Then and Now: Perspectives on the Status of Elementary Reading Instruction by Prominent Reading Educators

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Abstract:
This study queried members of the Reading Hall of Fame about elementary school reading *instruction*. Results from closed and open items revealed three major themes: (a) a neo-traditional view toward the teaching and learning of reading; (b) frustration with the fadism and ideological debates in the field; and (c) the necessity of enhancing teacher knowldge at the university and in public school settings. The perspectives of Reading Hall of Fame members of today were *then* compared to those of prominent reading educators of the past (Morrison, 1963), revealing both similarities and differences in the evaluation of elementary reading education *then* and now.

Article:
Consider the following statements about the state of U.S. elementary reading achievement and *instruction*:

   1. Responsibility for struggling readers [should be] returned to the classroom teacher with support from others.
   2. The recommendation that the regular classroom teacher provide individual *instruction* for the underachieving reader is unquestionably a desirable proposal.
   3. [A persistent problem is] new teachers coming into the field with insufficient knowledge about teaching reading and writing.
   4. The current preservice education of elementary school teachers will not provide the beginning teacher with sufficient training to undertake the awesome responsibility of helping children learn to read.
   5. [There should be] less search (and related claims) for THE way to provide reading *instruction*; more eclecticism among proponents and practitioners; less posturing and grandstanding by "leaders" in the field of elementary reading *instruction*.
   6. The main focus of current and past research has been concerned with finding "a right method" rather than in determining which children adjust best in a particular setting or which children produce their best under particular conditions.

   Would you consider these statements to be reflective of views expressed by current educational leaders? Indeed, half of the statements (odd-numbered items) are comments made

recently by members of the Reading Hall of Fame (RHOF), an independent organization honoring leaders in the field of reading education. The other half (even-numbered items), however, were made over 35 years ago in a report by Coleman Morrison (1963) in which he queried distinguished reading educators of his day about the status of reading *instruction*. As these comments suggest, some recommendations made by reading education leaders many years ago may seem applicable within a contemporary literacy education environment. On the other hand, some of the recommendations of yesterday would not be viewed as contemporary by most reading educators today. For example, Morrison's sample supported a reading readiness perspective and recommended that Kindergarten/1st grade teachers place considerable emphasis on mental maturity and visual and auditory perceptual abilities when determining whether students would benefit from formal reading *instruction*.

It was the purpose of this research to obtain a contemporary benchmark of perspectives about elementary reading *instruction* by surveying members of the RHOF and to contrast them to those of leaders of the past. We begin by presenting the historical background for our inquiry, followed by a description of our research methods. Next, we present the major themes that emanated from the survey and discuss them in relation Morrison's survey and other contemporary reports. We conclude by acknowledging limitations of our inquiry and by considering Morrison's conclusions in relation to the current status of U.S. elementary reading *instruction*.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
Morrison's (1963) dissertation study was an extension of two projects that were supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, initiated by Mary Austin, Morrison's doctoral advisor at Harvard University, and conducted by Austin, Morrison, and colleagues. In their first study, The Torch Lighters: Tomorrow's Teachers of Reading (Austin et al., 1961), they studied the college preparation in reading of elementary teachers, reporting less-than-ideal teacher education programs in reading and language arts. In a follow-up study, The First R: The Harvard Report on Reading in Elementary Schools (Austin & Morrison, 1963), they surveyed administrators in 1,023 U.S. school districts about their reading programs and visited 65 school systems to observe lessons and interview teachers and administrators about reading *instruction*. As a result of their investigation, Austin and Morrison concluded that U.S. elementary reading programs were "mediocre at best and not currently designed to produce a future society of mature readers" (p. 2).

Although The First R provided a detailed picture of reading *instruction* practices in 1960s elementary schools and classrooms, Morrison wondered how such practices aligned with what prominent reading educators of the day were recommending. To determine this, Morrison distributed a slightly modified First R survey to 50 eminent reading educators, whom he referred to as Reading Specialists (see Table 1). Results from the 46 completed questionnaires revealed more disagreements than agreements between practices reported by administrators and teachers in The First R and those recommended by the Reading Specialists. For example, the Specialists were much less likely to recommend chronological age as a determinant for entry to first grade than were the administrative officers in The First R; Specialists recommended that more time be spent on critical reading and the development of reading interests than was reported by administrators; and teachers tended to rely more on a single basal than the Specialists recommended.

While conducting a modified replication of The First R (Baumann, Hoffman, Duffy-Hester, & Ro, in press), we contacted Mary Austin for help in locating original survey instruments. One of the documents she provided us was a copy of Morrison's (1963) unpublished dissertation, which he opened as follows:

During recent years considerable concern has been expressed by professional educators, parents, and the public in general over the education of today's youth. Attention has been directed particularly toward the kind of reading *instruction* given to children and the level of reading achievement attained by them as a result. When children fail to reach expected standards of efficiency in reading, concern is converted into alarm and scathing criticisms displace mild rebuke. This has been especially true after widely circulated reports of reading failure have aroused national interest. (p. 1)

Morrison proceeded to argue that the 1955 publication of Why Johnny Can't Read, "Flesch's well-known polemic" (p. 1), and other reports led to public "forums where existing methods of teaching children to read were attacked, championed, explained, ridiculed, and maligned" (p. 1).

We were struck by the uncanny parallel between Morrison's assessment of the political/educational climate in the 1960s and current, often passionate, debates about the efficacy of various approaches and perspectives for teaching reading (Berliner, 1997; Goodman, 1998; Lehmann, 1997; Taylor, 1998). As in 1963, the literacy education and achievement of U.S. youth remain clearly in the political cross-hairs at the local, state, and national levels (Collins, 1997; Duff, 1996; Hancock & Wingert, 1996; Steinberg, 1997). Charges of declining achievement in American schools relative to the performance of students of years' past or to students in other industrialized countries are common and vocal (Kibby, 1995; McQuillan, 1998). And even though such claims are not necessarily supported when one examines the data on U.S. students' achievement across time (Campbell, Voelkl, & Donahue, 1997) or on students' achievement in other countries (Binkley & Williams, 1996), the myths live on (Berliner & Biddle, 1995). Morrison reported a similar situation in 1963, citing various studies (Gates, 1961; Gray & Iverson, 1952; Miller & Lanton, 1956; Worcester & Kline, 1951) that "suggest that children who have recently attended elementary school can read as well as, or a little better than, their counterparts of earlier decades" (p. 2).

Given our discovery of Morrison's (1963) work and the similarities between the political climate in the 1960s and now, we wondered what today's Leaders in literacy education would have to say about U.S. elementary reading *instruction*. Would we find their views similar to or discordant with practices recommended by leaders of over 35 years ago, and what might such contrasts suggest for literacy education practices? We addressed these questions by surveying living members of the RHOF regarding their perception of the status of current U.S. elementary reading *instruction* and juxtaposing their views to Morrison's Reading Specialists.

METHOD
INSTRUMENTATION
In our prior study, we reconstructed the Austin and Morrison First R survey instrument and administered it to groups of teachers and administrators (Baumann et al., in press). For the present study, we modified this instrument so that it would be appropriate for a sample of 1990s Leaders in reading education. This process involved (a) retaining questions that were still

relevant today (e.g., use of *instructional* materials, accommodating gifted and struggling readers, inquiring about problems and changes); (b) modifying queries to accommodate changes in the field (e.g., questions about reading readiness were expanded to include emergent literacy); (c) deleting topics that were no longer relevant (e.g., inquiring whether kindergarten was available for five-year-olds); and (d) adding items that asked about issues that were not topical in the 1960s (e.g., questions about literature-based *instruction* and whole language).

A draft survey was reviewed and revised several times by the researchers. It was *then* pilot tested with 47 reading professionals (university faculty, reading/language arts coordinators) who participated in a symposium at a national conference. These leaders responded to the survey and were asked to critique it by suggesting how items could be revised, expanded, or deleted to achieve the objective of querying reading education Leaders about trends in the field.

Based on the pilot responses, the 35-item survey was revised in its final form (see Appendix). Thirty-one were closed items (forced-choice or short fill-in formats) that queried Leaders about their background and professional experiences, reading program goals and philosophy, and various components of a contemporary reading program. The remaining four items were open-ended and required narrative responses to questions about persistent problems, current trends, and future changes in the field of reading education.

SAMPLE

Morrison's Reading Specialists (see Table 1) were individuals who were "actively engaged in teaching, writing, research, or development of *instructional* materials" and who represented "varying points of view" (Morrison, 1963, pp. 21-22). We chose the RHOF for our sample of Leaders in reading education because it was similar in number to Morrison's sample and likewise included established professionals with diverse views.

The RHOF consists of prominent individuals in the field, elected by member peers, who are "widely known and respected by people in the profession" as evidenced by publications, leadership positions, excellence in teaching, and participation in professional activities (By-Laws of the Reading Hall of Fame, April 1998, pp. 2-3). RHOF membership at the time of this research was 118: 66 living members, 31 deceased members, and 21 Honorary Members who were inducted posthumously.

Table 2 presents the names of the 66 living RHOF members who comprised our sample of Leaders. Both Morrison's Reading Specialists and the RHOF Leaders represent highly visible and credible members of the reading education community of their respective days. One indication of this is the fact that 62% of Morrison's Reading Specialists were later inducted into the RHOF, and of the 31 persons in Morrison's sample who were later elected to the RHOF, 13 of them were still living and included in our Leader sample.

DISTRIBUTION AND RESPONSE RATE

Headquarters staff at the International Reading Association provided mailing labels for RHOF members. The Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Georgia was responsible for survey distribution. Surveys were solicited in three waves. A cover letter from the researchers that explained the project accompanied an initial survey mailing. One month later, a second

survey was distributed, asking RHOF members to please complete the survey if they had not already. A final survey was mailed to nonrespondents two months later.

It was learned later that two RHOF members had died about the time of survey distribution, so the sample was reduced to 64 members. Forty-seven of the 64 surveys were accounted for as follows: (a) 41 surveys completed fully or nearly fully were returned by a data analysis cut-off date; (b) 1 survey was returned by the postal service with "address unknown"; (c) 4 responses were received from non-U.S. RHOF members who indicated that they could not respond meaningfully to the U.S. survey; (d) and 1 survey was returned from the daughter of a RHOF member who indicated that her father was too ill to complete the survey. This resulted in a 73.4% overall response rate (i.e., 47 of 64 surveys accounted for). Given that 6 surveys were accounted for but were not able to be tallied along with the other 41, we calculated a functional response rate of 70.7% (i.e., 41/58), a return percentage considerably above the 10%-50% norm for mail questionnaires (Weisberg, Korsnick, & Bownen, 1996).

DATA REDUCTION AND ANALYSIS

Data analysis involves three steps: quantitative analysis of the closed items, qualitative analysis of the open items, and a synthesis of quantitative and qualitative data into overall themes.

Quantitative analysis. Completed surveys were mailed directly to the SRC, where survey technicians logged in the surveys, coded them for data entry, entered them into data files, verified data entry, and reviewed them for consistency and possible anomalies. Due to the nature of the research questions, only descriptive quantiative analyses were conducted on the 31 closed items. First, summary statistics by item were generated and studied. Next, a series of frequency counts and distributions were created for all closed items.

Qualitative analysis. Ninety-three percent of the Leaders completed some or all of the four open-ended questions, which were analyzed in three phases. In Phase 1, categories were created, critiqued, and refined. In Phase 2, individual responses were assigned to categories. In Phase 3, categories were analyzed further to reveal broader topics, with single categories or category clusters that accounted for 10% or more of the responses reported in this paper.

Theme analysis. Following these separate quantitative and qualitative analyses, we examined the survey results in total, looking for overall themes. This process involved examining the responses to the open and closed survey items, generating prospective broad themes, evaluating them, and *then* reaching consensus regarding the major themes that characterized Leaders' views toward reading *instruction*.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics for the closed items (items 1-31) and the major categories and clusters for the open items (items 32-35) are transcribed onto the actual survey, which is reproduced in the Appendix. Table 3 presents a selective summary of the predominant responses to the forced-choice items, organized according to the three objective sections of the survey: background information, program goals, and specific reading program components. Table 4 presents

categories and clusters that equaled or exceeded 10% for the open-ended items, with sample verbatim responses for each category.

We present the results according to the three major themes that emerged from the Leader survey: (a) a neo-traditional view toward the teaching and learning of reading; (b) frustration with the fadism and ideological debates in the field; and (c) the necessity of enhancing teacher knowledge at the university and in public school settings.

NEO-TRADITIONAL READING *INSTRUCTION*

There was a pattern of responses that indicated that the majority of Leaders held a form of an updated-traditional view toward reading education. This neo-traditionalism was reflected in many closed and open items on a number of topics, several of which are presented to illustrate this theme.

First, most Leaders endorsed the conventional goals of reading *instruction* that included developing skillful readers who can decode effectively, read fluently, and comprehend text at basic and higher levels while simultaneously supporting the more contemporary goals of developing critical, thoughtful readers who are motivated, knowledgeable, and independent (#11).(FN2) Consistent with these multiple goals was the belief that there should be a range of teaching philosophies within elementary faculties (#13), although one Leader commented that the all philosophies should be "based on research."(FN3) Another Leader was concerned about there being a smorgasbord approach to philosophy: "I would hope that teachers would be exploring a coherent view of teaching and learning."

Second, the neo-traditional perspective was reflected by the large majority of Leaders who endorsed a balanced approach to reading *instruction* that included a combination of skills and whole language/literature (#14). Additionally, one-third of Leaders' responses to the open-ended question regarding promising, current trends were categorized as Contemporary-Traditional *Instruction* (#34a), which included a combination of balanced perspectives ("a more balanced stance based on the realization that extreme positions only increase problems") and skills-oriented or structured programs ("a swing back to a developmental sequence of skills"). But the overall tenor of comments was not a call for back-to-basics but rather a contemporary mix of methods. One Leader considered the "integration of 'whole language' (trade books and writing) and skills/strategies" as promising, and another called for "skills programs (where needed and abandoned), balanced with increased use of trade books".

Third, the Leaders' recommendation that trade books and basals be used in tandem (#17) also reflected neo-traditionalism. Several Leaders commented, however, on the importance of teacher responsibility and choice related to this issue. One Leader wrote, "I wouldn't mandate use of a basal but would require teachers demonstrate a competence in developing their own program in order to opt out of basal use," and another commented, "All of these suppose someone chooses. I want teachers to have a say."

Finally, responses to items on reading assessment reinforced the neo-traditional view, with Leaders expressing both support and skepticism for testing and accountability. Significant majorities of Leaders indicated that teachers should be required to administer both standardized

tests and informal assessments (#24), but they were mixed regarding the utility of formal assessments for improving the quality of reading *instruction* (#25). Additionally, Assessment and Accountability Issues emerged as a distressing trend (#34b), with Leaders expressing concern about the standards movement ("overemphasis on standards") and the use of standardized tests to document progress ("overassessment"; "mindless accountability systems"). Leaders also hoped for future changes in assessment (#35), one calling for "less emphasis on testing for the sake of testing," and another commenting that "we know how to assess achievement, but external assessments provide limited help in improving classroom *instruction*."

FRUSTRATION WITH FADISM AND IDEOLOGICAL DEBATES

A second theme involved Leaders' impatience with the tendency to adopt what is fashionable and to engage in ideological debates and intellectual posturing in the field. Responses to the open-ended items revealed these concerns. When asked about persistent problems (#32), a number of Leaders were concerned with "fads emanating from the universities" and teachers' "constant bombardment with ideologies and quick fixes." One Leader argued strongly that "[there is] too much convoluted and conflicting advice from professors, district specialists and administrators, professional organizations, and self-serving charlatans." Leaders approached these issues from various perspectives, however. For example, one worried about "continued cultism of the whole language establishment" whereas another was concerned with a "return to a single-minded focus on phonics based on 'scientific' research data" (#34a).

When asked about distressing trends (#34a), fully half of the responses were categorized within the theme of Political, Philosophical, and Methodological Turmoil. Leaders expressed specific concerns about trend swings ("pendulum-type approaches swinging from one reading panacea to another"; "a tendency to swing toward whatever is fashionable at the moment"), a quick-fix mentality ("misguided efforts (quick solutions) to improve literacy"), and the one-best-way perspective ("insistence by some that one approach to learning to read is the only one for teachers to use"; "authorities who are too sure only one method is good").

There also was frustration (#34a) with oversimplification of issues ("media presentation of phonics vs. whole language rather than looking at size of class, teacher preparation, lack of libraries, TV viewing, single parents, etc.") and curricular or *instructional* mandates ("more 'control' of what teachers can do"). A major concern involved what was perceived as, fruitless, philosophical debates that were manifest in "paradigm wars that confuse and mislead" teachers and administrators. One Leader expressed exasperation with "the continued useless and harmful disrespectful dialogue on list serves between zealots of a particular philosophy."

ENHANCING TEACHER KNOWLEDGE

The third theme involved the importance of enhancing teacher knowledge in both public school and university settings. There was consensus that teachers ought to be provided three or more days of inservice on reading *instruction* annually (#28) and that there ought to be reading specialists assigned to elementary schools (#30). Leaders recommended that reading specialists dedicate considerable time to staff development with classroom teachers, in program leadership and evaluation, developing goals and objectives, and guiding program implementation (#31).

When asked about the most persistent problem teachers face (#32), one-third of all responses

referenced limitations with pre and inservice education. Leaders were concerned about teachers' general knowledge of teaching reading and writing ("lack of good training in reading"; "inadequate preparation at the university level") and in literacy acquisition and language learning ("insufficient knowledge about how children learn language"; "lack of knowledge of how children learn to read").

It was not surprising, therefore, that when asked what kind of support would benefit elementary teachers (#33), over two-thirds noted the need for enhanced professional development. Support was recommended in the area of more rigorous university programs ("better preservice preparation of teachers and reading specialists"; "improved training in the teaching of reading at the teachers' colleges") and more comprehensive coursework ("required course in children's literature"). There was a call for better inservice programs ("EFFECTIVE/REALISTIC inservice"), with one Leader noting the importance of "staff development programs that actually show teachers how to help their students learn how to become successful readers." One Leader suggested that inservice be provided "by local specialists (rdg.) who tailor meetings to needs of teachers and their pupils."

Another type of recommended support involved guidance from literacy leaders ("consultation time with a knowledgeable reading specialist"; "assistance from supervisors when they implement a new strategy or activity"; "a well trained, school-based reading (literacy) resource teacher makes a difference"). Leaders also noted that teachers would benefit from peer observation and dialogue ("time free to watch each other teach"; "a system which encourages teachers to come together to discuss their problems and goals").

Teacher education and professional development was the most frequently noted hoped-for change in the 21st century (#35). Most responses involved improved pre- and inservice education ("I would like to see teachers better prepared in reading and children's literature"; "constant updating of classroom teachers with hands-on help"). There were also calls to "train teachers in character education" and have them become familiar with the historic background of the field." One Leader, however, recommended curtailing formal teacher education, writing "I'd like to see elementary teachers freed up from endless education courses so they could leave college with a better education."

In summary, results of our survey revealed three major themes: Leaders demonstrated a kind of trendy traditionalism in their characterization of elementary reading *instruction*. Leaders were tired of simplistic solutions offered to complex literacy problems and the rhetoric rampant in the field. And Leaders expressed the need for enhanced teacher professional development through colleges of education and school-based inservice activities.

DISCUSSION: *THEN* AND NOW
How do the perspectives of today's Leaders compare to the views of prominent Reading Specialists of the past? We address this issue in two ways: first by comparing how Specialists and Leaders addressed the three major themes, and second by noting issues ignored or downplayed by both groups.

MAJOR THEMES PAST AND PRESENT

Table 5 juxtaposes the three major themes that emerged from the Leader survey to select findings from Morrison's survey of Reading Specialists and to other contemporary works.

Neo-traditional *instruction*. Our comparison revealed two shared values and two diverse ones with respect to this theme. The common perspectives involved *instructional* goals and balanced reading. Regarding the former, Morrison's Specialists indicated that considerable amounts of time should be dedicated to producing readers who are skillful in word identification, fluency, and comprehension and who read critically, independently, and with motivation. For example, the skillful goal was reflected in the high proportions of Specialists who indicated that "Considerable" or "Moderate" amounts of time should be devoted to reading vocabulary (Grades 1-2 = 81%; Grades 3-4 = 92%; Grades 5-6 = 85%) and reading comprehension (98% for all grade levels). Regarding the latter, Specialists recommended that considerable amounts of time be dedicated to developing children's reading interests, while recommending that reading skills not be taught in isolation (e.g., 89% noted that teaching phonic analysis with other word recognition techniques assumed "Major" or "Considerable" importance). Although there is no doubt that a focus on reading skill *instruction* characterized the Reading Specialists' views in the early 1960s, they also valued integrating skill *instruction* and balancing skills with literature appreciation to a certain degree.

The divergent perspectives involved use of *instructional* materials and beginning reading *instruction*. Regarding *instructional* materials, unlike the Leaders who suggested that teachers employed a mix of basals and trade books, Morrison's Specialists recommended that either a single basal reading series (39%) or multiple series (32%) be used "Exclusively" or "Predominantly," data supported by Austin and Morrison's (1963) First R conclusion that "basal readers are the sine qua non of the elementary school reading program" (p. 54). Regarding beginning reading *instruction*, unlike today's Leaders who generally endorsed an emergent literacy perspective, reading readiness pervaded in the 1960s, as evident in Specialists' comments such as "formalized reading in the kindergarten will lead to pupil failure," "grade 1 is ample time to begin reading; no disadvantage in waiting," and "kindergarten should retain original meaning of term, that is, a happy place for children to play and learn" (Morrison, 1963, p. 31). This trend, no doubt, was a reflection of the "neural ripening" zeitgeist regarding cognitive development (Teale & Sulzby, 1986).

Fadism and ideological debates. Morrison's survey did not afford Specialists an opportunity to address this issue directly, but their parallel inquiry, The First R (Austin & Morrison, 1963), revealed that innovation and change were rare in the early 1960s. Those "changes" that were reported typically involved organizational plans (e.g., new reading group patterns) or *instructional* materials (e.g., the adoption of new basal programs). Morrison (1963) also commented in his review of literature that there were few changes in the preceding 25 years (cf. Gray, 1937; Witty, 1961): "These two reports indicate clearly that practices referred to as undesirable in the 30's are remarkably similar to those apparently still being practices in the 60's" (Morrison, 1983, pp. 6-7). Thus, given the static and conservative nature of elementary reading *instruction* in the 1960s, it is unlikely that Specialists were concerned with fadism, claims of quick fixes, pendulum swings, and paradigm wars that so perturbed the current Leaders.

Professional development. Morrison also did not address teacher professional knowledge directly in his Specialist survey, but he referenced The Torch Lighters (Austin et al., 1961), an unpublished survey (Morrison, 1962), and The First R (Austin & Morrison, 1963) as evidence that "the current preservice preparation of elementary school teachers will not provide the beginning teacher with sufficient training to undertake the awesome responsibility of helping children learn to read" (Morrison, 1963, p. 8). And given the concerns about contemporary inservice programs in reading ("Most of the [inservice] activities were sporadic rather than well-planned, continuous efforts... [and were] limited in content and duration"; Austin & Morrison, 1963, p. 171), we surmise that Morrison's Specialists would likely share the Leaders' strong concerns about teacher professional development.

TOPICS IGNORED PAST AND PRESENT

Finally, we find significance in two topics that were generally not emphasized by either the Specialists or Leaders: use of technology and teaching struggling or disabled readers.

Technology. Morrison (1963, p. 2) invoked Sputnik-based "Johnny and Ivan" comparisons as part of his rationale for concern about U.S. reading *instruction*. His survey, however, did not address technology beyond inquiring about the use of "audiovisual aides," of which two-thirds of the Specialists indicated should be used only "Moderately," and "programmed *instruction* (with or without machines)," of which about 70% of Specialists indicated should be used only "Moderately" or "Infrequently" (Appendix C, #1-2). Similarly, in The First R, Austin and Morrison (1963) noted that future citizens would be faced with decisions related to "the technological revolution" (p. 218), but their recommendations were limited to greater use of educational television as an *instructional* tool within the elementary classroom (p. 226) and as part of district-sponsored inservice programs (p. 237).

Leaders of the 1990s likewise tended to downplay the use of technology in literacy education. When asked about promising trends (#34a), only three Leaders noted the use of technology ("more computerized programs to model reading"; "use of technology to stimulate students' interest in reading"; "internet applications"), and just two Leaders commented on it in relation to changes required for the 21st century (#35: "attention needs to be given to the explosion of electronic text"; "access to interactive media"). Leaders were just as likely to comment on technology as a distressing trend (#34b: "the return to drill on isolated phonics, workbooks, and computer workbook materials"; too much belief in technology as the rescuer of teaching instead of hard work by students").

Given the dramatic infusion of technology into elementary classrooms in recent years, particularly regarding internet access (Wirt et al, 1998, pp. 40-41), it is somewhat surprising that Leaders of today did not often consider this an important issue of promise or concern, for teachers themselves certainly do. According to recent surveys, only 20% of teachers "reported feeling very well prepared to integrate technology into classroom *instruction*" (Lewis et al., 1999, p. iii), and "seventy-nine percent of teachers identified innovative technologies as one of the three areas for which they most needed information" (Alexander et al., 1999, p. iii).

Struggling or disabled readers. Although Morrison's Specialists indicated that "non-readers"

should receive individual *instruction* from someone other than the classroom teacher and that "underachieving readers" should be taught individually or in groups by the classroom teacher (Appendix D, #3), this topic was not addressed significantly in the report. Likewise, although the Leaders indicated that struggling readers ought to be accommodated through special and regular classroom teachers (#22), this topic was rarely mentioned in open-ended item responses. This is in sharp contrast to historic and contemporary surveys of elementary teachers and administrators. In The First R (Austin & Morrison, 1963), administrators and teachers indicated that "their greatest problem was in dealing with the underachieving reader" (p. 216), and this topic likewise emerged as highly prominent for teachers and administrators in our recent modified replication of this classic study (Baumann et al., in press).

As to why Leaders tended not to address technology and struggling readers more, we speculate that propinquity to the scene of the action may provide at least a partial explanation. Classroom teachers are those who must assume the everyday responsibility for learning about and using new technology and for teaching children who struggle to achieve in reading. Not surprisingly, these are issues of relevance and concern for those who are at the vanguard and teach children in schools daily. In contrast, some Leaders past and present may not have been faced with the realities of day-to-day teaching and thus may have focused more on theoretical, philosophical, and ideological concerns rather than pragmatic ones.

LIMITATIONS

Before moving on to final considerations, there are several limitations of this research that should be acknowledge. First, the findings are susceptible to limitations of self-report data, the most notable of which is social desirability bias (Warwick & Leninger, 1975), the tendency for those surveyed to respond according to accepted norms rather than their own beliefs. Mail surveys, however, are much less prone to social desirability bias than are face-to-face or telephone surveys (Dillman, 1975; Hochstim, 1967; Wiseman, 1972), and the candor of the Leaders' responses suggests to us that they were quite straightforward in their responses. Second, although our 71% functional response rate was high in relation to most mail surveys (Weisberg et al., 1996), one cannot assume that respondents' views generalize to nonrespondents. Thus, the results only speak for the 41 RHOF members who returned completed surveys. Finally, our research is limited by the perspectives and viewpoints we brought to it, which undoubtedly were reflected in our decisions about which questions to ask (and not ask), our response categorization and theme decisions, and our data interpretations.

CONCLUSIONS: YESTERDAY AND TODAY

On the basis of the differences Morrison (1963) uncovered between reported and recommended practices, he drew three conclusions from his study. First, he asserted that the impact of Reading Specialists was less than might be expected, hypothesizing that this was due to school officials' lack of knowledge of recommended practices. Second, Morrison expressed concern about the contemporary empirical base itself, noting the inadequacy of many research studies. Third, he concluded that the discrepancies were due to limitations of both current practices and the Reading Specialists' recommendations.

Are Morrison's (1963) conclusions applicable today? No and yes, we posit. Regarding the assertion that teachers and administrators are unaware of or disregard current research and theory

in reading education, we argue that this is not a valid criticism today. Contemporary teachers and administrators are highly educated; are regular participants in workshops, conferences, and graduate coursework; read reading professional journals and books regularly; and report that their beliefs and practices are influenced by various professional resources (Baumann et al., in press; Commeyras & DeGroff, 1998). Thus, we cannot generalize Morrison's suggestion that "those responsible for formulating, implementing, and evaluating reading *instruction* in the elementary school are not aware of recommended practices" (p. 205) to elementary classroom teachers and administrators of today. Further, we interpret the call for enhanced professional development by many Leaders as indicative of the need for even greater levels of knowledge and understanding regarding the complexities of teaching children to read.

We also believe that Morrison's (1963) concern about the limitations of *reading research* fails to apply to our contemporary empirical base. No doubt, debate in our field continues about the power and appropriateness of various paradigms and epistemological views toward knowledge and research (e.g., Datta, 1994; Gage, 1989; Howe, 1988). However, the advent of rigorous journals focused on *reading research* (Journal of Literacy Research, *Reading Research* Quarterly) and general educational research (American Education Research Journal), none of which existed when Morrison conducted his study, along with the proliferation of *reading research* (e.g., the forthcoming publication of the third volume of the Handbook of *Reading Research* in the past 16 years) make if difficult to argue today that there is "inadequacy of ... research studies" (Morrison, 1963, p. 205) in our field.

Regarding Morrison's (1963) final conclusion that "where wide differences exist between the real and the ideal both points of view should be reconsidered" (p. xvi), we see some applicability to today's elementary reading *instruction* environment. Morrison saw risk in both recommended educational changes and established practices. Regarding the former, he saw danger in overzealous *instructional* recommendations, commenting that "many proposals are being offered by persons within and outside the teaching profession without regard for legal boundaries, physical limitations, and teacher competencies and these pose problems for those willing to initiate change" (p. 206). We suspect that Morrison would be concerned with the trend today for state legislatures to dictate the content of reading teacher education coursework and for state departments of education to micromanage reading curriculum and *instruction* practices at the classroom level (McQuillan, 1998).

Morrison was likewise concerned with a status-quo educational environment, arguing that "numerous reading practices that showed promise yesterday have become static today to the extent that they are often treated with unwarranted fealty" (p. 206). Contrary to the unchanging reading world of the early 1960s as Morrison saw it, results from our parallel survey revealed that a majority of contemporary teachers (69%), building administrators (71%), and district administrators (72%) reported that they had made or been involved with "major changes or innovations in [their] reading *instructional* program over the past several years" (Baumann et al., in press). Whereas Morrison was concerned with the static nature of reading education in the 1960s, we suspect he might be equally concerned with the volatility of the contemporary environment. While no doubt many recent changes and innovations have been needed and productive, the ephemeral nature of trends and issues makes it difficult for teachers to sustain continuity of *instruction*, for administrators to organize and supervise programs, for parents and

policy makers to understand the constantly evolving curriculum, and most importantly, for students to experience a consistent, continuous *instructional* program that will promote their literacy learning.

Morrison (1963) likened the chasm he saw between unrealistic changes and unchanging conventions to the dangers confronting a seafarer caught between a sea monster and a massive whirlpool: "Where such wide variations exist between these two extremes a reconsideration of both will hopefully result in the formulation of policy that is safely between Scylla and Charybdis" (p. 207). We hope that our literacy odyssey as it unfolds over the next 35 years heeds Morrison's recommendation for critical examination of innovations and reasoned change.

Table 1 Morrison's (1963) Sample of 50 Reading Specialists

A. Sterl Artley	Mildred A. Dawson	Helen Huus	George D. Spache
Mary C. Austin	John DeBoer	William Kottmeyer	Ralph Staiger
Henry A. Bammon	Dolores Durkin	Nancy Larrick	Russell G. Stauffer
Walter Barbe	Donald D. Durrell	Constance McCullough	Ruth Strang
Althea Beery	Leo Fay	Paul McKee	Ruth Strickland
Emmett A. Betts(FN*)	Rudolph Flesch	Don H. Parker	Miles Tinker
Guy L. Bond(FN*)	Arthur I. Gates	Robert C. Pooley	Jeannette Veatch
Morton Botel	Carl F. Hansen	H. Alan Robinson	Charles A. Walcott(FN**)
Sister M. Caroline	Albert J. Harris	Helen M. Robinson(FN**)	Gertrude Whipple
John B. Carroll	M. Lucille Harrison	David H. Russell	Charles E. Wingo
Jeanne Chall	Arthur Heilman	William D. Sheldon	Paul A. Witty
Donald L. Cleland	Gertrude Hildreth	Henry P. Smith	
Theodore Clymer	Gwen Horsman	Nila B. Smith	

Notes: This list is reproduced from Appendix A of Coleman Morrison's dissertation (1963, pp. 208-210). The appendix also contained affiliations of the 50 Reading Specialists. These are not reproduced here due to space limitations. Thirty-one persons on Morrison's list of 50 Reading Specialists (i.e., 62%) were inducted into the Reading Hall of Fame subsequent to its establishment in 1973. RHOF members are shown in italic.

FOOTNOTES
* Did not return questionnaire
** Returned questionnaire unanswered

Ira Aaron	William Durr	Shirley Brice Health	Louise Rosenblatt
Richard Allington	Donald D. Durrell	Harold Herber	Robert Ruddell
Richard Anderson	Robert Dykstra	Richard Hodges	Takahiko Sakamoto
A. Sterl Artley	Margaret Early	Charlotte Huck	S. Jay Samuels
Mary C. Austin	John Elkins	Roselmina Indrisano	Helen K. Smith
Henry A. Bammon	Warwick Elley	Mogens Jansen	Frank Smith
Rebecca Barr	Roger Farr	Marion Jenkinson	Margaret Meek Spencer
Isabel Beck	Leo Fay	Martha King	James Squire
Morton Botel	Emilia Ferreiro	Roy Kress	Ralph Staiger
Robert Calfee	Pualo Freire	Nancy Larrick	Keith Stanovich
John B. Carroll	Edward Fry	Walter MacGinite	Thomas G. Sticht
Courtney Cazden	Roma Gans	Eve Malmquist	Dorothy Strickland
Jeanne Chall	Kenneth Goodman	Bill Martin, Jr.	Richard Venezky
Marie Clay	Yetta Goodman	Wayne Otto	Sam Weintraub
Theodore Clymer	Donald Graves	P. David Pearson	Joanna Williams
Bernice Cullinan	Vincent Greaney	Jean Robertson	
Dolores Durkin	John Guthrie	H. Alan Robinson	

Note: Thirteen persons in this Reading Hall of Fame sample were also included in Morrison's (1963) list of 50 Reading Specialists. These names are shown in italic.

Table 3 Selective Summary of Predominant Responses to Forced-Choice Items by RHOF Respondents

```
Category                                 Responses(FNa)
Background      *  White (#7/95%  ), male (#6/63%  ), university professors (#1/90%  ) averaging
information        39 years in education (#3).
(items 1-10)    *  Self-appraised as "extremely" or "very" knowledgeable of reading instruction
                   (#9/95%  ) and a "very active" or "avid" reader (#9/95%  ).
                *  Prominent persons, professional writings and organizations, and their own
                   research informed their work "Quite a Bit" to "Very Much" (#8).
Program goals   *  To develop skillful, strategic, and fluent (#11/88%  ); critical (#11/88%  );
(items 11-14)      independent and motivated (#11/90%  ); and knowledgeable (#11/56%  ) readers.
                *  A range of philosophies and methods endorsed (#13/67%  ), but most identified
                   with a balanced perspective (#14/92%  ).
Program         *  Beginning reading: Emergent literacy perspective held (#15/66%  ), but
components         they did not recommend the use of an adopted kindergarten reading program
items 15-31)       (#16/76%  ).
                *  Basal readers, trade books, and skills instruction: Advocated combined
                   use of basals and trades (#17/89%  ); use basals (#18/71/%  ) and informal
                   observation and assessments (#18/68%  ) to guide skill instruction.
                *  Classroom organization and grouping: Assign students heterogeneously to
                   classes (#19/55%  ).
                *  Programs for gifted and struggling readers: Accommodate gifted (#20/88%  )
                   and struggling readers (#22/83%  ) in the regular classroom, with special
                   pull-out (#22/51%  ) and in-class support (#22/63%  ) for struggling readers;
                   programs evaluated as "Poor" or "Inadequate" for gifted (#21/68%  ) and
                   struggling (#23/68%  ) readers.
                *  Reading assessment: Administer standardized tests (#24/66%  ) and informal
                   (#24/61%  ) reading assessments; formal assessments evaluated as "Somewhat
                   Useful" (#25).
                *  Overall program ratings: Grade of C+/B- for developing skillful/strategic
                   readers; grade of C or lower for developing critical independent, knowledgeable
                   readers (#26).
                *  Program leadership and inservice: Supervisor, director, consultant should
                   be active at district level, and principal, specialist, and teacher at school
                   level (#29); 3+ days of inservice recommended annually (#28/78%  ).
                *  Reading specialists: Should be assigned to most schools (#30/87%  );
                "Considerable" to "Great Deal" of time dedicated to staff and goal development,
                   leadership, evaluation, and program implementation (#31).
```

FOOTNOTE
a Parenthetic statements following responses are keyed to the survey in two ways. For items scored as percents, the item number and percent of respondents who selected it are shown in parentheses. For example, within the "Beginning reading section," the statement, "Emergent literacy perspective held (#15/66%)," means that 66% of the RHOF sample selected the emergent literacy option 2 for survey item 15. For items scored as means, grades, or Likert values, only the item number is shown in parentheses. Refer to the survey reproduced in the Appendix for verbatim items and complete numerical responses.

Table 4 Major Categories and Clusters and Sample Verbatim Responses to Open-Ended Items

Category	% (FNa)	Sample Responses

Item 32: What do you see as the most persistent problem elementary teachers face in the teaching of reading?

Category	% (FNa)	Sample Responses
Limited professional knowledge and training at pre- and inservice levels	30	* Inadequately prepared to TEACH reading. * Lack of knowledge of how children learn to read. * Limited expertise in literacy acquisition and *instruction*. * Lack of good training in reading.
Ideological debates and their negative repercussions	16	* Being buffeted by the latest "fad" or trend. * Teachers are afraid to teach phonic skills because of fear that to do so will violate whole language philosophy. * The confusion passed down to them [teachers] by the leaders in the field.
Lack of time and support	16	* Time to read independently. * Lack of time to teach reading. * Lack of leadership, supervision, and direction from school administrators.
Large class size	14	* Classes that are too large, classrooms that are too small. * Overcrowded classes making it very difficult to adjust the teaching to meet individual needs.

Item 33: What kind of support would help elementary teachers become more effective teachers of reading?

Category	% (FNa)	Sample Responses
Support for professional development	69	* The availability of reading specialist/resource persons. * Undergraduate and graduate reading education courses taught by college/university instructors whose major aim is to help teachers to prepare or improve as effective teachers of reading. * "On going" staff development--combination of workshops and study group activities. * Regular, coherent professional growth activities across the career span. * Use of video taping of lessons and subsequently evaluated with the teacher in non-threatening situations.

Item 34a: As you look ahead to changes in reading *instruction* in the next five to ten years, what current trends do you view as promising?

Category	% (FNa)	Sample Responses
Contemporary-traditional *instruction*	33	* The coming recognition of the need for a balanced *instructional* program. * A greater respect for the importance of direct teaching of reading skill along with much good reading. * A return to more structure (this does not mean phonics drills!!). * The awareness that the structure and support provided in a good basal program is needed for the new teacher. * Emphasis on monitoring acquisition of phonological awareness and alphabetic principle.

Professional development and collaboration	17	* Better college courses. * Teachers increasingly understand the relationship between reading and writing. * Improvements in staff development that emphasize learning by doing on the part of teachers (i.e., reading and writing themselves and examining their own processes); setting their own goals for what they need to learn in staff development projects. * School-wide collaboration in program planning and evaluation.
Literature-based and integrated language arts *instruction*	11	* Teachers are increasingly seeing reading and writing as key parts of global literacy, i.e., as parts of a unified learning process including spelling, handwriting, story and texts of different kinds. * Growing use of trade books, including nonfiction.

Item 34b: As you look ahead to changes in reading *instruction* in the next five to ten years, what current trends do you view as distressing?

Political, philosophical, and methodological turmoil	50	* Claims of having discovered the only efficient method in the teaching of reading. * Too much pendulum swinging! New names for old programs will not provide us with a panacea for all of our problems. * Continuation of debates about which method is best. * Political mandate of methodology and materials.
Assessment and accountability issues	12	* Persistence in believe that "raising standards" automatically leads to improved education. * Too much emphasis on grinding out standardized test scores because of tight budgets that demand test score proof to secure funds for specialized programs.
Teaching skills and strategies	12	* A noticeable decrease in attention to strategies and skills and not enough about acquiring knowledge. * Too much emphasis on skills and strategies, resulting in part from the influence of some versions--not all--of "whole language."
Teacher knowledge, preparation, and demands	10	* The trend among universities to shorten the length of preparation for elementary teachers. * The high level of distraction and distractibility in teachers' lives and in lives of their students.

Item 35: As we enter the 21st century, what changes would you like to see in elementary reading *instruction*?

Teacher education and professional development	19	* Continued focus on teachers developing knowledge about the reading process and being confident in knowing how to develop their reading programs to support all readers. * Increased opportunities for teachers to develop knowledge in school settings.
Improved classroom *instruction*	12	* *Instruction* based on the best knowledge we have about learning, language learning, text structure, and literature. * Finally, a planned, cross grade level sequence of *instruction* building on children's previous learnings and preparing them for future *instruction*, geared to each child's pace of learning.
More access to books and time to read	12	* I'd like to see children with books to read, especially children who find learning to read difficult. * Access to engaging new books.
Testing and assessment	11	* The development of better informal reading appraisal techniques. * Systematic and continuous follow-up studies of each child's reading development through all school levels.

Notes: A major category or cluster was defined as consisting of 10% or greater responses to an item. Only the first response to item 32 was coded for each survey; up to 2 responses per survey were coded for items 33-35.

FOOTNOTE
a Percents represent proportion of total responses for each question.

Table 5 Themes From the RHOF Leader Survey in Relation to Early 1960s Reading *Instruction*

Late 1990s Theme	Early 1960s Comparison	
	Compatibility with theme	Divergence from theme
Neo-traditional reading *instruction*	* Goals of *instruction* to produce skillful, fluent, critical, readers: Devote "Considerable" or "Moderate" amounts of time to vocabulary, comprehension, oral reading, silent reading, and critical reading (Morrison, 1963, Appendix C, #1-3) * Balanced reading *instruction*: Devote "Considerable" or "Moderate" amounts of time to reading interests; phonics important only when used with other word identification techniques, but not in isolation (Morrison, 1963, Appendix C, #7-8)	* Use of *instructional* materials: Single or multiple basal should be used "Exclusively" or "Predominantly" with much less use of self-selected materials (Morrison, 1963, Appendix E, #1-2) * Reading readiness predominates: Factors such as mental maturity, auditory and visual perception, and readiness test scores used to assess readiness for reading *instruction* (Morrison, 1963, Appendix B, #3)
Frustration with fadism and ideological debates	* No evidence of compatibility with this theme	* Innovation rare in 1960s: "Almost half [of administrators and teachers] stated that no changes had been made in educational policy or practice within recent years" (Austin & Morrison, 1963, p. 214) * No evidence of change or controversy in preceding 25 years (Morrison, 1963, pp. 6-7)
Enhancing teacher knowledge	* Morrison (1962, 1963) critical of teachers' knowledge of research and theory on reading *instruction*; corroborated by Austin et al. (1961) * Inservice programs "sporadic" and poorly conceived (Austin & Morrison, 1963, p. 171)	* No evidence of divergence from this theme

FOOTNOTE

1 We subsequently use Reading Specialists or Specialists to refer to the reading educators Morrison surveyed in 1963. This usage should not be confused with the more contemporary sense of reading specialist, which typically refers to a reading professional who provides *instruction*, evaluation, and leadership in an elementary, middle, or high school setting. We also subsequently restrict our use of the term Leaders to refer to the RHOF members who responded to our survey.

2 Parenthetic numbers correspond to numbered items on the survey. See the Appendix for exact item wordings and Leaders' responses to them.

3 Quoted material includes verbatim responses from two sources: (a) Leaders' unsolicited comments written adjacent to the closed items (#1-31); and (b) Leaders' written responses to the open items (#32-35).

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APPENDIX LEADER IN READING EDUCATION SURVEY
NATIONAL *READING RESEARCH* CENTER
U.S. Elementary Reading *Instruction* Survey
Leader in Reading Education Form
Directions Please respond to the following questions that inquire about elementary reading practices

LEADERSHIP BACKGROUND INFORMATION
1. What is your current position of leadership in reading (circle one number)? If retired, indicate your position at the lithe of retirement.
1. university-based teacher educator
2. university-based researcher
3. university-based teacher educator and researcher
4. publisher or earthendom developer
5. reading consultant (school- or district-based)
6. U.S. Department of Education personnel
7. other (specify position)
2. Circle the number in front of each education degree you hold. Write (in parentheses) the year you earned each degree.
1. Bachelors (19 ___) 2. Masters (19 ___) 3. Specialist (19___) 4. Doctorate (19___)
Write the area of study for your most advanced degree:
3. How many total years of experience do you have as an educator? years (write number of years)
4. How many total years of experience do you have as a school administrator? ___ years (write number of years)
5. What is your teaching experience? White the number of years for each level, or write 0 ("zero") If you have no experience at a particular level
elementary
middle school
high school
college or university
6. What is your grader (circle one number)?
7. What is your racial or ethnic identity (circle one number)?
1. black/African American 4. Asian/Pacific Islander 7. other racial or ethnic group
2. white/European American 5. Native American/Eskimo (specify group:)
3. Hispanic/Latino 6. multi-race
8. Across your career, which of the following have been influential sources of information for your work in reading education? Circle "1" for very mach influence, "2" for quite a bit, "3" for some, and "4" for not at all. Circle one number for each row.

	Very Much	Quite a Blt	Some	Not at All
undergraduate and graduate coursework in reading	1	2	3	4
my experience as a teacher of reading	1	2	3	4
my experience as an administrator or supervisor	1	2	3	4
the teachers or reading specialists I have known or worked with	1	2	3	4
other leaders or prominent persons in reading education	1	2	3	4
professional books I have read	1	2	3	4
professional journals I have read	1	2	3	4
curriculum materials I have used, produced, or bean aware of	1	2	3	4
professional organizations I have belonged to	1	2	3	4
professional conferences I have attended	1	2	3	4
my own research or evaluation studies on reading	1	2	3	4
other	1	2	3	4

9. How would you assess your base knowledge of effective reading *instruction* (circle one number)?

1. extremely knowledgeable 2. very knowledgeable 3. somewhat knowledgeable 4. not very knowledgeable 5. not at all knowledgeable

10. How would you describe your own reading habits (i.e., pleasure or leisure reading) outside the work or professional readings you do (circle one number)?

1. avid reader (1 read constantly)
2. very active (1 read every day and widely)
3. frequent reader (1 read most every day)
4. occasional reader (1 read sometimes)
5. infrequent reader (1 hardly ever read)

PROGRAM GOALS

11. The following statements represent various goals or objectives that educators might have for an elementary reading *instructional* program. Circle the numbers in front of [Illegible text] of the following statements that you feel should apply to an elementary reading program (i.e., you may mark multiple responses).

1. A goal to develop elementary readers who are skillful and strategic in word identification, fluency and reading comprehension.

2. A goal to develop elementary readers who are critical and thoughtful in using reading and writing to learn about people and ideas, and how they might use literacy to positively affect the world in which they live.

3. A goal to develop elementary readers who are independent and motivated to choose, appreciate and enjoy literature.

4. A goal to develop elementary readers who are knowledgeable about literary forms or genres and about different text types or structures

5. Other goal(s)

12. Should there be a written document describing the objectives, plans, and activities (e.g., a curriculum guide) for rending *instruction* in each school district (circle one number)?

1. yes 2. no 3. dot sure

13. There are many different *instructional* philosophies, approaches, and methodologies applied to elementary reading *instruction*. Which of the following patterns within an elementary school or district would you consider desirable (circle one number)?

1. There should be a with range of leaching philosophies, approaches, and methodologies represented with in an elementary teaching faculty.

2. There should be a single *instructional* philosophy, approach, and methodology that is shared

by most of the elementary teachers with a school or district.

14. Consider the three philosophies or approaches to elementary reading *instruction* listed below. Which heat describes your philosophy or approach toward reading *instruction* (circle one number)?

1. a traditional or skills-based approach
2. a whole language or literature-based approach
3. a balanced approach (i.e., combination of above)

PROCRAM COMRONENTS

15 What would you recommend as One best approach to reading at the kindergarten level (circle one number)?

1. A reading readiness perspective, that is, a child's physical, intellectual and emotional maturity are directly related to success in reading and writing. Therefore, It is a teacher's job to provide students appropriate activities (e.g., visual, auditory, motor skill activities) to support or chance their readiness for reading.

2. Any emergent literary perspective, that is, all children can benefit from early, meaningful reading and writing experiences (e.g., inverted spelling, environmental print, being read to). Therefore, it is a teacher's job to provide students appropriate activities that will enable them to understand the functions and forms of literacy and to Crow into conventional forms of reading and writing.

3. Do any formally or systematically teach reading in the kindergarten program but instead emphasize social and emotional development.

4. A different philosophy (specify:___ ___).

16. Would you recommend that a sumthercial or adopted program he used for reading at the kindergarten level (circle one number)?

1. No 2. Yes (program publisher or name:___)

17. What is your opinion about how elementary teachers should use basal readers and trade books (library books) in elementary schools? Which of the following choices do you believe represents the best use of basal renders and wade books In an elementary reading program (circle one number)?

1. Use basal reading materials as the only reading, *instructional* materials in the classroom; that is, use no trade books to teach reading.

2. Use basal reading materials as the foundation of the elementary reading program; in other words, the reading program is structured around the basal, but teachers incorporate trade books within the basal program.

3. Use trade books as the foundation for the reading program: in other words, the program is trade book based, but teachers use basals some of the time to supplement the trade books.

4. Use trade books as the only reading *instructional* materials in the classrooms; that is, teachers use no basal materials to loach reading.

18. What is your opinion about how elementary teachers should deal with reading skills *instruction*? Which of the following choices would you recommend for teachers (circle ALL that apply)?

1. Teach skills and strategies as presented in the basal program.

2. Select skills and strategies from the basal program, teaching only those skills that teachers feel their students need to learn.

3. Use the basal as a general guide for teaching skills and strategies, hot teachers adopt or

extend *instruction* from the basal significantly.

4. Supplement the basal program by teaching additional skills ant covered well or at all in the basal.

5. Use the basal to identify reading skills, but teach them in the context of trade books teachers are using.

6. Construct their own skills program, which they teach in conjunction with trade books teachers are reading.

7. Teach skills and strategies on the basis of ongoing Informal observation and assessments of students learning.

8. Teach reading skills very little on not at all--either from the basal or through trade books

19. What is your opinion about the use of various classroom organizations and grouping patterns for reading *instruction* in elementary schools (choose one number)?

1. Students should be assigned to elementary classrooms to insure a mix of ability levels.

2. Students should be assigned to elementary classrooms to insure that students of similar abilities and skill levels are pinched together for most of their ***instructional*** day.

3. Law level students at each elementary grade level should be assigned to a special teacher, and the rest of the classes are mixed in ability/skill level.

4. Students should be assigned to elementary homerooms to insure mixed ability/skill levels, but *then* students switch classes for *instruction* with students at a similar reading level.

5. Ability grouping should not be used in the elementary reading program.

6. Other (specify:).

20. The following statements describe various ways to accommodate the needs of elementary children who may be gifted, talented, or accelerated readers. Circle the numbers In front of ALL of the following statements that you would recommend (i.e., you may mark multiple responses).

1. There should be a pull-out program for the elementary gifted readers, which is taught by special teachers for gifted and talented students.

2. Special elementary teachers for gifted and talented students should corue into the classrooms and work with the classroom teacher to accommodate the most enpuble readers.

3. Elementary teachers should adapt their classroom curriculum and their ***instruction*** to accommodate the special needs of their gifted and talented readers.

21. In the elementary schools you are familiar with, how do you regard current programming for gifted readers (circle one number)?

1. exceptional 2. very good 3. adequate 4. pour 5. totally adequate.

22. The following statements describe various ways to accommodate the needs of elemculary children who may be struggling readers or experiencing, rending difficulties. Circle the numbers in front of ALL of the following statements that you would recommend (i.e., you may mark multiple responses).

1. There should be a pull-out program for elementary struggling readers, which is taught by special teachers for students experiencing difficulty in learning to read.

2. Special elementary teachers trained to work with children who experience reading difficulties should come into the classrooms and work with classroom teachers to accommodate their struggling readers.

3. Elementary teachers should adapt their classroom curriculum and *instruction* to accommodate the special needs of their students who experience problems in learning to read

23. In the elementary schools that you are familiar with, how do you regard current programming for struggling readers (circle one number)? g = 7.7

1 exceptional 2. very good 3. adequate 4. poor 5. totally inadequate

24. The following statements describe various standardized or formal assessments. Circle numbers in front of ALL of the following types of assessments that you feel elementary teacher should be required to administer to students each school year (i.e., you may mark multiple responses).

1. Distrier required standardized tests (e.g., Iowa Test of Basic Skills) that include one or more reading subtask.

2. Slete mandated competency tests in reading and/or writing.

3. District required Informal reading (e.g., informal reading invulorcies) and/or writing (e.g., essay) assessments.

4. Additional required or mandated assessments (specify:

25. How useful do you regard the proceeding formal assessments in improving the quality of reading, instruction in elementary school (circle one number)? $X = 1.0$

1. extremely useful 2. very useful 3. somewhat useful 4. not very useful 5. not useful at all

26. How would you rate the overall success of elementary school reading programs in this ability to achieve the following goals? Assign a grade of A, B, C, D, or F for each goal (write an A to F letter grade on each blank).

Develop elementary readers who are skillful and strategies in word identification, fluency, and reading comprehension.

Develop elementary readers who are critical and thoughtful in using reading and writing to learn about people and ideas, and how they might use literary to positively affect the world in which they live.

Develop elementary readers who are independent in choosing, appreciating, and enjoying literature.

Develop elementary readers who are knowledge about literary forms or genres and about different text types or students.

27. Who should assume responsibility for leadership in the elementary reading program at the district level (circle one number)?

1. district superintendent

2. district assistant superintendent

3. supervisor (elementary, secondary, or both)

4. specialist/coordinator (elementary; secondary, or both)

5. other (specific position)

6. There should be no designated leader for the reading program at the district level.

28. How much inservice on reading *instruction* should districts provide for elementary teachers each year (circle one number)?

1. a great deal (3 or more days per year)

2. some (1-2 days pet year)

3. little (less than one day pet year)

29. To what degree should the following individuals be active in the daily, implementation, and evaluation of the reading program in their district? circle "I" for very active "2" for somewhat active, "3" for not very active, and "4" for approach (that la, if you feel there should he no one serving in this male within the district). Circle one number for each row.

	Very Active	Somewhat Active	Not Very Active	Not Applicable
supericulardent or assistant superlutendent (distried based)	1	2	3	4
elementary suppervisor (district based)	1	2	3	4
curriculuma director (discriet based)	1	2	3	4
reading consultant (dignrict based)	1	2	3	4
principal or assistant principal (school based)	1	2	3	4
reading speclalist (school based)	1	2	3	4
classroom teacher (school based)	1	2	3	4

30. Should there be reading specialties Asslened to most (i.e., more than 50 percent) elementary schools in a district (circle one number)?

1. Yes 2. No

31. If you marked "yes" in item 30, estimate the amount of time the elementary tending specialists should spend on the following types of responsibilities. Circle "I" [for great deal of time "2" for considerable time, "2" for hardly any time, and "4" for no time. Circle our number for each row

	Great Deal of Time	Cansideruble Time	Hurdly Any Time	No Time
in individual and small group instruction for set ugelling senders	1	2x	3	4
in individual and small group instructiun for seectlerated teaders	3	2	3	4
in stuff development with classroom usuabers	7	2	3	4
in supervision of classroom teachers	1	2	3	4
in selection of reading materials	1	2	3	4
in materins distribution and management	1	2	3	4
in assessment of students	1	2	3	4
in program leadership	1	2	3	4
in interpretation of the program lo parends and the consinfially	1	2	3	4
in evaluating program effects (success and failure)	1	2	3	4
in developing goals and objectives	1	2	3	4
in guiding program implemenlatiun	1	2	3	4

32. What do you see as the most persistent problem elementary teachers face in the watching of reading?

33. What kind of support would help elementary teachers become more effective teachers of reading?

34. As you look ahead to changes in reading *instruction* over the next live to ten years, what current trends do you view

promising?

distressing?

35. As we enter the 21st century, what changes would you like to see in elementary reading *instruction*?