A Research Survey on the Introduction of Individualized Reading in the Elementary School

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A RESEARCH SURVEY ON THE INTRODUCTION OF
INDIVIDUALIZED READING IN THE 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

C. Eugene Wiltfong, B. S.
Fort Hays Kansas State College

Date July 30, 1962

Approved Ralph S. Cotner
Major Professor

Approved
Chairman, Graduate Council
ABSTRACT

C. Eugene Wiltfong (M. S.: Department of Education)

Title: A RESEARCH SURVEY ON THE INTRODUCTION OF INDIVIDUALIZED READING IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Master's Report directed by Dr. W. Clement Wood

The purpose of this research was: (1) to examine more fully the literature on individualized reading in order to gain a concrete understanding of the issues and problems involved; and (2) to learn some steps which are necessary for developing an individualized reading program in the classroom.

Since the present emphasis on individualized reading has become nationally recognized in the last ten years, the study was limited chiefly to periodicals containing studies and writings of proponents of the individualized reading program.

An individualized reading program is to be distinguished from a basal reading program in that no reliance is placed on a single or common set of systematically prepared graded readers for all to use. Instead, reliance is placed on providing the child with as broad and rich a variety of reading resources as it is possible to obtain and on guiding the child in selecting those materials and experiences most
individually suited to his needs, interests, purposes, and abilities.

It was of the opinion of many proponents of individualized reading that one of the biggest problems in introducing such a program is obtaining adequate reading material. The presence of large numbers of books and other reading material on many different reading levels is of primary importance.

The major features of individualized reading are that children generally make their own selections and read at their own rate. Many advocates of the program reported that reading came more easily and more rapidly when the book was closely related to the purposes and interests of the child.

Many studies have indicated that the attitude of the teacher toward the individualized reading program was of the utmost importance. The success of this program depends much upon pupil-teacher rapport. They must work together to discover weaknesses and then plan how to overcome them.

Evidence revealed by many studies has shown that many teachers and educators were very enthusiastic over the program. Teachers have reported that they were putting into practice principles long professed as sound, such as power of self-motivation, meeting individual differences, and the human drive to follow individual interests and pursuits.
Several studies reported show that students under the individualized reading program had made greater gains on standardized reading achievement tests than other comparable students under more familiar reading programs. The difference between the means was large enough to indicate the existence of a real, rather than a chance, difference.

The consensus of many writers is that reading is an individual process and should be taught accordingly. Because children differ so widely in interests, capacity to learn, and motives, writers have indicated that it is impossible to provide adequate stimulation and guidance through the use of the same materials and through group instruction.

Evidence provided by many studies has shown that most programs of individualized reading have been successful. However, because of the short period of time in which studies have been made and—in very few cases have these been controlled studies—there is no conclusive evidence that individualized reading is far superior to the group or basal reading approach. There is need for further research to determine if individualized reading can be successful for most teachers and for all kinds of schools as well as for all types of children.

This abstract of approximately five hundred words is approved as to content.

Signed
Instructor in charge of Master's Report
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express appreciation to Dr. W. Clement Wood under whose guidance this report was written and to Mr. Norman Frame for his helpful suggestions in the planning and preparation of this report.

C. E. W.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND PROBLEM

The purposes of this research were: (1) to examine more fully the literature on individualized reading in order to gain a concrete understanding of the issues and problems involved; and (2) to learn some steps which are necessary for developing an individualized reading program in the classroom.

The teaching of reading is a very complex process which necessitates numerous understandings on the part of the teacher of how children learn, as well as the many skills involved in learning to interpret accurately that which is read. From experience as both a teacher and an administrator, it is the opinion of the writer that individual differences are largely neglected in the teaching of reading. One of the means proffered by various educators recently for coping with individual differences has been individualized reading.

BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

Various reasons have lead many educators to try or at least to investigate the individualized reading method. Among the influences leading to the interest in individual-
ized reading is the dissatisfaction on the part of some educators with some of the outcomes of current reading instruction. These educators have come to recognize that an unjustifiably high rate of very poor readers are found in our schools.

A second factor is probably the recognition of the failure of many boys and girls to develop a permanent interest in reading as a leisure pursuit. Proponents of individualized reading believe that this practice will engender greater interest in reading.

Also, with television, movies, youth organizations, and other aspects of modern life making their demands on the time of today's children, elementary teachers are being faced with the necessity of developing an interesting, stimulating reading program that will encourage the child to recognize the values and pleasures to be found in books.

Individualized reading, it is claimed, recognizes and provides for a wide range in reading, not only in reading ability, but also in interests and needs found in every grade in today's schools. Witty stated, "It is believed that these varied interests and needs cannot be met effectively through group instruction which relies chiefly upon a textbook."¹

A frequently heard recommendation for the adoption of individualized reading comes from those critics of the reading program who point out the failure of group instruction. Some have asserted also that the basal reading program does not recognize the interest factor sufficiently. Witty stated, "Critics point to the primer and first grade readers and cite the repetition of words in a context which presents the unrealistic pursuits."\(^2\)

Evans reported, "Recent research has proven rather conclusively that the traditional 'group' method of teaching reading fails to maintain the interest of the child."\(^3\) It was indicated that this is to be expected in primary readers, where there is considerable repetition of words and phrases. Also many basic readers portray upper middle class social values rather than the values present in most middle and lower class American homes.

Due to the aforementioned problems and facts, many teachers have turned to different methods of teaching reading. Within the last ten years there has appeared a great amount of writing concerning individualized reading. Most of the opinions expressed and research cited has been favorable.

\(^2\)Ibid.

However, this does not mean that it is the best way of teaching reading for all teachers.

Hildreth contended that the growing interest in individualized reading indicates an effort by teachers to make fuller use of the extensive array of juvenile literature in school instruction and an effort on their part to pace instruction to the abilities and interests of the pupils. Hildreth indicated further that teachers have turned to this departure from traditional methods because of the advantages of ungraded teaching in the typical classroom, the discouragement slow learners meet when they try to keep up with the rest of the class, and the demands of rapid learners for good books.  

EXPLANATION OF TERMS

Basal reading. Yoakam defines basal reading as a systematic attempt to teach children to read by giving them daily instruction in reading generally through the use of basal readers. The concept behind the basic reader is that children must be taught to read by systematic lessons, gradually increasing in difficulty, and that the best way to

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present this material to children is in the form of carefully graded readers. It might be pointed out that too often teachers in using this method assume that all children at a given level have similar reading abilities and weaknesses, and all children are taught the skills in regular sequence, according to the teacher's manual, geared to a specific book. It is realized, however, that not all teachers use the basal reader in this manner, but it is too often the easy way out for the teacher.

**Individualized reading.** Probably the most often quoted definition of the individualized reading approach is that of Lazar as cited by Nania:

> Individualized reading is a way of thinking about reading—an attitude toward the place of reading in the total curriculum, toward the materials and methods used, and toward the child's developmental needs. It is not a single method or technique, but a broader way of thinking about reading which involves newer concepts concerned with class organization, materials, and the approach to the individual child. The term "Individualized Reading" is not synonymous with individual instruction. Individualized reading must also not be confused with Extensive Reading or Recreational Reading, although they have some features in common. Individualized reading is the basic program because it not only includes the development of skills but provides directly for the enjoyment of reading as well.  

In this study the individualized reading method will be thought of as a program which enables the student to have a

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reading program adapted to his personal needs, with materials fitted to his reading ability, and the entire reading time devoted to his individualized reading problems and interests.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Since the present emphasis on individualized reading has become nationally recognized in the last ten years, most of the available material was to be found only in periodicals. Because of the small number of schools that were practicing this method, it was thought a survey would not give much more information than that of articles to be found in periodicals, which proved to be quite numerous.

Because of the short period of time in which studies have been made (and in very few cases controlled studies) as yet, there can be no proven facts that individualized reading is far superior to the group approach. However, it has been reported to be highly successful in most cases.

PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

The materials presented in this research study were gathered from a review of literature available at Forsyth Library, Fort Hays Kansas State College; pamphlets on individualized reading distributed by the Reading Center of the Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia; research material from the National Education Association, Washington, D.C.;
and suggested readings given in a personal letter from Jeannette Veatch, Associate Professor of Education, Pennsylvania State University.
INDIVIDUALIZED READING vs. THE BASAL READING APPROACH

The two methods, individualized reading and basal reading, are sharply divergent on techniques of basal selection, grouping practices, lesson planning, and teacher-pupil relations. While some teachers may shift from one program to another at times, the basic philosophies of the individualized and the grouped approaches differ profoundly.

The profound philosophical difference between individualized reading and a basal reading program, according to Veatch, is that in an individualized program the personal interest of the child is engaged before he is taught, while in a basal program the interest of the child is subordinate either to the interests of the group or to the material itself.¹

Except in isolated cases, most individualized programs make use of class planning, individual contributions to class problems, and other socializing situations. In this way individual progress may be recognized, purposeful reading motivated, class experiences extended and deepened; as a result, individual development is not reckoned in terms of class progress and a fixed curriculum.

The getting away from the basic reader as the sole means of teaching reading is a giant step for any teacher to take, and especially for those who have been teaching strictly group reading for many years. However, to broaden the child's scope of information, to enlarge his background of experiences, to turn his attention to the many and varied books now available to children on all subjects should be some of the goals toward which any teacher should be willing to work.

The supporters of an individualized reading program are fundamentally concerned with recognition of several important factors, some of which are:

1. The teacher must have the skill and know-how to enable him to draw upon many methods and resources to meet the reading needs of individual children.

2. The children must be supported and encouraged to learn to read in terms of their individuality and their own unique pattern and pace of growth.

3. Motivation, the drive of the learner to achieve in reading, must be recognized by helping him seek for himself and choose those books for himself which will be satisfying to him.

4. A climate must be created in which reading becomes not only a necessity but irresistible.

With these factors in mind and an understanding of what individualized reading is not, may help one to develop a clearer picture of what it is. According to Crosley, Individualized Reading is not:

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1. Teaching each child in the same way.
2. Using the same material with each child.
3. Having each child read aloud to the teacher for a few minutes each day.
4. Letting children choose at random anything they want to read.
5. Having a small group of children, each with a different book, or the same book, join the teacher while she listens to each read aloud.
6. Putting emphasis on quantity of books rather than upon quality.³

Much of the success of this program will depend upon the ability of the teacher to adapt the instruction to the individuals within the classroom.

ADVANTAGES OF THE INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACH

Nania gives the following as advantages for the individualized reading approach:

1. In the individualized reading program, emphasis is not placed on any one set of graded readers commonly referred to as the "basal series". The individualized program is based upon self selection of materials by pupils, with teacher help and guidance, which they will read not only to develop skills and proficiency in reading but for enjoyment as well. Thus the material that each child will be exposed to will depend upon his own particular needs, interests, purposes, and abilities.
2. Children develop at different rates in reading. In this approach, a skill is taught when the need for it is clearly evidenced. This way, the slow are not forced to try to stay up with the so-called average group, and the better readers are not forced to slow down to stay within reach of this same mythical group. Thus each child is allowed to work at a pace which is comfortable for him;

³Ibid.
undue competition is minimized, and he competes with himself rather than with the class in general.

3. Instruction as indicated above is placed on a one-to-one basis. During the individual sessions, the teacher and the pupil "retreat" to a pre-planned place in the classroom at a preplanned time to discuss the material the pupil is reading. This is done to accomplish two important purposes: (1) to insure absolute privacy for the teacher and the child and (2) to place the child in a situation where he has the satisfaction of having the teacher completely to himself for five or ten minutes. Proponents of this approach are quick to emphasize that the frequency and the length of time devoted to each such individual session will depend upon such factors as: (1) the needs of each child (2) the material being read and (3) the size of the class.

4. While the teacher's contact with the child concerning his reading development should be primarily on an individual basis, groups are formed where there are several pupils who need instruction on one or more of the same particular skills. After they have been helped the group is disbanded.

5. This approach has proven to be very stimulating to the teachers involved in two ways: (1) they are able to bring each pupil along in line with his own capabilities, avoiding the frustration of trying to make each child measure up to group standards and (2) teachers find it much easier to become interested in the materials children report on as they do not have to listen to the same materials over and over again.

6. It has long been recognized that separation for remedial reading may be a cause of emotional stress. This stress can be sharply reduced since remedial work, except for extreme cases, would be carried on along with the other activities that are part of the on-going program.

7. It provides a more permissive atmosphere for learning.

8. It leads to a more favorable attitude toward reading in general.

9. Children learn to use books of all types for study projects.

10. A better integration with other language arts is possible.
11. Teachers assume the responsibility for teaching the skills rather than depending on reading manuals and workbooks.  

Other strong points pointed out by teachers who have used the individualized approach are:

1. Independent practice activities on an individual basis are always more economical of the pupil's practice time than taking turns listening to other children read aloud.

2. The pupils cover more ground in continuous reading when they use story books than when they are confined to reader selections.

3. The plan alleviates the pressure slow learners feel about getting into the "top group". No child is forced ahead at too rapid a pace, nor is any child held back by the slower progress of the rest of the group. The pupil receives specific help from the teacher at the time he needs it most.

4. Free-choice reading is a boon to the gifted child because it increases both the range and quantity of his reading.

5. This program may actually be less expensive in terms of school book purchase because it does not require a dual set of basal readers and trade books in sufficient quantity for every child.

4Frank Nania, "Individualized Reading Pro and Con," Grade Teacher, LXXVIII (April, 1961), pp. 13, 112.
6. Individual conferences, which are more common with this approach, provide a valuable personal relationship between teacher and pupils.

7. There seems to develop a keen interest for sharing.

8. Strong motivation for individual improvement is felt more keenly than in the group approach.

9. It offers the creative child a chance to explore his interests and to develop his background more thoroughly.

10. It tends to avoid the evils of competition and comparison, because each child is in a different book. Cooperation can be developed by getting several children to read on a single topic, but at different reading levels.

11. Decided carry-over to the home with more self-initiated reading and extensive use of the public library.

12. The child has a better sense of his own worth and self-understanding; he is a participating member of the group but relies on his own self-management; he feels that he is a real part of the program and is learning from his own efforts and not always because of what the teacher wants him to learn.

The reasons proponents prefer individualized reading over basal reading were summarized by Gray when he said:

Children differ so widely in interests, capacity to learn, and motives that it is impossible to provide adequate stimulation and guidance through the use of the same materials and group instruction. If the child is to develop individuality, creativity, and ability to think
clearly and to interpret deeply he must not be hampered by group regimentation. Instead, he should learn to read in an environment which stimulates motives for reading, which permits free choice of materials to be read at his own rate, and receive help as needed or at scheduled times.5

This plan of reading should go along quite well with the present trend of taking the child where he is and progressing from there because of the considerable amount of individual help that is given.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACH

Some of the major arguments against the individualized reading approach are the following according to Nania:

1. While self-selection is to be one of the cornerstones on which such an approach is to be built, it may well be its greatest weakness. Proponents of the individualized approach assume that all pupils will accept the responsibility for making intelligent selections. Not only will they not always assume the responsibility for the selection of materials, but the teacher has no efficient way of checking whether or not the pupils are reading the material after they have made their selections. It is extremely difficult for the teacher in a five-or-ten minute conference to check the pupil's comprehension of the ideas and concepts presented in a book with which the teacher is probably not familiar. It is physically impossible for the teacher to acquaint herself with the great variety of materials that would be read.

2. The obtaining of a sufficient supply of materials of varied difficulty to satisfy the needs and interests of an entire class is difficult. Many argue that present-day classrooms, libraries and community sources cannot provide for such a need. Others also argue that to provide the needed materials would cost too much; more than can be justified.

3. Individualized reading makes no provision for readiness. There is no preparation for the story. The child's own desire to read the story is supposed to preclude the necessity for teacher-directed introductions. There is no effort to try to explain new words or concepts found in the material. Many argue that in this approach, we are presenting concepts to children far beyond their grasp due to lack of experience with them, thus producing word readers.

4. Most teachers are bound by schedules which demand that pupils be in specific places at specific times. This, plus class size, makes it physically impossible for teachers to get in the number of conferences per day that would be desirable. As a direct result of this, children may well feel neglected and build up a negative attitude toward reading and school in general.

5. Unless the teacher is extremely proficient in her ability to diagnose a pupil's weaknesses, she may miss finding some of the skill areas in which help is needed. Even teachers who are competent in this area may find that the five or ten minutes they give each pupil per week is not enough time to do an adequate job.

6. The amount of bookkeeping required of teachers and pupils may well cause a negative attitude.

7. Children miss out on the social advantages of continued group work since groups are formed sporadically.

8. The individual approach lacks proper methods to verify results of growth in reading.

9. The individualized approach lacks ways of controlling vocabulary development.

10. Skill development is neglected because of the lack of a sequential program of development.⁶

⁶Nania, op. cit., pp. 112-113.
Other disadvantages felt by some who have tried the plan or studied it are as follows:

1. All slow pupils and others who cannot work well independently become restless and tend to waste time.
2. There is no opportunity to teach new vocabulary and concepts needed before reading.
3. It is impossible to provide a systematic program of word attack skills.
4. It is exceedingly hard to identify pupils' difficulties in short infrequent conferences.
5. There is some doubt about the permanence of skills taught so briefly.
6. The method is inefficient because of the time required to teach skills to individuals instead of teaching groups who are progressing at a similar rate.
7. The conscientious teacher becomes frustrated in attempting to provide individual conferences for all pupils who need them each day.

Having given the pros and cons of other authorities on individualized reading, it would be unfair to leave out the views of Veatch, who is a strong advocate of individualized reading. In contrasting the two programs, Veatch decidedly favors the individual approach as is obvious in her following summary of differences in the programs.

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<td>I READING MATERIAL</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Large number and variety of trade and textbooks used in instruction</td>
<td>A. Single basic or supplementary readers used in instruction</td>
</tr>
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<td>II CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE</td>
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A. Children choose what they read
B. Motivation arises from child's interests
C. Instruction on individual one-to-one basis
D. Grouping is short term and for specific immediate purpose
E. Reading lesson prepared independently and seatwork has element of self-determination
F. Remedial work integrated with other activities
G. Planned sharing period
H. Individual peak reading level checked and evaluated

A. Teacher chooses what children read
B. Motivation comes from teacher using the manual
C. Instruction on group basis
D. Grouping is semi-permanent and for indeterminate purpose
E. Reading lesson prepared in a group and seatwork determined by teacher
F. Remedial work entails separate operation
G. No special sharing period
H. Various and indeterminate reading levels checked and evaluated

III EFFECTS ON THE CHILD AND ON HIS READING

A. Gifted child progresses at his own pace
B. Slow reader not publicly stigmatized
C. Close personal interaction with teacher serves child's psychological needs
D. Reading at own interest and ability level fosters development of skills

A. Gifted child must gear progress to groups
B. Slow reader publicly stigmatized by group and book assignment
C. Child loses advantage of close personal interaction with teacher
D. Working at group interest and ability level may hinder development of skills
E. Acquiring skills only as needed assures their normal development

E. Acquiring skills when not needed may hinder reading competence

F. Oral reading promoted by genuine audience situation

F. Oral reading suffers through absence of genuine audience situation

G. Reading becomes its own reward

G. Extrinsic rewards may debase intrinsic value of reading

DISADVANTAGES OF BASAL READERS

Russell, a proponent and author of basic readers and texts on the teaching of reading, cites the following dangers in a basal program:

1. The children of any one class cannot all profit by the same book of a basic series.
2. A basic series of readers cannot capitalize upon the community environment of a particular school or the interesting news events which occur every week.
3. A basic series of readers should not be used to make reading something apart from the rest of the school program.
4. A basic series of readers may not provide all the reading situations needed by some children. 9

In most cases in a basal reading program, all children are taught the skills in a regular sequence, according to the teacher's manual, and geared to a specific book, in the belief that there is a kind of "natural" order in which read-

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ing skills develop. If reading, as most experts tell us, is a highly personal action, then surely skills develop in quite a different sequence in different people. In making this point, Veatch asserted, "Skills should be taught only when they are needed and if they are needed, otherwise teaching is a waste of time."\(^{10}\)

Most teachers will agree that grouping children does not meet the needs and abilities of each individual child. Because of the unevenness of skill development in each child, a particular pupil either wastes his time by having to slow down to follow others, or is put into an atmosphere of unfair competition and forced to adjust his reading pace to that of a hypothetical average of the group.

ADVANTAGES OF BASAL READERS

It would be unfair to say that the basal reader does not have some advantages too. That the basal reader contributed to the development of literacy in America few would care to deny. Several generations owed most of the reading ability they possessed to the school reader. However, the revolt against the basal reader approach has undoubtedly been beneficial in bringing about improved reading instruction.

\(^{10}\)Veatch, op. cit. p. 31.
The time may come when the basal reader will be a thing of the past, but that time has not yet arrived. Many beginning teachers would be at a loss as to where to start if they did not have at hand well-written basal materials with their accompanying aids to teaching.

Basal reading systems of the better kind have several advantages. Yoakam cited the following:

1. Carefully selected vocabulary.
2. Material selected because of its appeal to children.
3. Excellent illustrations.
4. Teaching aids including a manual, workbooks, charts, word and phrase cards, and other supplementary material.\(^1\)

Basal readers are carefully made for children by people long experienced in the teaching of reading. The authors of basal readers regard them as a useful tool in teaching the child to read. Yoakam stated, "The basal reader does not supply all the material or ideas needed by the teacher to teach children to read, but it helps him to accomplish this purpose and aids in the development of a systematic, sequential approach."\(^2\)

Whether it be individualized reading or basal reading, one would have to agree that a defensible reading program


\(^{12}\)Ibid. p. 7.
should recognize the value of systematic instruction, utilization of interests, fulfillment of developmental needs, and the articulation of reading experiences with other types of worthwhile activity. We should help students to become skillful, self-reliant, and independent in using the library and other sources for satisfying their interests and needs. The writer agrees with Betts who said, "It is not the grouping or individualization that counts as much as what is done after the classification is made."\textsuperscript{13}

STUDIES INVOLVING THE INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACH

The results of studies so far have not established any marked superiority of individual, self-selection reading over conventional methods in terms of actual level of reading performance in matched groups. However, the children in the individual plan tend to show more enthusiasm for reading and take greater interest in books. As a result, the studies reported show that most children do more reading than formerly.

There is conclusive evidence according to Hildreth that this plan serves to mature all the basic reading skills--the development of vocabulary, increased speed and fluency,

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Emmett Betts, Foundation of Reading Instruction} (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1954), p. 44.
extensive silent reading, comprehension, and critical thinking.\textsuperscript{14}

Many authorities believe that the method of individualized reading surely needs many continual tryouts and studies. However, studies indicate that there is much good to be found in this method regardless of the criticisms, but that it is not, nor will it ever be, the one and only method. It seems likely, instead, that it will take its place in the repertory of the skilled teachers in reading, and as such give valuable results for their children.

The following studies will indicate the findings of several who have tried this method.

\textbf{Spring Street School in Atlanta.} Five teachers from the primary grades in the Spring Street School in Atlanta established a program to compare the individualized program and the basal reading program. These five teachers had varying reactions and judgments regarding their experiences. Three of the five believed that individualized instruction constituted a better approach to teach reading to the more capable children than basal textbook instruction. Of the other two, one was undecided as yet about the relative merits of the two approaches, and the other one concluded that basal

instruction was the better approach, judging that primary children need the security of common instruction in carefully graded materials in the early stages of their learning to read. From the results of this study it was suggested that individualized instruction may enhance the development of abler readers.\textsuperscript{15}

\textbf{Wyandanch, New York.} An experimental program in individualized reading was established in the third and fourth grades in Wyandanch, New York. From the standardized tests given at the beginning of the year and the end of the year, it was observed that better than average gain in reading ability was made. A study of test pattern showed a much higher degree of accuracy at the end of the year than at the beginning. The gain in these groups was greater than in similar groups taught by the group method. In an informal interest inventory conducted in both control and experimental groups, dramatic results were evidenced by the much wider range of reading interests in the experimental group.

The very wide range of scores in the experimental groups, especially at the upper end, seemed to indicate that "the lid was lifted", and that no child was held back. The

range of scores in the control group was very much narrower, despite the fact that the I.Q. range was equal to or higher than that of the experimental group.

It was indicated by this study that the children read more proficiently, with greater interest, and in more varied areas. Reading became fun, as well as an important tool for finding information. There was a definite carry-over of reading skills to other parts of the curriculum. There also seemed to be a greater retention of skills and vocabulary, because teaching occurred at the time the need was evident.¹⁶

New York City Public Schools. This study was made on the question: What differential effect, if any, does individualized reading have on the scores that children attain on standardized reading tests? The study was made of the reading gains, as measured by standardized reading tests, of children who were given individualized reading in the fourth and fifth grades, and of children who were not given individualized reading in the fourth and fifth grades. At the time the study was initiated, the children involved were in the sixth grade. The investigation of reading growth began with the children's test results in the third grade.

It was found that in the sixth grade the average score for the individualized reading group was significantly differ-

ent from the average score for the city's sixth grade. The individualized reading group obtained an average reading test grade in the sixth grade that was higher than the average reading test grade obtained by the non-individualized reading group. The difference between the means was large enough to indicate the existence of a real, rather than a chance, difference. In the two years and four school months that had elapsed since the third grade reading survey, the children in the individualized reading group compared with a similar but non-individualized reading group had gained more on the average in reading test grades.

The results obtained from this study, the researchers believed, may have been due to various factors such as: differences in materials; greater motivation provided children to select regular within-school reading materials; differences in procedures afforded or permitted teachers and pupils by the materials; the type of pupil-teacher weekly time schedule to identify and meet individual and group needs and purposes; the possible variations in the amount of time devoted to reading instruction; or to the novelty of the individualized approach for the children. Regardless of the reason or reasons, the experimental group tended to make larger gains on standardized reading tests than other comparable children made with more familiar reading programs.17

17Miriam S. Arnow, "A Study of the Effect of Individ-
Michigan School. Two groups of children matched for reading ability, I.Q., and socio-economic status were taught by student teachers under the supervision of critic teachers. One group followed a basal-reader approach, while the other engaged in individualized reading. Their data showed no significant difference between the groups in reading gains. It was believed that the students in the individualized group showed greater interest in reading and read more books.18

Study by Jenkins. Jenkins, as reported by Witty, related the results of an individualized program where the pupils met with the teacher on a daily basis. The results of standardized reading tests showed that self-selection produced significantly greater gains than did conventional reading methods in the areas of reading vocabulary, reading comprehension, and total reading. The control group averaged 1.14 years in total reading gain while the experimental group averaged 1.41 years. In vocabulary growth the control group averaged 1.09 years growth and the experimental group 1.96 years growth. In comprehension 59 per cent of the experimental group gained two or more

years, while 24 per cent of the control group scored in this range. 19

REACTIONS OF TEACHERS AND PUPILS TO
THE INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACH

It was found throughout this research that the reactions of teachers and pupils alike have been both for and against the individualized approach. However, most results indicate more teachers and pupils are in favor of the program than against it. Much depends upon the teacher and how well she is prepared for this type of program. The attitude of the teacher toward this program is of utmost importance.

Comments of teachers. Witty quoted one teacher in an elementary school of Whittier, California, as stating, "While the individualized program increases the work of the teacher, the visible progress and interest of each child is exceedingly heartwarming." 20

Phyllis Parkin, another teacher, asserted:

Now there are certain gains the teacher cannot help observing: freedom of choice and the joy that accompanies it; release from the tethering gait of the group; release


20Ibid. p. 407.
from the stigma of the group label; a relaxed attitude toward reading; the pleasure of making reading a live, dynamic activity; more time for reading for the purpose that reading can serve; a change of emphasis from competition with the group to competition with one's self. 21

Crossley and Kniley related the comments of some teachers of the Franklin Elementary School in Philadelphia where the individualized program was used.

"I felt deep satisfaction in being close to each child in being able to slip in a word of encouragement privately without worrying about the reaction of the group."
"I developed a new respect and regard for the slow learners who worked at home in preparation of their stories and were eager to have the conferences."
"I feel that the greatest loss in individualized reading is in talking about the story together, sharing ideas, and experiences." 22

The following statements were made by Sharpe from the conclusion of a study in a Los Angeles City School with third grade pupils using basal readers one or two days a week and conducting individualized reading the other three days of the week.

It does require more time to plan and evaluate the work of each child in an individualized program than is required for a regular reading program, but the fact that children do read and seem to thoroughly enjoy it, is the gratifying result. Better work habits seemed to be established, and an increased achievement level was indicated. Children seemed to develop a real enjoyment

21Ibid. p. 408.

in reading, not only for fun, but for locating factual and other interesting information as well.\textsuperscript{23}

**Comments of children.** Witty cited Karlin's report of third grade children's comments in the Lader School, Menlo Park, California, as follows:

"I like reading this year because I don't have to read the same words over and over."

"I can read as fast as I like and don't have to wait for the slow ones. Sometimes we couldn't finish the story in a group."

"I didn't like the old stories; I could hear the other groups reading them, so they were not new. Now I can read any kind of story."

"It's more fun because I can read all the science books I like. I couldn't read long enough in a group."

"I can read the book I like without being teased about 'baby books'."

"I don't like to read in a group; If I make a mistake, the others laugh. I like to read to you alone."\textsuperscript{24}

Some negative attitudes of children given by Crossley and Kniley in their report of the study in the Franklin Elementary School in Philadelphia are as follows:

"I don't like individualized reading because I do not know where I stand. If I heard other people read I would know where I stand."

"I don't like the way you have to wait for a conference."

"I like group reading because I can hear other boys and girls read."

"I like to read books out loud."\textsuperscript{25}


\textsuperscript{25}Crossley and Kniley, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
There were additional favorable remarks cited from this study, but they were very similar to those quoted previously.

If the studies found and reported here are the usual findings of individualized reading programs for most teachers and children, then one would concede that the program does have something good to offer and some excellent results can be derived from it.
CHAPTER III

MATERIALS OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED READING PROGRAM

Probably one of the biggest problems in introducing a successful individualized reading program is that of providing adequate reading material. Of primary importance is the presence of large numbers of books, magazines, pamphlets, and other reading materials on many different reading levels.

The classroom teacher, to use these many books effectively in an individualized reading program, must know both their difficulty and content. He must be able to grade each of them, roughly, as to their reading difficulty. Only in this way can a check be made of reading comprehension or can the right book find its way to the right child. A card for each book should be kept by the teacher. On the card should be: the book's reading difficulty, key comprehension questions of various kinds, a list of pages good for testing oral reading and some of the more difficult vocabulary, as well as any other information that would aid in teaching reading skills.

There are very few children who can not be stimulated to read if there is a large supply of books available which will attract the children to them. Attractive books, a helpful teacher, and the freedom to browse and select will
accentuate the drive to read in children. They will not need to be motivated from some outside force. A child who reads something because he wants to read it is well on his way to getting meaning from his reading.

Materials for an individualized reading program may be drawn from books which are loosely termed "trade books", meaning those books designed for the general bookstore and library market, as distinguished from those specifically described as textbooks or basic texts. Single story content in adult format seems most suitably adapted to this type of program.

The teacher, as organizer, must be sure that at any one time books range in difficulty (vocabulary and concept) from those at a level of independent reading for the child achieving the least, to those at the instructional level for the one with superior ability. The teacher must be aware of the varied interests of the pupils and carefully check, in terms of these interests, the books available for selection.

SOURCES OF RELIABLE READING MATERIAL

If the teacher is to acquaint himself with children's books, both as to content and reading difficulty, the quickest and easiest way is to consult some reliable reference books on children's literature.
Probably one of the most useful references for children's literature is the *Children's Catalog*.\(^1\) Books are arranged not only by title, author, and subject matter, but also briefly describe the plot and give an estimate of the reading difficulty of each title. The children's books listed in this reference volume and its yearly supplements are selected for their literary qualities. Other sources of books that are graded as to difficulty are the lists published by the State Department of Public Instruction known as the State Reading Circle Lists and the publication *Adventuring With Books*.\(^2\) The latter publication has a classification of books in the table of contents as well as title and author indexes, and age limits for each title.

Groff recommends for teachers of the dull child or the retarded reader Spache's *Good Reading for Poor Readers*,\(^3\) which the teacher can consult to find books that are more mature in their interest level than in their difficulty level.

\(^{1}\) *Children's Catalog* (New York: H. W. Wilson, Co., Supplements Published Yearly).


In individualized reading teachers should be on guard not to overlook the development of word analysis and other reading skills. The teacher should know many word analysis techniques and in what order they may be introduced properly. A teacher who confesses to any weakness in this respect, according to Groff, should have a copy of Gray's On Their Own in Reading on his desk for constant study and referral.

Because so much of the word study and other reading skill drill that children do in individualized reading is of an independent, self-study nature, the teacher should have on hand source material for developing reading games and devices. For this source Groff suggests Russell Karp's Reading Aids Through the Grades as the most well-known and widely used source. This paperback volume is full of descriptions of reading games and devices to develop many different kinds of reading skills at all reading grade levels.

Another source for finding materials for individualized reading the teacher should not overlook is Textbooks in Print. This book published yearly lists all the reading

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4Groff, loc. cit.; William S. Gray, On Their Own in Reading (Chicago: Scott, Foresman Co., 1948).


6Textbooks in Print (New York: R. R. Bowker, Published Yearly).
textbooks in print. All the supplementary materials, independent reading activity materials, readiness materials and word games and charts that are part of a reading textbook series are also included.

Groff believes that teachers using individualized reading should give some thought to the use of audio-visual materials for teaching reading. He suggests the two following collections of materials for this purpose: Leestma, Audio-Visual Materials for Teaching Reading and the Children's Reading Service Audio-Visual Catalog. Both sources list recordings and filmstrips which are particularly valuable as reading readiness experiences for children not mature enough for books or for children whose attention span with books is short.

There are also sets of self-testing, graded reading materials that can be utilized in an individualized reading program. One of the most widely advertised and newest is the SRA Reading Laboratory. This is a box of one-hundred fifty short stories and factual articles and one-hundred fifty reading rate building exercises printed on cards and

7Groff, op. cit. p. 5; Robert Leestma, Audio-Visual Materials for Teaching Reading (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Slater's Book Store, 1954); Children's Reading Service Audio-Visual Catalog (Brooklyn, New York: Children's Reading Service, Published Yearly).

written at ten different grade levels from grade two through nine.

The aforementioned sources are excellent and would be very valuable in any reading program. However, if one wished to begin an individualized reading program and did not have these sources available he might wish to use some of the following suggestions given by Veatch.

1. Order trade books on your regular book order.
2. Order one or two copies of supplementary readers that you do not already have.
3. Order one or two copies of basal readers you do not already have.
4. Sound out your P.T.A. or teacher's organizations about having a book fair.
5. Trade some of your books with other teachers for those you don't have.
6. Visit all libraries within a reasonable distance and inquire how to obtain boxes of books on loan and about their policy of selling "throw-outs".
7. Request bookmobile visits and be persistent until they are made.
8. Take your class to the library and be sure each pupil has his own personal library card.
9. Encourage children to bring books from home.
10. Ask for book samples which principals, supervisors, or administrators frequently receive.
11. Institute a book hunt in your own and other people's attics.9

HOW MANY BOOKS ARE NEEDED?

There seems to be no set number of books which should be available to organize an individualized reading program,

however, it is suggested by several authorities that at least five books per pupil are needed. The number is not so important as the variety of interests. Dolch maintained, "Fewer books are all right if they are interesting." Some say a teacher should study the interests of each child and provide for each one. Teachers will want to select books that are somewhat below the achievement level of the slowest readers and a grade or two above the highest achievement level. Such a wide range is necessary to guarantee that all will have a choice under all conditions.

After the program is initiated, it will be found that a constant supply of new books is needed. Children who are reading what they can read and what they want to read will use a number of books. However, once the program is started and it is successful, it will be doubtful that the teacher will have trouble in acquiring enough books.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD MATERIALS

Witty and his co-authors suggest that there should be a variety of books even if the basal approach is used, such as: Our Animal Story Book, The True Book Series, I Want to Be Books, and The Walt Disney Story Books for the primary

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grades; and such series as: The First Books, The Landmark Books, The World Landmark Books, and The Allabout Books for the older children.\textsuperscript{11} These books should prove to be popular in any reading program whether it be individualized or basal reading.

\section*{USE OF WORKBOOKS}

Traditionally, reading has been divided into many special skills and workbooks have been prepared to teach each one of these skills. The introductory pages of workbooks often list skills which can be taught from them and their pages on which they can be found.

It is believed by many authorities on individualized reading that workbooks can be used more successfully in the individual approach than in the basal approach, because in the basal approach the entire class usually practice on the same skill whether all individuals needed it or not. However, with the individual method the teacher, in conferring

with each child, can determine the skills in which he needs practice and can assign the practice pages it is believed the child needs. Hence, practice can be adapted to the individual, and a wider range of workbooks can be used.

The teacher is a potent force in developing good reading tastes in his students, which is an important factor in the teaching of reading. The teacher, who knows where and how to locate adequate materials, should have little trouble in providing enough books for an individualized reading program.
CHAPTER IV

ORGANIZING AND PLANNING FOR AN INDIVIDUALIZED READIN G PROGRAM

Organizing and planning are very important factors on the part of the teacher in establishing a sound program. The teacher must consider carefully how he plans to introduce the program to his students, administrators, and parents.

INTRODUCING THE NEW PROGRAM

There seems to be some disagreement as to how much publicity to give the program in the beginning. Dolch doubts the advisability of having a great deal of publicity when the program is begun. He states, "The teacher is starting a new program. He must neither promise too much nor expect too much. The new program should be discussed as an experiment and not as a force that will change the entire curriculum."¹ There are other authorities who feel that everyone should be fully informed. It seems reasonable to assume that all persons involved in a program should be informed, but no definite results should be promised.

There are three methods suggested for changing from a basal approach to an individualized approach. The first one is to change over part of the class or one group of the class at one time; the second is to change the entire class at one time; and the third is to use a part of the time by having two or three days a week of individualized reading and the other days for basal reading. In the research done in this study there were no findings that established one method as preferable to the other methods of teaching reading.

THE OBJECTIVES

The objectives suggested by White underlying individualized reading are:

1. More readers who read more extensively with pleasure and purpose
2. Lowered resistance to reading through providing increased emotional security and satisfaction
3. Freedom from boredom and elimination of face-saving disinterest in books
4. Minimal frustration caused by time limits and unfair competition
5. Increased satisfaction and motivation
6. Equal opportunity to attain capacity achievement at individual maximum speed
7. Development of the child's sense of personal responsibility for himself and for others
8. Growth of the child's sense of personal worth

Other additional objectives as suggested by Veatch are:

2Dorothy White, "Individualized Reading" (Pamphlet Published by NSE Elementary Instructional Service, November 1958 reprint).
1. Instills an appreciation of fine literature of all types
2. Develops a spirit of self-evaluation
3. Develops an ability to evaluate literature critically
4. Inspires the child to read

Along with the previously mentioned objectives, the teacher must not overlook the objectives to be found in a basal reading program.

**PREPARATION OF THE CHILDREN**

In making preparations it is believed by many that, if individualized reading is to be started correctly, there must be much discussion of it beforehand with the children. They must know just what will be done and how their teacher plans to carry it out. They must think beforehand of the problem of selecting the right book and should do a great deal of discussing in the early stages of the program on how to pick a book of their choice and at their reading level.

The teacher should inform the students about the way the books will be arranged, what kind of books are available, and how to review them. It is suggested by most authorities that the books should not all be in the same corner or area but should be scattered over the room so that more students can be picking books at the same time. The teacher should

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have some set rule in the beginning on how to properly check out a book. Regulations should be initiated as to whether the child will stand at the shelf until he gets a book he wants or if he should go to his seat after picking a book in order to examine it.

Many children will need to be convinced that they are actually on their own in picking their own reading material; however, teachers should not hesitate, especially in the beginning, to help a child pick a book at least near his level. The child may even need to be convinced that the teacher actually means that he should read for his own interest and information. Before this time, he may have thought that reading was just to please the teacher.

The teacher and the children will need to discuss what they will do when they come to a word they do not know. Will they try to sound out the word? Will they use the context in which the word appears? Will they see a familiar part of the word? Or will they just skip the word and go on? Of course any of the first three ways would be acceptable, but to use the last would promote no learning. Any teacher can devise his own methods; however, two good suggestions are: (1) the child can ask some other student in the room or (2) the child can write down the words he does not know, if the teacher is busy and can obtain his help at conference time if not before.
This preparation may take some time, but the teacher needs to have the children well informed about the experiment and the rules and regulations if it is to be properly executed.

CARRYING ON THE PROGRAM

When the teacher has arrived at this stage, he might sit down and ask himself these questions as suggested by Veatch before he proceeds.

1. Is my own mind made up?
2. Do I know the reading level of my pupils?
3. Have I decided who will participate?
4. Do I have enough books?
5. Is my room ready?
6. Have I planned enough for readers and non readers to do while I work with individuals and groups?
7. Have I established adequate routines?
   a. Do I have a plan for getting and returning books?
   b. Do I have a plan for keeping records?
   c. Have I planned a way for unknown words?
   d. Have I planned other routines for my room?
8. Have I consulted with school authorities and parents.4

A teacher who can answer, yes, to these questions should be well on his way toward developing a good individualized reading program.

Daily planning. Each day, before the actual reading begins, there should be a time for planning. This will help prevent behavior problems which might otherwise develop. Each child at the end of this planning session should know

what he is to do that day, whether this be conferring with
the teacher, selecting a new book, preparing to share a
book, practicing word analysis or oral reading skills with
another child or alone, doing creative writing about a book,
reading practice exercises, working in a workbook, etc. All
of these various activities can be listed on a large chart
and can be continually reviewed.

Conferences. The conference the teacher holds (lasting
from three to ten minutes) should be systematically
scheduled for each child with certain major purposes being
kept in mind. Techniques for recording as much as possible
about how well the child reads should be established. Nota-
tions should be made of what books a child reads, his general
reading ability, his special word recognition problems, his
interests, and his work habits. This information can supply
excellent information for parent-teacher conferences. The
teacher should help the child set purposes for reading the
books he has chosen. Guidance must precede as well as follow
the child's reading. The child should be made well aware of
his deficiencies in skills and interests. Groff states,
"There is convincing evidence that children are unable to
recognize many of their deficiencies in reading."\(^5\)

The success of this program depends much upon pupil-teacher rapport. The child needs to understand that the teacher is eager to help him at all times. He also needs to understand that the teacher is sympathetic, interested, enthusiastic, and not unduly critical of his weaknesses. Teacher and pupil must work together to discover weaknesses and then plan how to overcome them.

While the primary responsibilities of the teacher are to develop a desire to want to read and to teach the skills to fulfill these desires, his role in an individualized program is more that of guiding the child and serving as a resource person.

Records. It is recommended by many authorities that records be kept by both teacher and pupils, but not to the extent that it takes up all of the time or becomes a drudgery.

Records kept by teachers should contain notations of the difficulties of the child such as a card or sheet for each child where he can list (1) words asked about, (2) sounding difficulties, (3) meaning difficulties, and (4) helps which he needs in various reading skills. Of course, much of this information should be taken mentally or in short notes to be written down more fully at a later time. The keeping of records should not hinder teaching.
The records of children should contain a number of items. First, they should keep a record of the books and pages read. Each child should have a notebook in which he records each of the books, with title, author, and other information the teacher might wish him to keep. Second, the child should evaluate the book as to what he thought about it. Third, he should keep a list of new words learned each day. This is to direct attention to the words and to see that they are not skipped. Fourth, the child should list some new ideas he has learned from reading. This kind of record keeping is of utmost importance to the child if actual learning is to take place. Time must be given near the end of each reading period to permit each child to fill in his records.

**Developing the skills.** Many proponents of individualized reading are in complete agreement that the factor of close interrelationship of teacher and child heightens the sensitivity of the teacher to the basic needs of the child. In an individualized approach, children are not taught skills unless they need them. When the teacher sees this need he should take the cue, introduce the lesson and teach the skill that is needed. Learning the skill when it is needed should be much more meaningful to the child.

The teacher, through individual and group conferences, becomes aware of the weaknesses or needs of the child in word
attack, comprehension, consonant blends, phonetic analysis, and other reading skills. To give help on these skills the teacher can use any of the devices that are used in a regular basal reading approach, such as choosing pages from workbooks dealing with the difficulty, use of ditto sheets, games, flash cards, or any other valuable aids. The important thing is to have only the students who need this practice participate. The value of this procedure is that only those who need the work on a specific skill are participating and other children are not forced to mark time while the others catch up.

Activities. Many teachers think of reading as a time of sharing and special activities and wonder whether the individual method will lend itself as well as the group method to such activities. The results of various studies in this research have indicated that individualized reading will not hinder such activities.

Individualized reading gives an opportunity for real audience reading. When children read aloud, their goal is to communicate with their listeners, which should give pleasure to the reader and the listener. There is a genuine audience who do not know what is coming next but are eager to find out. The listener is attentive because he is interested in what is being read.

Another excellent activity might be a panel discussion by three or more students who have read the same book.
Children enjoy discussions like this and they can gain much from them. They learn courtesy in talking together; they learn that everyone is entitled to his own opinion, if he can support it; they learn how to exchange ideas and feelings in a friendly way; and they learn a great deal about how to express themselves effectively. Some other activities might be dramatizations, telling portions of a story, drawing cartoons to illustrate a story, group discussions, and many, many more.

EVALUATION

In the individualized reading program the teacher should know thoroughly and be able to teach at a moment's notice all the reading skills and abilities. There is no possibility for preparing lessons in advance. Guidance should be continual on the part of the teacher, and it should be the form of guidance which assumes close personal acquaintance with each child. Informative records must be kept by both teacher and child. In addition, the teacher must have a wide acquaintance with literature, new and old, easy and difficult, above and below the supposed reading level of his group.

This approach seems to offer a greater amount of opportunity to measure the progress of the child in reading. The most commonly used types of evaluation are teacher and
parent observation of the child as to types of material read, difficulty of material read, reaction of child, standardized tests, and teacher tests. A program such as this should be stimulating and challenging to teachers and children alike as it is so far reaching and free of the boundaries which basal reading so often imposes.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND GENERALIZATIONS

In general it may be said that a program of individualized reading instruction is to be distinguished from a basal program in that no reliance is placed on a single or common set of systematically prepared graded readers for all to use. Instead, reliance is placed on providing the child with as broad and rich a variety of reading resources as it is possible to obtain and on guiding the child in selecting those materials and experiences most individually suited to his needs, interests, purposes, and abilities.

The major features of individualized reading are that children generally make their own selections and read at their own rate. The teacher works with individuals chiefly but also with groups or the whole class on difficulties observed during individual sessions.

In an individualized reading program, an underlying premise is that the child is eager to read providing: he selects his own material for his own reading program, reads at his own rate regardless of progress of the rest of the class, participates in groups organized on other bases than ability, is taught by using a wide variety of books instead of only basal readers, and is taught the skills he needs at the time he needs them.
The process of self-selection of reading material makes grouping into ability groups unnecessary. The democratic ideal of the uniqueness of the individual and of equal opportunity for growth is provided in the individualized reading program. The interests and abilities of each individual can be realized and developed. It provides an efficient method for meeting the wide range of differences which are common in any classroom group by providing books at different levels of reading difficulty.

The use of self-selection in the teaching of reading can acquaint children with the classics of literature, which many of the basal readers of today do not do. Children can also become acquainted with a greater number and a greater variety of books in other areas of literature.

Reading at the child's interest and ability level is believed to foster greater development of skills. Proponents of the program believe that reading develops more easily, more rapidly, and children become more skillful readers when the books are closely related to the purposes and interests of the child.

In any grade or age group there are variations of abilities and, as age increases, interests and abilities become more diverse; hence, the need for individualization of instruction becomes greater. In other words, the consensus of many writers is that reading is an individual process and should be taught accordingly.
The individual plan does not lessen the work or time of the teacher, but it does seem to take away much of the drudgery. Teachers believe that a rich reward is reaped as pupils appear to develop more interest in reading and progress seems more apparent.

The teacher should evaluate his own personality with the understanding that his intelligence, emotional stability, experience with children, knowledge of teaching, and inner motivations have a great influence over what he will be able to do successfully. A teacher who believes reading to be an individual process who can accept ideas of the individualized method, should find individualized reading to be more satisfying than teaching reading by the basal approach.

The attitude of the teacher toward the individualized reading program is of utmost importance. He must realize that this may be a more complicated and difficult method than the basal reader method, especially at the beginning. The teacher must not believe that individualized reading is a plan wherein he no longer needs to teach. The same standards of instruction that characterized the basal program must be maintained. Instruction in all skills must be given and instruction in basic skills must be emphasized. Practice materials for various skills must be on hand and the child referred to these materials when necessary. The teacher's rapport with his students has never before been so important.
to his success as a teacher. The close cooperation between the teacher and student are essential to the success of the individualized program.

The teacher, under this plan, spends most of his time teaching rather than listening to recitations. He helps an individual here or a group there. The teacher can be among the children as they work.

Most studies have revealed various degrees of enthusiasm and differing opinions among educators and teachers in reporting their experiences with individualized reading. Many teachers have asserted that they are putting into practice principles long professed as sound; such as, the power of self motivation, meeting individual differences, and the human drive to follow individual interests and pursuits.

It was reported in several studies that students do as well on standardized achievement tests under individualized reading as with the basal approach.

Many studies and remarks found in this research indicate that most programs of individualized reading have been successful. This would indicate, that if an individualized reading program is properly developed, some good results should be derived from this method. However, further studies need to be made to determine if this is true for all teachers and all kinds of schools, for all types of children, for the fast and also the slow, and after a period of time when the first
enthusiasm has had time to wear off. The newness of this method demands more research and much trial and error. It will be necessary at this point to exercise judgment and insight to decide the best course of action to take in any given situation. This should involve much professional reading and accumulation of ideas and techniques as well as the help of any resource person who might be available.

Certainly individualized reading instruction is no panacea for all reading problems. This method just as any other method that is used will have its pitfalls. It might not work as well with one group as it does with another, but how gratifying it should be to a teacher if his children become so engrossed that they become carried away with their reading.

The personal value of this research cannot be measured at this time. However, from the standpoint of clarifying the procedure of the individualized reading method, it has been invaluable. The study has shown that this might be one of the solutions toward the improvement of reading. However, it is fully realized that individualized reading is not the only method. At this time the writer believes he has found ideas which will be helpful in teaching reading more efficiently and in making learning experiences for the pupils more interesting and effective.
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