

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MATERIALS FOR SPEECH PRACTICE  
IN THE EARLY ELEMENTARY GRADES

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A Thesis

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by

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In speaking of "readers," reference is made not to a person who reads, but rather to a book containing material for reading.

## INTRODUCTION

At present there are practically no published stories for articulation drill adapted for reading by first grade pupils and slow readers in the early elementary grades. The problem is to develop an interesting reader which will give efficient speech correction practice and at the same time provide acceptable supplementary reading materials at the primer level.

An examination for available drill materials for articulation practice reveals that nearly all of the materials consist of sentences, rhymes, and jingles. A great many of such materials will have to be taught to the children before any use can be made of them. In none of the materials do we have stories comparable to those found in readers at that level. (See Appendix D for a partial list of present drill materials available at the primer level.) The average reader<sup>1</sup> is not developed for practice of sounds and as a result does not give efficient practice for defective speech sounds. For these reasons it is important to develop a reader which can be of immediate use and value to the speech defective child at the first grade reading level.

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<sup>1</sup>In speaking of "readers," reference is made not to a person who reads, but rather to a book containing selections for reading.

In attempting to carry out this project it is necessary to review research concerning two different aspects. The first is the development of speech in relation to the appearance of sounds and to the growth of expression of ideas. The second is the accepted standards for beginning reading books.

There are many stages of speech development through which the child passes on his way to true speech: reflexive vocalization (the newborn infant's voice), babbling (the voluntary coos and gurgles of an infant about six or seven weeks old), lalling (the repetition of heard sounds), and echolalia (the child's imitation of sounds which others have made).

The sounds produced in the babbling stage of speech development resemble words spoken by older members of the environment. Although there is no predetermined order of appearance of the various sounds heard in babbling, the likelihood is that the child will produce vowels before consonants. Of the vowels, a variety of [a] repeated at length with variations in pitch and intensity will probably be among the first to be heard. However, the aspect which is of most concern for this study is that of the development of the consonant sounds. One of the problems connected with this project is that of determining the sounds most frequently missed by children of school age. The determination

of these sounds will then serve as the basis of the drills to be presented by the stories. The sounds missed at school age may be assumed to be those which are latest to "appear"; thus, it may be well to review what is known about this development. When a child is three and one-half years of age he should be able to produce [p], [b], [m], [w], and [h]. By four and one-half, [d], [t], [n], [g], [k], [ŋ], and [j]; by five and one-half, [f]; by six and one-half, [v], [ð], [ʒ], [ʃ], and [l]; and by seven and one-half, [s], [z], [r], [ʁ], and [hw] should be mastered.<sup>2</sup> Throughout the several stages of speech development and up through the development of word sentences, we become aware of a large number of such errors and faults. For example, a two-year-old child who has begun to speak is very likely to lisp. His sibilant sounds may be produced with a lingual protrusion, or perhaps a [t], [d], [ʃ], or [ð] sound substituted for them. Guttural sounds are inaccurately produced, with dental substitutions common and frequent.<sup>3</sup> The following are some of the sounds most frequently missed: [tʃ], [k], [g], [f], [ʃ], [ð], [v], [s], [z], [ʃ], [r], and [l].<sup>4</sup> Some combinations which give rise to difficulty

<sup>2</sup>Mildred Berry and Jon Eisenson, The Defective in Speech (New York: F. S. Crofts and Co., 1942), p. 20.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>4</sup>Charles Van Riper, Speech Correction, Principles and Methods (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1939), pp. 52-3.

are: [tw], [st], [sm], [bl], [br], [kr], [sk], [skr], [pl], [pr], [spr].<sup>5</sup> Naturally, the errors made vary greatly from one individual to another. The difficulties are due to substitutions or omissions or slurring of sounds in either the initial, medial, or final position in words, or in all positions.

Somewhere between twelve and eighteen months of age "the average child" really begins to talk. By talking we mean that the child intentionally uses conventionalized sound patterns (words) and that his observable behavior indicates that he anticipates a response appropriate to the situation and the words he is uttering. The first words, even though spoken in isolation are really sentences in that they express complete thoughts. The "word sentences" have for the child the same purpose as whole sentences for adults. "Because more can be expressed by nouns than by any other parts of speech, and because the child hears more nouns than he does other parts of speech, the first words are likely to be nouns. . . . verbs are next likely to appear in a child's vocabulary, followed then by adjectives and adverbs. Pronouns are acquired rather late in the child's language development. Articles, prepositions, and conjunctions make their appearance last, and are often omitted in speech after

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<sup>5</sup>George Seth and Douglas Guthrie, Speech in Childhood (London: Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 1935), p. 155.

they have been learned."<sup>6</sup> A very gradual development of the sentence and the different kinds of sentences used is apparent in the child between the ages of two and five years. In examining the reported data there is an indication that true sentence forming rarely occurs before the child knows one or two hundred words. The ten words most frequently used were: I, is, it, you, that, do, a, this, not, and, the.<sup>7</sup>

By the time the child is six years of age his oral sentence structure is complex. However, in beginning reading it is necessary to go back to more simple forms--back as far as the word sentence. Reading usually appears after speech has been established. Any measurable success in reading is dependent upon several factors: the child's mental maturity, perception, and muscular coordination, previous experience, language background, and social behavior. A child finds it easy to understand reading which deals with things he has himself experienced. For this reason the graded vocabularies are based on those known objects and experiences "common" to most children of a given age.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Berry and Eisenson, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

<sup>7</sup>Madorah Elizabeth Smith, An Investigation of the Development of the Sentence and the Extent of Vocabulary in Young Children (Iowa City: The University, 1926), p. 27.

<sup>8</sup>Albert J. Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1940), p. 28.



Indirect evidence indicates that the vocabularies used in the primary grades are too large. The basic need is for abundant reading in which the pupil is not continually hampered by difficulties in word recognition, and which will enable him to achieve the fluency necessary to full comprehension and enjoyment.<sup>9</sup> The specific method of selecting the vocabulary will be discussed under PROCEDURE AND RESULTS.

In writing the stories, two aspects were taken into consideration. The psychological aspect involves the choice of material and children's likes and dislikes. The mechanical aspect includes the standards set up concerning the length of the lines in a child's book, size of type, illustrations, vocabulary, and sentence structure. The materials should be suited to the level of understanding, imagination, and interest of the pupils of a specific grade. Many studies of children's own choices among reading selections show clearly that young folks have very pronounced likes and dislikes. The following characteristics are important factors in determining children's interests: suitability, surprise, liveliness, animation, conversation, plot, and humor.<sup>10</sup> It is important that children's books be clear,

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<sup>9</sup>Arthur I. Gates, Reading for Public School Administrators (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1931), p. 52.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

simple, and amusing--closely imitating the child's life. The material should be drawn from the child's life; however, it can be carried farther than reality, just as a child's imagination carries him out of reality.

To aid readability, 18 point type or larger should be used with liberal spacing. The lines should not be longer than four inches; however, "There are at present no data on children's reading which enable us to say with assurance that lines should be short rather than long."<sup>11</sup> A phrase or group of words closely related in thought should not be broken at the end of the line. Illustrations add interest, and large illustrations seem to be more interesting than small ones. Blue, red, and yellow are favorite colors.

"To a child's mind, a good book is like a worn teddy-bear; something to love, depend upon and take to bed at night. Fortunately, beauty, imagination, and sensitivity are limited to no one."<sup>12</sup>

#### PROCEDURE AND RESULTS

In preparing the book, PRIMER FOR SPEECH PRACTICE, (see Appendix A) the following factors were considered: the

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>12</sup>Maureen Daly, "Books for Children," Chicago Sunday Tribune, November 11, 1945.

development of speech and language in the child; the psychological factors which make a book useful and attractive; and the mechanical aspect of readers. Present-day pre-primary, primary, and first grade books were reviewed for comparison. (See Appendix C).

Separate stories were written for each sound, or for the voiced and voiceless pairs most frequently missed by beginning school children. The sounds chosen were: [s], [z], [k], [g], [ʃ], [ʒ], [r], [l], [f], [v], [tʃ], [dʒ]. The vocabulary of the stories was chosen from three standardized lists: the Kindergarten Union List, Gates, and Thorndike. From these words, lists were made which illustrated the various sounds to be practiced. For example, all of the words having [s] and [z] sounds were grouped together, all of the [r] words, etc. From these groupings eight stories were written--one emphasizing the [s] and [z] sounds, one emphasizing the [k] and [g], one emphasizing [ʃ] and [ʒ], [f] and [v], [tʃ], [dʒ], [r], and [l]. There is a gradual increase of vocabulary difficulty and sentence structure complexity for each story ranging from the pre-primer level at the beginning to the last half of the first grade at the end.

An attempt was made to obtain illustrations which would not only enhance the interest of the stories, but also serve as an aid to the slow reader, an aid in lip-reading practice, and also to make the child conscious of the rela-

tionship between words and correct sounds. The pictures and stories were planned together. A story idea was developed and revised in conjunction with a specifically planned picture.

When the book was completed, the author and five speech clinicians used the material in working with their first grade speech cases and first graders of different reading abilities. It was rated from the point of view of interest, readability, vocabulary, efficiency of drill for specific sounds, progression of difficulty (too rapid or too slow), frequency of the sound (too frequent or not often enough), and sentence development. Ratings were marked on each aspect. The ratings ran from 1 to 5--high to low. Each clinician was asked to add any additional criticisms under the heading of REMARKS. Form evaluation sheets were made out which served as a basis for the criticisms. A summary of the results of those evaluations will be found in Table I.

TABLE I

CLINICIAN'S RATINGS OF PRIMER FOR SPEECH PRACTICE

	1	2	3	4	5
Interest	5	9			
Vocabulary	5	8	1		
Sentence Structure	12	2			
Efficiency of Drill for Specific Sounds	12	2			
Frequency of Sound	9	5			
Total	43	26	1		

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The problem was to develop an interesting reader which would give efficient speech correction practice and at the same time provide acceptable supplementary reading material at the primer level.

The reader was developed on the basis of accepted standards of present published primers. The vocabulary was chosen, as far as possible, to give efficient practice on specific consonant sounds.

As a result of ratings of the book we find that: (1) the interest factor rates high despite the fact that the illustrations were not available at the time the book was

being evaluated; (2) the vocabulary was satisfactory. The words proving difficult were those which, upon examination, often appeared in other primers and accepted readers. Proper names, chosen because they gave additional practice on specific sounds, were stumbling blocks; however, this was expected due to the fact that most proper names have to be taught separately; (3) the sentence structure was satisfactory; (4) the drill for the specific sounds was adequate.

It may be concluded from the ratings and from general opinion that the book meets the standards as stated in the problem.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

## A. BOOKS

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New York: F. S. Crofts and Co., 1942. 426 pp.
- Gates, Arthur I., Reading for Public School Administrators.  
New York: Teachers College, Columbia University,  
1931. 126 pp.
- Harris, Albert J., How to Increase Reading Ability. New  
York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1940. 403 pp.
- Seth, George, and Douglas Guthrie, Speech in Childhood.  
London: Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 1935.  
224 pp.
- Smith, Madorah Elizabeth, An Investigation of the Develop-  
ment of the Sentence and the Extent of Vocabulary  
in Young Children. Iowa City: The University, 1926.  
92 pp.
- Van Riper, Charles, Speech Correction, Principles and  
Methods. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1939.  
434 pp.

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- Daly, Maureen, "Books for Children," Chicago Sunday Tri-  
bune, November 11, 1945.

APPENDIX



APPENDIX A

PRIMER FOR SPEECH PRACTICE

APPENDIX A

State of California

Story of the State

By

Told by

LUCILLE PETERS

Illustrated by

PRIMER FOR SPEECH PRACTICE

MARY RUTH PAULINE

Table of Contents

Story	Page
R-----	1
L-----	8
Told by	
K-G-----	14
LUCILLE PETERS	
F-V-----	20
S-Illustrated by	
MARY RUTH PAULINE	
CH-----	41
TH-----	46

Table of Contents

Story	Page
R-----	1
L-----	8
K-G-----	14
F-V-----	20
S-Z-----	27
SH-----	36
CH-----	41
TH-----	46

Roy and Mary.



Mary is a doll.  
Her hair is red.  
Roy and Mary.



Mary is a doll.  
Her hair is red.



See Roy is a dog.

See His hair is brown.

See Roy and Mary play.

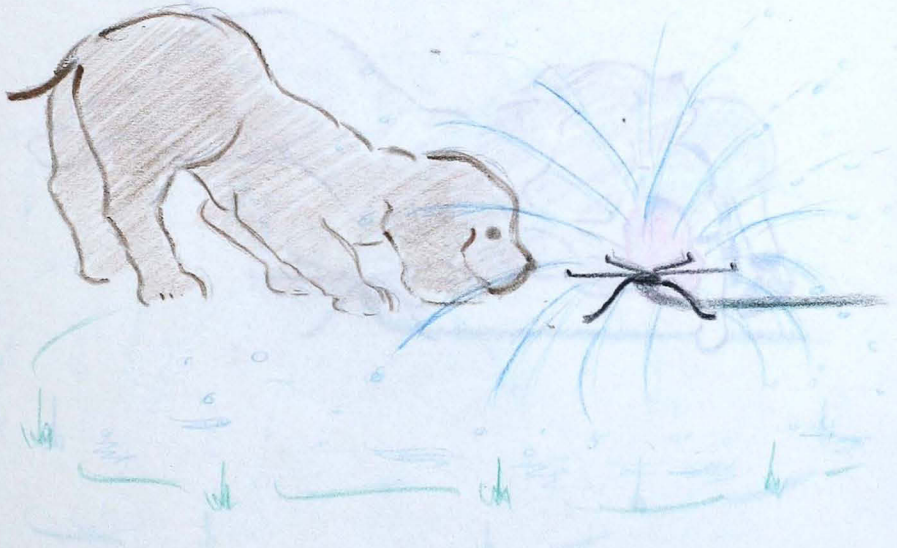


See Roy. a chair.  
See Mary. a red chair.  
See Roy and Mary play.





Mary likes the water.  
See Roy play in the water.  
See Roy play in the water.  
Roy and Mary like to play.



Roy likes the water.  
See Roy play in the water.  
See Roy play in the water.  
Roy and Mary are wet.



Roy runs in the water.

Roy runs in the water  
with Mary.

Roy and Mary are wet.



My name is Billy.  
Roy is my little dog.



My name is Lynn.  
Mary is my little doll.  
Look at Lynn and Billy  
play.



Look at Lynn.  
Look at Billy.  
Look at Lynn and Billy  
play.



Billy plays ball.  
Roy likes to play ball.  
Billy and Roy play ball.



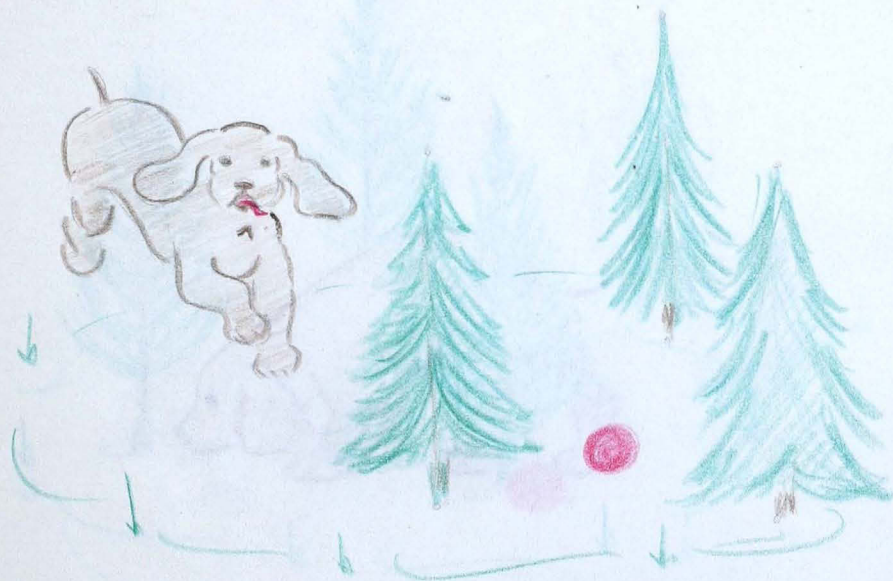
Play, Roy, play.  
Play with the ball.  
Get the ball from Billy.





Lynn likes to play ball.  
Lynn likes to play ball  
with Billy.

14  
K-G



Can you find it?  
Run, Roy.  
Run and get the ball.

15  
K-G



Can you find it?

Can you find the ball?

Come back here.

Billy will get the ball.

The dog will get the ball.

Can you find the dog or Billy?



Come, Roy, come.  
Billy will get the ball.  
Come back here.  
Billy will get the ball.  
Who will get the ball,  
the dog or Billy?

178  
k-g



The dog is hiding.  
Billy got Roy.  
Roy and Billy are together.  
Billy likes the ball.  
Who will get the ball,  
the dog or Billy?



The dog is hiding.  
Roy is playing a game.  
Roy is behind a big rock.  
Hear Roy bark?  
Bark, Roy, bark.  
Get up, Billy.  
Get up.



Roy let go. "Find me."  
Roy let the ball go.  
Billy fell on the grass.  
Roy barked and barked.  
Get up, Billy.  
Get up.



Fifi said, "Find me.  
Find me, Steven."  
Come and find Fifi."





Steven said, "Come Roy.  
Come and find Fifi."

Roy will look for Fifi.  
Who will find Fifi?



Steven will look for

Fifi.

Roy will look for Fifi.

Who will find Fifi?



"Run after" her, Roy.  
"Run fast." here.  
Come over here.

APPENDIX A



24

f - v

"Over here," said Fifi.  
"I am over here.  
Come over here."

APPENDIX A



25  
f - v 2  
h

Steven said, "I have  
found Fifi."  
Steven said, "I found  
Fifi.  
Here is Fifi over here.  
I have found her."  
Look at Fifi."

APPENDIX A

26 2  
f - v h



Steven said, "I have  
found Fifi.  
She is funny.  
Look at her face.  
Look at her feet.  
She is funny.  
Look at Fifi."

27  
S-Z



"Come, Fifi," said  
Mother.  
"Come, Steven," said  
Mother.



"Sam and Suzy are here.  
Sam has come to play.  
Suzy has come to "play."





Suzy said, "See Fifi!"  
Sam said, "See Fifi!"  
She looks funny."  
We want to look funny.  
We want to play."



Steven said, "Look at  
Fifi.

She is funny, Mother.

We want to look funny.

We want to play."



Mother said, "You may  
play.  
You may play here.  
Sam and Suzy will play  
here too.



"You may have this, Suzy.  
You may have this, Sam.  
You may have this,  
Steven.  
This will look funny.  
You will like to play  
here."



"Look at me," said Steven.

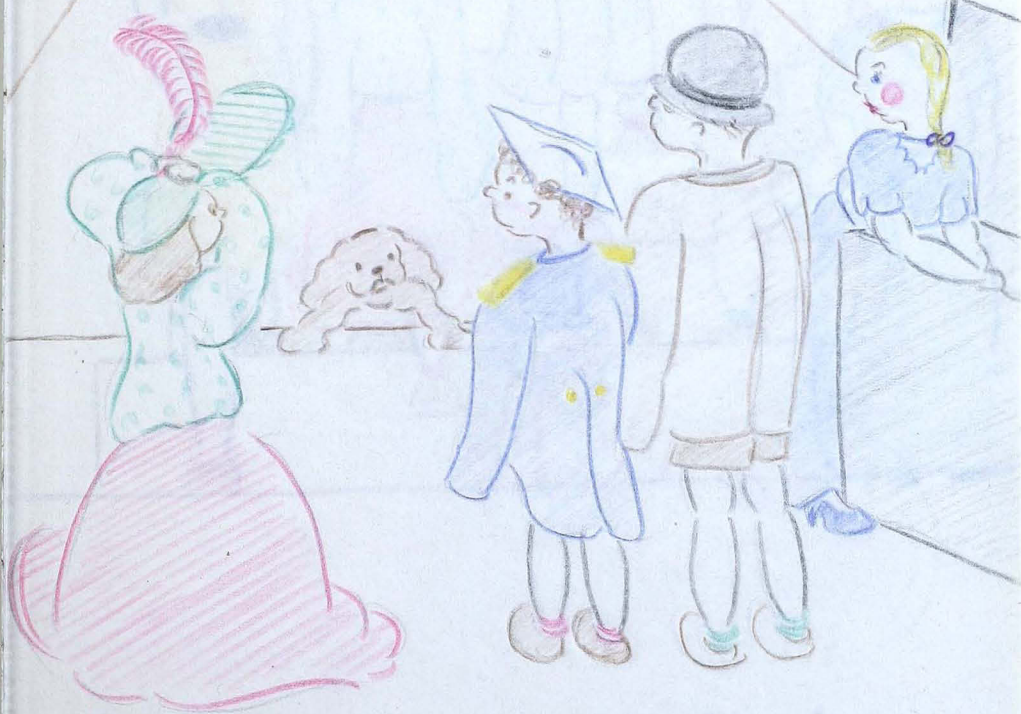
"I look like Father.

Look at my sister.

She is like Mother.

See Sam and Suzy.

They look funny."



Here we come at last.  
Roy wants to play too.  
We will dress Roy.

Four, five, six.

Here we come.

272

335

SS-2

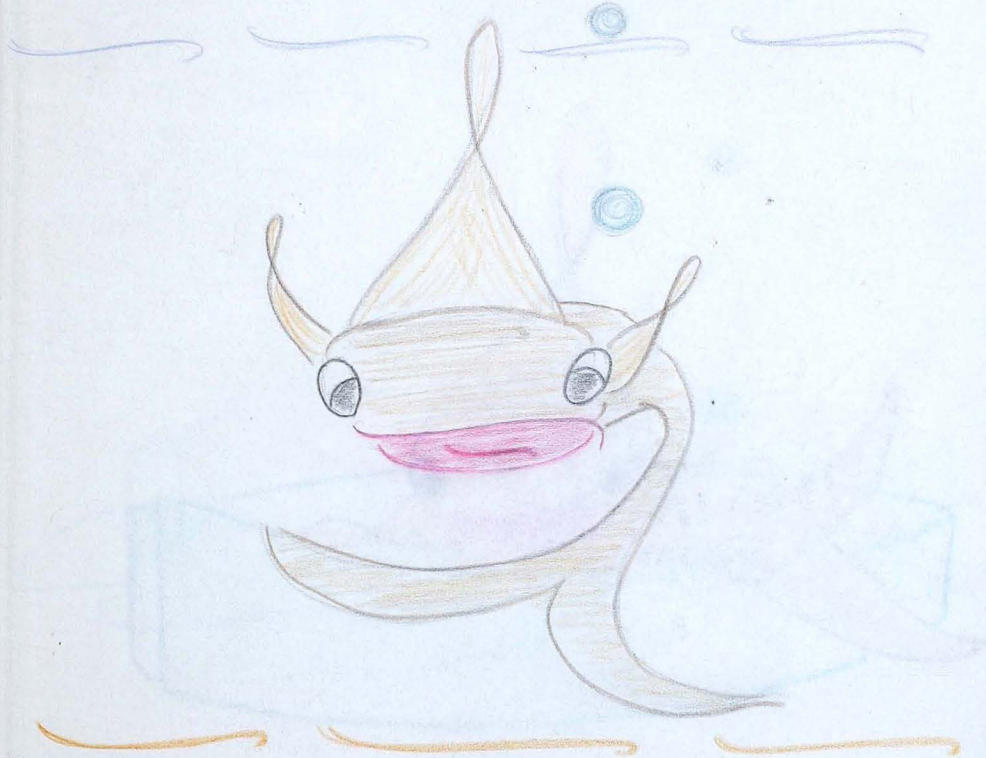


Here we come at last,  
down the steps.  
One, two, three,  
Four, five, six.  
Here we come.

36

SH

sh

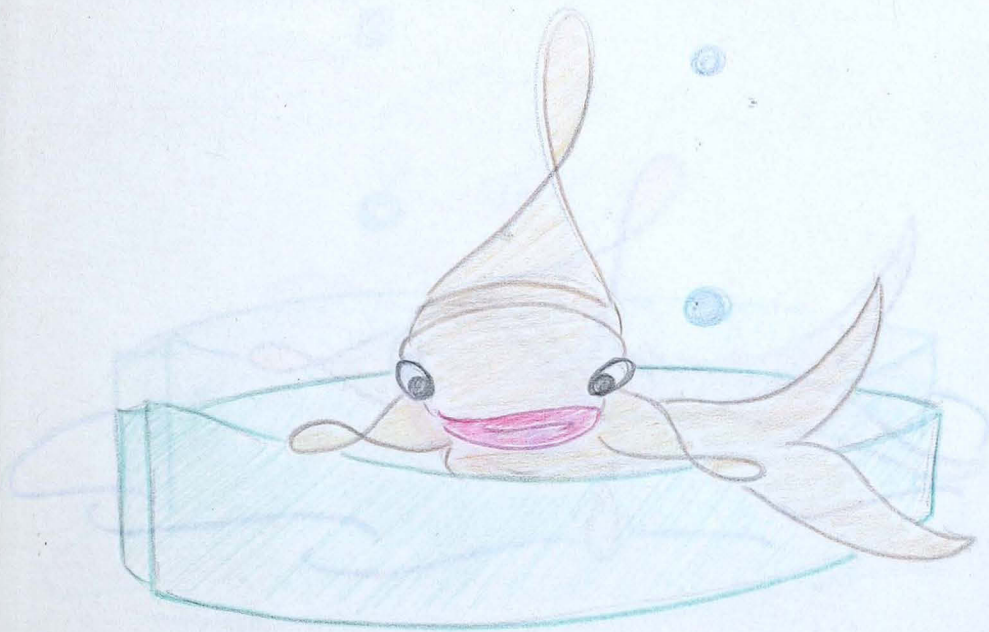


My name is Shoo-Shoo.

I am a fish.



37  
sh

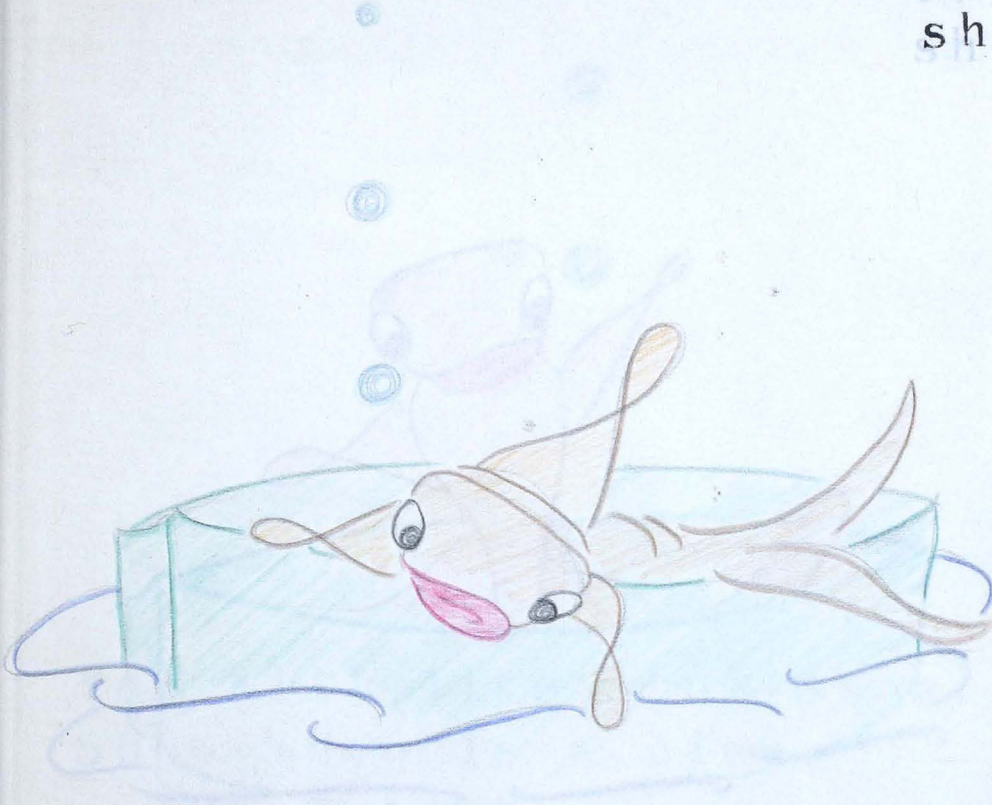


My ship is in the ocean.  
I live in my ship in the  
ocean.

See my ship?  
I live in a ship.

38

sh



My ship is in the ocean.  
I live in my ship in the  
Ocean! be a nice fish.

392

sh 1



You will like Shoo-Shoo  
Shoo-Shoo is a nice  
fresh fish.

I shall swim.

I shall dance.

I shall be a nice fish.

CH

41

40

sh

You will like Shoo-Shoo.  
Shoo-Shoo is a nice  
fresh fish.

My name is Itchy.

CH

41

42

ch



My name is Itchy.

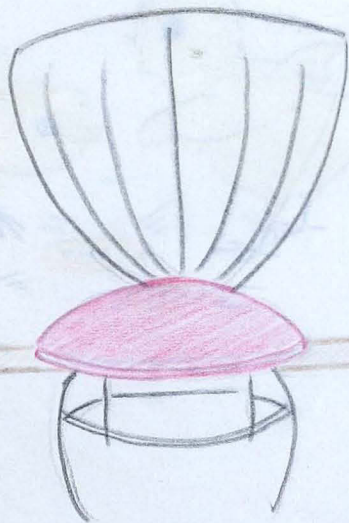
I am not a child.

I am not a watch.

47  
42  
ch  
ch



I am not a child.  
I am not a watch.



I am not a picture.  
I am not a chair.

44

ch



I am not a chicken.  
I am not change.  
A MATCH!



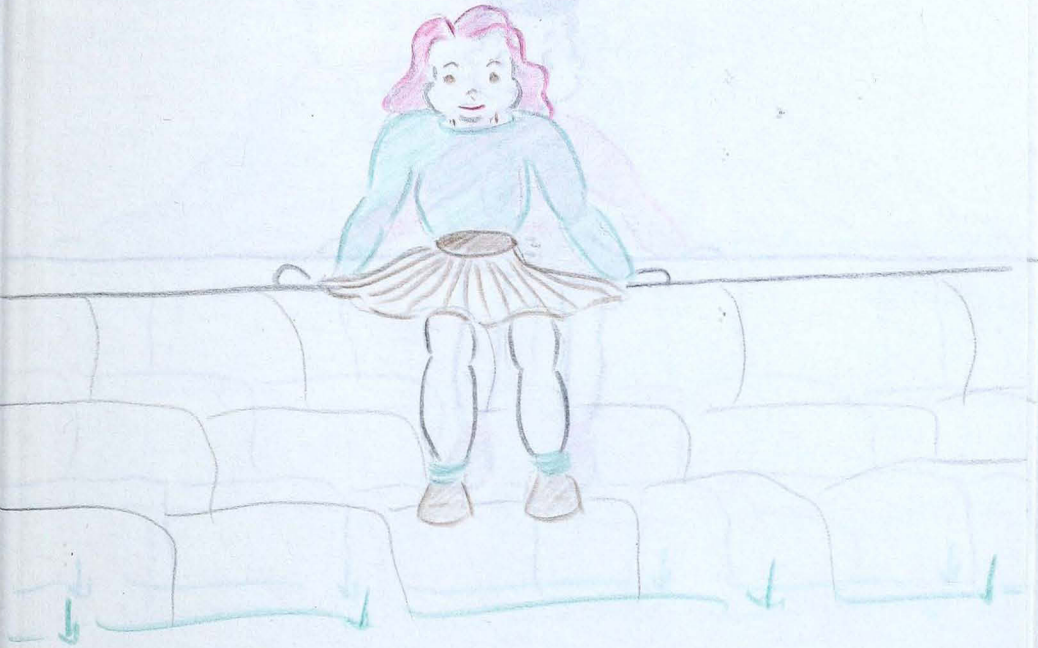
45  
ch



I do not cost much.  
Guess what I am.  
A MATCH!

46

TH



My name is Martha.

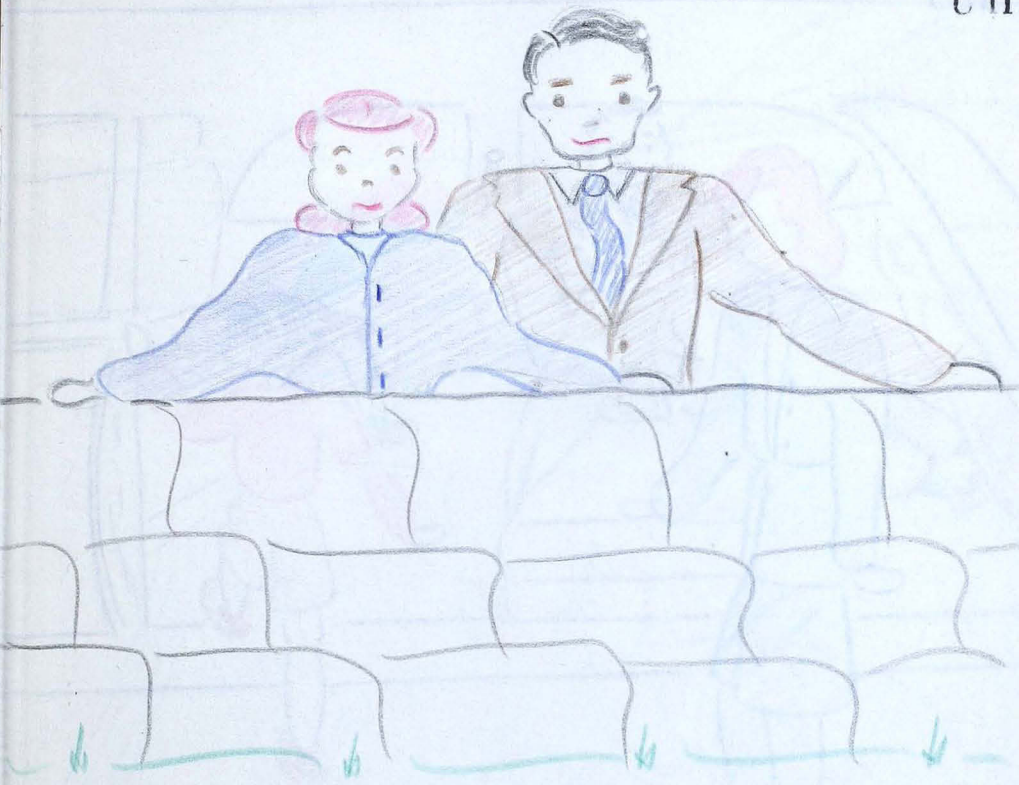
47  
th



My name is Seth.

This is our father.

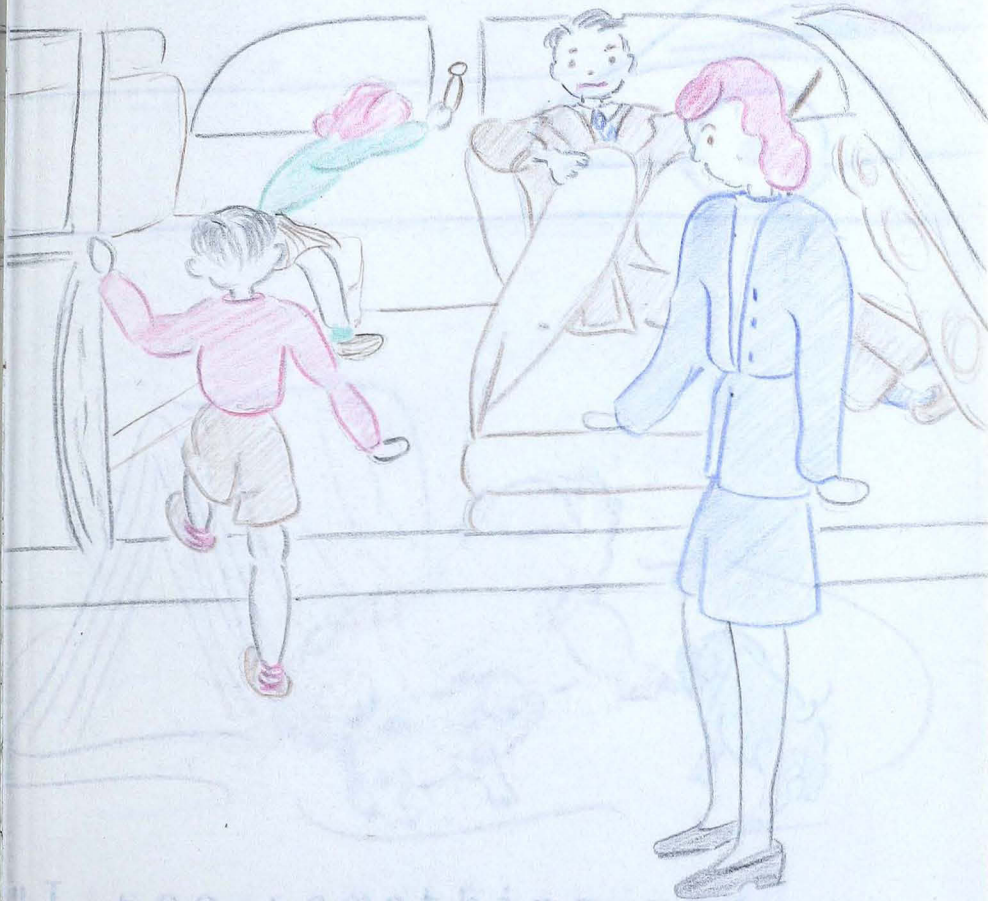
This is our mother.



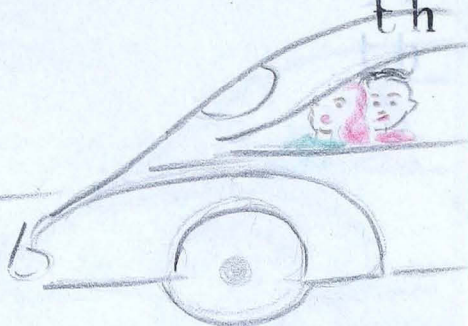
This is our mother.

This is our father.

with Mother and Father.



"I see something you  
We are going with them.  
We are going for a ride  
with Mother and Father.  
Oh, there are three pigs.



"I see something you  
don't see," said Martha.  
"There, look quick.  
There is a pig.  
Oh, there are three pigs.



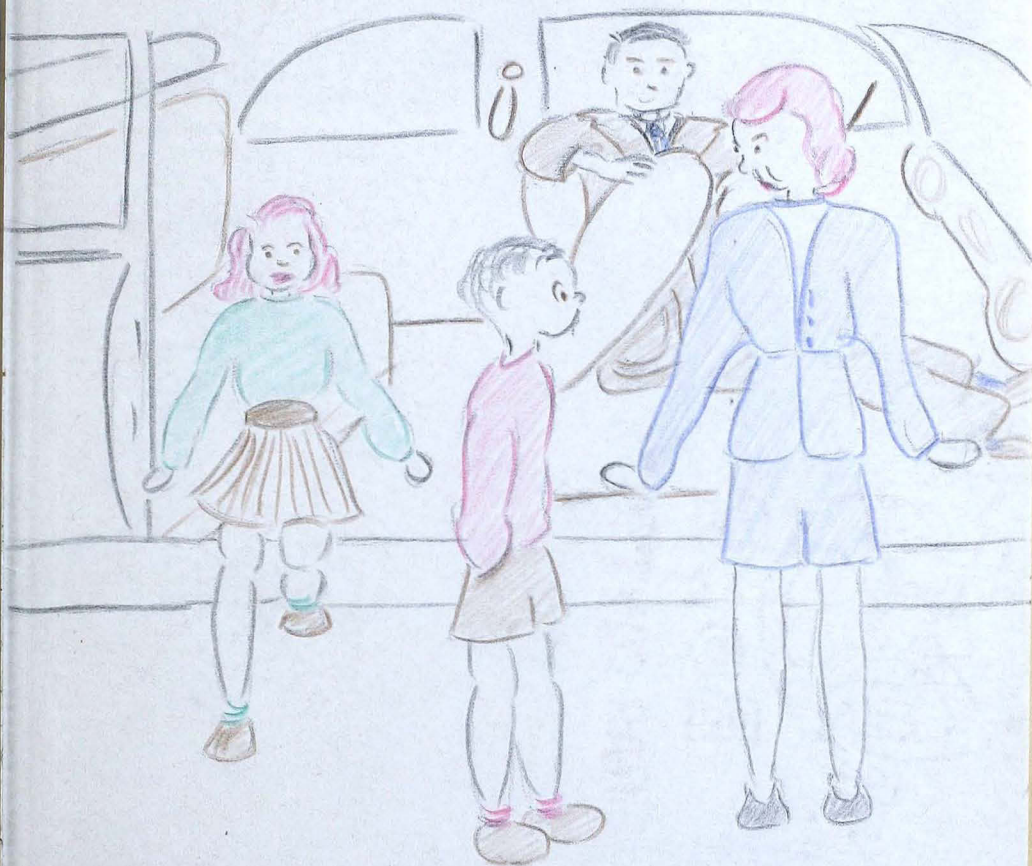
"I see something you  
don't see," said Seth.

"Over there is a cow.

See the cow?

There are one, two,

three cows."



"This is fun," said  
Martha.

"This is fun," said Seth.  
Thank you for the ride,  
Mother.

Thank you for the ride,  
Father.

We saw many things.



## APPENDIX B

EVALUATION SHEET  
FOR  
PRIMER FOR SPEECH PRACTICENAME:DATE:GRADE:SPEECH DEFECT:STORY USED:  
-----Interest:     1                    2                    3                    4                    5Vocabulary:     1                    2                    3                    4                    5Efficiency of drill for specific sounds:

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Sentence structure:

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Frequency of sounds:

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Remarks:

Clinician \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

## READERS EXAMINED FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE BOOK

- Baker, Clara Belle, Mary M. Reed, and Edna D. Baker, Friends for Every Day, Indianapolis: The Bobbs Merrill Company, 1939, 174 pp.
- Gradey, William E., Paul Klapper, and Jane C. Gifford, Good Friends, Chicago: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939, 157 pp.
- Gray, William S., and Mary Hill Arbuthnot, We Look, Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1942, 160 pp.
- Hildreth, Gertrude, At Play, Chicago: John C. Winston Company, 1940, 119 pp.
- Hogan, Inez, Bigger and Bigger, Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1942, 45 pp.
- Leavell, Ullin W., Elizabeth G. Breckinridge, Mary Browning, and Hattie Follis, Ben and Alice, Chicago: The American Book Company, 1936, 149 pp.
- Smith, Nila Banton, At Home and Away, Chicago: Silver Burdett Company, 1935, 142 pp.
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- Stone, Clarence, and Althea Beery, What Fun, St. Louis: Webster Publishing Company, 1939, 167 pp.
- Wright, Lula, Little Lost Dog, Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1942, 45 pp.
- Yoakam, Gerald, M. Madilene Veverka, and Louise Abney, The Laidlaw Basic Reader, Chicago: Laidlaw Brothers, Inc., Publishers, 1940, 127 pp.

## APPENDIX D

## AVAILABLE SPEECH DRILL MATERIALS AT THE EARLY ELEMENTARY LEVEL

- Barrows, Sarah T., and Katherine H. Hall, Games and Jingles for Speech Development, Boston: Expression Company, 1936, 71 pp.
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