

THE READING INTERESTS OF PUPILS OF HIGH AND LOW ABILITY
ON THE DIFFERENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC LEVELS IN THE
FIFTH GRADE OF PAMPA SCHOOL.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	iv
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	
Purpose of the Study	
Source of Data	
Description of the School	
Method of Procedure	
Related Studies	
II. ANALYSIS OF READING INTERESTS ON BASIS OF ABILITY	5
III. INFLUENCE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS UPON READING INTERESTS	26
IV. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS . .	44
Summary	
Conclusions	
Recommendations	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	46

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Comparative Distribution of Boys and Girls into Five Ability Groups	5
2. Comparison of the Number of Boys and Girls of Five Ability Groups in Types of Books Read	7
3. Percentage of Boys and Girls in Each Group Who Preferred the Various Types of Books	11
4. Distribution of the Number of Books of Each Type Read by the Five Ability Groups	15
5. Comparison of Boys and Girls of Five Ability Groups in Number of Books Read in Each Type.	17
6. Percentile Rank of the Reading Interests of the Five Ability Groups	21
7. Percentile Rank of Girls in Choice of Three Magazines	23
8. Percentile Rank of Boys in Choice of Three Magazines	25
9. Comparative Distribution of Boys and Girls into Three Socio-Economic Groups	27
10. Percentile Rank of Reading Interests of High, Medium, and Low Socio-Economic Groups	28
11. Percentile Rank of Pupils of High, Medium, and Low Socio-Economic Status in Types of Books Preferred as Shown by Questionnaire	30
12. Percentile Rank of Pupils of High, Medium, and Low Socio-Economic Status in Types of Books Read	33
13. Number of Books of Each Type Read by Each Socio-Economic Group	35

Table	Page
14. Percentile Rank of Favorite Magazines of Girls	37
15. Percentile Rank of Favorite Magazines of Boys	38
16. Percentile Rank of the Number of Books Read from the Home, the School, and the Public Library	39
17. Percentage of Parents with High School or College Education	41
18. Percentage of Homes with Books and Magazines	42

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The wise use of leisure time is important for children as well as for adults. The habit of reading for recreation and information can bring pleasure and satisfaction to the individual. Since the interests and needs of pupils are to be considered in choosing books, it is important to know the types of books preferred by pupils.

In this particular study the problem is to find which types of books pupils of the fifth grade of different abilities and of different socio-economic status like to read. This study is also concerned with the comparison of boys and girls in their choice of books and magazines.

Purpose of the Study

This study has three purposes:

1. To determine the types of books read by fifth-grade pupils on the different ability levels.
2. To determine the types of books read by fifth-grade pupils on the different socio-economic levels.
3. To compare the types of books read by boys with the types read by girls of the same ability and socio-economic status.

Source of Data

Data for this study were obtained from intelligence tests, from socio-economic score cards, from a record of library readings over the eight-month period, and from a survey questionnaire given to the pupils of the ten fifth grades.

Limitations of the Study

There are several limiting factors in this study. The period of eight months covered by the study limits the reliability of the results obtained. The number of children used in the study is not sufficient for conclusive results. The pupils used in the study came from ten different classrooms with different teachers and from four different elementary schools. The personalities of the teachers and the general class environments could not be the same. All these factors would influence the pupils in their choice of books.

Description of the School

This study was made in the ten fifth grades of the four elementary schools of Pampa, Texas. The elementary school includes grades one through five. Each school is a separate unit in a different part of town. The organization of each unit is the same. Each school has its own principal with the number of classroom teachers varying

from thirteen to sixteen. The pupils are chosen heterogeneously and the home-room plan is used with the exception of the special music teacher.

The library is located in the home room. An exception to this was the two fifth grades which were placed in the junior high school building during the first semester because of crowded conditions in the elementary school. These two groups had access to the general junior high school library during the first semester.

The pupils come from homes of various economic levels. They come from the town and also from the outlying areas. Some of these are from farm and ranches and others from gas and oil centers.

Method of Procedure

All the pupils in the fifth grade were given the Kuhlmann-Anderson Intelligence Test for the fifth grade. These tests were given and scored according to directions in the manual. Each home-room teacher was given a card file and report slips to be used by the pupils in reporting books read. Sims Score Card for Socio-Economic Status, Form C was used to determine the economic status of the pupils. Near the end of the experiment, the pupils filled in a questionnaire indicating reading interests, favorite books, and favorite magazines.

Related Studies

A related study was made by Lazar¹ in 1937. This study dealt with the relationship of intelligence to the reading interests and habits of boys and girls. Witty² in a later study found that the superior child's reading increased as he grew older. He also found that boys did not read as much as girls in the mentally average group. Hedgpeth³ made a study in children's choice of books. Her study was based on the problem of finding the reason for the superior reading abilities of two fifth-grade groups.

This particular study is different from these three related studies in that it seeks to find the types of books being read by the boys and girls of different mental ability and on the different socio-economic levels in the fifth grade of the Pampa Elementary School.

¹May Lazar, Reading Interests, Activities, and Opportunities of Bright, Average, and Dull Children, p. 54.

²Paul Witty, Reading in Modern Education, p. 40.

³Lelia Frances Hedgpeth, "Reading Activities of Fifth-Grade Children," Unpublished Master's thesis, North Texas State College, Denton, 1948.

CHAPTER II

AN ANALYSIS OF READING ON THE BASIS OF ABILITY

This chapter presents an analysis of the reading interests of fifth-grade pupils on the basis of ability. The Kuhlmann-Anderson intelligence tests were given to determine the levels of ability. Table 1 shows the distribution of scores into five groups, superior, bright, bright-normal, slow-normal, and dull.

TABLE 1
COMPARATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF BOYS AND GIRLS
INTO FIVE ABILITY GROUPS

Groups	Number in Group		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Superior (125 and above)	3	2	5
Bright (111-124)	20	32	52
Bright-Normal (100-110)	53	58	111
Slow-Normal (90-99)	52	53	105
Dull (59-89)	38	21	59
Total	166	166	332

The superior group had the smallest number of pupils. It was composed of three boys and two girls. The bright-normal group was the largest with 111 pupils, fifty-three boys and fifty-eight girls. The second smallest group was the bright group with fifty-two children, thirty-two girls and twenty boys. The number of boys and girls was more nearly equal in the bright-normal and slow-normal groups. There was a difference of five in the bright-normal group in favor of the girls. The difference in the slow-normal group was only one in favor of the girls. The greatest difference was in the dull group. The boys had thirty-eight pupils and the girls had twenty-one pupils. The boys had greater numbers in the superior and dull groups whereas the girls had more in the bright, bright-normal, and slow-normal groups. The total number of boys was equal to the total number of girls. The total number of each was 166, and the total number of pupils was 332.

Table 2 is a comparison of the number of boys and girls of the various ability groups on types of books in which the most reading was done. The information for Table 2 was taken from the library records of the pupils in the fifth grade over the eight-month period from September, 1950, until May, 1951. The study was limited to those who took the Kuhlmann-Anderson tests and filled out the Sims Socio-Economic Score Card. A report was made by each child

TABLE 2

COMPARISON OF THE NUMBER OF BOYS AND GIRLS OF FIVE ABILITY GROUPS IN TYPES OF BOOKS READ

Level of Ability	Superior		Bright		Bright-Normal		Slow-Normal		Dull	
	3	2	20	32	53	58	52	53	38	21
Types of books	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Cowboy	3	..	..	1	1	1
Mystery	2	..	2	9	9	7	3	8	1	2
Animal	2	..	8	9	6	14	9	2
Indian	1	5	2	2	1
Biography	2	..	4	1	3	4	1	1
Aventure	1	1	7	15	14	23	20	14	6	5
Fairy	1	..	4	4	5	..	1	1
Children of other lands	1	1	3	5	3	3	2	2
Stories about our country	..	1	..	1	1	..	..	1	2	..
No books read	5	6	7	8	7	6	13	6

for each book read. On the report slip, the name of the book, the author, and the type of book was written. These reports were kept in a card file in which each child had a

name card. These records were checked and the type of book which occurred the greatest number of times was listed as the favorite type of book of the pupil.

Table 2 shows that in the superior group two boys preferred mystery stories and one girl and one boy preferred adventure stories. One girl in the superior group chose stories-about-our-country. All pupils of superior ability reported books. Of the twenty boys in the bright group, seven preferred adventure stories. Books of each type were read by boys of this group with the exception of cowboy, Indian, and stories-about-our-country. Girls of the same group preferred adventure stories; fifteen of the thirty-two girls in the group read more adventure stories than any other type. Mystery stories ranked second with nine girls in this group who preferred this type. Five boys and six girls reported no books read.

Adventure stories held first place with both boys and girls in the bright-normal group. Fourteen boys of a group of fifty-three and twenty-three girls of a group of fifty-eight read more adventure stories than any other type. Second choice of the boys of this group was mystery books. Nine boys preferred mystery stories and nine girls in the same group preferred animal stories. Eight boys read animal stories and seven girls read mystery stories. Boys of this group read stories of all types with the exception

of Indian stories. Girls did not read stories of cowboys or stories-about-our-country. The same number of boys and girls preferred fairy stories. Four of each group indicated a preference for this type. Three girls read more cowboy stories than any other type. Seven boys and eight girls of this group did not report any books read.

In the slow-normal group were fifty-two boys and fifty-three girls. Adventure stories were first choice of this group. Twenty boys and fourteen girls read this type of books. The boys had six more who read adventure stories than did the girls. In this group eight girls chose mystery stories compared with three boys who read the same type. Fourteen girls and six boys preferred animal books. Three boys and three girls chose stories of children-of-other lands. Five boys ranked fairy stories first whereas no girls of this group preferred this type. One girl chose cowboy stories, a type which was not a favorite of any boys of the group. Five boys read Indian stories compared with two girls who read Indian stories. Four girls and three boys liked biography best. In the slow-normal group, seven boys and six girls did not report any books.

In the dull group of thirty-eight boys, all types of books were represented by at least one boy. Animal stories were rated first by nine boys. Six boys read more adventure books than any other type. Indian, children-of-other-lands,

and stories-about-our-country each had two boys who ranked the type first. Cowboy, mystery, biography, and fairy stories each had one reader in each group. The boys in the dull group had the largest number of non-readers. Thirteen boys in this group reported no books read.

Five girls in the dull group read adventure stories. Mystery, animal, and children-of-other-lands each had two pupils to list it as a favorite type of reading. Three types, cowboy, Indian, and stories-about-our-country, were equal with one girl listed for each type. Six girls reported no books read. Table 2 indicates no great difference in types of books read by the different ability groups. Adventure, mystery, and animal were the favorite types.

Table 3 shows the percentage of boys and girls who preferred the various types of books. It also shows the comparison on the different levels of ability. In the superior group, which was the smallest and had only five members, 66.7 per cent of the boys preferred mystery stories, and 33.3 per cent preferred adventure stories. The girls were equally divided between adventure and children-of-other-lands with 50 per cent for each type.

In the bright group, 35 per cent of the boys and 46.9 per cent of the girls preferred adventure stories. Twenty-eight and one-tenth per cent of the girls and 10 per cent of the boys preferred mystery stories. The three types not

TABLE 3

PERCENTAGE OF BOYS AND GIRLS IN EACH GROUP WHO PREFERRED
THE VARIOUS TYPES OF BOOKS

Level of Ability	Superior		Bright		Bright-Normal		Slow-Normal		Dull	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Cowboy	5.6	..	..	1.9	2.6	4.8
Mystery	66.7	..	10.0	28.1	17.0	12.1	5.8	15.1	2.6	9.5
Animal	10.0	..	15.0	15.5	11.5	26.4	23.7	9.5
Indian	1.7	9.6	3.8	5.3	4.8
Biography	10.0	..	7.7	1.7	5.8	7.6	2.6	4.8
Adventure	33.3	50.0	35.0	46.9	26.4	39.7	38.5	26.4	16.0	23.8
Fairy	5.0	..	7.7	6.9	9.6	..	2.6	4.7
Children of other lands	..	50.0	5.0	3.7	5.6	8.7	5.8	5.7	5.3	9.5
Stories about our country	3.1	1.8	..	..	1.9	5.3	..
No books read	25.0	18.8	13.2	13.7	13.4	11.2	34.0	28.6

chosen for first place by any boys were cowboy, Indian, and stories-about-our-country. There were five types not chosen by the girls. They did not select cowboy, animal, Indian,

fairy, or biography. Mystery, animal, and biography were each chosen by 10 per cent of the boys. Five per cent of the boys preferred fairy stories and stories-of-other-lands. Three and one-tenth per cent of the girls chose children-of-other-lands and stories-about-our-country. Twenty-five per cent of the boys and 18.8 per cent of the girls read no books.

In the bright-normal group, the boys read from each type except Indian stories and girls read from all types except cowboy and stories-about-our-country. Adventure stories ranked first with 26.4 per cent of the boys and 39.7 per cent of the girls. Fifteen per cent of the boys and 1.5 per cent of the girls chose animal stories. Cowboy books were preferred by 5.6 per cent of the boys and no girls in the group preferred this type. Seventeen per cent of the boys and 12.1 per cent of the girls read more mystery stories than any other kind. No boys read Indian stories and only 1.7 per cent of the girls read this type. Biography was chosen by 7.7 per cent of the boys and by 1.7 per cent of the girls. Boys and girls were almost equal in their choice of fairy stories. The percentage for this type was 7.7 per cent for the boys and 6.9 per cent for the girls. Stories of children-of-other-lands were read by 5.6 per cent of the boys and 8.7 per cent of the girls. No books were reported read by 13.2 per cent of

of the boys and 13.7 per cent of the girls. In the slow-normal group, girls read from all types with the exception of fairy stories, and boys read from all types except cowboy and stories-about-our-country. Mystery stories were read by 15.1 per cent of the girls and 5.8 per cent of the boys. Twenty-six and four-tenths per cent of the girls preferred animal stories whereas only 11.5 per cent of the boys in the same group ranked animal stories as their favorite. Indian stories were preferred by 9.6 per cent of the boys and by 3.8 per cent of the girls. Biography rated first with 7.6 per cent of the girls and 5.8 per cent of the boys. Stories-of-children-of-other-lands were read by 5.8 per cent of the boys and 5.7 per cent of the girls. No books were reported read by 13.4 per cent of the boys and 11.2 per cent of the girls in the slow-normal group.

In the dull group each type was preferred by one or more boys and all except stories-about-our-country were chosen by girls. The highest percentage of boys preferred animal stories. Twenty-three and seven-tenths per cent read more animal stories than any other kind. Adventure stories were read by 23.8 per cent of the girls in the group whereas 16 per cent of the boys read stories of adventure. Cowboy stories were read by 2.6 per cent of boys and 4.8 per cent of the girls. The preference for mystery stories declined in this group. This type was read by 4.8

per cent of the girls and 2.6 per cent of the boys. Indian stories were chosen by 5.3 per cent of the boys and 4.8 per cent of the girls.

In the dull group a higher percentage of girls read cowboy, mystery, biography, adventure, fairy, and stories of children-of-other-lands than did the boys. A higher percentage of boys preferred stories of animals, Indian, and stories-about-our-country. No books were reported read by 34 per cent of the boys and 28.6 per cent of the girls in the dull group. Table 3 indicates that a higher percentage of pupils in the superior group read than did pupils in the other groups.

Table 4 shows the number of each type of books read by the different ability groups. The tabulation in Table 4 makes no comparison between boys and girls but records the number of books of each type which were read by the different ability groups, the total number read by each group, and the average number of each type of books read by all groups. Table 4 shows that adventure stories ranked highest with a total of 1,122 books and cowboy stories ranked lowest with a total of 187. The average number of adventure stories read was 224.4 whereas the average for cowboy stories was 37.4 for each group. Animal stories ranked second with a total of 636 books, or an average of 127.2 books for each group. The third highest was mystery stories with a total

TABLE 4

DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF BOOKS OF EACH TYPE
READ BY THE FIVE ABILITY GROUPS

Level of Ability	Type of Books									
	Cowboy	Mystery	Animal	Indian	Biography	Adventure	Fairy	Children of Other Lands	Stories of Our Country	Unclassified
Superior	...	20	4	4	6	26	1	3	11	1
Bright	24	180	56	20	25	213	35	27	23	11
Bright-normal	79	200	281	102	171	443	111	105	90	87
Slow-normal	59	119	204	70	142	338	52	97	54	67
Dull	25	30	91	31	40	102	23	54	20	39
Total	187	549	636	227	384	1122	222	286	198	205
Average	37.4	109.8	127.2	45.4	76.8	224.4	44.4	57.2	39.6	41.0

number of 549 books read, an average of 109.8 books for each group. Stories-about-our-country were the second lowest with a total of 198 books read. A total of 205 books were reported that belonged to other classifications than those used in this study. There were 384 books of biography read. Table 4 indicates that children of fifth-grade level preferred adventure and animal stories to cowboy and Indian stories.

In Table 5 a comparison is made of boys and girls of each ability group in the number of books read in each type. Table 5 shows that in the superior group no cowboy books were read by either boys or girls. Eighteen mystery books were read by boys of this group whereas only two were read by girls. Three animal stories were reported by boys and one by girls. Indian stories were read in the same order as animal stories. The same number of books of biography was read by both boys and girls. Boys preferred adventure stories and read sixteen of this type but girls read only ten. No fairy books were read by boys and only one by girls. Three books of children-of-other-lands were read by the superior group, one by boys and two by girls. Girls liked stories-about-our-country and read nine books in this group whereas boys read only two. One book was unclassified. The total number of books read by boys of the superior group was 47, an average of 15.7 books for each boy. Girls read

TABLE 5

COMPARISON OF BOYS AND GIRLS OF FIVE ABILITY GROUPS IN NUMBER OF BOOKS READ IN EACH TYPE

Type of Book	Level of Ability									
	Superior		Bright		Bright-Normal		Slow-Normal		Dull	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Cowboy	....	....	11	13	54	25	26	33	18	7
Mystery	18	2	46	134	117	83	16	103	17	13
Animal	3	1	23	33	160	121	92	112	66	25
Indian	3	1	6	14	68	34	36	34	23	8
Biography	3	3	9	16	105	166	73	60	31	9
Adventure	16	10	58	155	221	222	159	179	54	48
Fairy	....	1	10	25	56	55	14	38	7	16

TABLE 5--Continued

Type of Book	Level of Ability									
	Superior		Bright		Bright-Normal		Slow-Normal		Dull	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Children of other lands	1	2	8	19	48	57	52	45	32	22
Stories about our country	2	9	13	10	51	39	27	27	16	4
Unclassified	1	....	5	6	49	38	38	29	26	13
Total	47	29	189	425	929	740	533	669	290	165
Average	15.7	14.5	9.5	13.3	17.5	12.8	10.6	12.6	7.6	7.8

twenty-nine books, an average of 14.5, which was 1.2 less than the average for the boys in the same group.

In the bright group, the twenty boys read eleven cowboy books and the thirty-two girls read thirteen cowboy books. Girls read 134 mystery stories and the boys in the group read forty-six. Indian stories were not very popular with this group as only twenty-six stories of this type were read by the entire group. Sixteen biographies were read by the girls and nine by the boys. Boys read fifty-eight adventure stories and the girls read 155. Twenty-five fairy stories were read by girls and ten reported by boys. Although fewer in number, the boys read more stories-about-our-country than did the girls. The total number of books read by girls was 425, which made their average 13.3, or 3.8 more than the 9.5 average of the boys.

In the bright-normal group the number of boys and girls was more nearly equal with fifty-three boys and fifty-eight girls. Although the boys had five less members in their group, they read more books of each type, except adventure and children-of-other-lands, than did the girls. There was a difference of nine in stories-of-other-lands. Boys read a total of 929 books compared with 740 for the girls. The boys' average was 4.7 higher than the average for the girls. This was the greatest difference of any group.

Girls had the advantage of the boys by one member in the slow-normal group. In this group, girls read more cowboy, mystery, animal, adventure, and fairy stories than did the boys. The greatest difference was in mystery stories of which the girls read ninety books more of this type than did the boys. The boys exceeded the girls in number of biography and Indian stories read. Boys and girls read the same number of stories-about-our-country. The total number of books read by this group was 669 by girls and 533 by boys. The girls read an average of two books a person more than did the boys.

The dull group was composed of thirty-eight boys and twenty-one girls. The number of books read by boys exceeded the number read by girls in all types of books except fairy stories, in which the girls exceeded the number read by boys by nine books. The boys of this group read 290 books, or an average of 7.6, which was .2 less than the 7.8 average read by girls of this group. Table 5 indicates that the higher ability groups read more books than did the dull group. There was not much difference between boys and girls in the number read.

Table 6 represents the answers of pupils to questions concerning their interests in reading, especially to readings outside of school. According to answers given to questions, the girls in the superior group had the highest

TABLE 6

PERCENTILE RANK OF THE READING INTERESTS OF
THE FIVE ABILITY GROUPS

Question Asked	Ability Level									
	Superior		Bright		Bright-Normal		Slow-Normal		Dull	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Do you like to read?	100.0	100.0	86.7	100.0	90.0	90.6	91.5	90.9	83.3	82.3
Do you have books of your own?	100.0	100.0	80.0	93.3	94.1	83.0	82.8	88.6	86.7	76.5
Did you choose them?	33.3	100.0	56.7	66.7	60.7	52.9	55.1	54.5	56.7	47.0
Do you read books from the public library?	100.0	100.0	73.3	60.0	47.0	54.7	38.3	52.3	30.0	17.6
Do you have your own library card?	100.0	100.0	40.0	46.7	41.0	45.0	29.8	31.8	23.3	17.6

reading interest. They scored perfect to all answers whereas the boys of the superior group rated perfect in all except the one of being able to choose books of their own.

In the bright group, the girls ranked higher than the boys on three points and had the same score on one. The boys rated higher on the number who read books from the public library although a higher percentage of girls had their own library cards. In the bright-normal group there was a .6 per cent difference in favor of girls who liked to read. A higher percentage of boys had books of their own and had helped to choose their books. In this group the girls exceeded in number the boys who had their own card from the public library and a higher percentage read books from the library.

A higher percentage of boys in the slow-normal group liked to read but girls ranked higher in number who owned books. A higher percentage of girls had their own card from the public library and read books from there. In the dull group the boys had a higher percentage rank on all questions. The greatest difference was in the percentage who read books from the public library. The boys ranked 12.4 per cent higher on this question than did the girls. Table 6 indicates that girls, on the average, had a greater interest in reading than boys.

Table 7 shows the percentage of girls who preferred the three magazines listed most frequently on the questionnaire. No check list of magazines was given to the pupils to record their choice. They were asked to write the name of their favorite magazine, and the ones listed most frequently were used in Table 7. The magazines which ranked highest were Life, American Girl, and Saturday Evening Post; of these Life and American Girl came to school and were

TABLE 7
PERCENTILE RANK OF GIRLS IN CHOICE OF THREE MAGAZINES

Magazine	Level of Ability				
	Superior	Bright	Bright-Normal	Slow-Normal	Dull
<u>Life</u>	....	23.3	25.0	26.2	33.3
<u>American Girl</u>	....	13.3	17.3	4.8	16.6
<u>Saturday Evening Post</u>	50.0	6.7	7.7	14.3	....
Unclassified	50.0	56.7	50.0	54.7	50.1

available to the pupils. All other magazines which were listed were included in Table 7 as unclassified. Fifty per cent of the girls in the superior group listed Saturday Evening Post as first choice and 50 per cent were distributed

among a number of other magazines. American Girl was preferred by 17.3 per cent of the girls in the bright-normal group. American Girl was listed by 13.3 per cent of the group and Saturday Evening Post by 6.7 per cent of the same group. American Girl was preferred by 4.8 per cent of the girls in the slow-normal group and by 16.6 per cent of the girls in the dull group. Life was preferred by 23.3 per cent of the bright group; by 25 per cent of the bright-normal group; by 26.2 per cent of the slow-normal group, and by 33.3 per cent of the dull group. Saturday Evening Post, which was not a school magazine, was read by 50 per cent of the superior group and by all other groups, except the dull, by a lower percentage.

Table 8 shows the percentage of boys who preferred each of the three magazines listed most frequently in the questionnaire. The magazines listed were Life, Boys' Life, and Collier's. Life and Boys' Life came to school and were available to the pupils. Life was the first choice of each ability group. Boys' Life was not chosen by the superior group but all other groups listed it; the highest percentage was given it by the bright-normal group. Collier's was not chosen by the superior group but 12 per cent of the dull group reported it as first choice. Scattered choices of other magazines were listed as unclassified in Table 8.

TABLE 8

PERCENTILE RANK OF BOYS IN CHOICE OF THREE MAGAZINES

Magazine	Level of Ability				
	Superior	Bright	Bright-Normal	Slow-Normal	Dull
<u>Life</u>	50.0	31.7	31.8	44.2	36.0
<u>Boys' Life</u>	....	17.6	23.3	9.3	20.0
<u>Collier's</u>	....	10.0	6.8	6.8	12.0
Unclassified	50.0	40.7	38.1	39.7	32.0

Tables 7 and 8 indicate that boys and girls are familiar with magazines and their interest is divided among a number of different magazines.

CHAPTER III

AN ANALYSIS OF READING INTERESTS ON BASIS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

This chapter presents an analysis of the reading interests of fifth-grade pupils on the basis of socio-economic status. Sims Socio-Economic Score Cards were used to determine the three group divisions. The tests were given and scored according to the Manual of Directions for Sims Score Card for Socio-Economic Status. Scores from two through nine were designated as the low socio-economic group scores from ten through nineteen were placed in the medium socio-economic group; and all scores of twenty or above were classified as the high socio-economic group. The number of boys and girls in each group was the same or almost the same. There were twenty-six of each in the low socio-economic groups. The girls had ninety-three and the boys ninety-two in the medium socio-economic group. The high socio-economic group had forty-eight boys and forty-seven girls. The total number of pupils was equally divided between boys and girls.

Table 9 shows the distribution of pupils into the three socio-economic status groups.

TABLE 9
COMPARATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF BOYS AND GIRLS
INTO THREE SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

Groups	Number in Group		
	Boys	Girls	Total
High (20-31)	48	47	95
Medium (10-19)	92	93	185
Low (2-9)	26	26	52
Total	166	166	332

Table 9 shows that the low socio-economic group had the smallest number whereas the medium group was the largest. This distribution of pupils into these groups was made to determine what, if any, was the relationship between the socio-economic status and the types and number of books read by the pupils.

All the pupils in the fifth grades were given a questionnaire on which to check Yes or No to questions. This was to indicate their reading interests, especially the reading done outside of school. The results are shown in Table 10. On the first question the girls in the high group ranked first with a score of 95.5 per cent whereas the girls

in the low group ranked last with a score of 77.7 on the same question.

TABLE 10
PERCENTILE RANK OF READING INTERESTS
OF HIGH, MEDIUM, AND LOW
SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

Questions Asked	Socio-economic Status					
	High		Medium		Low	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Do you like to read?	88.0	95.5	88.4	91.5	87.7	77.7
Do you have books of your own?	95.2	95.5	81.4	82.9	71.4	72.2
Did you choose them?	71.4	59.1	53.5	56.0	52.4	38.9
Do you read books from the public library?	57.1	75.0	41.9	45.8	23.8	38.9
Do you have your own library card?	50.0	65.9	32.5	30.5	19.0	38.9

In Table 10 the girls ranked higher than the boys in the high and medium groups, but the boys scored ten points higher than the girls in the low socio-economic group. The number of books owned increased as the level of socio-economic status was raised. The range was from 71.4 per cent in the low group to 95.5 per cent in the high group. More boys in both high and low levels helped choose their own books; however, the girls had a slight advantage in the medium group. The girls in each group read more books from

the public library than did the boys. The girls of the high and low groups had more reading cards from the public library, but the boys of the medium group had two points in their favor on this question. The percentage was lowest on the number who had cards from the library.

Table 10 seems to indicate that most children like to read. Girls, on the average, like to read better than boys. There is an indication that there is a relation between socio-economic status and interest in reading.

Table 11 shows the percentile rank of pupils of high, medium, and low socio-economic status in types of books preferred as shown by a questionnaire submitted to the pupils. They were given a list of the types of books used in this study and were asked to indicate the type of book they preferred. These lists were grouped according to the socio-economic status group and the results recorded.

Table 11 shows that cowboy books, though read by some in each group, were not very popular. This type was most popular with the boys and girls of the low socio-economic group. A third of the boys in the low group chose cowboy books whereas only 4.9 per cent of the girls in the medium group preferred it. Mystery stories were liked by boys and girls of all groups, but more girls than boys liked this type. The highest percentage was 46.7 for the girls in the high socio-economic group, which was 19.9 per cent more than

the boys of the same group. Fewer boys of the low socio-economic group seemed to prefer mystery stories as only 14.3 per cent reported this type.

TABLE 11

PERCENTILE RANK OF PUPILS OF HIGH, MEDIUM, AND LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS IN TYPES OF BOOKS PREFERRED AS SHOWN BY QUESTIONNAIRE

Type of Book	Socio-economic Status					
	High		Medium		Low	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Cowboy	9.8	8.9	12.9	4.9	33.3	16.7
Mystery	26.8	46.7	18.8	40.2	14.3	27.8
Animal	17.1	6.7	18.8	8.5	9.5	11.1
Indian	12.2	....	11.8	7.3	23.8	....
Biography	4.9	6.7	3.5	4.9	4.8	5.5
Adventure	24.4	17.7	28.3	20.7	14.3	16.7
Fairy	2.4	8.9	2.4	11.1	....	11.1
Children of other lands	2.4	....	3.5	....	....	....
Stories about our country	....	4.4	....	2.4	....	11.1

Animal stories were usually preferred by boys although more girls of the low group read animal stories than did boys of the same group. The highest percentage who preferred this type were the boys in the medium group with 18.8 per cent reading animal stories. The lowest group in animal

stories was the high group of whom only 6.7 per cent preferred this type. Indian stories were chosen by boys of all groups but the girls of only the medium group listed it as a favorite, and then the percentage was less than any boys' group. Indian stories were most popular with boys of the low socio-economic group.

Biography was preferred by boys and girls of all groups on about the same percentage. The range was from 3.5 per cent for boys of medium status to 6.7 per cent for girls of high status. Other scores for this type were 4.9 per cent for two groups, 4.8 per cent, and 5.5 per cent. Adventure stories were preferred by 24.4 per cent of the boys in the high socio-economic group and by 17.7 per cent of the girls of that group. This type was preferred by a higher percentage of boys and girls of the medium group; 28.3 per cent of the boys and 20.7 per cent of the girls chose this type. In the low-status group, 14.3 per cent of the boys and 16.7 per cent of the girls listed adventure as their favorite type of story.

Fairy stories were chosen by a small percentage of all groups with the exception of boys of the low-status group. The percentage of girls who chose it was higher than the percentage of boys in each group. Children-of-other-lands stories were chosen only by the boys of the high and medium status groups. Stories-about-our-country were read by no

boys but by all groups of girls, the highest percentage who preferred it being the girls of the low socio-economic group.

Table 11 seems to indicate that boys and girls of high-and medium-status groups prefer mystery and adventure stories. Girls of the low-status group like mystery and cowboy stories and boys of this group prefer cowboy and Indians.

Table 12 shows the percentile rank of pupils of high, medium, and low socio-economic status in types of books read. The information for Table 12 was taken from the report slips filled out by the pupils for each book read. In the high socio-economic status group, adventure was the most popular type of book with boys and girls both. Twenty-seven and one-tenth per cent of the boys and 46.7 per cent of the girls read adventure stories. Mystery books were read by 12.5 per cent of boys and 14.9 per cent of the girls of the high-status group. More boys of this group chose fairy stories than did girls. Animal stories and biography were each read by 10.4 per cent of the boys of the high-status group. Cowboy and Indian stories were not listed as favorites by any girls of this group. No books were reported read by 20.8 per cent of the boys and by 12.8 per cent of the girls. In the medium socio-economic status group both boys and girls preferred adventure stories, the girls having a percentage of 35.9 per cent and the boys 28.9 per cent. Animal stories

TABLE 12

PERCENTILE RANK OF PUPILS OF HIGH, MEDIUM, AND LOW
SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS IN TYPES OF BOOKS READ

Type of Book	Socio-Economic Status					
	High		Medium		Low	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Cowboy	2.1	....	3.3	2.2	7.7	3.9
Mystery	12.5	14.9	9.8	15.2	7.7	11.5
Animal	10.4	8.5	14.2	17.4	23.0	19.1
Indian	2.1	....	5.4	1.0	3.9	3.9
Biography	10.4	2.1	7.7	4.4	15.5	3.9
Adventure	27.1	46.7	28.9	35.9	11.4	26.9
Fairy	12.5	4.3	2.2	4.4	....	3.9
Children of other lands	2.1	6.4	7.7	5.5	3.9	3.9
Stories about our country	....	4.3	4.4	....	....	....
No books read	20.8	12.8	16.4	13.0	26.9	23.0

were second choice by both boys and girls of this group. All types of books listed were chosen by boys of this group but no girls preferred stories-about-our-country. A higher percentage of boys than girls reported no books read; 16.4 per cent of the boys and 13 per cent of the girls were in this group. In the low socio-economic status group, 23 per cent of the boys preferred animal stories whereas 26.9

per cent of the girls read more adventure stories. Boys of this group read no fairy stories and only 3.9 per cent of the girls reported this type as their favorite. The second choice was biography by boys and animal stories by girls. The girls of this group had a lower percentage of non-readers.

Table 12 indicates that more girls than boys read, as the boys of each group had a larger number of non-readers. There is not much difference in types of books chosen by boys and girls of the high and medium status groups; they read adventure, mystery, and animal stories.

Table 13 shows the number of books of each type read by each socio-economic group. No comparison is made between boys and girls in Table 13. The total number of each type read is recorded and the average number of books read by each of the three groups is listed. The per pupil average of books of all types is given for each division. Table 13 shows that fewer cowboy books than any other type were read. A total of 187 were read and the medium group read ninety-nine of this number. Mystery stories were most popular with the medium group although the high group read 196 mystery stories compared with 285 read by the medium group. Both high and medium groups were above 183, which was average for this type of book. The medium socio-economic status group read more animal stories than either of the

TABLE 13

NUMBER OF BOOKS OF EACH TYPE READ
BY EACH SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP

Type of Book	Socio-Economic Status				
	High	Medium	Low	Total	Average
Cowboy	47	99	41	187	62.3
Mystery	196	285	68	549	183.0
Animal	180	361	95	636	212.0
Indian	58	137	32	227	75.7
Biography	115	219	50	384	128.0
Adventure	368	627	127	1122	374.0
Fairy	72	121	29	222	74.0
Children of other lands	66	188	32	286	95.3
Stories about our country	55	124	19	198	66.0
Unclassified	70	121	14	205	68.3
Total	1227	2282	507	4016	
Average	12.9	12.3	9.8	12.1	

other groups. The medium group read 361, the high group read 180, and the low-status group read ninety-five. A total of 636 animal stories was read, which was the second highest number reported. Fifty-eight Indian stories were read by the high-status group, 137 by the medium group, and thirty-two by the low-status group. Biography ranked

fourth in popularity. A total of 384 books of this type was reported by the three groups. This was an average of 128 per group. Adventure stories were the most popular type on all socio-economic levels. The high-status group read 368, or an average of 3.9 books for each of the ninety-five pupils in the high-status group. The medium group read 627, or an average of 3.4 books per pupil for each of the 185 pupils classified as the medium group. The low-status group averaged 2.4 books per pupil.

A total of 222 fairy stories was read by the three groups, an average of seventy-four books per group. Children-of-other-lands and stories-about-our country ranked second and third from the lowest ranking type, which was cowboy stories.

Table 13 indicates that pupils read more adventure, animal, and mystery stories and fewer cowboy and fairy stories. The average number of books read by the pupils of the different groups suggests that the socio-economic status may influence the number of books read. There is a difference of 3.1 book average in favor of the high socio-economic status group.

Table 14 shows the percentile rank of the magazines which the girls of the fifth grade listed as their favorites.

The pupils were asked to write the name of their favorite magazine on a questionnaire. The three magazines

which occurred the greatest number of times were listed as favorites. The number of other magazines which were listed, usually once or twice, were grouped under the heading "unclassified."

TABLE 14
PERCENTILE RANK OF FAVORITE
MAGAZINES OF GIRLS

Magazine	Socio-Economic Status		
	High	Medium	Low
<u>Life</u>	31.6	30.5	23.0
<u>American Girl</u>	18.4	13.9	23.0
<u>Saturday Evening Post</u>	10.5	17.7	15.4
Unclassified	39.5	37.9	38.6

Table 14 shows Life was the decided favorite of girls of the high and medium socio-economic status groups and was equal to American Girl in the low socio-economic group. American Girl ranked in second place with high group and third with the medium group. Saturday Evening Post rated second with the medium and low groups and third with the high group.

Table 14 indicates that girls are familiar with a number of different magazines, rather than reading only a few. It seems to indicate that they are interested in current problems because of the high rating given to Life.

Table 15 shows the percentile rank of three favorite magazines of boys as shown by their answers on a questionnaire. The boys were not asked to select from a list but to write the name of their favorite magazine. As a result the names of many different magazines were listed. The three which were named the greatest number of times were listed and all others were grouped together as unclassified.

TABLE 15
PERCENTILE RANK OF FAVORITE
MAGAZINES OF BOYS

Magazine	Socio-Economic Status		
	High	Medium	Low
<u>Life</u>	36.6	31.2	52.4
<u>Boys' Life</u>	19.5	18.8	19.0
<u>Collier's</u>	2.4	12.5	9.6
Unclassified	41.5	37.5	19.0

Life was the highest ranking magazine in all groups. It received the highest percentage by the low-status group. Life received 52.4 per cent from this group, the high group rated it 36.6 per cent, and the percentage of the medium group was 31.2 per cent. Boys' Life was the second favorite by almost the same percentage by each group; the high group had 19.5 per cent; the medium group, 18.8 per

cent; and 19 per cent by the low-status group. The low-status group had the lowest percentage of unclassified magazines with 19 per cent and the high group had 41.5 per cent.

Table 15 seems to indicate that boys of high socio-economic status were familiar with many different magazines. Life was the favorite magazine of all boys regardless of their socio-economic status.

Table 16 shows the percentile rank of the number of books from each of the three sources of books used in this study. On each report slip, the pupils checked the source of the book which had been read. The purpose of Table 16 was to determine if the school libraries were adequate to meet the needs and interests of the pupils.

TABLE 16

PERCENTILE RANK OF THE NUMBER OF BOOKS
READ FROM THE HOME, THE SCHOOL,
AND THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Source of Books	Percentage
Home library	3.1
Public library	3.6
School library	93.3

Table 16 shows that 93.3 per cent of the books read came from the school libraries. Many children reported in Table 10 that they had books of their own at home, yet only 3.1 per cent of the books read came from the home. Since

this study included only those books read during the eight-month period, the books at home may have been read previous to this study. Some pupils also indicated that they had cards from the public library and read books from there, yet the 3.6 per cent reported indicates that the reading from the public library was done during vacation periods. Table 16 seems to indicate that the school library met the needs and interests of the pupils during the school year.

Table 17 shows the percentage of parents of the pupils of this study who had high school or college education. Information for Table 17 was taken from results of the Sims Socio-Economic Score Card. Table 17 shows that of the high socio-economic status group, 96.6 per cent of fathers and 97.7 per cent of mothers attended high school, and 59 per cent of fathers and 56.8 per cent of mothers attended college. The percentage is lower for each in the medium group, which shows that 73.1 per cent of fathers and 74.9 per cent of mothers attended high school. The percentage of those who attended college dropped even more as only 8.6 per cent of fathers and 13.7 per cent of mothers reported any college training. In the low socio-economic status group, 14 per cent of fathers and 24 per cent of mothers attended high school but only 2 per cent of fathers reported college training.

TABLE 17
 PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS WITH HIGH SCHOOL
 OR COLLEGE EDUCATION

Socio-economic Status	High School		College	
	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
High	96.6	97.7	59.0	56.8
Medium	73.1	74.9	8.6	13.7
Low	14.0	24.0	2.0	....

Table 17 indicates that the parents in the high socio-economic status group have about the same amount of education. The difference between the father and mother in the medium status group was only 1.1 per cent in favor of the mother on the high school level but was 5.1 per cent on the college level. Table 17 seems to indicate a positive relationship between the amount of education and the socio-economic status of the group.

Table 18 shows the percentage of homes with books and magazines. The purpose of Table 18 was to determine if there existed any relationship between the socio-economic status and the number of books and magazines in the home. Table 18 shows that homes of high socio-economic status had more books and magazines than the other groups.

TABLE 18
 PERCENTAGE OF HOMES WITH
 BOOKS AND MAGAZINES

Socio-economic Status	Books			Magazines		
	None	1-25	26 or more	None	One	More
High	2.3	20.5	77.2	5.7	9.0	85.3
Medium	14.1	55.2	30.7	30.3	25.7	44.0
Low	50.0	42.0	8.0	80.0	14.0	6.0

Only 2.3 per cent of the homes of the high socio-economic status group reported no books and 5.7 per cent reported no magazines whereas 77.2 per cent had more than twenty-five books and 85.3 per cent had two or more magazines in the home. In the medium group 14.1 per cent reported no books in the home; 55.2 per cent had from one to twenty-five books; and 30.7 per cent had more than twenty-five books. In the medium group 30.3 per cent took no magazines, 25.7 per cent had one and 44 per cent had two or more magazines in the home. Fifty per cent of homes in the low socio-economic group had no books and 80 per cent had no magazines. Only 8 per cent had more than twenty-five books and 6 per cent received two or more magazines. Table 18 seems to indicate that there is a relationship between the socio-economic status and the number of books and magazines in the

home. The higher the socio-economic status, the greater was the number of books and magazines in the home.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study undertook to find the reading interests of pupils of the fifth grade on the basis of ability and socio-economic status. To carry out this study, all the fifth grades of the Pampa School were used. The Kuhlmann-Anderson Test was given to find the different abilities; Sims Socio-Economic Score Card was used to find the socio-economic status of the pupils; a questionnaire was submitted to all pupils to find the preferences of each; and a record was kept of the types and number of books read by each pupil. Five ability groups, classified as superior, bright, bright-normal, slow-normal, and dull, were formed. The types, number of books, and reading interests were compared in Chapter II. In Chapter III the pupils were divided into high, medium, and low socio-economic status groups. A comparison was made of types and number of books read; of the amount of education of the parents on the different socio-economic levels; and of the number of books and magazines in the homes.

Conclusions

The facts revealed by this study on the reading interests of fifth-grade pupils indicate the following:

1. Girls, on the average, read more books than boys.
2. Boys and girls prefer adventure and mystery stories to other types.
3. Ability is not a deciding factor in types of books preferred by fifth-grade pupils.
4. A higher percentage of pupils with ability of bright-normal or above read books than pupils of slow-normal or below.
5. The socio-economic status influences the number of books read.

Recommendations

The data revealed in this study seem to justify the following recommendations:

1. Pupils should be encouraged to make better use of the facilities offered by the public library.
2. An effort should be made to find the reason for the large number of non-readers.
3. The school should cooperate with the homes with few or no books and magazines so that children may have an opportunity to have more books and magazines in the home.
4. Pupils should be encouraged to broaden their reading interests.

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