

COMPARISON OF COMPREHENSION IN PRE-DIRECTED INFORMATIONAL
READING AND IN NON-DIRECTED INFORMATIONAL READING AT
THE PRIMARY LEVEL, BASED UPON A SURVEY OF
PROFESSIONAL LITERATURE IN THE FIELD

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Importance of Reading

Although schools in the United States have experienced remarkable progress since the era during which "readin', writin' 'n' 'rithmetic" constituted either the sole or the principal curriculum in the little one-room, ungraded, rural school, neither reading, writing, nor arithmetic has been superseded by other studies of more recent vintage. As a matter of fact, more emphasis is being placed upon these fundamental fields of study today than ever before, though there is a different reason motivating such emphasis.

(In other years reading, writing, and arithmetic were "taught" and "learned" more or less as ends within themselves. No attempt was made to motivate their use in the classroom or to relate them as subjects to life in the community. They were regarded as so much necessary material which had to be "covered" before the pupil could "pass." Now, however, the tendency in these fundamental fields of learning, as in all others, is toward adequate motivation in the classroom, so that the pupil will not be burdened with the necessity of struggling through masses of irrelevant material whose significance he does not comprehend.

Rather, an effort is made to relate classroom subjects to community life, thus giving them meaning and pertinence in the everyday experiences of the child.

Today, in the more progressive schools, children do not learn to read or write or solve problems in arithmetic until, in the natural course of their school experiences, a need for such abilities arises and they themselves recognize that they have reached the point where they need to master elementary skills in these fields.)

Of course, the teacher must serve as the guide in bringing about sufficient motivation for these learnings, and she must also cause situations to arise in which the child is made to realize that he needs to know certain processes in order to solve his problems. The skillful teacher is not the one who exercises no restraint whatever in the classroom situations, but rather one who tactfully guides the children into worth-while learnings as occasions arise when such learnings will mean something to them.

Reading, with its essential drills and practice leading to mastery, cannot be left to chance. Few children, however brilliant they may be, will ever teach themselves to read without encouragement and guidance from an adult who is sincerely interested in their progress and achievement. The adult occupying this role is usually the parent or the teacher -- more often the teacher.

"Frequently," says McKee, "reading is considered to be the most important subject in the curriculum of the modern elementary school."¹ He points out that in cases in which reading is not actually looked upon as being the most important subject offered by the school, it is certainly regarded, by all schools, teachers, and administrators, as one of the most fundamental subjects of study. So much depends upon one's ability to read, not only in school experiences but also in home and community life, in adulthood as well as childhood, that reading must necessarily be accorded a primary place in any educational program. (McKee continues by saying that "in modern social life the ability and desire to read enable one to develop a wide acquaintance with, and enjoyment of, the affairs of man and nature. In the modern school the pupil who can and will read possesses an essential tool with which much of his formal education can be attained."²)

Storm and Smith are more dogmatic in advancing their concept of the importance of reading in the curriculum than is McKee. They assert: ("Reading is the most important subject in the curriculum. It is the most fundamental, because nearly all the other subjects depend upon it as a source

¹Paul McKee, Reading and Literature in the Elementary School, p. 17. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1930

²Ibid.

of information and clarification."³ (During the first three years of a child's life in school he is given instruction designed to enable him to learn to read. After he has passed the third grade, he is supposed to possess the ability to read well enough to comprehend subject matter in textbooks in the fields of history, geography, languages, arithmetic, nature study, and so on. The difficulty of the materials he studies increases with his growth in ability to read and to understand the meaning of the printed page. In the lower grades, the texts that the pupil must master are few in number and simple in context; but after the third grade books descend upon him in ever-increasing number and complexity. Though much of the educational experience, from the primary grades through graduate study in college, centers around the ability to read, it can be said in the primary grades the child learns to read, but thereafter he reads to learn.⁴)

Unless he has mastered the mechanics of reading in the primary grades -- that is, unless he has become skilled in silent reading so that he can get the necessary amount of meaning from the printed page -- then he is sure to be overwhelmed with the amount of reading which confronts him. He must read with sufficient rapidity and comprehension to enable him to understand the content of these various subjects. When he enters high school he meets with a still greater amount of material which must be mastered through the use of the reading tool. If he is

³Grace E. Storm and Nila B. Smith, Reading Activities in the Primary Grades, p. 18. Boston, Ginn, 1930.

⁴Ibid.

unable to interpret the content, he falls behind; and again we are reminded that reading is a fundamental and important study tool.⁵

(Fundamentally, man is a social being. He lives in a community peopled with many other persons similar to himself, and with these individuals he holds various types of social intercourse. Although it is seldom stated in such a manner, the primary -- perhaps the sole -- purpose of the school is the development of the individual as a social being. If this be true, then one of the very important responsibilities of the school is to teach such uses of language as will enable the individual to communicate most effectively with other persons with whom he comes into direct or indirect contact in life. The child and the adult must know how to speak and write in order to relate ideas effectively. For the same reason, one must be able to read in order to understand the ideas of others which are presented in written form.⁶)

(If these are accepted as worth-while objectives of the school, it becomes necessary to provide the child with adequate adult guidance so that the inexperienced pupil may accomplish the greatest possible development with the least possible amount of error and loss of time. Above all, he must have guidance in becoming effective as a citizen and efficient in the skills which society demands that he possess.

⁵Ibid., pp. 18-19.

⁶McKee, op. cit., p. 1.

True democracy assumes the existence of an intelligent and educated citizenry. It assumes that the people are informed concerning the affairs of the nation and that they will think and act judiciously. Consequently the wide assimilation of important information is imperative. The people must become acquainted with the crucial economic, social, industrial, and political problems confronting American life. They must come to understand the social order in which they live and the government which they have established. They must have at hand the accurate knowledge essential to making intelligent decisions in selecting representatives and in determining policies. They must develop that great host of attitudes which are of undoubted importance in the exercise of intelligent citizenship. In fact, there can be no real democracy unless the people know what they should know, unless they develop an abiding interest in good government, and unless they act intelligently.⁷)

(Only with expert guidance can the young child begin to form the attitudes and develop the abilities to comprehend which are necessary if one is to be efficient in causing such purposes as those cited above to become functional within his own life and in his community. The ability to read intelligently and to analyze what one reads is recognized generally as one of the chief avenues of comprehension, definitely leading to satisfactory personal and social living.)

What is ordinarily called reading is defined in the purely technical sense by Dolch as "comprehending new relationships between familiar words as the eyes move regularly along the line."⁸ If this definition can be accepted, it

⁷ Ibid., pp. 19-20.

⁸ Edward William Dolch, The Psychology and Teaching of Reading, p. 171.

implies a considerable amount of directed learning before much reading can be done. Dolch's definition suggests that words are already familiar before the reading is engaged in, indicating a directed period of word-learning. Then, when the actual reading occurs, these familiar words are encountered again in new relationships.

McKee has written that "reading is a tool by which the pupil is enabled to learn much that the school has to offer."⁹ No tool can be adequately mastered without guidance from someone already skilled in its use. Thus, if proper guidance is not supplied during the pupil's reading experiences, he may learn to read, yes; but his use of reading as a "tool" will not be nearly so effective as it might be with adequate guidance and direction.

(The primary purpose of reading in school is to extend the experiences of boys and girls, to stimulate their thinking powers, and to elevate their tastes. The ultimate end of instruction in reading is to enable the reader to participate intelligently in the thought life of the world and appreciatively in its recreational activities.¹⁰)

(Only within comparatively recent decades has much effort been expended in attempting to develop new and better methods of teaching reading and in motivating instruction in reading.) In the old schools, many teachers realized that little was being done in enabling the boys and girls

⁹ McKee, op. cit., p. 36.

¹⁰ Guy Montrose Whipple, editor, Twenty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, "Report of the National Committee on Reading," p. 9.

(p. 9)

to read adequately, but about the only remedy that could be thought of was a more determined application of the "hickory stick." Teachers "taught" and pupils were supposed to "learn"; and when learning was not as much in evidence as it should have been, teachers concluded that they possessed a "dumb" lot of children. No effort was made to make reading an interesting study -- it was sheer boredom. Little guidance was given in the techniques of learning to read, for few of these techniques were then known. Much of the study in reading consisted in rote memorization of words, followed by the struggle to pick out these words in printed matter and try to find some "sense" in the material. Instruction in reading, as in other subjects, was by trial and error -- mostly error! When we note the large numbers of pupils who do not become good readers even with the scientific aids in reading instruction now in everyday use, we wonder that anyone in the old days came into possession of the ability to read. It is true that many persons were "self-taught" readers. Having had only a few months or at most a few years of formal schooling, they laboriously taught themselves to read, building upon the elementary and fragmentary instruction they had received at school. The story of Lincoln's struggle to educate himself is the classic in this connection.

Gray states that the scientific study of problems

relating to reading began in Europe in the middle of the nineteenth century. Although the principal reason for these pioneer studies was a newly aroused interest in the psychological processes involved in the techniques of reading, another underlying purpose was apparent. This was a determination on the part of educators to get at the bottom of the causes for the difficulties encountered in reading, and the appalling inefficiency of persons as readers even after they had had all available training.

Before 1900 most of the investigations in the field of reading were conducted in Germany and France by educators of those countries, but since that date scientific interest in reading has increased so rapidly in the United States that by 1925 this country was exceeding all other nations in this type of work.¹¹

A decade ago Gray wrote:

Interest in reading problems has increased with gratifying rapidity among both educators and laymen, as shown by numerous local, state, regional, and national conferences devoted to the subject, frequent revisions of courses of study, the publication of a large number of professional books on reading, and more than a thousand scientific studies relating to reading.¹²

It does not take long for the child, after he has

¹¹William S. Gray, A Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading, p. 2.

¹²William S. Gray, "A Decade of Progress," Thirty-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, "The Teaching of Reading: A Second Report," p. 6.

entered school, to discover that success in all of his courses and the satisfaction of a growing curiosity concerning the world which surrounds him depend to a great extent upon his ability to read effectively. If the child early becomes conscious of the important role which the ability to read plays in all life, the adult at the same time must be much more cognizant of the significance of reading in his everyday experiences. Reading is a thing which, like most of life's greatest blessings, is often taken for granted; and one is likely not to realize how often he reads or how barren his life would be if he could not read.

The adult who cannot read finds it next to impossible to perform intelligently even the minimum duties of citizenship, and is, moreover, excluded from one of the most satisfying media for personal enrichment and recreation.¹³⁾

(Perhaps the most significant element in reading is comprehension. It is possible for one to master the techniques of reading, and even be able to read with a fair degree of rapidity and skill, and yet be unable to derive sufficient meaning from what is read. One may even find himself "calling words" unconsciously as he looks at the printed page, though his mind is wandering elsewhere and his powers of comprehension are thus minimized. Along with the development of mechanical skills in reading, one must become adept

¹³Chester C. Bennett, An Inquiry into the Genesis of Poor Reading, p. 1.

in concentrating upon what is being read so that meaning can be derived from it. But even comprehension and concentration are not enough; there must also be the power of memory to enable one to recall the essence of what has been read. The development of all of these skills is dependent upon proper guidance and direction at the time one is attempting to master the fundamental processes in reading.

Comprehension means merely the understanding or interpretation of the meaning of what is read. One who comprehends what he reads is able to gather correct meanings from printed or written symbols. When a teacher works to provide a pupil with the power of comprehension, she tries to equip him with the various abilities which he needs in order to understand or interpret the material he reads.¹⁴

Now there can be no reading without meaning. One who reads to himself without getting meaning is engaged in mere busy work. One who reads aloud without understanding the meaning of what he reads is engaged in mere word calling. Consequently comprehension is the basic general ability in all reading. . . . Without doubt the ability to understand or interpret the meaning of material read is the primary and fundamental reading ability which all teachers of reading should emphasize continually.¹⁵⁾

Pennell and Cusack have stated that "books satisfy children's love of adventure; their curiosity about animals, people, and inventions; their desire to lose themselves in another environment."¹⁶ It is obvious, however, that if the child does not know the best ways to attain speed in

¹⁴McKee, op. cit., p. 94.

¹⁵Ibid. p. 94

¹⁶Mary E. Pennell and Alice M. Cusack, The Teaching of Reading for Better Living, p. 7.

reading, the techniques associated with the mastery of the mechanics of reading, the retention of meaning from what is read, and the ability to comprehend adequately what is read, he will fall far short in attaining all the values and benefits implied in the above brief statement by Pen-nell and Cusack, as well as the others previously mentioned in this discussion. It goes without saying that the most effective readers, other things being equal, are those who have had the best direction and guidance during the time they were mastering the fundamental skills associated with the process of reading.

(The responsibility for teaching children to read is assumed largely by the school. Therefore the school must be held accountable for the results obtained. However, many children reach middle elementary grades unable to derive any satisfaction from reading or to use it as a learning tool. This condition exists in spite of improved text-books, better teaching methods, modern school plants, and more attention given to child welfare. Is it possible for schools to reduce these failures drastically or to eliminate reading failure entirely? The answer cannot be given in the affirmative until we understand children more thoroughly in the elementary school years, until we analyze more accurately their learning problems in reading, and study more astutely the complicated interrelationships between school learning and behavior trends . . .¹⁷)

(Despite all the research and scientific experimentation that have been undertaken in recent decades relating to reading difficulties and the improvement of reading, it still remains true that "there is no best way to teach

¹⁷ Gertrude Hildreth and Josephine L. Wright, Helping Children to Read, p. 1.

reading."¹⁸ There are better ways, yes; but no best way. For into the reading program which the school and the teacher must develop for practical classroom use, must enter such factors as individual differences in the pupils, differing interests and needs, different books available for reading, the experience and philosophy of the teacher, and the teacher's consciousness of the importance of reading in human life. All of these factors, and others which might be mentioned, vary with individuals and with situations, so that no cut-and-dried method can be evolved which can be said to be the best. Adaptations and alterations must be made in order to conform to the local situation and to meet individual and group needs.

But it cannot be denied that the reading program which does not provide for a maximum of teacher guidance and direction in the critical stages of learning mastery of fundamental skills and techniques in reading will produce boys and girls who will be mediocre readers in their youth and indifferent readers in their adulthood. The quality and the quantity of guidance afforded can often determine whether one will enjoy reading for pleasure and information, or whether one will despise the act of reading. What a responsibility, then, rests upon the teacher as she shapes the attitudes of youth toward reading!

The Problem

The problem for consideration in this thesis is a comparison of comprehension in pre-directed informational reading and in non-directed informational reading at the primary level, based upon a survey of professional literature in the field. Apparently little previous investigation has been done along this line, although Gray cites a few studies in his Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading which have some slight relationship to the study now under consideration.

Gray has pointed out that illiteracy is still widespread in the United States, and is decreasing at a surprisingly slow rate,¹⁹ in spite of all the modern methods of teaching reading and all the new techniques for analyzing reading problems and mitigating them. Perhaps most of this illiteracy is the result of lack of educational opportunities, for it is generally known that in certain areas of the country many children never attend school at all. In the same areas, however, and in others, there are many other children who attend school for a few months or years and then drop out. Some of these, too, may remain illiterate because of their short stay in school or because their instruction in reading has been so poor or so fragmentary that they have not mastered even the fundamental

¹⁹Gray, Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading, p. 15.

skills.

Every study made in the field of reading has the opportunity of making some slight contribution to the already voluminous literature relating to reading problems and their solution. The present study does not lay claim to making any such contribution, although it is hoped that by compiling and unifying some of the materials already available in the field, the writer may be able to perform some service for those interested in a study of classroom techniques in the teaching of reading.

Limitations

The data utilized in this study were compiled from publications of recent years, all relating to some phase of reading instruction in the primary grades. The study has been confined to the primary grades because the writer's particular interests, as well as her professional responsibilities, lie in that field.

Nothing is included in this survey relating to beginning reading, for it is assumed that the pupil must already know how to read with some degree of adequacy before he can do informational reading or before he can experience comprehension.

Little is said about specific methods of teaching reading in the primary grades, since the emphasis is upon directed and non-directed reading rather than upon the class-

room techniques employed. Generalizations are dealt with primarily throughout the presentation of the material.

Organization

The study as reported in this paper has been organized into four chapters:

Chapter I presents a brief initial discussion of the importance of reading and indicates the nature of the present problem.

Chapter II deals with the weaknesses and shortcomings of non-directed reading.

Chapter III, the longest single chapter in the study, presents information relating to pre-directed informational reading and its bearing upon ability to comprehend.

Chapter IV lists conclusions and recommendations which seem to be implied by the study.

CHAPTER II

COMPREHENSION IN NON-DIRECTED METHODS IN INFORMATIONAL PRIMARY READING

Reading as a Tool

The fact that reading serves as a tool in the educational process has been mentioned in the preceding chapter. In simple language, a tool is an implement with which to do things. In like manner, (reading is a process by means of which things can be accomplished. The "things" which are to be achieved are those phases of educational growth which will contribute to the well-rounded intellectual development of the individual so that he may perform to the limit of his capacity the responsibilities that befall him as a citizen in the school community and later in the adult community.)

Possessing the ability to read with adequate skill and comprehension, the child has within his reach all realms of knowledge. These he can attain up to the limit of his willingness to strive, and to that of his capacity to learn.

Although much has been written about the importance of reading in the various curriculum fields, the degree to which reading limits learning does not in practice seem to be fully recognized. Under present conditions, and perhaps under ideal conditions,

pupils must obtain from books a large part of their knowledge and much of their stimulation to thinking. Reading is therefore an essential tool in the study of most parts of the curriculum. Closely related to reading is the ability to locate books and articles that deal with problems met in and out of school; to select, understand, and appraise pertinent problems; to organize the data, often secured from a variety of references, so that the information will aid in the solution of their problems; and to provide for the retention, the improvement, and the use of what has been learned. Shortcomings in any of these types of abilities are quickly reflected in the quality of the pupils' work in all subjects studied from books. There is probably no single source of frustration in study that is so serious as that found in deficiencies in reading ability.¹

If one is to perform some task requiring certain tools, his ability to discharge his responsibility will be drastically impaired if he lacks the essential tool. He may be able to devise other means for doing the thing, but his attainment of the task will be less adequate than if he possessed the needed tool. So it is with reading and learning. The child in school is faced with the challenge to "learn," and the tool necessary to learning is the ability to read effectively and comprehensively. Lacking this ability, the child's attainment in the learning processes will be correspondingly lowered. It is difficult to think of a single learning process which is not dependent, either directly or indirectly, upon ability to read.

At the same time, one's ability to read depends upon

¹Mabel Snedaker and Ernest Horn, "Reading in the Various Fields of the Curriculum," Thirty-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, "The Teaching of Reading: A Second Report," p. 134.

his intellectual capacity, upon his guidance and direction by the teacher while learning the fundamental processes of reading, upon his attitude toward reading, and upon the degree to which reading materials made available to him meet his needs and challenge his interests.

So-called "poor" readers are usually thought of as lacking in ability, but their inability to master reading may not be due to this condition at all, but rather to the fact that the reading program offered to them does not challenge their interests or meet their needs or assist in solving their problems. Because of these shortcomings in the reading program, they appear indifferent, and teachers are prone to think of them as being mentally inferior. Only as a last resort, and after careful diagnostic testing, should a pupil be labelled as intellectually subnormal; for external evidences and preconceived ideas may be misleading -- and often are.

"Poor readers tend to regard the school situation as rather unpleasant and difficult to face."² But these same pupils, with a wholesome program of guidance in reading, pointed directly at the individual for the purpose of meeting his needs and arousing his interests, often develop into the best and most avid readers in the class. Their indifference toward reading and their lack of ability in

²Bennett, op. cit., p. 122.

reading may be the result of poor guidance or of too-little guidance from their teachers during the formative stage of their reading skills.

Experiences

("Experience" has become, of late, the most vital word in modern education, thanks to the philosophies of James, Dewey, Kilpatrick, and others of the pragmatic school of education. The contention of this group of educators is that the child learns through experiences, and through experiences alone. Every experience he has produces some effect upon his nature, and the responsibility of the school is therefore to see that his experiences are wholesome ones, fostering in the child the attitudes and abilities and skills that will make life richer for him.)

Another significant element in the philosophy of pragmatism is that of the importance of the "workability" of things. It is even said that a statement or theory is true only if it "works," if it has utility. Following this line of reasoning, one can readily see that (reading can become to the child a valuable experience if it "works" -- if it is meaningful to him, if it helps him to meet his needs, if it arouses his interests, if it contributes to his leisure moments and hours. If it possesses no utility for him, it is comparatively wasted effort, bearing little fruit

and contributing nothing to the meaningful experiences that the school situation should bring to him.

An important aim in modern education is growth through experiences. The school is necessarily limited in the possibilities for first-hand experiences, but through visual aids and reading the school has unlimited possibilities in providing vicarious experiences as substitutes for first-hand experience. Reading is a means of extending and enriching the child's experiences. Its value as an experience depends upon amount, variety, and keenness of interest and appreciation in reading done.³)

(Effective school experiences must involve the "establishment of permanent, varied, and desirable interests in reading that lead to the habit of voluntary reading of a wide range."⁴ Thus, enjoyable, meaningful, and worth-while experiences in connection with reading for information in the classroom will lead the pupil to explore still further the possibilities inherent in the skill of reading; this spirit of adventure will lead him early, if it is properly encouraged and guided, into the rich and unlimited fields of reading for recreation during leisure time. The reading experiences the child has in school in his early years may determine whether he will become an avid reader or whether he will go through life with little thought of the rich treasures that lie ready for mining in the printed page.)

"Natural" Method

From the standpoint of the teacher's time and effort, and possibly of the pupil's satisfaction,

³Clarence R. Stone, Better Primary Reading, pp. 23-24.

⁴Ibid., p. 24.

the optimum method may be the one which pupils themselves follow when left to their own devices. This "natural" or "incidental" method has a number of defenders. It is upheld on the assumption that pupils' abilities and inclinations differ, and that, consequently, a procedure good for one may be difficult or impossible for another. It is maintained that it is impossible to provide the type of definite tuition suitable for each child, because aptitudes for different methods are too difficult to determine at present. It is argued also that the really effective skills are so subtle that they can scarcely be taught to children under the present mass instruction which provides little opportunity for observing and influencing the progress of each pupil. It is believed, therefore, that the most interesting and profitable procedure is to provide the pupils with abundant material, opportunities, and incentives for work, and rewards for progress, but with very little definite instruction. It is expected that from the child's own experience techniques will emerge which will be suitable for meeting at least the genuine needs of reading.⁵

Although this situation is the ideal, it is hardly practicable, and represents only wishful thinking. It is a form of "let-alone" policy for education, founded in the belief that children, if left to their own devices, will eventually evolve their own schemes for doing the things they need to do and for learning the things they need to know. Rousseau experimented with this concept in an extreme way in France, and what he produced was anarchy, not only in the schools but throughout the nation; and his doctrines, widely accepted as they were, hatched the French Revolution with all of its horror, anarchy, and bestiality.

Without guidance, children are apt to revert to their

⁵ Arthur I. Gates, New Methods in Primary Reading, pp. 24-25.

worse selves, and seldom do they progress to their better. The "natural" method of teaching reading will result in much loss of time and in inaccurate skills on the part of pupils. There is actually no justification for such a method when the schools of America are staffed with well-trained, experienced teachers who possess the ability to provide guidance and direction to the boys and girls as they attempt to master the fundamental skills in reading.

Experiments in government, society, and politics, as well as in education, have proved, time after time, that wholesome discipline is much to be preferred above anarchy or lack of discipline or guidance. This is as true in the schoolroom as it is in the nation or the city. Discipline, however, does not mean wielding the hickory stick; it means, rather, the skillful guidance of energies into worth-while channels. If we may call this the "unnatural" method, then we may assert that the "unnatural" method, when applied to the teaching of reading, is much better than the "natural," for civilization has never experienced progress in its "natural" state. It has been only as man has been able to elevate himself above his "natural" state and into an "unnatural" realm of intelligence that worth-while accomplishment has resulted. In the same way, the "natural" method of teaching reading is likely to become nothing better than time-and-energy wasting.

The "natural method" is really an unabridged trial and error or trial and accidental success procedure, the limitations of which are recognized in the learning of other skills. The frequency of failure, of difficulties of various sorts, and of probable unnecessarily low accomplishment by many whose deficiencies were overcome or compensated for after struggles, is sufficient reason for seeking definite methods of instruction which make the development of the basal perceptive skills a definite objective of teaching.⁶

Studies and various types of tests have revealed the main deficiency in the "natural," unguided method of learning to read and of reading for information. As a rule, about half of the group as a maximum number will learn to read fairly well, and will be able to comprehend what is read with a fair degree of adequacy, and perhaps a quarter of the group will do passably well in their reading experiences; but at least a quarter of the total group will flounder considerably or deplorably, encountering difficulties so serious that they are able to make little if any progress. These are the ones who will later be styled as "special disabilities" in reading unless they are given prompt and proper assistance in overcoming their problems. If they are allowed to go unaided to the point where they become classified as "special disabilities," they will then either be permitted to struggle on vainly against the overwhelming odds that confront the non-reader, or else they will be passed on to a special teacher for remedial help.⁷

⁶Gates, New Methods in Primary Reading, pp. 30-31.

⁷Ibid., pp. 27-28.

In most cases neither of these steps will be necessary if the classroom teacher is able to provide the type of guidance that will enable the pupil to solve his problems, meet his needs, and foster his interests.

Non-motivation is one of the characteristics of any unguided method of teaching reading. And if an activity is not properly motivated, it usually fails to attain its purpose. Let us contrast a specific classroom experience, one centering around a lesson on newts.

The teacher who fails to provide proper guidance or motivation for the topic will ask the pupils to open their books to the lesson about newts. "Now, children," she will say, "you must read this carefully, because I am going to ask you some questions about what you have read." Then all the pupils read simultaneously the material about newts. Then all books are required to be closed, while the teacher propounds her questions relating to the printed material which has been read. When some answers could not be recalled, the children were rebuked for not having read their lesson carefully.

Now let us look into the classroom of a teacher who practices motivation of lesson material and who attempts to provide proper guidance for learning experiences relating to reading. The teacher sees to it that a bowl of water containing newts is prominently displayed in the classroom

where all the children will be attracted by it. Then the bowl may be passed around among the children to permit them to examine the little animals. Everyone has questions about the newts. The teacher does not attempt at once to answer any of the questions, but she may ask, "Wouldn't you like to find the answers to your questions?" Then she may ask the pupils to ask their questions again in orderly manner in order that they may be written on the board. Afterwards the group of pupils study together the text material about newts, keeping in mind the questions and being able to refer to the list of questions at any time during their reading. A natural follow-up of this is a group discussion, animated and enthusiastic, for each child will have discovered something interesting about newts. At this point the teacher may suggest that the material be read again in order to discover new questions not previously discussed. Perhaps some child will ask whether there is any other material available on newts, or the teacher may suggest additional sources to be read in order to give further enlightenment on some of the questions not adequately covered by the text. Pupils will volunteer to read certain sources and be prepared to give reports at the next class session.⁸

Gates gives some of the shortcomings of the "natural"

⁸Snedaker and Horn, op. cit., p. 160.

or unguided method of teaching reading:

Among a group of children learning to read for a year or more by their own methods, many techniques are found for attempting to recognize, pronounce, and learn new and unfamiliar words. The most common will be the method of guessing at the word on the basis of context clues. The pupils give primary attention to the meaning -- a habit which is admirable but insufficient. Neglect of the techniques of word-form perception leads to an over-emphasis of guessing on the basis of the context. Many pupils become hasty, inaccurate readers. When the material contains a number of unusual words, comprehension may be distorted, with the result that words are constantly misrecognized.⁹

Reading without Guidance

When one comes across, in his reading, material which is too difficult to read readily, he must take time out to study it. But unless he has had direction in how to analyze his difficulties, he will hardly know how to approach his problems or how to comprehend the meaning of the difficult reading materials. Difficulty in reading may be caused by the discovery of unfamiliar words, too long sentences or paragraphs, or combinations of ideas which do not at once fit into past experiences in reading, and which therefore are not easily comprehended. "Difficulty is the most characteristic feature of study material."¹⁰

The pupil who is forced to rely solely upon his own ingenuity in solving his reading problems and who therefore

⁹Gates, op. cit., p. 28.

¹⁰Dolch, op. cit., p. 171.

becomes his own teacher, is usually rather poorly taught. Initiative, of course, is commendable; but it cannot exist without a previous foundation of fact and procedure upon which to base new departures in the solution of problems. Hence initiative is curtailed by the teacher who does not provide adequate guidance and direction in the reading process, and fostered by the teacher who sees that her pupils have been well guided throughout the time they were learning to read.

Gates reports a study with pupils in the elementary grades who learned to read with little or no guidance from the teacher. The entire group had comparable intelligence quotients; there were no dull pupils, and all ranged from fair to superior in intelligence. In the rate of accuracy of comprehension, as measured by standard reading tests, fifty-three per cent of the group equaled or excelled the norm, or the scores made by presumably representative pupils on the same tests; but only thirty-eight per cent equaled or excelled the achievement of average pupils on their own mental-age level. Approximately forty per cent scored average or above average in silent reading, but twenty-five per cent were only fair, and another thirty-five per cent were definitely inferior in silent reading. More than twenty-five per cent were extremely

incompetent in word recognition.¹¹

(Every pupil who is to develop into an active, understanding, competent reader must learn many ways of recognizing words when they are encountered on the printed page. "If the words are familiar to him in conversation, he can identify them as soon as he unlocks their sound and he is then able to proceed in getting the ideas from his reading."¹² The pupil learns to recognize and to analyze words by employing several techniques. He may rely upon his memory of the appearance of words and thus may be able to remember whether and under what circumstances he has met up with a particular word before. In the early years of his school life he is likely to encounter words used repeatedly in the same or in similar context situations, and he may thus be able to recognize them by the use of memory. He may recognize parts (syllables) of longer words and then may use clues to unlock the mystery of the total meaning and pronunciation of the word. This method takes into consideration distinguishing characteristics of certain words, such as prefixes, suffixes, and letter combinations. Or again the pupil may be able to glean meaning from the word by employing phonetic principles -- sounding out the syllables and thus arriving at the meaning of the whole.)

¹¹Gates, op. cit., pp. 25-27.

¹²Roma Gans, Guiding Children's Reading through Experiences, p. 26.

Gans emphasizes the importance of proper guidance of pupils in order that they may be able to use one or all of these methods more or less subconsciously and rapidly in untangling the mysteries couched in new words.¹³

Gray has pointed out that many scientific investigations relating to the field of reading have emphasized the fact that a surprisingly large percentage of pupils, especially in the upper grades and in secondary schools, experience serious difficulties in reading or are unable to engage successfully in required reading activities. The evidence points to the fact, Gray concludes, that most of the pupils who undergo these difficulties in their later school experiences owe their ineptitude to improper direction or lack of direction in the lower grades while they were learning to read. Even in the higher academic levels where such reading difficulties so often occur, Gray states that most of them can be corrected or eliminated and reading success can be vastly improved by using instruction carefully adapted to the interests, needs, and capacities of the pupils.¹⁴ A teacher must be especially skilled to conduct a successful reading program at these higher levels in school, for pupils at these higher ages often consider reading instruction as "baby-stuff" and may

¹³Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁴Gray, "A Decade of Progress," Thirty-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, "The Teaching of Reading: A Second Report," p. 15.

become indignant or openly antagonistic to any such program. So the teacher must be tactful, and above all must provide sufficient motivation to enable the pupils to see that they are "missing something" because of their deficiencies in reading ability. If this can be done, they will develop within themselves a determination to master their difficulties.

Hildreth and Wright, in a study of a group of children in a remedial-reading program at Teachers College, Columbia University, reached the conclusion that "these children had become reading failures chiefly because they had received inadequate attention and inappropriate instruction in the first school years."¹⁵ This inadequacy of the early reading program is largely due, in the belief of these educators, to the fact that teachers often fail to recognize individual differences among pupils; or, if they do recognize these differences, they are at a loss what to do about them, and consequently they do little or nothing. This is but another type of inadequate guidance or direction, for a comprehensive program of reading based upon individual differences constitutes the best type of guidance and direction for the learner. On the other hand, if individuality is not allowed to enter into the picture in its true proportion of importance, the teacher will have a set mold

¹⁵Hildreth and Wright, op. cit., p. 14.

of instruction into which she will attempt to fit every pupil. Is it any wonder, under such conditions that many pupils cannot conform to this fixed pattern and thus become "failures" in their ability to master the necessary subject matter?

Many children in the elementary grades, Gans has discovered as a result of extensive research, fail to receive "helpful, sequential individual guidance," and as a result of this neglect on the part of the teachers and the school instructional program, "fail to become successful, happy, voluntary readers in and out of school, often despite efforts of a remedial teacher to help them."¹⁶

One authority in the field of reading has stated that (the most important single factor in meeting a child's reading needs is the provision of reading materials suited to his level of reading ability.) He indicates that the rapid improvement in a child's reading ability which often results from a program of remedial instruction is due not to some magical formula or to some unique method of approach, but rather to the intelligent use of materials well suited to the reading level of the individual child.¹⁷

Non-directed or poorly directed instruction in reading seldom gives much consideration to the provision of materials which are designed especially for the individual and

¹⁶Gans, Guiding Children's Reading Through Experiences, p. 30.

¹⁷Durrell, op. cit., p. 65.

group needs of the children to be served. It is more like the old-fashioned school in which all children had to study the "reader" and master its contents, and no provision was made for additional materials to supplement the "reader" or for easier or more difficult reading matter for pupils who needed a different type of material than that provided in the "reader." Pupils who could not master the context of the stereotyped reading course were regarded as "dull," and no one ever thought of the fact that their "dullness" might not be due to lack of intelligence but rather to the fact that the instructional program was either too simple or too difficult to challenge their interests and to meet their needs. This viewpoint, modified somewhat by modern methods and by new findings in the field, is still held to some extent by the old-fashioned teacher who does not see the value of providing proper guidance for the children as they learn to read for information. Fortunately, however, almost every school today, even the small rural one, has some variety of materials for use in the reading program, so that the pupils at least have some choice of what they shall read and are not limited to the one "reader" which constituted the sole instructional medium in other days.

. . . the best results in reading will not be obtained by attempts at a complete integration of reading in a unified activity program, because of the broad and comprehensive character of the reading

materials which the children should have opportunity to read regardless of relationship to project activities and because of the need for specialized instruction and practice for the orderly development of particular skills in reading.¹⁸

Silent and Oral Reading

Teachers of reading and authorities in the field of reading have long been at loggerheads as to the relative merits of silent and oral reading. One can discover in published materials wholehearted support for silent reading as opposed to oral reading, and he may feel that he has at last found the answer to the problem of which is the more significant. But if he look further, he will discover just as much authority and fully as many factors arrayed in support of oral reading. The only logical conclusion to be reached, then, is that both silent and oral reading play an important role in the instructional program.

Storm and Smith have cited a number of studies indicating that silent reading results, on the whole, in a higher degree of comprehension for most pupils than does the oral type. In silent reading a minimum of attention must be devoted to the mechanics of reading, and for this reason the reader can concentrate almost entirely upon meanings.¹⁹

Gray investigated a number of studies relating to

¹⁸Stone, op. cit., pp. 345-346.

¹⁹Storm and Smith, op. cit., p. 34.

silent and oral reading, and from these studies summarized the purposes of silent reading which seemed to be most in evidence.²⁰ These may be stated briefly as follows, not necessarily listed in the order of their importance or prevalence:

1. To keep informed concerning current events.
2. To obtain specific information to be used in making plans.
3. To learn more about happenings or problems of special interest.
4. To obtain the opinions of others concerning civic, social, or industrial problems.
5. To keep in touch with business or professional developments.
6. To obtain suggestions concerning efficient methods of doing work.
7. To determine the important items in correspondence, messages, and instructions.
8. To follow directions.
9. To advance in one's field of work.
10. To broaden one's range of information.
11. To keep the mind stimulated with important things to think about.
12. To develop a broad outlook on life.
13. To derive pleasure during leisure hours.
14. To satisfy curiosity.

²⁰Gray, Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading, p.9.

Although it is obvious that most of these purposes of silent reading relate to adult life -- and the studies cited by Gray in this connection were with adults -- it is easy to consider these same purposes in relation to the objectives of a child when he engages in silent reading. One will find few purposes listed above for adults which cannot be applied with equal validity to purposes of silent reading as related to children.

Oral reading is more of a public performance, since it implies that there shall be an audience of one or more persons. Oral reading is engaged in not so much for the purpose of obtaining information as for conveying it to others. It is good training for one's powers of enunciation and pronunciation, and it assists one in putting the proper expression into one's voice to convey meaning with the greatest clarity. The fact that so many adults are poor oral readers may be due largely to the fact that they had little guidance in oral reading while in school. Everyone read orally, yes; but in most cases reading was merely an act of word-calling, and the voice usually maintained itself in a monotone with a minimum of dramatic expressiveness. Today in the classrooms more emphasis is being placed on reading orally to convey meaning, and not merely to call words.

Let us take a glimpse into one of the old-fashioned

schools while a reading "lesson" is in progress. Every pupil has his book opened to a given selection chosen by the teacher, and almost invariably the one immediately following, in the book, what was read yesterday. One pupil stands at his desk or at the front of the room to read orally, without previous preparation, until the teacher tells him to stop. The other pupils are supposed to listen to what is read, to watch for errors, and to keep the place in their own readers. Then, while the pupil remains standing, the class criticizes his performance, pointing out errors in pronunciation and words mis-called. The teacher warns the pupil to try to do better next time and tells him to take his seat. But the teacher does not give him any individual guidance to assist him in doing better next time. What help he receives comes en masse from class and teacher immediately after he has completed his oral reading, and he is given little or no help in overcoming his shortcomings.

The above situation still exists, unfortunately, in some classrooms today. These are the classrooms in which the teacher believes in providing a minimum of guidance for the pupil who is learning to read, or who may recognize that the pupil should be guided but she does not know how to go about it.

The above method of procedure in oral reading was an artificial and useless creation of the school, often without

meaning and seldom possessing any purpose. There was no sensible reason for the reader to read aloud or for the class to listen and to keep the place. There was no motivation whatever except for the fact that the teacher said, "Turn to page so-and-so and we will read that story." Can it be strange that there was little interest in such a program -- or lack of program, we should say?

Largely as a result of the poor work being done in oral reading, which had long been the principal type of reading instruction in American schools, great emphasis began to be placed on silent reading about 1920. The reaction was so pronounced for a time that oral reading was almost discarded.²¹ Within a few years, however, it was seen that there was an important role in the schools for both oral and silent reading, and oral reading was reinstated, along with improvements in method which made it more meaningful and interesting.

Many teachers employ to some extent the method of oral reading known as "sight reading." Children read a story aloud, individually, without previous preparation except for word, phrase, and sentence drills. Since no silent study of the selection is permitted prior to the reading, special emphasis should be placed, before the reading, on phrase and sentence exercises based on the story. This

²¹McKee, op. cit., pp. 565-566.

will insure that no new words will be encountered, and for this reason the pupils should be able to read the passage rather smoothly without previous preparation. The stories should not be known prior to the class reading. For this reason, if the stories are in the readers, the books should be passed out only during the reading period.²² There is undoubtedly a place in the reading program for procedure such as this, but it certainly should not be the sole method of teaching oral reading. Sight reading, of course, is the type of reading which is most often done in life, except that the reading is usually silent rather than oral. But a well-rounded instructional program calling for teacher guidance in all phases of reading does not lay too much emphasis upon sight reading. Better results can usually be obtained by guidance during the reading process rather than confining the guidance to phrase, word, and sentence study prior to reading, although some of this may be worthwhile.

Most reading done by adults is silent, although there may arise certain occasions when oral reading is called for. In Gray's investigation of reading studies, the three occasions when oral reading is utilized most often were found to be:

1. To inform or entertain others in private or in public.

²²Durrell, op. cit., p. 119.

2. To increase one's understanding and appreciation of materials read.

3. To entertain children or to interest them in reading for themselves.²³

Many modern schools provide a period each day during which the children may go to the library room or the reading table in the classroom to read for pleasure or information. The children are usually encouraged to make their own selections as to the books they will choose for reading, but a record is made of their selections. The teacher or the librarian in charge has three responsibilities:

(a) to aid pupils in selecting books which will be of interest to them; (b) to observe their reading habits, correct minor errors, such as lip-movements, give help to those who request or need it, and make a record of errors and difficulties which in her judgment should receive additional attention during the regular reading period; and (c) to give remedial instruction frequently to pupils who are in need of such help.²⁴

It is obvious that with skillful guidance in the classroom, such free reading experiences can become fruitful, meaningful, and pleasant for the pupils; but without guidance little value is to be derived from such activities.

One common omission in the guidance of pupils, which is noted not only in the teaching of reading but also in other fields, is the lack of follow-up work after initial learning experiences. Pupils may

²³ Gray, Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading, p. 9.

²⁴ Guy Montrose Whipple, editor, Twenty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, "Report of the National Committee on Reading," p. 58.

engage in a rich experience of inquiry and discussion on the cause of forest fires, or the historical landmarks of their community, or the personal precautions necessary in a prevalent epidemic, but because of lack of time or oversight valuable learnings are not acquired. Frequent use of summaries, reviews, and sensible methods of helping pupils to remember important learnings is essential to growth. "Fixatives" -- those procedures that help a pupil to remember and proceed to new learnings -- are an essential part of teacher guidance. The lack of such procedures, especially in the beginning reading period, has undoubtedly lessened the reading progress of ready learners.²⁵

²⁵Gans, Guiding Children's Reading Through Experiences, pp. 29-30.

CHAPTER III

COMPREHENSION IN PRE-DIRECTED METHODS IN INFORMATIONAL PRIMARY READING

Whereas the preceding chapter dealt with comprehension in non-directed primary reading, the present one is a discussion of comprehension in pre-directed reading. Excerpts from the writings of authorities and educators in the field of reading are summarized or quoted in order to indicate some of the values and outcomes of a properly guided program of reading in the primary grades.

(Any instructional program in reading must be planned in such a way that it not only meets the needs and fosters the interests of the pupils at the time, but that it also will contribute something of value to one's enjoyment of reading and to his use of reading for information as he grows into adulthood. Reading is an art, a skill, and it becomes more meaningful and more pleasant with use. For this reason the school situation should be so wholesome that the child will be inspired to continue his reading experiences and to enlarge them at every opportunity as he grows older.)

Many adults list reading as their favorite type of

leisure-time activity. Although the occasion for reading may vary widely with different individuals, McKee has found that there are four principal situations in adult life when reading is done.¹ These he summarizes as follows:

1. Reading silently to obtain information.
2. Reading silently for recreational purposes.
3. Reading aloud to provide others with information.
4. Reading aloud for recreational purposes.

These same reading situations are common in every American schoolroom.

Value of Guidance

Widespread experience by teachers and the results of many experiments in the field of reading have shown that rapid progress in learning to read and in making intelligent, meaningful, worth-while use of reading in study activities "presupposes careful planning and guidance on the part of teachers."² Because of this interpretation of the function of reading, the activity of reading is regarded as a component part of a unified instructional program rather than as an isolated activity to be engaged in at rigidly scheduled periods. Reading is also recognized as a phase of child development rather than as an end in itself.

¹ McKee, op. cit., p. 56.

² Gray, "A Decade of Progress," Thirty-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, "The Teaching of Reading: A Second Report," pp. 18-19.

Guidance in reading must essentially be individual, for the most part. Variations in achievement in all school subjects, and differences in natural abilities are widely recognized. But variations in taste in reading are greater than these other characteristics, largely because reading is a part of all of them.³

Among the essential phases of proper guidance in reading on the primary level may be named the following:

- (1) Provision for individual differences in the assignment of materials and special activities.
- (2) Provision for training in study skills that the class is using for the first time in which the pupils are not proficient.
- (3) Provision for individual aid and for work with small groups.
- (4) Provision for definite techniques in taking notes from reference materials.
- (5) Provision for thinking through what has been read and planning how to report it clearly to the group.
- (6) Provision for definite techniques in the construction and use of illustrative materials.
- (7) Provision for placing responsibility for efficient study squarely upon the pupils.⁴

Instruction in reading must take into account a wide range of differing abilities and interests if it is to teach the pupils to engage successfully in all important reading activities that life has in store for them. In fact, instruction in reading may be said to fall short of its goal to the extent that it does not prepare the child for intelligent and capable participation in all types of

³Dolch, op. cit., p. 184.

⁴Snedaker and Horn, op. cit., pp. 155-157.

reading situations in proportion to their relative value to him in meeting his needs and challenging his interests.⁵

. . . above all else the school should make children habitual readers. School education is partial and incomplete. It is a mere beginning. Upon it must be built a lifetime of educative experience, and most of such experience must come, if at all, from reading. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that each individual consistently and habitually do some reading. That is, whether a person has much time for reading or not, there should be the permanent desire to seek the pleasures of reading whenever there is opportunity to do so.

The sad thing is that it is so easy to discourage children from doing any reading at all, and the school has been guilty of giving just such discouragement. Thousands of children have gained at school a lifelong belief that books are dull and stupid things, that a library is a place for people who cannot do anything worth while but who merely sit and read. That is bad enough. But in consequence they likewise remain ignorant of the fact that the library contains untold stores of enjoyment for all types of people. Learned or ignorant, highbrow or lowbrow, all can find in the library whatever kind of interest they are seeking.⁶

Thus it is evident that one of the teacher's most significant roles as a guide or director in classroom activities and learning situations is that of inspirer of attitudes. To many children, the teacher is the object of veneration and idealization. How important, then, it is that the teacher be careful and conscientious in the types of attitudes she demonstrates in the classroom. An attitude of indifference toward books may result in the children's becoming indifferent or even antagonistic toward

⁵McKee, op. cit., p. 55.

⁶Dolch, op. cit., p. 200.

books, while the teacher, if she demonstrates enthusiasm for books and exhibits an attitude of contagious interest in books and in their content, may be the means of encouraging indifferent pupils to develop similar wholesome attitudes toward reading.

(Gans enumerates five major reading goals, which she suggests might advantageously be kept framed on the desk of every teacher of primary children:

- Guide pupils to know when it is satisfying and to their advantage to read, both in and out of school.
- Guide pupils to know how to select what to read.
- Guide pupils to read skillfully what is selected.
- Guide pupils to appraise critically the content in terms of its intended use.
- Guide pupils to know how to use ideas gained from reading.⁷⁾

Gans suggests that without these goals in operation in the classroom, guidance will be haphazard and inefficient, and more likely than not the pupils will flounder helplessly in their reading activities, not knowing where they are supposed to go, drifting aimlessly in their efforts like a ship without a rudder.

To accomplish the broad aims of reading instruction, such as those quoted above, which seem to be inclusive of almost any aims which might be thought of, some educators suggest that in the primary grades at least two directed periods a day are advisable for reading instruction, in

⁷Gans, Guiding Children's Reading Through Experiences, pp. 3-4.

addition to the incidental reading that should play so important a part in the early years of reading. Of course, it is understood that the number of reading periods each day will vary with the reading attainments of the group, but seldom is it advisable to have fewer than two such periods each day.

(The purposes of these daily directed periods in reading may be listed briefly as follows:

to develop attitudes, habits and skills necessary to cope with the many different kinds of material available including newspapers and magazines; to give specific training in reading the material of the other school subjects; to develop skill in the use of the special features of books, encyclopedias, and other reference books; to diagnose and give remedial treatment for reading difficulties and to establish the habit of resorting to books for information and pleasure.⁸)

Oral reading in the modern school is utilized in small groups, since this plan permits greater practice for each individual child and also fosters individual guidance by the teacher in helping the pupil to improve his difficulties and to solve his problems. Before beginning small-group instruction, the teacher should be well acquainted with methods of administration, methods of selection and adjustment of materials to pupil needs, and the types of organization of classroom work that are best suited to the teaching of reading in small groups. In order to obtain

⁸Fennell and Cusack, op. cit., pp. 18-19.

the greatest possible uniformity of interest in the entire class, the teacher must take special care in her planning of lessons and in the way activities shall be carried out. Also, types of instruction must be suited to the particular group, and adequate provision must be made for checking comprehension during and after reading.⁹

Gray, voicing the opinions of the Committee on Reading of the National Society for the Study of Education, has written that desirable growth in reading can be obtained more effectively when a broad program of training is provided, including both basic instruction in reading and systematic guidance in reading in the various curricular fields. If training is basic and continuous during a reading period, pupils can be prepared to engage with increasing efficiency in all reading activities. Guidance and direction foster growth in all fields of instruction, and primary reading is no exception. Through additional guidance provided in the different curricular fields, rapid progress is possible in the various uses and applications of reading. Gray summarizes by saying:

The Yearbook Committee heartily . . . believes that a well-rounded program of basic instruction in reading, supplemented by systematic guidance in the various curricular fields, is essential for most pupils in the middle grades. The evidence available shows conclusively that rapid growth in

⁹Durrell, op. cit., pp. 117-118.

desirable reading attitudes and habits can be secured through carefully planned guidance of both types.¹⁰

In ^{an} another article in the ^{Yearbook} Yearbook, Gray states that the Committee on Reading of the National Society for the Study of Education

recommends the use of specific periods for carefully planned guidance in reading throughout the elementary-school, secondary-school, and college periods. This recommendation is based on a clear recognition of the fact that pupils encounter many difficulties in learning to read and in making efficient use of reading both in and out of school. As here conceived, the major purposes of guidance are to insure initial right learnings, to promote the sequential development of basic reading habits, to increase efficiency in applying reading to study situations that are common in various curricular fields, to prepare pupils for higher attainments at successive levels of progress, to prevent the development of wrong attitudes and inefficient habits, and to provide needed corrective and remedial training. The time allotment for such activities should vary with the needs of the learners and their general level of advancement. . . . the Committee recognizes that satisfactory results have often been achieved under highly favorable conditions, such as small classes, unusually competent teachers, and appropriate materials, without special periods reserved for teaching pupils to read. The fact should be pointed out, however, that even in such cases specific guidance in learning to read is provided at times and in very effective ways.¹¹

Motivation

Reading for specific purposes is much more effective than undirected study, is the conclusion arrived at by

¹⁰William S. Gray, "The Nature and Organization of Basic Instruction in Reading," Thirty-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, "The Teaching of Reading: A Second Report," p. 109.

¹¹Gray, "A Decade of Progress," ibid., p. 19.

Gray after having investigated many research problems relating to the teaching of reading and to problems in reading at various age levels.¹²

If the school proposes to teach the child things he has not been able to learn alone, it has the responsibility of furnishing, by all means, an environment not only equal to but better than anything he has previously enjoyed.¹³ This implies not only a wholesome educational environment, characterized by the best instructional techniques, but also adequate guidance and direction in all learning processes, together with abundant materials of wholesome quality and sufficient quantity.

All persons who have been teachers have become convinced that children learn best when they want to learn. The best teacher is the one who is most successful in making the children eager to learn what is planned for them. "Motivation" is the term which has come to be applied to the teacher's activities in producing the desire in the children to want to learn specific items of the instructional program. This "motivation" is usually thought of as giving the children a motive or a reason for wanting to learn; but more correctly it should be referred to as arousing the desires or motives that the children already possess.

¹²Gray, Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading, p. 118.

¹³Julia M. Harris, H. L. Donovan, and Thomas Alexander, Supervision and Teaching of Reading, p. 182.

The teacher, in motivating class work, merely appeals to the natural tendencies with which every child is endued.¹⁴ Actually, no teacher can "give" any child a motive -- but she can challenge the motives that lie dormant within him.

The purpose of one's reading determines to some degree the processes involved in comprehension and interpretation. For example, analysis, selection, and judgment are very prominent when one is reading to discover important points and supporting details or to find passages related to a given problem; association and organization are essential when reading to grasp the author's organization or to supplement or validate previous experience; critical evaluation is important when appraising the worth, relevancy, or consistency of statements, and when weighing the validity or the evidence presented; association, organization, and retention are prominent in reading to reproduce or to make specific use of the facts apprehended; and emotional responses to the events and situations presented are prominent when one is reading to develop appreciation or literary taste.¹⁵

All teachers of young children must recognize and utilize their delight in play as one of the most significant motivating factors in learning. Play is coming to be used more and more in all phases of education for the simple reason that so many things can be learned almost incidentally in this way and because children, at the same time, can be kept in a happy frame of mind and the school can be made to appeal to them as the place that they want to go to and where they want to stay as long as they can. In other days it was believed that learning was accompanied by unpleasantness and actual mental suffering, and for

¹⁵Gray, "The Nature and Organization of Basic Instruction in Reading," Thirty-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, "The Teaching of Reading: A Second Report," p. 69.

this reason nothing of a recreational nature was allowed in connection with learning experiences -- everything had to be serious, difficult, and boring. Now, however, it is recognized that the best types of learning take place under the most pleasant conditions.

(In the reading experience in the primary grades, word meanings can be clinched by seat work, using paper, colors, paste, pencils, and other materials. Coloring of pictures by the reading of simple directions is a favorite experience which also possesses rich learning values. Room games of all kinds can be played by means of simple directions written on the blackboard or on cards held before the group. Another type of play activity appeals to the desire to "be first" in getting answers in response to challenges proposed by the teacher. Care should be taken, however, to avoid discouragement for the slower ones; some activity should be planned for them so that they, too, can know the thrill of successful achievement. Children like the puzzle interest -- making words with letter cards or constructing sentences with word cards. A game can be played around the activity of finding words in printed matter, or in matching labels to pictures. "Acting out" stories is also a favorite activity, providing valuable motivational and learning experiences.¹⁶)

¹⁶Dolch, op. cit., pp. 9-12.

Handwritten note: The original of this material was in the handwriting of Dolch.

Value of Interest

Gray has pointed out that the activities of the reading period have, in recent years, been greatly enriched. This enrichment, he says, is due largely to the realization that (children's interests must be appealed to and cultivated if instructional experiences are to have as much value as they should have for the individual child. Today reading materials are provided that relate to the interests of the pupils, that stimulate the development of inquiring attitudes among the children, that have real worth in terms of experiences and learning situations provided, and that are closely related to the everyday lives and experiences of the children.)¹⁷

It is important that the means and methods chosen to increase ability to read should also increase interest in reading. The liking for reading and habits of reading are, even in these days of radio, enormously valuable assets. They provide a convenient, inexpensive source of recreation to all save the extremely stupid, one that need injure nobody, and that is adaptable to an almost infinite variety of interests. They open the way to self-education and culture.¹⁸

Educators have come to realize that when the interests of the pupils are not challenged, little learning can occur, and that which may occur is of a mediocre sort. The enlivened curriculum now in evidence to a greater or lesser

¹⁷Gray, "A Decade of Progress," Thirty-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, "The Teaching of Reading: A Second Report," p. 7.

¹⁸Edward L. Thorndike, Improving the Ability to Read, p. 18.

extent in all modern schools is based upon a recognition of the importance of pupil interests and upon a recognition of individual differences in ability, interest, and need.

Catering to the interests of the children does not mean that they must be allowed to do anything they wish to do. It does mean, however, that they may be permitted to engage in activities they like to participate in if these activities can be correlated with the instructional program so as to provide worth-while learning experiences. But in all of these activities there must be guidance and direction, so that the experiences will not degrade into mere "busy work" without a purpose. Children should not be allowed to build airplanes or make scrapbooks or construct houses merely for the sake of doing something -- such activities must be adequately motivated by the teaching program so that projects can be related to learning. Interests of the children in making things can contribute much to their progress in reading, for it will become necessary for them to engage in reading in order to learn how to go about their handcraft projects.

In the smaller children's groups (some of the literature read should be dramatized, thus appealing to the natural interest of the boys and girls in "play-acting." Puppet shows, pantomimes, and dramatic reading are all worth-while activities in which primary-age children are

interested and from which they will derive rich benefits. Puppet shows may be used to dramatize nursery rhymes and fairy tales. By means of pantomime the children may depict nursery rhymes, fairy tales, original experiences they have had, and stories they have read. Dramatic reading may feature stories and plays in the children's literature collection. Dramatization should never be forced on a class; usually a mere suggestion from the teacher is all that is needed to cause the children to become enthusiastic about the idea of dramatizing some story or experience; and often the children may suggest such activity themselves.¹⁹

Reading for Meaning

A primary aim -- perhaps the primary aim -- in the teaching of reading is to give children the ability to obtain meaning from the printed page. A second objective is to develop such strong motives for reading and such "permanent interests in reading as will inspire the present and future life of the reader and provide for the wholesome use of leisure time."²⁰

(Before comprehension can be adequate to meet the needs of the children, they must have certain prerequisites which will assist them in gaining meaning from what they read.

Among these prerequisites may be named the following:

1. Wide experience.

¹⁹ McKee, op. cit., p. 524.

²⁰ Storm and Smith, op. cit., p. 251.

2. Knowledge of meaning of common words and phrases.
3. Ability to attack unfamiliar words successfully.
4. Ability to anticipate meanings.
5. Ability to arrange ideas in proper sequence.
6. Ability to read with proper eye-movements.
7. Knowledge of meaning of punctuation marks.
8. Ability to recognize sentences as units of thought.
9. Ability to speak good English sentences and to understand spoken English.
10. Ability to work one's way through problematic situations successfully. (21)⁻¹²

(Difficulties with individual words made up one of the principal handicaps of poor readers. Words outside of the reader's experience, which are usually unfamiliar words for which he has no meaning, cause serious difficulty in comprehension and interpretation of reading material at any age level. If it is necessary for the reader to make long stops in his reading in order to try to analyze and recognize certain words, the flow of thought will be interrupted and memory of the content reduced considerably.) In order to avoid additional eye movements, recognition of words must be immediate. It is also important that the child be able to analyze words independently. A reading program in order to prove adequate in any sense of the term, will

(21)⁻¹² McKee, op. cit., pp. 96-97.

include sufficient attention to three major phases of word study -- meaning, recognition, and analysis.²² This implies efficient teacher guidance of the children in developing their ability to master these essential phases of reading.

When reading occurs in connection with a class activity, the reading process itself is of secondary importance. The project which is being carried forward is the really significant thing to consider. If pupils encounter difficulties in their reading, they should be given at once whatever help is necessary so that the activity can go forward. The teacher should compile a record of the types of difficulties which are revealed and should provide special help later during the regular reading periods.²³

Careful, thorough reading is demanded in most subjects. . . . This type of reading is basic for acquiring fundamental information and an understanding of relations among the various elements in a factual background. One may deplore the tendency to make retention of facts the sole aim of education, yet it must be remembered that ability to do careful, detailed reading has important values in both vocational and avocational activities. Almost everyone encounters situations in which it is essential to follow directions precisely, to select from an argument the main ideas for discussion, or to obtain a detailed knowledge of a process or a body of facts. At the same time it must be remembered that too extensive use of thorough reading can produce slavish,

²²Durrell, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

²³Whipple, editor, Twenty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, "Report of the National Committee on Reading," p. 40.

slow readers and that this type of reading needs to be balanced by the speeded and associational types.²⁴

(The wide use which is now made of reading to enrich learning experiences emphasizes the importance of rapid growth in accuracy and thoroughness of comprehension. In general reading, guidance should have for its objective the directing of attention to the content and to aid pupils in relating right meanings, in retaining significant items of information, and in reacting satisfactorily to what is read.) In order to accomplish these purposes, the reading activities should be always challenging and purposeful. Among the purposes for which pupils should learn to read intelligently, the following merit special consideration on the part of the teacher who is responsible for developing and guiding meaningful reading experiences:

to discover what a story is about; to determine the sequence of events; to select the larger thought divisions of a story; to discover the main point or central theme of a selection; to identify specific items of information; to select details that support an opinion, explain an idea, or prove a point; to find answers to factual and judgment questions; to verify statements; to determine how to perform an activity; and to draw conclusions from the facts presented.²⁵

This list, of course, is neither cut-and-dried nor all-inclusive, and each teacher will wish to add other purposes

²⁴Durrell, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

²⁵Gray, "The Nature and Organization of Basic Instruction in Reading," Thirty-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, "The Teaching of Reading: A Second Report," p. 114.

of her own to supplement this list or to replace some of these items, in the belief that such alteration will prove helpful in her own classroom situation. (In promoting desirable types of growth, use should be made of materials that can be comprehended readily by the pupils. As they acquire the ability to read effectively for different purposes, the difficulty of the reading materials should be increased. Teachers must always insist on as high a quality of reading performance as is possible in individual cases. "Through systematic guidance, extending throughout the middle grades, the general efficiency of pupils in comprehension should be greatly increased.")²⁶

(When one can see about him all the social, economic, and political ills of the day which are the result, in part at least, of faulty thinking or lack of thinking on the part of the people, one finds it easy to realize the need for making an effort to see to it that the children now in the public schools should develop habits of right thinking.) In the past the school was primarily concerned with imparting information and having children memorize and recite facts. It goes without saying that facts are important and necessary tools with which to think, but they must not be regarded as ends in themselves, but rather as means to an end.²⁷

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Pennell and Cusack, op. cit., p. 66.

The general intelligence of pupils and their mastery of a meaning vocabulary are undoubtedly closely related to progress in comprehension of materials read. It is important -- in fact, necessary -- to have clear-cut objectives in the teaching of comprehension, accompanied by a vigorous program of good teaching and adequate direction of learning activities.²⁸ These two items are conclusions resulting from a number of studies of reading for comprehension.

The work type of silent reading is essentially a job involving much drill. The primary goal of the teacher is to teach the pupil how to read effectively and understandingly. The child should have a distinct work attitude; he should have a purpose in reading, and he should be able to know whether he achieves it or not. There are many reading abilities and skills to be mastered, many of which can be acquired only through the use of drill methods and drill materials. For this reason much of the instruction will involve drill exercises to aid in locating information and in comprehending what is read. It is necessary to have such drill exercises as those relating to vocabulary building, improvement of eye movements, decreasing lip movements, developing comprehension, outlining, summarizing, and

²⁸Gray, Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading, p. 106.

similar activities.²⁹

(McKee has listed the abilities which are necessary before the pupil can engage in effective silent reading for information, even in the primary grades:

- (1) Those knowledges, skills, habits, and attitudes bound up in the ability to comprehend material read quickly and accurately in the light of the problem in mind.
- (2) Those knowledges, skills, habits, and attitudes bound up in the ability to locate information quickly and accurately in the light of the problem in mind.
- (3) Those knowledges, skills, habits, and attitudes bound up in the ability to select and evaluate material read quickly and accurately in the light of the problem in mind.
- (4) Those knowledges, skills, habits, and attitudes bound up in the ability to organize material read quickly and accurately in the light of the problem in mind.
- (5) Those knowledges, skills, habits, and attitudes bound up in the ability to decide quickly and accurately what part of the material read should be remembered and how to remember it.³⁰

Data from numerous studies cited by Gray show that silent reading is used far more widely in social life than is oral reading, that it is more rapid, and that it is usually accompanied by better comprehension of what is read. Because of its great importance, economy, and efficiency, silent reading should be given special attention in the instructional program.³¹ Because the teacher does not hear the pupil repeat the words that are read, as in oral reading, there is sometimes a tendency to permit pupils to go

²⁹McKee, op. cit., p. 75.

³⁰Ibid., p. 72.

³¹Gray, Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading, p. 27.

their own way in silent reading with little or no guidance or direction designed to enable them to improve their silent-reading skills and abilities.

Oral reading also plays an important part in the total instructional program in so far as guidance is concerned. The objectives of the work type of oral reading have been listed by McKee as follows:

1. The ability to understand what is read. This is essentially a matter of comprehension, involving such basic reading abilities as a knowledge of the meaning of words, the ability to recognize words, proper eye-movements, etc. . . .
2. A knowledge of the factors that result in effective oral reading.
3. The ability to enunciate clearly.
4. The ability to pronounce important words correctly.
5. The ability to read with a pleasing voice.
6. Absence of mannerisms.
7. Use of proper posture during reading.
8. Proper attitude toward one's audience.
9. The ability to select material appropriate to the occasion and circumstances.
10. A knowledge of the purpose the material is to serve.
11. The ability to convey the author's meaning.
12. A knowledge of sources of good things to be read aloud.³²

It is obvious that careful guidance on the part of the teacher must be practiced in order to insure that the pupils will be able to attain these objectives to the very best of their ability. No objectives can be attained without some assistance in how to go about reaching them, and this is particularly true with young children who are just learning the fundamental skills of reading and of learning.

³² McKee, op. cit., p. 569.

Free Reading

Gray's summary of studies in the field of reading has indicated that the amount of reading being done by American people is increasing rapidly and steadily. For this reason he advocates that the schools of the country should use every possible effort to make the boys and girls familiar with the sources and values of the different types of reading material. In this connection, too, the schools should train the youth to read intelligently and to utilize their reading time wisely.³³ If nothing is read in the school except the required texts and "readers," the boys and girls probably will become antagonistic toward reading and will do little recreational reading in later life because of their unhappy experiences with reading while in school. On the other hand, modern educators have discovered that much can be done to stimulate a child's desire to read by placing in his immediate environment a display of attractive reading materials. This procedure represents a life situation: when merchants wish their customers to think of buying for Thanksgiving, Christmas, or any other holiday season, they fill their windows with appropriate merchandise or they publish advertising materials regarding it. Schools are now making use of this same means of stimulating a desire to learn how to read and to broaden one's

³³ Gray, Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading, p. 15.

field of reading in the early years.³⁴ This plan is not strictly non-directed reading, since pupils are encouraged to read; but there is no formal guidance, and the child makes his own selections of materials to read.

A library table or a library corner within the classroom, where many books suited to the reading levels of the grade are to be found, will stimulate increased interest in reading. At regular library periods the children should be free to go to this library center and choose their reading matter. At odd moments during the day, also, they may freely utilize the materials to be found there. Always, of course, the teacher should stand by to give assistance in the choice of reading materials and to give help when difficulties are encountered. Hardly any other device can be conceived which will constitute a greater incentive for children to do a great deal of reading than a library center within the classroom.³⁵

(As soon as pupils have learned to read with ease, a period should be used each day for promoting habits of independent reading for pleasure. At first, teachers will find it necessary to direct pupils during these periods. Interest in reading independently must be cultivated in many cases. The poorer readers will need help in securing meanings. All will profit by the teachers' comments, suggestions, and display of interest in particular selections. Either silent or oral reading may be used as best meets the needs of the occasion.)³⁶

³⁴Pennell and Cusack, *op. cit.*, p. 7. ³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 11.

³⁶Whipple, editor, Twenty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, "Report of the National Committee on Reading," p. 40.

Teacher's Function

In any activity related to the school the teacher is inevitably the principal character. This is especially true in connection with the guidance and direction of reading experiences. The logical guide for the learning process, whether it be in reading or in any other subject field, is the teacher, who is specially trained for providing such guidance. Although the function of the teacher in the reading program has been implied on practically every page of this paper thus far, it is the purpose of the writer in this section to present a brief discussion of the importance of the teacher in carrying out a comprehensive program of reading instruction in the primary grades.

Of course, the teacher is not the only factor to be considered in judging the results of the reading program, but she may easily be thought of as the most important one. The pupils who comprise her group, together with their abilities, interests, and intelligence, qualify to a significant extent the effectiveness of the work she is able to do in reading instruction. "No teacher can be judged fairly or adequately unless the ability of the class with which she works is rather intimately known."³⁷

First of all, the teacher must discover the type of

³⁷Harris, Donovan, and Alexander, op. cit., pp. 9-10.

reading that the child is ready to become interested in. This may be called the degree of reading maturity. In order to gain some insight into the children's reading tastes, maturity, and possible lack of any outside reading at all, the teacher may inquire as to what the children have read recently, both inside and outside of school. "Well, how did you like it?" is a good question to ask each pupil about the things he has read. His answer will give her some valuable information, if she is a sympathetic listener, concerning the pupil's likes and dislikes in reading. In case the teacher discovers the reading to be quite suitable, she may recommend more of the same type. Often, though, the reading done outside of school will reflect a cheap type of reading matter or that suited only to very immature or childish minds. If so, the reading activity in the classroom must begin on that level in order to provide satisfaction and interest, but soon the teacher may tactfully suggest other reading on a slightly higher plane, and so on until reading tastes have considerably improved. The teacher's personality and her enthusiasm mean much here, and she must be careful in her recommendations, for if she is sufficiently admired, the children will attempt to do anything she suggests, and if she is not cautious and conscientious in discharging her responsibilities as a guide in reading experiences, the children may encounter

disappointments which may thwart their interest in further reading.³⁸

Early in the school experience, story-telling or story-reading by the teacher impresses upon the child vividly and permanently the idea that books open up an immense world of fascinating experience. If this introduction to reading is expertly done by the teacher, it leads to a desire on the part of the pupil to read for himself, and this desire will serve to stimulate his efforts to that end. The teacher may help to spur the children on in their reading progress by saying, after she has told or read a story to them, "There are many, many more stories as good as this that you will read for yourself as soon as you can." Children never tire of the old folk tales of the human race; but modern tales need variety in order to sustain interest.³⁹

There is need for a much higher level of classroom efficiency in the teaching of reading than is now found in a great majority of schools. One way of realizing this need is to have the teachers -- those in service as well as those in training -- repeatedly observe expert demonstration lessons.⁴⁰

Durrell has listed a series of procedures and abilities that he deems necessary for the teacher to possess before she can be successful in guiding pupils in the

³⁸Dolch, op. cit., pp. 185-187.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 5-8.

⁴⁰Harris, Donovan, and Alexander, op. cit., p. 46.

achievement of adequate progress in reading.⁴¹ The writer has paraphrased and condensed these prerequisites for the development of basic skills as follows:

1. The teacher is familiar with the individual differences of her pupils and is able to cope with them successfully by taking them into account in planning her instructional materials.
2. The teacher has specific objectives for each child or each group of children in her class.
3. There is a definite plan for the observation of pupils' growth in voluntary reading habits.
4. The teacher knows the books that are available to the children, and she is able to offer intelligent and helpful suggestions to each pupil regarding his choice of reading material.
5. There is adequate provision for differences in the reading abilities of the pupils.
6. The teacher has definite plans for motivation of reading.
7. There is full attention to growth in vocabulary.
8. Oral-reading instruction is made effective by various means of maintaining interest.
9. The instruction in silent reading is characterized by insight into many problems and needs.

⁴¹Durrell, op. cit., pp. 4-10.

10. There is training in oral and written recall.

11. There is definite instruction for the improvement of study skills.

As has been said previously in this paper, there is no best way for the teaching of reading. Obviously, teachers of reading should be vitally concerned with discovering combinations of techniques which may be acquired "with the minimum of time and effort and the maximum of satisfaction on the part of pupils and teacher."⁴² Only in this way can individual differences be met and the needs of the local situation met and made meaningful in connection with the instructional program in reading.

The secret of success in a progressive manufacturing concern, after the personnel for executive work has been chosen, lies in a cheap, abundant source of raw material, with transportation facilities so arranged that a regular supply coming on schedule time prevents any shortage in the output of the finished product. A teacher's problem is analogous with that of the factory head. Abundant material in the way of actual reading matter must be provided regularly. Its suitability for the children is just as essential. Not only must the material be adapted to the age and tastes of the child, it must be adapted, as well, to the more progressive methods of teaching reading if best results are to be secured from these methods.⁴³

⁴²Gates, op. cit., p. 24.

⁴³Harris, Donovan, and Alexander, op. cit., pp. 435-436.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

From the foregoing study, consisting of a survey of literature relating to pupils' comprehension in non-directed and pre-directed methods of reading instruction in the primary grades, the following conclusions were apparent:

1. Reading is a fundamental field of study in the public schools.

2. Comprehension of and ability to master other subject matter fields depend to a large extent upon one's ability to read effectively and to derive meaning readily from what is read.

3. Non-directed reading in the primary grades is a type of trial-and-error in which the pupils flounder helplessly about in their efforts to master reading skills. Such teaching of reading is outmoded and never justifiable, in the light of many scientific aids to the effective teaching of reading.

4. It is never advisable to attempt to do something aimlessly, without purpose, when it is possible to do the same thing intelligently, with plan and purpose, and with

competent guidance from someone who knows how it should be done.

5. The more guidance and pre-direction the child can receive in the primary grades, the more likely he will be to develop into a competent, skilled, capable reader able to read for information or for pleasure with an equal degree of satisfaction and ability.

6. A library table or corner in the classroom is one of the strongest inducements to encourage primary children to want to learn to read.

7. The teacher is the determining factor in whether there is proper guidance for children in their study of primary reading. The teacher's attitude as well as her ability and experience can exert a tremendous influence in determining whether her pupils will develop into avid readers or whether they will become antagonistic to reading of all types.

Recommendations

The writer makes the following recommendations based upon the data utilized in this study:

1. The development of a comprehensive program of pre-directed reading for the primary grades would be a worth-while contribution to the field. Whereas the present study has indicated some of the advantages of pre-direction, no attempt has been made to set forth a program

centered around the concept of pre-directed instruction.

2. Teachers should give more time to a study of individual differences in ability, interests, and needs on the part of their pupils, and then work out their program of instruction in reading accordingly.

3. Teachers of reading should make every possible effort to provide adequate and effective guidance in developing the children's abilities, interests, and needs in reading.

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