for teaching phonics has gradually swung to a middle course, namely, that phonics, if taught, should be taught in a most informal but practical and beneficial way. This course would enable the majority of pupils to become better and more independent readers. Nila B. Smith has aptly summarized this situation as follows:

While some textbook writers seem less certain than writers of former times on this subject, there is nothing to indicate that anyone of them takes the extreme attitude of dispensing with phonetics entirely. Every manual which has appeared in connection with a basal series of readers during the past ten years has recognized phonics. Various states of confidence in the value of phonetics are expressed by authors, but they all discuss this phase of reading and outline procedures for teaching it.⁶

Examples of these various opinions in professional books on the teaching of reading are numerous, but an attempt will be made to note only a few of them here. John O'Brien in his book, Reading: Its Psychology and Pedagogy, indicates that he is highly in favor of phonetic training, for he says that phonic analysis is the device necessary to help pupils to avoid periods of confusion.⁷

On the other hand, Arthur I. Gates in his book, The Improvement of Reading, expresses his belief that phonetic training is of doubtful value in the primary grades. He says:

⁶Nila B. Smith, American Reading Instruction, p. 220.

⁷John O'Brien, Reading: Its Psychology and Pedagogy, pp. 22-25.

The great mistake in American teaching has been the assumption that phonetic skill was all-important and sufficient, that the other types of training could be neglected, and that the more phonetics the pupils got the better. These mistakes have resulted not only in waste but frequently in the production of a special type of difficulty in reading. So excessive has phonetic drill often been that pupils have become not only "word-form conscious" at the expense of interest in meaning, but, even worse, they have become "word-detail conscious." Thus phonetic skill in moderation is useful; in less degree, it leaves the pupils handicapped; in greater degree it may result in a more serious deficiency.⁸

Again, it should be noted that the results of the numerous experiments in phonics teaching in the past twenty years are by no means conclusive. However, it is necessary that the writer call attention to the fact that the majority of investigators, including such phonetic authorities as Sexton, Herron, Gates, Mosher, Newhall, Garrison, and Heard, are all of the opinion that the first few months of learning to read should emphasize the "look and say" method which, in reality, is not a phonetic method at all and so need not be discussed here. Herron and Sexton are further agreed that the "intrinsic method" is superior to the special drill periods, at least when results are measured over a brief period of time, and that phonetic training is a positive aid to word recognition.⁹

The statements given above are fair examples of the

⁸Arthur I. Gates, The Improvement of Reading, p. 6.

⁹Donald C. Agnew, Effects of Varied Amounts of Phonetic Training on Primary Reading, p. 5.

widely diverse opinions that are to be found among reading authorities of the present day.

In the following paragraphs Agnew gives a short summary of the most recent arguments offered by both teachers and reading authorities for and against phonetic instruction in general:

The Case for Phonetics

1. Phonetic training has had a long history -- it has been provided in large amounts and the procedures for teaching reading for a century or more should be carefully scrutinized before being abandoned.
2. Phonetic training gives the pupil independence in recognizing words previously learned. This ability becomes steadily more important in connection with silent reading.
3. Phonetic training encourages correct pronunciation and enunciation.
4. Phonetic training gives valuable "ear training" in recognizing and in differentiating sounds.
5. Phonetic training aids in "unlocking" new words by giving the pupils a method of sound analysis.
6. Phonetic training improves the quality of oral reading, for instance, in breath control and in speech co-ordination.
7. Phonetic training improves spelling.
8. Phonetic training is a valuable background for shorthand.
9. Many cases of reading disability may be traced to deficiencies in word recognition and sound analysis. These disabilities are often overcome by remedial procedures involving phonetic training.

The Case Against Phonetics

1. Phonetic training tends to isolate words from their meaningful function by emphasizing sound.
2. Phonetic training tends to lead to the neglect of context clues.
3. Phonetic training tends to sacrifice interest in the content of reading.

4. Phonetic training leads to unnecessarily laborious recognition of familiar words.

5. Phonetic training is impractical because of the non-phonetic character of the English language.

6. Phonetic training is unnecessary for many pupils since its advantages can be obtained without formal training.

7. Phonetic training encourages the breaking of words into unnecessary small units.

8. Phonetic training tends to emphasize too explicit articulation.

9. Phonetic training narrows the eye-voice span.¹⁰

¹⁰Ibid., p. 7.

CHAPTER III

RELATED STUDIES AND EXPERIMENTS IN PHONICS

There is not a great deal known as a result of scientific investigation regarding the teaching of phonics. It is true that a large number of reports and much data have been presented, but conclusive evidence is still prominently lacking. Teachers are still searching for adequate answers to the major controversial issues: Should phonics be taught at all? If so, when? What should be taught? How much should we teach? How should we teach phonics? Notwithstanding the seeming lack of definite information, some important data concerning these vital elements which have been offered by some of the leading reading authorities of today will be analyzed.

In attempting to arrive at a satisfactory solution to these questions, several reading authorities have conducted important investigations or surveys and recorded their findings for all to see and discuss.

The two most important experiments of this nature which have been made recently, and in which there are fairly definite findings relative to these problems are the Durham

and Raleigh, North Carolina, and the Newark, New Jersey, experiments.¹

The object of the two investigations reported here was to obtain data concerning the validity of some of the claims and objections to phonetics as pointed out earlier in Chapter II. The general question raised is that of the relative value of phonetic training and of non-phonetic training as a basis for teaching reading skills.

A committee from Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, decided to investigate the problems mentioned above. Immediately the question of the most suitable technique arose. Since the control-group technique, as used in most experiments has been open to numerous criticisms -- namely, (1) it sets up artificial situations which are new to the teachers, (2) it permits free play of prejudices on the part of teachers, and (3) it often develops a spirit of competition between the experimental and the control group which affects the learning conditions and makes conclusions more difficult -- it was decided that the investigations in Durham and Raleigh, North Carolina, should be undertaken through the use of another technique, different to that employed in most of the ordinary school situations. A comparative study of these two groups followed.

¹Ibid., p. 28.

A number of questions arose in selecting the groups:

- (1) In what grade should the investigation be carried out?
- (2) Where could the investigation be situated in order to provide a wide variation in phonetic experiences?
- (3) How could the amounts of phonetic training be measured?

In regard to the first question it seemed advisable to start the study in the third grade because by that time the value of phonetic training (if any) should be fairly apparent and adaptable to testing.

In the second question as to the best location for the investigation to be made, it was determined that the schools should be large enough to give a good and true sample of third-grade pupils. It was also necessary to choose schools having a large number of first-, second-, and third-grade teachers in order to obtain a wide variation in the amounts and kinds of phonetic training.

The third and last question relating to the measurement of phonetic experience to which pupils have been subjected presented the most difficult problem of all. The children could not give this information and interviews with the teachers could yield no real measure. The teacher's responses to the inquiry as to whether they taught phonics were usually vague and inconclusive. For example, they gave such indefinite answers as "not much" or "a lot." It

can readily be seen that these responses could not aid in determining a quantitative measure of phonetic training.

The two school systems decided upon for the work of the investigation, as has been stated, were those of Durham, and Raleigh, North Carolina. The Durham and Raleigh groups consisted of 230 picked third-grade pupils who were similar in several respects: (1) they had all attended their respective schools since entering the first grade and had had no other school experiences except those provided in the Durham and Raleigh school systems; and (2) the pupils were all of average ability -- neither retarded nor accelerated beyond the ordinary practice.

These 230 pupils, it was pointed out, represented, to an exceptional degree, the ability and progress of the whole school program.

The pupils were first tested as a group and were given the Otis Intelligence Scale, Primary Examination (Form A), the Gates Silent Reading Test A, B, C, and D, and the Pressey Diagnostic Test Vocabulary -- Grades 1A to 3A. The tests were administered under the supervision of graduate and senior students in Experimental Education in Duke University.

The group testing was then followed by individual testing. In all, eight different individual tests were given to the 230 third-grade pupils. This task was accomplished

in ten days. The children were given the tests in several sittings so that fatigue was kept at a minimum.²

The general conclusions of the Durham and Raleigh investigations were as follows:

1. The comparisons made from the test findings failed to reveal any significant advantages or disadvantages arising from the different amounts of phonetic experiences.

2. The effort to find a critical grade in which phonetic experience is particularly effective for training in reading was unsuccessful.

3. There seemed to be a slight tendency for large amounts of phonetic training in grades one and two to affect reading ability adversely.

4. The tests further suggested, however, that moderate amounts of phonetic experiences in grades one and two were beneficial to some extent to the reading abilities measured.³

Another intensive study for the purpose of improving the teaching of reading was planned and carried out by the public schools of Newark, New Jersey, in 1923, under the direction of the Assistant State Superintendent of Education, Elmer K. Sexton. Various committees of teachers, each headed by a school principal, attacked different vital problems in the field of reading. A controlled experiment "to test the value of phonics in the teaching of primary reading"

²Ibid., pp. 30-34.

³Ibid., p. 34.

was one of the major problems chosen by the committee.⁴

The experiment was conducted in eight large public schools in Newark, beginning in September, 1924, and continuing for three years, to February, 1927.

Various types of schools in different sections of the city participated. The principals of all eight schools, with the help of about fifty primary reading teachers, conducted the experiment. Many foreign children were included in the groups.

The committees prepared a working plan and directions were sent to all principals and teachers. The general plan was for two low-first grades in the same school to start reading under similar conditions. One teacher would teach phonics, the other would eliminate phonics entirely. At promotion time the experimental pupils promoted to the high-first grade would continue with phonics or without, just as they had begun in the low-first grade, but under two new teachers. Nine hundred twenty pupils were involved.

At the end of the semester the pupils were to be tested to determine whether or not phonics had proved to be valuable as a part of the method of teaching beginning reading.

The requisite scientific conditions were that the experiment must be kept under control at all times and that

⁴E. K. Sexton and J. S. Herron, "The Newark Phonics Experiment," Elementary School Journal, XXVIII (May, 1928), 690-701.

these conditions in this experiment be equal:

1. Equal graduation of classes -- the two experimental low classes in each school were to consist of:
 - a. Left-overs.
 - b. Those promoted from kindergarten.
 - c. Those entering the first grade without kindergarten training.
2. Equal size of classes.
3. Equal health conditions.
4. Equal teaching conditions (use of devices, plans, and methods).
5. Equal amounts of class work.

The following tests were employed in the low-first grades: Detroit Word Recognition Test, Form B., the Newark Word Recognition Test, the Newark Picture-Word Matching Test, and the Newark Sentence Test. The high-first grades used the Detroit Word Recognition Test, Forms A and B, and the Haggerty Reading Examination. Some original tests were worked out by the Newark committee, based on a vocabulary common to all eight of the schools involved. Almost one thousand pupils (441 in the phonics group and 488 in the non-phonics group) were given the tests.

The results of the experiment were as follows:

1. The findings clearly indicated that the teaching of phonics functioned very little or not at all with the

beginners during the first five months. It began to be of value to the pupils during the second five months and of even greater value in the second grade.

2. Equally good results were found in the classes taught by the teachers using phonics and the teachers who did not teach phonics.

3. Equally poor results, in some instances, showed up in the phonics and non-phonics groups.

4. The general consensus of the studies reported favored the teaching of phonics in the latter part of the first grade, if phonics was to be taught at all.

Other worth-while investigations which have been made in order to determine the solution to the specific controversial issues mentioned earlier in this chapter are offered at this point as they relate to each of the controversial issues to be discussed.

Relative to the first controversial issue to be considered, namely, "Should we teach phonics?" we find that Currier and Duguid have reported an investigation involving this issue. The experiment included two matched groups of children in the schools of Tilton, New Hampshire, during their first two years in school. One group was given phonics instruction and the other group was given quick drills with perception cards instead of phonics work. Later the experiment was repeated with a third-grade group.

One of the most important conclusions drawn, after five years of experimentation, was that phonics drills have real value for some children but are not essential to every child as a part of the daily program in the primary grades. This seems to indicate that phonics should be taught according to ability grouping and that children who already possess some efficient methods of attack should be excused from phonetic instruction and permitted to engage in other phases of reading which will be more valuable to them.⁵

A study conducted by Joseph Tiffin and Mary McKinnis to determine to what extent phonics instruction is related to reading ability, as measured by certain standardized reading tests, was carried out recently in the schools of Lafayette, Indiana. There were 155 pupils with ages ranging from nine to fifteen, who were chosen from the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grades and who were then divided equally among the four grades.

The first test used was the Rogers Test, Part II, which, in modified form, contained one hundred nonsense words utilizing most of the letter combinations of the English language. Each nonsense word was followed by the word in diacritical spelling. The pupils were asked to choose the diacritical word which represented the correct pronunciation of the word.

⁵L. B. Currier and O. C. Duguid, "Phonics or No Phonics," Elementary School Journal, XXIII (February, 1923), 448.

In addition to this test, each child was given the Iowa Silent Reading Test, Elementary Form A, and the New Stanford Reading Test, Form V.

The results of this experiment were as follows:

1. The tests showed with reasonable certainty that phonics ability is significantly related to reading ability among the pupils studied.

2. Among the pupils studied, representing an age range from nine to fifteen years, there was practically no relation between phonics ability and chronological age.

3. Tests indicated a likelihood of phonics ability being related to mental age.

4. That those cases found to be markedly deficient in phonics ability and those not markedly deficient in phonics ability and in other important characteristics may be profitably treated by instruction and drill in the specific principles in phonics, was indicated by this survey.⁶

According to Brown, Anna Fleming, another reading authority, in her article, "Phonics the Backbone of Reading," is very emphatic in her answer to the question, "Should we teach phonics?" She asserts that phonics should be taught

⁶Joseph Tiffin and Mary McKinnis, "Phonic Ability: Its Measurement and Relation to Reading Ability," School and Society, LI (February, 1940), 190-192.

to the primary child from the very outset of his training.⁷ However, the conclusions reached in the previously discussed Durham and Raleigh investigation and in the Newark investigation are neither so emphatic nor so enthusiastic concerning this question, because no conclusive evidences of real value or lasting benefits were found from the teaching of phonics in either investigation.

The second controversial issue for discussion, namely, "To what extent should phonics be taught?" has been answered definitely by Smith in a very few words as follows:

The skillful teacher will use phonics but she will not exaggerate its use. There is a specific place for phonics in the teaching of reading -- and it should be understood that phonics should only be taught until the children are able to read by sound and to find out new words independently of the teacher.⁸

Pertaining to this issue we also find, as has been previously discussed, that the conclusions drawn from the Durham and Raleigh investigation are somewhat different from the above-mentioned conclusions. Although their findings reveal no significant advantages or disadvantages for phonics instruction, or a critical grade in which phonics instruction is most effective, they do say that moderate amounts of phonetic experiences are beneficial to some

⁷Sister M. Dorothy Brown, Phonics as a Basis for Improvement in Reading, p. 19.

⁸Nila B. Smith, "Shall We Teach Phonics?" Elementary English Review, XX (February 24, 1943), 63.

extent to the development of reading ability, while large amounts seem to affect reading ability adversely.

The Newark experiment also reveals that although phonics is of little or no value for beginners, it can be taught to some extent and be of some value in the latter part of grade one and throughout grade two.

The third issue for discussion, namely, "When should phonics be taught?" is clearly explained in the following statements:

The essential thing is to begin as early as possible to make phonics a direct means of reading and it should so serve continuously. The point to remember is this -- when a child is ready for word getting he will, of his own accord, notice differences of words.

Nearly all teachers are agreed that phonics should be taught only after the child has quite a vocabulary of sight words and has done enough reading to realize that reading is for the purpose of thought getting. This will effectively check the danger of the idea that reading is merely a word calling process.⁹

This issue involving the problem of when phonics should be taught has been clarified to some extent and the majority of authorities, after thorough investigations, have come to similar conclusions.

In an investigation made by Grace Arthur, the mental age most suitable for beginning phonics study was found to be between 6.5 and 6.9, although Dolch and Bloomster report the logical age as seven years.¹⁰

⁹Lillian Lincoln, Everyday Pedagogy, p. 113.

¹⁰Brown, op. cit., p. 19.

In the study conducted by Sexton and Herron in Newark, New Jersey, it seemed that there was little or no value from phonic instruction given to beginners during the first five months in school, but there seemed to be a definite value in reading achievement during the second semester and there was even greater result in the second grade.¹¹

Regarding this same issue, Dolch and Bloomster, of the University of Illinois, made a study which they thought would help to determine when phonics should be taught. Their work groups included the children of grades one and two, and their conclusions were that children with mental ages below seven years made only chance scores. The mental age of seven years seems to be the lowest at which a child can be expected to use phonics, even in the simplest situation.¹²

Obviously, then, the general implication seems to be that the second grade is the best time to offer phonics, although Nila B. Smith has this to say about Dolch and Bloomster's and Sexton and Herron's reports concerning the question of when phonics should be taught:

There is nothing in the above data, however, in my opinion, which would cause us to infer that nothing should be done in the way of developing phonics readiness preceding the seven year level.¹³

¹¹Sexton and Herron, op. cit., p. 452.

¹²E. W. Dolch and Maurine Bloomster, "Phonic Readiness," Elementary School Journal, XXXVIII (November, 1937), 204.

¹³Smith, "Shall We Teach Phonics?" Elementary English Review, XX (February 24, 1943), 64.

The fourth question, "How should phonics be taught?" is the most essential question of all. There are numerous suggestions on this question, many of which are excellent, but only the more important ones will be noted.

It is generally conceded that the child is taught phonics by three main steps:

1. The child is led to hear sounds in words and to remember and recognize other similar sounds in words.
2. He is taught to analyze words to the degree that he is able to make out new words unaided.
3. He is taught to see differences and likenesses in words.

In suggesting specific methods for teaching phonics it will be necessary to understand clearly the probable reasons for the failure of so many of these methods. In the first place, the method employed should be analytic, not synthetic, for the child in his reading encounters the word as a whole.¹⁴ Much of the difficulty little children have had in making phonics function in reading has been due to the employment of a synthetic method of teaching. A child may give a long list of words in the "ake" family glibly, but if he meets the word "shake" in his regular reading he may fail to know how to master it. In his book, he encounters the complete word. He must, therefore, be

¹⁴Cordts and McBroom, op. cit., p. 390.

presented with the complete word in his phonics lesson and learn to analyze it, if he is to possess this skill in reading.

A suggested lesson of this type is as follows:

The teacher asks for a suitable sentence selected from the current day's reading program and a list of words of the same family may be written on the board, as, for example:

We will make a snow man.

bow sow show

low cow blow

mow row crow

As a child blends the sound and pronounces a word, he may go to the board and encircle that word. The word is then used in a sentence to determine whether the meaning is clear or not. This affords the teacher an excellent opportunity for a good "check-up." After all the words have been given and the peculiarities in pronunciation have been discovered and correction has been attempted, a few of the children might give the words again in groups, such as going down a row -- "bow," "low," "show," etc.

The children acquire more skill as the term advances and they will be able to attack more and more words independently.¹⁵

¹⁵Mary L. Dougherty, How to Teach Phonics, p. 80.

Other methods of teaching phonics should be mentioned here, also. Most teachers start phonics by showing the children large-type letters which establish a good eye span before concentrating on smaller units. Drills are often given as well as the use of phonetic charts. Often the children learn sounds by analyzing words into their proper elements. Again sounds may be taught by connecting them with stories. Picture cards may also be used and verbal drills are often effective.

Some teachers find group instruction quite successful in teaching phonics.

Again, the teacher must watch carefully for the child's attack on new words in oral reading. Here is a suggestive list by which teachers check their pupils on modes of attack:

1. Fitting the word into the context.
2. Looking at the picture.
3. Spelling the word.
4. Sounding the letters and syllables.
5. Comparing the new words with the above rhyme word.
6. Analyzing a known word within an unknown word.

As to the question, "How should phonics be taught?" Dickson's recent survey of the "trends in the teaching of phonics" reveals a general agreement in regard to one basic method: "The analytic-synthetic method is the one generally

accepted."¹⁶ This same opinion is expressed by Paul McKee.¹⁷

Isabel Wilson, in her article, "Primary Reading," recommends only "informal phonic lessons," during which time the child learns to distinguish sounds. She further suggests numerous devices such as the use of rhymes, games, and drills.¹⁸

Gates also recommends the informal methods of teaching phonics in every instance. For this purpose he advocates the intrinsic method instead of formal drills. The child sees the visible parts of the word and can readily transform it into sounds in situations that make it necessary to translate them -- that is, to see the visual character as equivalent of sound.¹⁹

The fifth and final issue involved in the controversy, namely, that of "What elements should be taught?" has brought about only limited suggestions and answers from some of the leading authorities as to the essential elements to be taught in phonetic instruction.

Sarah T. Barrows, in her book, An Introduction to the Phonetic Alphabet, has this to say about the importance of teaching the child a knowledge of the phonetic alphabet:

The primary teacher will find the knowledge of the phonetic alphabet invaluable, for she especially needs to be able to recognize the sounds

¹⁶Aileen Henrietta Brown, "Phonics as an Aid to Teaching First Grade Reading" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Education, Kansas State Teachers College, 1930), p. 24.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 25.

in the spoken word without regard to the letters in the written word. This ability, which she must in turn impart to her pupils, can be most effectively gained by the use of the phonetic alphabet, and, if later the use of the alphabet is discontinued and the symbols forgotten, the pupils will have become less "eye-minded" and more "ear-minded."²⁰

Since there are but twenty-six letters to represent about forty-five different common sounds, it becomes quite evident that some letters must represent several sounds; hence it would be most economical to teach only those sounds which are of common use and value, and to teach those words individually, by sight, in which these sounds occur. For example, the letter a represents a different sound in each of the following words: made, have, senate, rate, local, ask, calm, and ball. It is equally quite evident that it is not worth the child's time to learn all the sounds which a given letter represents. Some letters represent the same sound so regularly in different words, and those words occur so frequently in the children's vocabulary that it would seem economical of the child's time to teach him to associate with the letter the sound which it usually represents. For example, such a sound is represented by the letter i in it, him, still, ring, bid, think, and silk, or the sound represented by the letter s in sat, stand, sun, silk, hats, etc. On the other hand, there are words in which the letters represent sounds different from those

²⁰Sarah T. Barrow, An Introduction to the Phonetic Alphabet, Introduction, p. vii.

usually associated with them. Such words are have, said, says, friend, and kind. These words should, without doubt, be taught as sight words.²¹

Other words, although equally irregular as those above, may occur so frequently in the children's vocabularies that they may be taught as sight words in analogous groups. Such words are fight, might, bright; say, day, may, pay; harm, arm, and farm.

In brief, then, if we are to follow the theory that phonics should be taught, the child, to be properly prepared to pronounce independently such new words as it is essential and economical for him to know by means of phonics, must learn:

1. The initial consonant sounds found most frequently in children's reading vocabularies; l, b, h, s (sit), m, r, p, c (can), d, t, f, n, w, and sh (ship).

2. The final consonant sounds found most frequently in reading vocabularies.

3. The so-called "short" and "long" vowel sounds which occur most frequently blended with their accompanying consonants either initially as illustrated by initial "short" vowel blends or as illustrated by (a) and (b) lists of sounds given below:

(a) le, la, lo; be, ba, bi, bu; si, sa, se; ma, ra, ri; ca; pa, pi, pe; du, di; ti; fi, fe, ne; wi, we.

(b) Initial "long" vowel blends; dee, see, swee, wee; pai, rai; bea, lea, mea; boa, coa, roa, or finally as illustrated by (c) and (d) below:

(c) Final "short" vowel blends: at, ot; ill, ell; an, in, en, un; am, im, um; ad, ed, id, ud; ap, op; ig, ag; uk, ack, ock; ing, and ong.

(d) Final "long" vowel blends: each, eat, oil, aid, ate, ake, ame, ace, ite, ade, ive, ike, ile, one, ole, oke, ore, eep, eed, eet, and oats.

²¹Cordts and McBroom, op. cit., p. 392.

4. The most frequently occurring diphthongs: ou, as in shout; ow, as in now.
5. The initial consonant blends, as: tr, sp, sw, pl, fl, tr, dr, br, and or.
6. The final consonant blends: st, ts, nd, nt, ps, nk (drink), mp, cks (ducks), and tch (catch).²²

The emphasis on the above study of phonics is based on the knowledge that phonics is the study of the sounds of letters. Sounds are heard, and letters are seen. Through numerous devices, the child may recognize these same sounds and their letters when he meets them in new words.

Dolch offers the suggestion that since the memorizing of a certain set of phonograms has proved unsatisfactory, then letter phonics is, after all, the practical answer -- a well-developed skill in working out syllables, common or uncommon, will give the child the best aid in attacking the host of polysyllables which he will always meet in his reading.²³

In a survey Tate found that phonics instruction, when taught incidentally as an integral part of the reading program, is far superior to the formal look-and-say method.²⁴

Vogel, Jaycox, and Washburne have published lists of phonics to be taught in the first and second grades. The phonetic elements included in their list for grade one

²²Ibid., pp. 392-394.

²³Smith, "Shall We Teach Phonics?" Elementary English Review, XX (February 24, 1943), 65.

²⁴Ibid.

were the result of an analysis of the word list given in the Twentieth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, and the list for grade two was outlined from an analysis of the word list published in the Seventeenth Yearbook.²⁵

Again, two of the most extensive studies of phonetic elements were made by Cordts in 1925 and by Sullivan in 1938. Cordts' analysis and findings were based on forty-two primary reader vocabularies and four published studies of primary reading. Her study is a most reliable and authoritative source for correct pronunciation and accurate terminology.²⁶

Sullivan's data, collected in 1938, constitute the most recent and perhaps the most acceptable of recent surveys. Her investigation is based on Gates' revised Reading Vocabulary for the Primary Grades. This analysis presents the most common phonetic elements and all the phonetic parts resulting from the words analyzed.²⁷

From the various surveys and investigations mentioned in this chapter, it can be seen that the leading authorities are not, and probably never will be, agreed as to the value

²⁵Mabel Vogel, Emma Jaycox, and C. W. Washburne, "A Basic List of Phonograms for Grades I and II," Elementary School Journal, XXIII (February, 1932), 436-443.

²⁶Aileen Henrietta Brown, op. cit., p. 28.

²⁷Ibid.

of phonics instruction in the reading program.

There are those whose findings have failed to reveal any significant advantages arising from phonetic experiences, whose effort to find a critical grade in which phonetic experience is particularly effective has failed, and who believe that equally good (or poor) results may be obtained in classes taught by the teacher not using phonics as in the classes taught by the teacher who uses phonics.

On the other hand, there are those who are agreed that moderate phonics instruction is a valuable aid to reading in that it makes for independent reading, that second grade is probably the ideal placement of thorough phonics instruction, that phonics instruction is best given when there is a definite need for it, that there are several good methods and devices available for teaching it, but that the informal method of teaching word recognition seems by far the most satisfactory manner of instruction, and that Gates' Reading Vocabulary for the Primary Grades and the Twentieth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education are among the good authoritative sources for determining the most important phonetic elements to be taught.

The criteria for teaching phonics cannot be laid down in a very positive form. At best, the writer can only offer some possible points for judging the necessity for

and the value of phonics instruction in teaching beginning children to read.

The first and practical thing for the reading teacher to do is to attempt to check for the following points:

1. Is there a definite need for phonetic training?
2. If phonics is taught, how should it be taught?
3. If taught, when should it be taught?
4. If taught, in what amounts and in what elements?
5. If taught, how can the teacher be convinced that phonics instruction has proved effective in developing the other necessary reading skills as well as mere word recognition?
6. Is there a more effective method of teaching beginning reading than phonics?
7. Is phonics instruction ever harmful?

The answers to these questions will aid the teacher of reading in solving the problem of whether or not phonics should be taught. This study has shown that if phonics is to be taught, it should be done incidentally as an integral part of the reading program rather than by formal drills.

Chapter IV will show the status of phonics teaching in Panola County and the relation of this teaching to the above criteria.

CHAPTER IV

STATUS OF PHONICS IN THE SCHOOLS OF PANOLA COUNTY

The purpose of this chapter is to set forth the data secured by the writer from a questionnaire sent to elementary teachers in the schools of Panola County, and to determine whether the status of phonetic teaching in Panola County compared favorably or unfavorably with the studies reported in Chapter III.

In planning the questionnaire, the writer tried to determine the questions most pertinent to the problem under investigation, namely, the status and importance of phonics in the Panola County schools.

Eight questions were finally selected, and the questionnaire (see the following page) was sent to the elementary school teachers in Panola County.

In connection with the special question chart that was included under question one, "Assuming that you do or do not teach phonics," the two check lists for the teaching or non-teaching of phonics were included to determine the methods and devices used, the time allotted to phonics, and the

exact frequency and place for the teaching of phonics, if response was in the affirmative, and the reasons for not teaching phonics, if response was negative.

QUESTIONNAIRE ON PHONETIC TEACHING

1. Do you teach phonics? Yes _____. No _____.

Assuming that you do teach phonics:	Assuming that you do not teach phonics:
<p>a. What method of instruction do you follow? _____ _____</p> <p>b. What phonetic materials and devices do you use? _____ _____</p> <p>c. Do you teach phonics every day? _____</p> <p>d. How much time do you allot to each phonics lesson? _____</p> <p>e. Do you teach phonics in connection with: reading _____ spelling _____ at a separate period _____</p>	<p>Check the reasons below that most nearly fit your reason for not teaching phonics:</p> <p>a. Of no particular value _____</p> <p>b. Do not have time _____</p> <p>c. Use other methods of teaching word recognition _____</p> <p>d. No place for phonics to fit into daily schedule _____</p> <p>e. Consider phonics "out of date" _____</p> <p>f. Feel that you have not had proper training to be able to successfully teach phonics _____</p> <p>g. Think phonics too complicated to impose on small children _____</p>

2. If so, is phonetic instruction prescribed or voluntary? _____

3. In what grades do you think phonics should be taught? _____

4. Do you feel that phonics is a definite aid to reading?

5. Do you believe that compulsory phonetic training in all schools would help to eliminate so many poor readers in the upper grades? Yes _____. No _____.
6. How many teachers are in your school? _____
7. How many grades are in your school? _____
8. Remarks: _____

The data to be discussed in the following pages have been compiled from the sixty responses to the questionnaire sent to approximately eighty urban and rural school teachers in Panola County. Three rural districts, Deadwood, Yarnell, and Longbranch, failed to make any responses. This means that there were only twenty-three out of the twenty-six schools responding.

In response to the first question, "Do you teach phonics?" there were thirty-one teachers who answered in the affirmative and twenty-nine teachers who answered in the negative, representing a total of twenty-three schools. These returns seem to indicate that only about fifty per cent of all elementary teachers in the Panola County schools reporting favor phonetic teaching. The returns for question one are tabulated in Table 1.

TABLE 1

THE NUMBER OF TEACHERS IN EACH SCHOOL THAT DO AND DO NOT TEACH PHONICS AS REPORTED BY THE TEACHERS OF PANOLA COUNTY

School	Town	Teachers		
		Number Answering "Yes"	Number Answering "No"	Total Number Reporting
Carthage Elemen.	Carthage	9	7	16
Beckville Elemen.	Beckville	0	5	5
Gary Elemen.	Gary	4	1	5
DeBerry	DeBerry	1	1	2
Liberty Chapel	Rural	1	0	1
Byfield	Rural	1	0	1
Mitchell	Rural	1	1	2
Old Center	Rural	0	2	2
Antioch	Rural	0	1	1
Mt. Pleasant	Rural	0	1	1
Midyett	Rural	2	2	4
Clayton	Rural	2	1	3
Pleasant Ridge	Rural	1	1	2
Brooks	Rural	0	2	2
Horton-Shady Grove	Rural	0	1	1
Alpine	Rural	3	0	3
Alsup	Rural	1	0	1
Murvaule	Rural	2	0	2
Bethany	Bethany	1	1	2
Galloway	Rural	0	1	1
Reeves	Rural	1	0	1
McCoy	Rural	1	0	1
Fairplay	Rural	0	1	1
Total.....		31	29	60

In tabulating the responses for the special columns entitled, "Assuming that you do teach phonics" or "Assuming that you do not teach phonics," the writer found that there were thirty-two teachers who checked the affirmative column and twenty-eight who checked the negative. The statements of those who answered in the affirmative are listed below as they applied to the question, "What method of instruction do you follow?"

1. "My method is really developed as the need requires."
2. "Sound."
3. "Visual aid."
4. "Games and drill in connection with reading and spelling."
5. "Word method."
6. "Rational method."
7. "Letters and sounds."
8. "No special method."
9. "By spelling and marking the word."
10. "Word drills."

All of the responses except numbers five, six, and eight were duplicated by the majority of the teachers.

In asking this question the writer had hoped to obtain the names of the most generally known and accepted methods of teaching phonics, but from the above answers it is apparent that the teachers of Panola County are either teaching

phonics only "after a fashion," or are only saying that they teach it because they probably feel that they should be doing so. Only two of the sixty teachers responding listed known and accepted methods of teaching phonics -- the word and the rational methods. It could be that these teachers are uncertain about what method of word recognition they are teaching and feel that they may be teaching phonics.

To the question, "What phonetic materials and devices do you use?" the following varied responses were offered:

1. "Dictionary."
2. "Flash cards and charts."
3. "Games and phonetic moviegrams and magazines."
4. "Books on phonetic methods."
5. "I just sound words for the pupils."
6. "Pictures and workbooks and posters."
7. "Songs and games of dramatization."
8. "Stories and games."
9. "Whatever the situation presents."
10. "Blackboard."
11. "Word families and sound the letters."
12. "I don't have any worth mentioning."

The majority of the teachers listed the first four items as well as number ten.

To the question, "Do you teach phonics every day?" there were various responses as follows:

1. "No, but really use phonics in our everyday class work in reading and spelling."
2. "Yes."
3. "Not directly but correlate it in some way."
4. "No. Only about three times weekly."
5. "No."
6. "Every other day."
7. "Only as occasion requires."
8. "Not as a special lesson."
9. "Yes, but more some days than others."
10. "Not necessarily."

There were nine responses of "yes" and three stating "about three times per week," while nine answered "no."

To the question, "How much time do you allot to phonics?" the responses were varied but definite, if not somewhat ridiculous, as in the case of the teacher who stated that she taught phonics for one hour daily. The replies were:

1. "15 minutes daily."
2. "20 minutes" (three times weekly).
3. "10 minutes daily."
4. "30 minutes" (three times weekly).
5. "10 minutes" (three times weekly).
6. "15 minutes" (three times weekly).
7. "25 minutes" (three times weekly).

8. "Different lengths of time."
9. "Varies."
10. "No limited time."
11. "30 minutes daily."
12. "Only a few minutes."
13. "According to need."
14. "Correlate with reading and spelling."
15. "1 hour daily."

There were two teachers who stated that they spent fifteen minutes daily teaching phonics, four who spent thirty minutes tri-weekly, five who spent fifteen minutes tri-weekly, four who reported "varied" times, four who reported "no time limit," and two who reported that they "correlate phonics with reading and spelling." One teacher reported one hour daily, another reported thirty minutes daily, and another reported twenty-five minutes three times weekly. The remainder of the responses were for different periods of time varying from twenty minutes to one hour daily, and from "only a few minutes" to "as much time as needed."

The responses to the question, "Do you teach phonics in connection with reading, spelling, or at a separate period?" were answered as follows: There were three teachers who checked reading only and three who checked spelling only. There were twenty-four teachers who checked

both reading and spelling. Only two teachers stated that they taught phonics in both the reading and spelling periods and at a separate period as well. Only two teachers' responses indicated that they taught phonics at a separate period.

In checking the returns for the second column of the questionnaire, "Assuming that you do not teach phonics," we note the following responses:

1. "Phonics of no particular value" was checked by none of the teachers.
2. "Don't have time" was checked by only one teacher.
3. "Use other methods of word recognition" was checked by seven teachers. (Incidentally, they did not list the methods they employed.)
4. "No place for phonics to fit into daily schedule" was checked for fourteen teachers.
5. "Consider phonics instruction out-of-date" was checked by one teacher.
6. "Feel you haven't been trained, or haven't had the proper training to be able to successfully teach phonics" was checked by eighteen teachers.

It is interesting to note that the majority of the teachers checked statements three and six, which would seem to indicate that the teachers are well aware of the need for phonetic training yet realize their lack of preparation

and knowledge for the teaching of phonics in an effective manner.

The statement, "Think that phonics is too complicated and uninteresting to impose on small children," was checked by two teachers.

Question two on the questionnaire, "Is phonic instruction prescribed or voluntary?" was answered "voluntary" by the teachers of fifteen schools and "prescribed" by the teacher of one school, the Pleasant Ridge School, a two-teacher school of eight grades.

There were seven schools which did not report on this item, since phonics was not taught in their schools at all.

It is evident from the findings in this questionnaire that the majority of teachers are not required to teach phonics and that such instruction, if given, is entirely voluntary on the part of the teachers.

Question three, which asked, "In what grades do you think phonics should be taught?" was included in the belief that although the majority of teachers think that phonics is strictly a primary subject, or tool, to be used in teaching beginners to read and spell, there might be those who believe that phonic drill could be given or taught to children in the intermediate grades to advantage. It might possibly help in decreasing the large number of poor readers who are passed from the primary grades into the intermediate

grades. Out of the twenty-three schools reporting, there were twenty-three teachers who stated that they believed that phonics should be taught only in the first three grades, while there were twenty-six teachers who stated that phonics should continue on through the intermediate grades. The remaining teachers did not report, since they did not teach phonics at all.

Table 2 shows the responses to question three, namely, "In what grades do you think phonics should be taught?"

TABLE 2

GRADE PLACEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS
OF PANOLA COUNTY FOR PHONICS INSTRUCTION

Grade or Grades Recommended	Number of Teachers Making the Recommendation
First through second.....	1
First through third.....	22
First through fourth.....	5
First through fifth.....	6
First through seventh.....	9
First through eighth.....	2
Second through third.....	1
Second through seventh.....	1
Third through fifth.....	1
Fourth through fifth.....	1

In regard to question four, "Do you feel that phonics is a definite aid to reading?" there were forty-nine affirmative and five negative responses. There were three teachers who reported "I don't know" to this question. Two schools failed to report.

It is interesting to note that a few of the schools which did not report the teaching of phonics at all, checked the answer "yes" when asked whether they felt that phonics was a definite aid to reading.

Question five, "Do you believe that compulsory phonetic training in all schools would help to eliminate so many poor readers in the upper grades?" was considered one of the vital issues in the writer's problem, hence the reason for its inclusion in the questionnaire.

There has been a complaint by some, in recent years, that the children of today cannot read as well as they should for their grade levels, and therefore many of them cannot make the required progress in their other studies and thus fail in their work.

It was the writer's belief that the practice of omitting phonics from the daily study program might possibly be one explanation for the many poor readers, for them seem to lack a thorough foundation for future independent reading. It was hoped that this question would show whether other teachers had felt the same lack or need for word-study and drill in their respective schools.

In checking the responses to question five, the writer found that the majority of the teachers, even those not teaching phonics, still believed it to be of value and importance in the elementary school reading program. There

were forty-nine affirmative and seven negative responses. There was one "I don't know." This question, then, did serve to show how the teachers of Panola County feel about phonics instruction.

It was revealed in the responses to questions six and seven, "How many teachers are in your school?" and "How many grades are in your school?" respectively, that phonics was taught by as many teachers of the one- and two-teacher rural schools as by the teachers of the urban schools who had only one grade to teach.

Not one of the responses given under "Remarks" proved to be of any value to the study being made.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In summarizing the findings in Chapters I, II, and III, we note the following facts: First, that phonics is not a new method or aid for teaching reading to primary children but rather an old technique, dating back to the early eighteenth century, which has been revised to fit the reading needs of the modern school program; second, that phonics is not generally approved by all reading teachers; third, that phonics instruction as it now exists has not sufficiently proved its real value in connection with the teaching of reading; and fourth, that phonics instruction in its present status is inefficient and limited.

These findings further show that the teaching of phonics involves both advantages and disadvantages, but nevertheless reading authorities such as Gates, Smith, Gray, Agnew, Sexton, Herron, and others give it some credit or value in the reading program for beginners. The phonics they recommend is what is known as the intrinsic or informal type. Recent literature agrees that this type of phonics has a place in the elementary program. The best guarantee for success in reading, however, is good teaching.

Again, the general popular opinion seems to be that phonics should be employed according to the needs of the pupils concerned because some pupils seem to require more assistance in reading than others. Children who are slow to read seem to profit most by phonics instruction.

The findings in Chapter IV show that phonics, as taught in the Panola County schools, is still in an undeveloped stage and that it has a great deal of room for growth and improvement. It further shows that phonics instruction is not quite so popular in rural areas as in the urban sections of the county, probably because the rural teachers lack the necessary materials, devices, and training with which to teach phonics in the most satisfactory manner.

Likewise, these data show that the majority of the Panola County teachers, while admitting that they do not teach phonics, were more than ready to agree that there really is a need for phonics instruction. This probably indicates how easily they were influenced by the questionnaire in spite of their limited knowledge of phonics.

Phonics instruction is a part of the reading program of most of the urban schools and is being introduced into many of the smaller and rural schools of Panola County. The majority of teachers in these schools are coming to recognize the fact that there is no definite time for or amounts of phonics to be taught as all groups differ in

their needs and requirements. It should only be taught as the need arises and then only by those materials and devices which make for the most successful reading instruction. Furthermore, these teachers seem to recognize the fact that phonics training develops more accurate, if not more rapid, readers. Teachers who teach phonics believe it encourages more independent reading.

Again, the teachers of Panola County show, and readily admit, a definite lack of educational training and knowledge in phonics and realize that there is still much room for improvement and advancement in the field of phonics instruction.

Finally, most teachers of reading seem to realize that they may utilize a number of different methods and by taking concepts and procedures from each one, formulate their own particular method suitable for their own situation.

The teaching of phonics in connection with reading for children in the elementary grades, if intelligently used, will do much toward helping slow readers to fit into the new program of education which attempts to provide every child with wholesome and worth-while life experiences.

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