An Experimental Developmental Reading Program For A City Elementary School

Lloyd Shank

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AN EXPERIMENTAL DEVELOPMENTAL READING PROGRAM
FOR A CITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

being

A Master's Report presented to the Graduate Faculty of the Fort Hays Kansas State College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science by

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Fort Hays Kansas State College

Date July 24, 1952 Approved A. C. Wood
Major Professor

Ralph E. Lode
Chairman Graduate Council
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Appreciation is also extended to the administration of the Dodge City Public Schools in which this study took place, and to the children of the Miller Elementary School who participated in the special reading program.

To my wife and family, for their continued interest and encouragement, special appreciation is given.

L. L. S.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In every school system there are pupils who deviate from what is supposed to be average in physical, mental, emotional, or social characteristics to such an extent that they require special educational services in order to develop to their maximum capacity. It is inherent in the philosophy of our democracy that every child is entitled to an education to the limit of his capacity. Therefore, in a democracy such as ours, education is committed to the principle of furnishing an education for all, regardless of color, race, or creed. It then is also committed to furnish an equal opportunity to individuals who may need special help in obtaining this education.

Significance of the problem. The objectives of the education of exceptional children must be in accord with the principles of democracy. They do not differ from the general objectives of education for all children; only the means of obtaining these objectives must differ. The Educational Policies Commission has identified four groups of objectives or educational purposes relating to the person himself, to his membership in the family or community group, to his activities as a producer and consumer, and to his life as a citizen. The commission defines these
four groups as the objectives of (a) self-realization, (b) human relationship, (c) economic efficiency, and (d) civic responsibility.¹

It has been shown that between one and two per cent of the total population are so seriously retarded in reading that they cannot be expected to read beyond the fourth grade level of difficulty,² and between five and twenty per cent of the total school population are retarded readers.³ Not infrequently, from twenty to thirty per cent, or even more of the pupils of a class encounter difficulty in doing reading.⁴

Statement of the problem. Retarded readers do not profit sufficiently from the group education techniques used in most of our schools for teaching children of average ability. For this reason, it is necessary to furnish some type of special help if we expect them to develop


their fullest potentialities. The problem stated is: An experimental developmental reading program for a city elementary school.

Limitations and scope. There are many types of "special education", but this paper will deal with only that aspect of education for those who, for various reasons, are retarded in reading and cannot profit from a regular classroom situation in learning to read.

A further limitation of the study is that the study was confined to the Miller Elementary School of Dodge City, Kansas. It is commonly designated as the east-side school or ward one. The school is composed of pupils from three ethnic groups; namely, the Negro, the Mexican, and the White. No attempt is made or intended to show variations of achievement among the different ethnic groups because special instruction was given to pupils who had need of such instruction regardless of race or color. It is true that there existed a problem of teaching some of the bi-lingual children because of their language handicap; however, it was considered as only a part of the need of those children.

The school is composed of 342 pupils and fifty-three of these children were given special instruction in reading. In some cases, pupils remained the entire year, while others remained only as long as they could profit
Definitions of terms used. Developmental reading: A term used to denote a plan of instruction not only to remedy poor reading habits, but to develop correct habits before they can cause more serious problems.

Remedial reading: A term which refers to constructive and special instruction for pupils who encounter more or less difficulty in reading.

Retarded readers: Those children who deviate at least one year or more below their respective grade norms on standardized tests.

Special classes. A separate class for those retarded in reading whereby they may receive special help.

Special teacher. A teacher, specially trained, to instruct retarded readers.

Basal reading level. The level at which the child can read independently and where he should do, (1) leisure time reading, (2) reading of literature, and (3) reading of other subject matter fields in his grade level. Likewise, he should comprehend at least 90 per cent of the subject material.

Instruction level. The level where teaching is needed to build reading skills. The child is expected to comprehend about 75 per cent of the material he needs.

Frustration level. The level at which no child
should be required to attempt to read. Generally the child reaches the frustration level when he can comprehend only about 50 per cent of the material read.

Procedure in reporting the study. The study is presented in five chapters. Chapter I is an introduction to the study which states the problem, the significance of the problem, the limitations and scope of the study, and the definitions of terms used.

Chapter II is a study of the various plans and types of programs now being used in various schools which are designed to aid the retarded reader.

The problems to solve, objectives to achieve, the management of the program, and the planning necessary in initiating and operating a developmental reading program are discussed in Chapter III.

Chapter IV is an evaluation of the special reading program of the Miller Elementary School of Dodge City, Kansas. The evaluation is based upon the results of the Metropolitan Reading Achievement Tests which were given near the beginning of the special reading program and near the close of the special reading program. It is also based upon the increase of the retarded reader's basic vocabulary as determined from Dolch's 220 Basic Word List.

Chapter V includes a summary of the purposes and
results of the study, conclusions drawn, and recommendations concerning future programming.

### Child Study

In their report, recognizing the need for providing special instruction for the mentally retarded, have adopted various ways and means for approaching this goal. These are based upon plans of organization used in schools today, depending upon the philosophy of the administrators, the type of school district, the nature of pupils to be aided, and the amount available special education to be provided. It will be well to note the various plans in operation in the furnishing special education and the steps now underway for extended research.

#### 1. Organization Plan

The first plan of organization to be considered is the one in which each teacher gives special attention to help to the retarded reading under supervision at school on the initiative of a special teacher. This plan may be supplemented by teaching various types of special reading and regular classes in reading for the retarded reader. That is, offering first a special reading class, then a unit of regular reading from the corner of an everyday class, and another

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CHAPTER II

OTHER STUDIES

Many schools, recognizing the need for providing special instruction for the retarded reader, have adopted various ways and means for meeting this need. There are three main plans of organization used in schools today, depending upon the philosophy of the administration, the type of school plan in use, the size of the school system, the number of pupils to be served and the extent to which special education is to be provided. It will be well to cite the various plans in operation before describing actual schools and the means used to care for retarded readers.

A. Classroom plan. The first plan of organization to be considered is the one in which each teacher gives special attention and help to the retarded readers in her homeroom without the aid or assistance of a special teacher. This plan may be administered in various ways. The teacher may stress reading by alternating periods of special reading and regular classes in reading for the retarded readers. That is, offering first a special reading unit, then a unit of regular reading from the course of study, then a special reading unit, then another
unit of regular reading, etc. 1

Another means by which the classroom teacher may do her own remedial instruction is the utilization of the content of the regular course as the basis of remedial reading. 2

B. Remedial room plan. The second main plan of organization is the use of a remedial room, whereby pupils are sent for special instruction by a special teacher. 3

This plan may also be used in a variety of ways. One plan is to send all the retarded readers from a certain class for a certain length of time each day. 4 Another plan is to send only individual students from the room for a short time each day or week. 5 Still another form of this plan is to use a short intensive period of instruction, using perhaps six weeks during the school year. 6


3 W. S. Gray, loc. cit.


5 George H. Reavis, "The Reading Program of the Cincinnati Schools," National Elementary Principal, 27:14-17, October, 1947.

6 W. S. Gray, op. cit. p. 1003.
G. **Opportunity room plan.** The third main plan of organization is to group the seriously retarded pupils into an opportunity or special room where they are instructed by a special teacher. This plan may also be used in two ways. One plan is for the pupil to remain all day and receive instruction in all phases of his school work. The second plan is for the pupil to remain only part of each day to receive help in deficiencies and to return to his own room for the rest of his regular classes. In such a room, the child receives more or less individual instruction. Dr. Gray states that all methods employed are more or less effective in aiding the pupil overcome his reading deficiencies. This is true because the virtue may not lie so much in the specific methods used as in the stimulation and leadership of the teacher, the determination of the pupil to succeed, or some like factor.

**Problem of today.** The problem of today is the need for cooperation of all agencies that can contribute to an understanding of the nature of reading deficiencies and of the causative factors involved. Another need is for wide experimentation to refine the techniques of diagnosis and

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7 M. V. Briggy, *loc. cit.*

remediation. Also there needs to be a careful study of the deficiencies and needs of pupils in regular classes to reduce to a minimum the number who require remedial treatment. The need is urgent for studies of the relative merits of different procedures now in use and of the purposes for which they can be employed to the greatest advantage.

Many school systems over the United States have programs of instruction for the retarded reader. It would not be possible or logical to describe them all. However, a selected group will be described briefly to show the awareness of the problem; how programs in operation are similar in some respects; and how programs differ in organization.

University of Wyoming Training School. Child guidance is given as an integral part of the remedial reading program. The children needing help are given special instruction outside the regular classroom. Regular classroom teachers work in cooperation with the special teacher. Candidates for special instruction are

9 Loc. cit.
10 Loc. cit.
selected by teacher observation and testing. This school recommends that prevention and alleviation of problem cases should be given more emphasis.

Concord Massachusetts Schools. In this school system, emphasis is placed upon diagnosis of the reading difficulty. All available information is gathered about the child, parent, reading achievement, capacity, vision, hearing, and any other trait which might have a bearing on the case.

If it is a case which, on the basis of knowledge obtained from diagnosis, can be cared for by the classroom teacher, the child will receive no special help from any one other than the classroom teacher.

Other cases are taught by a special teacher. The pupils receive individual instruction for periods of fifteen to thirty minutes per day. There is close contact between teacher and special teacher. Emphasis is given to prevention of future reading difficulties. The school uses specialized diagnosis so that the class is not just filled with slow readers. Stress is placed upon preparing the child for the special class so that there is no stigma attached to the program.

The report cautions that the remedial program can

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12 M. V. Briggy, _loc. cit._
not function as a narrowly conceived adjunct to the school program. It can work only as a part of a broad, well-supported, well-staffed and carefully organized child adjustment effort which is an integral part of the overall pattern of school activities.

Madisonville Public School, Cincinnati, Ohio.\textsuperscript{13}
The program for remedial reading includes any child who is at a level of one year or more below his reading expectancy. The parent or guardian is contacted to explain the purpose of the special class and the child's need of it. Factors which the school considers in providing for the needs and interests of the child are physical, family, emotional and social, and his school experiences.

Ohio Wesleyan University Training School.\textsuperscript{14} This school follows the pattern of many others, in that they begin with the child "where he is". They try to find the cause of his reading disability; then determine his level of reading ability; and then, help the child to improve his reading. The school gives concentrated work rather than widely distributed practice in reading. The class is scheduled at opportune times of the day.


Franklin Academy, Columbia, Mississippi. The program in reading is not isolated but is an integrated part of the regular class work. They, like others, begin with the child on his level of ability. The outstanding value received from the program was believed to be the social recognition the children attained in the school and a feeling of personal worth. Also, the children developed an attitude of cooperation.

Northeast Missouri State Teachers College, Kirksville, Missouri. This school reported that the child who was a candidate for remediation was given a complete diagnosis to determine his maturity age, nutrition status, sensory and physical defects, endocrine disorders, and emotional, social, and experimental development. From this diagnosis, treatment was prescribed to help the child in anyone of the five areas of deficiency.

University of Minnesota. Reports from this school said that instruction was given during the summer months for two hours a day for five weeks. The school tried to


determine the causal factors and proceeded to correct the deficiency. They stressed remedial work as an actual reading situation. Drill exercises were not presented in an isolated manner but grew out of and were based upon the reading they were doing. The exercises were made as attractive as possible. The child was informed of his difficulties and progress and was praised for any progress shown. The main concern of the program was readiness.

**Concordia Kansas Public Schools.** The school is rather unique in Kansas at the present time in that it provides special education classes for the educable mentally retarded pupils as authorized by Kansas Law, as well as, remediation for retarded readers who, for various reasons, are not in a special education class. Remedial reading classes are kept small; not more than one to five pupils at a time. The special instruction in reading lasts only as long as the child needs to correct his reading difficulties. A testing program is carried out to implement the teacher's observations. This additional program in reading is to provide better educational opportunities for all students.

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18 From notes taken during an address by Carl A. James, Superintendent of Schools, Concordia, Kansas, April 17, 1952.
CHAPTER III

ORGANIZATIONAL PROCEDURES

Schools are dedicated to the task of educating all children of school age to the fullest extent of their capacity, therefore, the challenge to schools is in identifying and providing a developmental program for retarded readers. Specialists in the field of elementary reading believe, that even with pupils with an I.Q. of sixty, it is worthwhile to spend time and energy in teaching children to read.\(^1\)

Problems to solve. Any plan for studying the school child who experiences trouble in learning to read should take into consideration the amount of time and effort required to make the plan work and the usefulness of the data in adjusting the curriculum to fit the child's needs. A child cannot be happy, he cannot have self-confidence, he cannot have a feeling of security unless he knows how to read. Our schools are reading schools, and in order to progress, he must be able to read. Reading is the "sine qua


non" of the child's development in academic school subjects.

The problems involved in a developmental program are many and varied. One of the big problems is finding the causes of the child's reading disability, whether they be physical, emotional, social, or educational. This may require the services of many different specialists, such as, the doctor, the psychologist, the optometrist, or others. Another problem involved is that of determining the level of the child's reading ability. This should be done by two different ways:--that of observation and testing. By means of intelligent observation, the teacher can many times discover those who need help. Use of standardized tests enables almost any trained teacher to determine the extent of disability to read effectively. Another problem that must be solved is that of actually helping the child to improve his reading because it is for this reason that a program is set-up. This is the most important problem and is one which involves the parent, the teacher, the special teacher, the school, and the community as well as the child himself.

When and where to begin. One of the most important things that should be done in initiating a remedial program is to begin early in the school life of the child so that there is time to carry out a program without stress or strain. Emphasis should be placed on reading readiness
and preventative measures, thereby, many difficulties can be prevented instead of corrected. By this means, a child may be saved from the habit of failure and undesirable personality changes. 3

In any developmental program in reading, we must start with the child's present reading level and advance from there. 4 It is, therefore, of utmost importance that there be very close cooperation and understanding between home-room teacher and special teacher. They must present a systematic and continuous remediation program.

Objectives to achieve. W. S. Gray 5 maintains that it is not practical to try to establish a general set of objectives that can be adopted in all remedial programs since the purposes are largely dependent on the deficiencies and needs of the individual pupils. However, the common objectives that were chosen for the Miller School program are as follows:

1. Establishment of effective basic reading habits.

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2. Promotion of permanent interests in and habits of independent reading.

3. Development of skills in work-type reading.

4. Fostering of desirable reading attitudes.

5. Deepening of appreciations for literary, scientific, and other types of writing.

6. Acquaintance with and facility in library skills.

7. Widening of conceptual background of pupils.

8. Improvement of methods of thinking employed by pupils while reading.

9. Formations of habits of thoughtful, critical, and analytical reading.

Management of the program. According to A. I. Gates, those things that should be the essence of the management of the remedial program are:

1. Remedial instruction should not be substituted for enjoyable activities.

2. Remedial instruction should be managed so as not to classify the pupil in an embarrassing way.

3. The time allowance for remedial work should be generous.

4. The teacher should have sufficient time to arrange and supervise the remedial work.

5. Remedial work may be either individual or cooperative.

6. Remedial work should be started at a favorable time.

7. Success should be emphasized in remedial work.

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8. Improvement should be measured and the record shown.

9. The competitive impulse should be enlisted.

10. The pupil's particular errors and successes should be detected.

11. The teacher's attitude should be optimistic and encouraging.

12. Practice should be so distributed as to avoid fatigue.

13. A variety of exercises and activities should be provided.

14. A plan should be dropped when it fails to produce results after a fair trial.

15. Individual supervision should be continued until the pupil has his improved techniques well habituated.

Current research indicates that separate or special classes make possible more effective teaching and learning. The organizational plan must provide for a special room, provided with a specially trained teacher and an abundance of resource material in order to meet the needs of each child. This is the plan which was adopted by the Miller Elementary School of Dodge City, Kansas.

Preplanning for the Miller School program. It must be realized that for any plan to be effective, it must have the full support of all persons concerned. This means that the Board of Education, the Superintendent, teachers and

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children must give their support, or at least be in sympathy with, what the school is trying to accomplish. This support was secured from the Board of Education, superintendent, and teachers.

Cooperation of teachers. In a faculty meeting, each teacher was asked what was the greatest difficulty they experienced in carrying out their teaching duties and was given a week to "think it over". Then, in a personal interview between the principal and each teacher it was found in almost every case that the largest problem was the teaching of retarded readers. In another meeting, the teachers were asked if they would be willing to cooperate with a "special" reading teacher in initiating a remedial program, providing such a program could be formulated. Needless to say, it was one-hundred per cent affirmative.

Support from the administration. The principal, in a meeting with the Board of Education and the superintendent, presented the problem and the need for remediation in reading. They accepted the proposition, and provided an amount in the budget for a special teacher for the coming school term.

The school nurse also gave full cooperation, in that she gave up her room in the building to allow space for the special reading class. She also gave invaluable aid in checking the physical health of the children.
involved and recommending remedial measures to the parent or guardian of the children which pertained to health factors.

Cooperation of parents. The parents and guardians of children which were candidates for special instruction were contacted to see if they would be favorable to such a program of remediation. All were willing to cooperate and expressed a desire to help their children. The P.T.A. Study Club used the program for a unit of study and gave the school a sum of money to be spent on "extra" library books.

Diagnosis and selection of pupils. The next step in the plan was to determine which children were to be included in the special reading program. A testing program and recommendations of the teachers were used in determining the pupils who needed special help. The cumulative records were used to determine the achievement level and I.Q. of each candidate. From these records and the immediate past teacher's recommendations, candidates were selected during the first week of school. All candidates then were given the Metropolitan Achievement Test in reading to determine, as nearly as possible, just which ones were to be included in the remedial program. During the first few weeks of school, the special teacher was given a chance to assimilate and prepare materials and plans. It was also
possible to observe the children in their classrooms.

**Scheduling of classes.** The periods for remedial instruction depended upon the time of day that would work best for both the classroom teacher and the special teacher. In no instance was the time for remedial instruction taken from an activity which the pupil enjoyed, such as, playground, music, or art. Classes were scheduled for an amount of time which varied between thirty-five and forty minutes per day for each pupil. The pupil remained with his own group in all other classes.

**Testing.** Each child had been or was given the Kuhlman-Anderson Intelligence test to determine his capacity for learning. The basal reading level was determined from the Metropolitan Achievement Test for reading. Further experimentation was given in class to determine the instruction and frustration levels of reading. This was accomplished by using series of graded levels of reading texts from which the child read or tried to read. The Dolch basic sight vocabulary cards were also used to determine the extent of the child's basic vocabulary.

In most cases, reading difficulties were apparent by means of teacher and special reading teacher observations. In cases which the teachers could not determine the causal factors, the Individual Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty test was given. Because of the time
element and limitations in giving this test, it was given to only a small percentage of the children involved.

**In-service study.** One of the important things the program called for was an in-service study of reading; both developmental and remedial. The aim of the in-service study was to help all teachers to be able to recognize and correct many of the causal factors of poor reading ability before the habit of failure could cause more serious difficulties.

From the in-service study, the administration, teachers and parents came to realize and to appreciate more fully the problem of teaching reading. More emphasis is now being placed on "prevention" rather than "cure" in the teaching practices. The philosophy of the entire teaching staff is in accord with teaching the child on his level of ability, rather than requiring a child to use a certain text because he happens to be in a certain grade in school.

**Reporting to parents.** Reports were made to parents on the progress of their child by means of a personal letter which was sent at the same time of the regular report card. The letter included comments about the child's attitude improvement, interest, achievement, things the parent could do to help the child, and any encouraging thing that could be said about the child. Recommendations.
were also included from the health nurse if the causal factor was of a physical nature which could be corrected.

The ultimate test of the value of a remedial and developmental reading program is not just the gains in reading skill alone, but also the evidence of compensatory living on the part of those who have been reached. It is a fairly simple matter to test the gains in academic achievement in reading but fails through observation of the change in behavior patterns. One can fully realize the true value of a special program.

Some of the more important advantages which have arisen from the progress which were observed by the classroom teachers besides the change in structure and spelling, an increase in interest in reading, more regular attendance, and improved personal and mental health.

It was observed in the classroom teaching work with a renewed interest in reading, there was also a gain in interest in all other phases of social work. Because to say that when the child is interested in the subject under, he creates no discipline problem.

An important gain that should be shown to school board or people is the simplification of the selection of the part of the teaching effort in planning the particular for the next school year. Briefly, the outcomes were for
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND EVALUATION

The ultimate test of the value of a remediation and developmental reading program is not just the gain in reading skill alone, but also the evidence of constructive living on the part of those who have been reached.

It is a fairly simple matter to test the gain or loss in academic achievement in reading but only through observation of the change in behavior patterns can one fully realize the true value of a special program.

Some of the more important concomitant values derived from the program which were observed by the classroom teachers were: the change in attitude about reading, an increase in interest in reading, more regular attendance, and improved physical and mental health.

It was observed by the classroom teachers that with a renewed interest in reading, there was also a gain in interest in all other phases of school work. Needless to say that when the child is interested in his school work, he creates no discipline problem.

An important gain that cannot be shown by any chart or table is the solidification of the thinking on the part of the teaching staff in planning the curriculum for the next school year. Briefly, the outcomes were for
each teacher to keep an accurate record of the achievement in reading for each child as to the material he has covered for the year. The next teacher of the child will take-up where the last teacher left off, disregarding grade level. No longer do teachers of this school feel that they must cover all the required texts, whether the child is capable of doing the work or not.

In order to establish some concrete value of the special reading program as well as the concomitant values, Form R of the Metropolitan Reading Achievement Test was given near the beginning of the school year, and Form S of the same test was given near the close of the school year.

Table I indicates the chronological age (C.A.) of the child as of the last test, the mental age (M.A.), the intelligence quotient (I.Q.), the grade equivalent (G.E.) in reading at the beginning of the program, the grade equivalent in reading near the close of the program, and the gain or loss in reading achievement expressed in years and months for grades III, IV, and V. The first reading achievement test was given on October 1, 1951, and the last reading achievement test was given on April 1, 1952. The last test was given before the end of the year in order that the teachers could determine whether reteaching would be necessary, and if it were necessary
### TABLE I

PROGRESS CHART IN READING ACHIEVEMENT FOR GRADES III, IV, AND V, SHOWING THE GAIN OR LOSS IN ACHIEVEMENT FROM OCTOBER 1, 1951 UNTIL APRIL 1, 1952

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(continued)
**TABLE I (continued)**

PROGRESS CHART IN READING ACHIEVEMENT FOR GRADES III, IV, AND V, SHOWING THE GAIN OR LOSS IN ACHIEVEMENT FROM OCTOBER 1, 1951 UNTIL APRIL 1, 1952

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Note: This table should be read as follows: pupil 1 was 9 years and 0 months old on April 1, 1952, and 7 years and 5 months old mentally on the same date. The level of reading ability (G.E.) on Oct. 1, 1951, was the third month in the first grade. On April 1, 1952, the reading level was the ninth month in the second grade. The gain in achievement was one year and six months.
so that there would be time enough left in the school year to do any reteaching necessary.

It can be seen from Table I, that all pupils did not gain in achievement in the same degree or amount. It would appear that achievement does not follow a direct route which is probably due to the differences in the physical, social, mental, or emotional capacity of the children.

From the gain or loss column, it can be observed that of the fifty-three children in the program, three children made no progress in reading achievement and two children actually regressed in reading achievement. This fact may be due to a number of factors, such as lack of interest in reading, irregular attendance, home environment, poor health, an emotional block, or low mental ability.

Because of the over-age and low mental ability of the three children who made no progress, it might appear that they have reached the maximum, or near maximum, of their growth in reading. No definite conclusions could be drawn about the two children who regressed in reading achievement because of the wide variation between their chronological ages and their mental ability. However, the regression may be due to inaccurate results from the testing, either from the first test or the second test.
It may also have been due to a physical or mental disturbance in the child at the time the last test was given.

Increase in reading achievement ranges from one month to one year and six months among the other forty-eight pupils given special reading instruction. However, it is not possible to ascertain the exact amount of gain in achievement which can be attributed to the special instruction and the amount of gain in achievement which can be attributed to the work done by the classroom teacher because both worked toward the same goal—that is, to help the child become a better adjusted personality.

A surprising result, as indicated by the tests in reading achievement, is that the largest amounts of gain in reading achievement were made by the pupils in the third grade. This may indicate that poor reading habits are generally more easily corrected in a younger child because the maladjusting reading habits are not so firmly habituated and proper reading habits can be supplemented for poor reading habits more quickly. Likewise, the results indicate that generally the more the child is over-age for his grade, the smaller is the amount of gain in reading achievement. This would indicate that, all factors being equal, the earlier that reading difficulties of the child can be ascertained, the greater will be the chances of correcting the child's reading maladjustments.
It can be ascertained from Table I, that forty-eight of the fifty-three retarded readers, or 91.59 per cent, made some gain in reading achievement, and five of the retarded readers, or 9.41 per cent, showed regression or no gain in reading ability.

Since the span of time between tests was seven months, the gain in reading achievement should approximate this amount. Twenty-one of the retarded readers, or 39.64 per cent, made normal or above normal progress. Twenty-seven retarded readers, or 50.95 per cent, made gains in reading achievement in the amounts from one to six months.

Based upon this data alone, the percentage of retarded readers making steady gain in reading ability would indicate that the special reading program has been a successful addition to the school curriculum.

Table II shows the number of new sight words gained for grades III, IV, and V, from Dolch's Basic Word List of 220 words. It indicates the I.Q., the number of words known of the basic list at the beginning of special instruction, the number of words known of the basic list at the close of the period of special instruction, and the gain in the number of words learned of the basic list.

From the gain column in Table II, it can be observed that the number of words gained range from three (pupil 51) to 142 (pupil 16).
### TABLE II

NUMBER OF BASIC VOCABULARY WORDS KNOWN FROM DOLCH'S BASIC WORD LIST OF 220 WORDS FOR GRADES III, IV, AND V, SHOWING THE GAIN IN ACHIEVEMENT FROM OCTOBER 1, 1951, UNTIL MAY 1, 1952

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TABLE II (continued)

NUMBER OF BASIC VOCABULARY WORDS KNOWN FROM DOLCH'S BASIC WORD LIST OF 220 WORDS FOR GRADES III, IV, AND V, SHOWING THE GAIN IN ACHIEVEMENT FROM OCTOBER 1, 1951, UNTIL MAY 1, 1952

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Read this table as follows: pupil 1 could recognize 78 words from the 220 word list by Dolch on October 1, 1951, and on May 1, 1952, he could recognize 175. His gain in number of words learned is 97.
There is no indication of any correlation between the total number of words known from the basic list and the mental capacity of the child. Neither is there any relationship among groups of children of the same mental capacity in regard to the total number of words gained during the remediation period as evidenced by pupils ten, seventeen, thirty-six, and forty-two, with I.Q.'s of sixty-six, sixty-one, fifty-six, and fifty-one respectively who made very small gains in the total number of words known while pupils twenty-four, thirty-five, forty-four, and forty-nine, with I.Q.'s of sixty-eight, sixty-six, sixty-eight, and fifty-eight respectively, showed considerable gain in the total number of words known at the close of the instruction program.

Table II is significant in only one factor; that is, every retarded reader made some gain in the total number of basic words known by the close of the instruction period in special reading classes. However, in comparing Table II with Table I, there is an indication of a direct relationship between the total number of basic words known by a child and the grade equivalent attained by the child, although a few variations occur. This may indicate that a pupil must increase in his mastery of the common basic words in order to increase in reading achievement.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the study was two-fold in nature. The first purpose was to study the various organizational plans of remediation programs now being used, and the second purpose was to evaluate the effectiveness of the developmental reading program of the Miller Elementary School of Dodge City, Kansas.

The study indicated that, in view of the large percentage of retarded readers in the nation's schools, some means must be provided to help these children gain a more useful place in society.

The three main plans of organization used in schools today was presented in order to know what is now being done in the schools of the nation in order to meet the need of remediation in reading.

By the use of reading achievement tests and Dolch's Basic Word List of 220 words, the effectiveness of the special reading instruction program in the Miller Elementary School was evaluated in terms of gain or loss in reading achievement and the number of vocabulary words gained.

The study indicated that forty-eight of the fifty-three retarded readers, or 91.59 per cent of the pupils
in the program, made gains in reading achievement ranging from one month to one year and six months, while three of the fifty-three retarded readers showed no gain in achievement and two of the fifty-three retarded readers regressed in reading achievement. Twenty-one pupils, or 39.64 percent of the pupils in the program, made normal or above normal progress in reading, based on a seven month instruction period. All pupils made some progress in the mastery of the basic vocabulary word list although some gains were small.

Concomitant values of the special developmental reading program were found to be: an increase in interest in reading, more regular attendance, improved attitude toward reading and other aspects of school life, less discipline problems, aid in planning the school's curriculum for the coming year, and improved physical and mental health of the pupils.

Conclusions. The study indicates that any plan of remediation that can be provided which will aid the retarded reader to increase his reading ability level is well worth the time, effort, and money expended.

It would appear from the results of the Metropolitan Reading Achievement Test that remediation of reading difficulties are most effective when the causal factors of poor reading are detected and corrected early in the child's
school life.

In view of the fact that some children did not progress in reading achievement, it may indicate that some children, due to their mental, social, physical, or emotional ability, attain a maximum reading level beyond which there is little chance of ever improving their reading efficiency.

Recommendations. The school is an agent of society, and as such, must endeavor to meet the needs of all children in society, regardless of their abilities to conform to the average norm. In a democratic society, each individual is entitled to an equal educational opportunity to the fullest extent of his capacity. In administering a remedial reading plan to provide these needs, the following principles are recommended as being essential:

1. Each deficient reader is a personality problem.

2. Success in remedial reading is generally dependant upon correction of maladjustments that poor reading has caused.

3. The effective remedial reading program should be aimed at removing any factors that may bear a causal relationship to the disability.

4. The program should help pupils gain enough proficiency in reading that they would enjoy reading and be able to use ideas gained from reading in their lives.
5. The special class must be geared into the regular school program and into the life needs of the pupils.

6. The scheduling of instruction should proceed in accordance with the child's own rate of development.

7. Remedial work should be scheduled for opportune times of the day.

8. Neither the teacher nor the child should expect the impossible from work in remediation.

9. The teacher should possess the qualities of patience, kindness, sympathy, and enthusiasm.

10. There must be a cooperative attitude among all persons connected or concerned with any plan of remediation.

11. All agencies available must be made use of in diagnosing the causal factors in retardation.

12. Any plan must conform with available facilities.

13. Special materials must be supplied and correctly used to encourage interest.

14. There is an urgent need for studies of the relative merits of the various plans now in use.

15. The ultimate test of the value of a remedial program can be had only in the evidence of constructive living on the part of those who have been reached.

For the Miller Elementary School of Dodge City, Kansas, or any similar school, a program of instruction
similar to the type of program in operation at Concordia, Kansas, which was described on page twelve should be inaugurated.

There are enough children in the Miller Elementary School who fall in the range of mental ability as described by the Division of Special Education of Kansas, to provide at least two sections of special education classes for the educable mentally retarded. This would do two things: (1) it would remove the very slow learner from the regular classroom which would allow the classroom teacher to have more time for instruction of the average and above average in ability, and (2) it would provide more teacher time for the slow-learner who needs more attention and supervision.

The next recommendation would depend upon acceptance of the first recommendation. If special education classes were provided, then the school should provide remedial instruction for those pupils not in a special education class who need some special help in overcoming their reading difficulties. These children should be taught individually or in small groups regardless of their grade placement. Remediation classes would be for those of average, or above average, in mental ability who, for some reason, needed help in overcoming some reading difficulty. Instruction should be
concentrated and the pupil returned to the regular classroom as soon as the difficulty was removed.

Children should be taught in relation to their stage of development in all four areas of development. Teachers need to realize that reading, like walking or talking, is only one aspect of the total development of the child. They can no more force a child to read before he is ready than they could force a child to talk before he is ready. Progress in reading will take place only when instruction is given on the child's level of ability.

More emphasis needs to be placed upon "prevention" of reading difficulties rather than upon "cure" for the reading difficulties. It is better to teach well only a small portion of the text or materials required than to "cover": the entire amount of work for the year and be teaching the child at the frustration level.

In view of the indication that some children appear to reach a maximum growth in reading ability, the school needs to provide instruction of the type which will aid them in becoming economically independent when the time comes for them to rely upon themselves to provide for their own livelihood.

Because of the limitations in scope of this study, it is recommended that further study be continued to verify the conclusions reached from this investigation.
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TECHNIQUES FOR IMPROVING READING

There can be no question about the need for diagnosis and provision for differentiated reading activities in classrooms above the primary-grade level. The wide range of reading ability in any grade level has been the subject of much concern in dealing with the problem.

It should be pointed out that reading development among children can take place more, among other reasonable practices, reading materials and reading activities are adjusted to the levels of achievement at which children actually are. The apparently insurmountable difficulties of adjusting instruction over wide ranges to large class-size groups will not appear nearly as difficult when we see how small groups and individual activities possible when children work within their capacities.

APPENDIX A

It will be necessary for teachers to think of the reading process in terms of stages of development and not in terms of operational activities and materials by grade levels. Children must first of all be identified according to that area of the developmental process at which they are.

It is with this thought in mind that some basic norms and aids in developing reading are given. Not all techniques are equally effective or are they equally effective for any particular group.
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It will be necessary for teachers to think of the reading process in terms of stages of development and not in terms of traditional activities and materials by grade levels. Children must first of all be identified according to that area of the developmental process at which they are.

It is with this thought in mind that some techniques and aids in developing reading are given. Not all techniques are equally effective or are they equally effective for any particular group.
Sound blending. After a child learns the letters, he is ready to learn the sounds of letters and groups of letters. It is best to teach the short vowel sounds only in the beginning. Children should know that a, e, i, o, and u are called vowels. A picture-sound chart is helpful to use during the teaching of sounds. Words like the following are useful for blending. Just a few sample words are given but the list can be made as extensive or short as the teacher may desire.

A WORDS
sat cap am rag can sad sap bag man
mad mad rat map ran bad bat ham wag

E WORDS
bet den beg net wet hen fed get let
men leg led led red pet met pen bed

I WORDS
sit rip bit him tin lip win lid hit
kid rib dim dip dig rim did pin fit

O WORDS
hot hop pot rob mop fog not mob top
hog rot got pop dot doll lost cost job

U WORDS
nut fun up rug bud sum run pup cup
sun gum tub cut hum mud rub jug bun

Combinations of these words can be mixed in a group for drill. In other words, take words from each list and mix them up in another group.

As soon as a child is able to blend letter sounds together smoothly, using only the short vowel sounds, he must learn to deal with words which have long vowel sounds.
He can identify the long vowel sounds simply as "the names of the letters"—a, e, i, o, u. Two little rules that help to meet his needs are:

(1) When two vowels are next to each other, I skip the second and say the name of the first. eg. meat, seal, blue, fruit, etc..

(2) When I see a vowel, a consonant, and a vowel together, I do the same thing; that is, skip the second vowel and say the name of the first. eg. same, skate, pale, rule, etc. Then he is ready for lists like these:

**VOWEL-VOWEL**
nail main paid sail rain wait tail
bait rain beat bean deal weak leap

**VOWEL-CONSONANT-VOWEL**
make use kite same tub made cute
hike spoke cure ripe bite hate poke

The child's attention should be directed to the manner in which words change by the addition of the silent final e. eg. short to long sounds.

cut mat rip pin man not rid
cute mate ripe pine mane note ride

Much time will have to be spent by the remedial teacher in listening to the child read orally. The purpose of this oral reading is to face the child again and again with the problem of dealing systematically with unfamiliar words. Such words are sight words and are learned by much repetition.
**Phonograms.** Instead of listing the phonograms and teaching them before the child meets them, it is best to wait until he comes to them in his oral reading with the instructor. The teacher must explain that some letters usually work together and give a different sound. This can be illustrated by showing the child a number of examples, such as, cow, owl, gown, now, scout, hound, sound, etc. Some words used in teaching phonograms are listed by letters.

- deed, beer, feel, peep, EE
- week, feet, keep, meet, seem, need, deep
- boot, hoop, hoof, pool, OO
- food, soon, root, cool, room, fool, poor
- say, bay, pray, may, day, play, gay, hay
- pay, clay, tray, gray, lay, ray, say, jay
- jaw, haul, law, lawn, draw, Paul, crawl, hawk
- oil, boy, boil, join, coin, toy, coil, soil

Words in which rarely used phonograms appear can be treated as sight words, such as, f for ph, and the silent gh as in daughter.

**Beginning blends.** Durrell gives seventeen identified blends. Of these the most common to speech are sh, ch, th, and wh. The others are, tr, fr, pl, gr, cl, dr, br, st, wh, th, fl, sp, sw, tw, and sm. A few of the
words which can be used in teaching these blends are as follows:

**SH:** shack, shade, shake, shame, shape, share, sharp, shave, shawl, shed, sheep, sheet, shop, shelf, shift, shore, etc.

**CH:** chain, chair, chap, chase, chat, chatter, cheep, check, checkers, cheer, cheese, cherry, chest, chicken, chill, etc.

**TR:** track, trade, trail, train, tramp, trap, treat, tree, trick, trip, trim, troop, trot, truck, true, etc.

**FR:** frame, free, freeze, fresh, fret, fried, flock, frog, from, front, frost, frosty, frown, froze, fruit, etc.

**PL:** place, plain, plan, plane, plank, plant, plaster, plus, plate, platter, please, plenty, plot, plow, plug, etc.

**GR:** grab, grace, grade, grain, grand, grape, grass, grate, grave, graze, grease, greedy, green, greet, grin, etc.

**CL:** claim, clam, clamp, clapper, clasp, clarify, class, clay, clean, clap, click, clock, clover, club, etc.

**DR:** draft, drag, dragon, drain, drank, draw, drink, etc.

**BR:** brad, brag, braid, brake, bran, branch, brand, etc.

**ST:** stab, stack, stain, stair, stake, stale, stamp, etc.

**WH:** whack, whale, what, wheat, wheel, when, where, whether, etc.

**TH:** than, thank, thankful, that, them, then, they, thick, etc.

**FL:** flag, flake, flame, flap, flash, flat, flatter, flax, etc.

**SP:** space, spade, spank, spare, spark, speak, spear, etc.

**SW:** swam, swarm, swear, sweet, swell, swept, swift, etc.

**TW:** tweed, tweezers, twelve, twenty, twice, twig, twin, etc.
These blends can be taught very effectively by use of a blend wheel which is made as the following diagram.

The prefixes re, in, con, de, dis, com, un, ex, pro, pre, and en, and the suffixes s, ed, ing, y, ly, ty, er, est, tion, ance, ness, ful, ant, ous, ent, ment, able, al, less, and ive can be taught in much the same manner. Children like to use the wheels and can use them independently or with the help of another child.

**Syllabication.** By the use of the dictionary and lists of words with vowel-consonant-consonant-vowel and vowel-consonant-vowel construction the child can learn that the word is broken into compartments or parts. The syllables will end with either a vowel or a consonant depending upon the vowel sound. If the syllable ends with a consonant, it is a "closed" syllable, which means that the vowel sound in the syllable is short. If the syllable ends with a vowel, the syllable is "open", which means that the name of the vowel is given. eg. the long sound of the vowel.

**Reversals.** The most effective cure for word
reversals is left-to-right sound blending. However, any means which calls attention to the error of repeating helps the child to remember not to repeat the word just because he made an error. Picture stories aid in teaching the child to read from left to right.

**Increasing eye-voice span.** Sight cards can be used very well for this purpose. Show the child a list of the 220 basic words, and have him say the word as fast as he can is good training. Another means of increasing the eye-voice span is by the use of the phrase tachistoscope. These can be made by the teacher to fit her own particular needs for the children she may have. Flashmeters and Metronoscope are other instruments recommended, although I have never personally used them.

**Interest motivating techniques.** Although it would be next to impossible to mention all the means of motivating interest, the writer would like to mention two that have been used with more than fair results.

All children have something that they would like to have for their own. Have them bring an old catalogue to school, or at least the page on which is listed the thing they would like to have. From leading questions, the teacher can use the written description accompanying the picture to teach a form of reading. This method has never failed to show the importance of knowing how to read.
Almost similar to the above is the comic book method. Almost all children at least like to look at comic books even though they themselves cannot read them. By explaining that if the child knew the basic words he would be able to read what the book says as well as to look at the pictures.

Just as one medicine will not cure all ills, neither will one method cure all the faulty reading habits. It must be left to the ingenuity of the teacher to deal with each type problem.