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Evaluation of a Reading Program Tri Valley Central School Grahamsville, New York

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EVALUATION OF A READING PROGRAM
TRI VALLEY CENTRAL SCHOOL
GRAHAMSVILLE, NEW YORK

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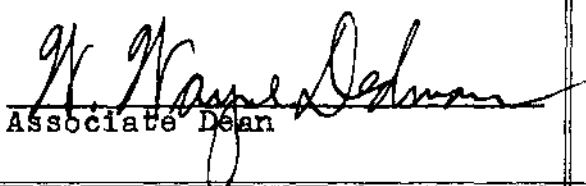Faculty Advisor

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Background

I have taught and observed the teaching of reading for
many years, always conscious of problems faced by the reading
teacher and the administration. The problems disturbing me
were mainly: (1) the time consumed in the classroom to teach
an average of three reading groups; (2) the duplication of
effort in the classroom; (3) the necessary planning to keep
the other groups constructively busy while one group read;
(4) the teacher's feeling of constantly rushing to be able to
teach all phases of a lesson during the allotted time; and
(5) the lack of importance given to reading teaching in some
upper intermediate grades.

Last year after conferring with the administrative of-
ficials of our school we decided to try a new plan for teach-
ing reading. Reading is taught one hour each day. The chil-
dren in grades four, five, and six are grouped for that hour
according to reading ability, each child going to his respec-

tive reading group with each teacher teaching one group. It is this new reading program which I will evaluate.

The Statement of the Problem

My problem is to evaluate the present reading program as compared to the reading program which we had in the previous years.

Analysis of Factors Contributing to the Problem

Factors resident in the pupil

Our children come from middle class and relatively poor homes in a rural area. The school is eight years old and before it was built all students attended one-room schools with few pupils ever attending high school. Consequently, few of our parents ever attended high school with even fewer going to college. This has a very effective relation to the reading habits of our children. Reading is not an important facet of many of the parents' lives, but they want their children to be good readers and they take an interest in their children's reading.

Factors resident in the teacher

The teachers who are involved in our reading program have all, except one, taught under the reading program in previous

years and there is just one without experience in the teaching of reading. They were all agreeable to try the present program. They have had courses in teaching reading and know what makes a good reading program.

Factors resident in the curriculum and objectives

The curriculum under our new reading program is basically the same as it was under the old program, teaching the basic recognition skills, comprehension, and speed. The difference in the program is time allottment for each group and one of the main objectives is to produce a greater enjoyment of reading. More time is given to helping children select library books on their reading level and we also have time in the class period to talk about books read.

Factors resident in the materials of instruction

We have always been fortunate to have adequate materials of instruction including a basic text plus at least two supplementary text books. We also had sets of a few classics which we used in reading classes. In our new reading program we found it necessary to buy more copies of each book as our groups are much larger. We also find that we need many more supplementary readers because pupils are finishing the books in much less time than they previously did. We have purchased books in which comprehension and speed are tested.

Factors resident in classroom environment

We were able to initiate our new reading program this year for the reason that our intermediate grades are now located in one building. The space was made available for an extra classroom during this hour as there are six grades participating and we have seven reading groups. The seventh group is taught by the elementary principal. We have a reading supervisor to give aid to individual teachers as it is needed.

In each classroom encyclopedias, dictionaries, and maps are available. The library is open for the use of these reading groups during the reading hour.

Factors resident in the administration

There are an elementary principal and a supervising principal in our school, both of whom are very interested in our new reading program and are supporting the principles behind it. They, of course, are anxious to see proof of its worth before committing themselves to the establishment of the program as a permanent one.

Steps to be followed in Pursuing my Research Problem

1. Discuss my project with the administration and receive
    their approval of my evaluation of our present reading
    program as compared with our previous program.

2. Never having done extensive research before, read the
    following books on how to conduct a research:

    Corey, Stephen M., Action Research to Improve School Practices,
        Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia
        University, 1953.

    Hillway, Tyrus, Introduction to Research, Houghton Mifflin
        Company, 1956.

    Shane, Harold G., and McSwain, E. T., Evaluation and the
        Elementary Curriculum, Henry Holt and Company, 1958.

3. In order to evaluate the reading program, find what
    constitutes a good reading program. To find this my
    first step is to read what the leaders in the field of
    reading consider to be a good reading program.

4. After studying the materials dealing with the problem,
    develop the broad goals of a good reading program.

5. From the broad goals determine the criteria which are
    necessary for studying an effective reading program.

6. Build an evaluative instrument to be used by the teachers
    who have been involved in both reading programs. This
    instrument will compare the effectiveness of the previous

and present reading programs.

7. Study results of standardized tests given in grades four,
    five, and six for the five previous years to find the
    average growth per pupil per year under the previous
    program.

8. Compile results of standardized reading tests given in
    grades three, four, and five in May 1958. These are the
    pupils who are studying under the new reading program.

9. Compile the results of standardized reading tests given
    in May 1959 to those same pupils.

10. Compare the results of the standardized tests in previous
    years with the results of the test given in May 1959.
    Also compare the average growth shown per child over the
    previous five years with that shown this year.

11. Draw my conclusions.

12. Make recommendations.

CHAPTER II

A DESCRIPTION OF THE READING PROGRAMS EVALUATED

The Previous Reading Program

For many years our reading program resembled those pro-
grams common to most schools today. Each classroom teacher
taught her own reading in her classroom. In September she,
or the reading supervisor, or both, looked over the child's
reading record, his results on standardized silent reading
tests, and his previous teacher's recommendations. Gray's
Oral Reading Test was then administered. Using the above
criteria the teacher determined the child's reading group.
If she was fortunate she found that she had three reading
groups, but often the necessity arose for a fourth group,
one group being comprised of one or two children with a
severe reading problem. The reading supervisor often taught
those children with reading difficulties, but the classroom
teacher found herself teaching three reading groups with
reading abilities ranging from those children who read at
grade level or above to those who were reading two or three
years below grade level. Teaching the three groups used one
and one half or two hours of the school day, as each reading

lesson to each group consisted of introduction of the lesson, teaching necessary reading skills, introducing new words, guided silent reading, any oral reading the teacher deemed necessary to meet her goals, discussion of the story to check comprehension and interpretation, and the follow-up, such as work book activities.

The teacher found that she had many problems under our previous program. She had the problem of triple preparation for the reading lesson plus the ever-present problem of planning worthwhile activities for those children who were not in the particular group which the teacher happened to be teaching at the time. Needless to say the teacher did not complete an entire lesson each day. She often continued the lesson the next day. The chief criticism of the faculty of this program was that they always felt rushed. They felt certain that they could do a better job if there were more time available in the school program for teaching reading.

The administration, in observing this reading program, found a great duplication of teaching effort. Going from classroom to classroom the administrators saw the same lessons being taught by various teachers to small groups of children. The supervising principal in conferring with the elementary principal and me, the reading supervisor, suggested that because of our many problems in our intermediate grade reading program, we study the possibilities of using a departmen-

talized reading program.

The Present Reading Program

Beginning in March 1958 meetings were held with the intermediate grade teachers for the purpose of discussing the adoption of a new reading program. Everyone was in agreement that revision of our program was necessary. We decided to retain those goals which we considered necessary to a good reading program. It was agreed that our chief objections to the reading program were that there was too much pressure on the teachers due to the time element involved, and there was a great waste of students' time while waiting for various reading groups to complete their lessons.

The Joplin Plan[1], as used in Joplin, Missouri, had received considerable publicity in the national press. This plan of teaching reading seemed to alleviate problems such as ours. Research concerning our problem was carried on by the faculty. We found that in the opinion of Dr. A. Sterl Artley, "Joplins' is the most successful of all the reading programs, because it seems to make every child a success. And when a child is happy, he progresses faster."[2]

1. Roul Tunley, "Johnny Can Read in Joplin", The Saturday Evening Post, October 27, 1954 pp. 27+.

2. Ibid, p. 28.

However, in our research we found unfavorable criticism of departmentalized reading plans. In the Letter to Supervisors entitled Grouping for Teaching Reading, opinions of reading experts were summarized. The feeling was expressed that the program "lacks the flexibility of grouping within the classroom where the teacher can group and regroup for various kinds of reading activities, vary the length of the reading lesson when necessary, and where she can move a child from one group to another as he grows in reading skills. Grouping should be much more flexible than this plan permits."

It was also stated that in a departmentalized reading plan the teachers of reading probably will know less about the child than the classroom teacher. We decided that because our school is small most teachers know all the children, so that would not be a detriment to the program.

Our teachers felt that any program would have more flexibility than classroom grouping for if one groups' reading time was lengthened, then another group was neglected. It was also felt that it would be possible to move a child from group to group in a departmentalized plan, as easily as in classroom grouping.

1. University of the State of New York, "Grouping for Teaching Reading", Letter to Supervisors, December, 1955.

Consequently, we decided to adopt a reading program which might be referred to as a modified Joplin Plan, to the extent that teaching basic reading skills is a very important part of our program, whereas, one of the criticisms of the Joplin Plan is that reading skills are not an important part of the daily reading lesson. Nor did we abolish reading marks as was done in Joplin. It was felt that our community would not accept an innovation such as this. We, therefore, continue to use the same marking system that we previously used except that the teacher of a particular reading group determines the mark.

During the spring of 1958 we explained to the third, fourth, and fifth grades about the new reading program which would begin in the next school year. The teachers' enthusiasm over a change in the system of teaching reading was contagious. The children readily accepted the idea, eagerly anticipating the opening of school in the fall.

The principal difference in the previous reading program and our new reading program is in grouping the children. When the reading hour rolls around the students in a specific grade - let's say fourth grade - forget that they are fourth graders and go to the room where they work with other students who are working at the same reading level regardless of their grade placement.

In September 1958 our new reading program began. The

reading level of each child had been determined during the summer, using the results of standardized tests, teacher judgment after observing and working with the child for a year, and by studying school reading records of each child. The groups were established much as they had been in the previous program except that everyone in the intermediate grades four, five, and six, who was reading at the same level was grouped together. We have seven groups, ranging from third grade level to above sixth grade level with two nonreaders who read with the lowest group. The size of the groups varied with the smallest group comprising seven members and the largest having thirty children. The organization of the groups is illustrated in figure one. Noting the reading levels, you can see that ours was not principally a problem of poor reading ability, although we do have students who read two to three years below grade level.

Group	Number in Group	Reading Level
Group I	7 children	Remedial - 3rd Grade
Group II	30 children	Average - 4th Grade
Group III	23 children	Remedial - 4th Grade
Group IV	30 children	Remedial - 5th Grade
Group V	30 children	Average - 5th Grade
Group VI	14 children	Average and below - 5th Grade
Group VII	30 children	Average - 6th Grade

Figure 1.   Organization of the Reading Groups

Scheduling is an important part of our present reading program. We have reading every day for one uninterrupted hour from one until two o'clock. During this hour no gym, music, art, or any other class is scheduled. The library, which incidently also is used by the high school, is open for the use of the reading classes.

At one o'clock each day the class forgets its grade designation and breaks up to go to reading classes at each individual child's level. The reading lesson continues as it did under the previous program using the Scott Foresman Series as a basic text with many supplementary readers. The present reading program stresses reading skills and abilities, the difference being that the teacher is more relaxed as she doesn't feel the pressure of time to finish the lesson. Many more texts are used because it is seldom that a story is not finished in one lesson. Often there is time for library usage and enrichment activities.

Because this is the first year of our new reading program, and because we feel that the mechanics or skills are so important in a reading program, we have not allowed a child to be placed in a reading group above his present grade level, that is, a fourth grader will not be placed in a fifth or sixth grade group. We allow for the gifted readers by grouping them together and having the group, when finishing the basic text and some supplementary texts at their desig-

nated grade level, proceed then to the basic text for the next grade level. Consequently, gifted readers entering the fifth and sixth grades in September 1959 will have completed the first volume of the basic text for that grade.

The new reading program stresses the development of reading as a leisure activity. In the advanced groups novels are read. Many paper bound novels were purchased to be used as supplementary texts. The last half hour of the school day is reserved for leisure reading in the classroom. The library is available for use of the intermediate grade students at this time with the librarian and reading supervisor helping students select books. The librarian became acquainted with the reading level of each group; then by determining the child's instructor, the librarian is able to determine the approximate reading level of the child.

Much is accomplished during the regular reading hour in developing the habit of leisure reading. The children are encouraged in class to discuss the books they read. Some recommend books which they think the others would enjoy. Teachers motivate reading by reading aloud the exciting or interesting part of a book, and by bringing library books to the reading class.

Each month the teachers evaluate the progress of the students in the reading group. If they feel that anyone in the group should be moved they fill out the form as illus-

trated in figure two and hand it to the reading supervisor.
Upon the approval of the supervisor and often after a con-
ference with the teacher to whose group the child would be
moved, the child is sent to the new group.

Teacher_____ Date _____

Pupil_____

Recommend Change to Group_____

Reason for change:

'Figure 2.   Recommendation of Change of Reading Group

The new reading program was adopted with the approval of
all the teachers involved. All those involved except one
have previous experience in teaching in our school system.
Each teacher who was involved in the program was allowed to
teach the group of his choice. Because our school is compar-
atively small, with two divisions of each grade, most of the
teachers knew the pupils. Some teachers had children in their
grades previously. Some of the teachers asked to teach the
same group next year.

There are important mechanical details involved in a
program such as our present one. Six classroom teachers

comprise the teaching staff, but we found that we had seven distinct reading groups. It was necessary that an extra classroom be available for the reading hour and we also need-ed an extra teacher. The reading supervisor and elementary principal teach this seventh group sharing the supervisory duties involved in the program.

CHAPTER III

GOALS OF AN EFFECTIVE READING
PROGRAM IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES

It is the purpose of a fundamental reading program in the middle grades to teach the child to like to read and to provide the instruction and guidance leading to understandings, skills, and attitudes which he needs to read with comprehension and enjoyment.

The reading program which meets the needs of the child in the intermediate grades is organized according to the physical, emotional, and mental development of children.[1] It meets these needs by recognizing that the intermediate grade child is reaching adolescence, the period during which his interests cover a wider range than they have thus far in his development and that he is gradually becoming conscious of the problems in the world around him. His questions are changing and he is demanding more complex answers. He is displaying greater ability to think in the abstract. Attention span and ability to work alone are increasing. Small muscles are still developing and growth in stature often becomes more rapid. It is at this age that we often

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1. Paul McKee, The Teaching of Reading in the Elementary School, p. 136.

see a reorganization of the personality. There are strong
peer relationships and they are used as a yardstick for be-
havior, dress, and attitudes.[1] There is little difference
in interests displayed by the sexes, but the girls will tend
to follow the boys' interests in the selection of reading
material.

The purpose of this study is to determine the effective-
ness of our new reading program. In order to do this effi-
ciently the first step in the evaluation was to establish
broad goals of an intermediate reading program. After care-
fully considering the emotional, mental and physical aspects
of the pupils at the intermediate level, and also considering
social factors involved, it was felt that these are the main
purposes of the reading program.

Broad Goals

 I. The basic purpose of a good reading program is to read
    effectively with comprehension.

 II. A basic reading program is designed primarily to teach
    the child how to read.

III. A good reading program provides experiences designed
    to use reading in the solution of fundamental problems.

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1. L. Joseph Stone and Joseph Church, <u>Childhood</u> <u>and</u>
   <u>Adolescence</u>, pp. 202-206

IV. The effective reading program creates those experiences designed to foster personal growth and literary appreciation.

 V. The school program shall help those children with reading difficulties by giving them experiences designed to correct faulty learnings.

Once objectives of a program are established a clarification of values is necessary. This will be developed in two ways. First, the broad goals will be interpreted in terms of criteria necessary to the development of the goals. Secondly, the criteria will be translated in behavioral terms. In a cooperative study agreement must be reached with regard to goals, criteria, and behavior to be sought. However, since this is an individual study the evaluator attempted to interpret the goals, criteria, and behavior in terms of the philosophy of the faculty and administrators of the school.

Criteria For Studying an Effective Reading Program

I. In building a reading program which teaches the child to read effectively with comprehension, the school:

   1. Provides a physical environment which is conducive to study.

   2. Provides adequate materials of instruction.

   3. Furnishes a variety of reading materials--magazines, newspapers, etc.

4. Allows time in the school program for reading instruction.

5. Encourages flexibility in the reading program to allow for variety in the reading instruction.

6. Provides an adequate library and sufficient time in the day's program for pupils to use it.

7. Groups the pupils for reading, according to reading ability.

8. Plans the reading program so there is organized instruction.

9. Works toward making the reading process meaningful to the child.

10. Builds favorable attitudes toward reading.

11. Develops, in addition to reading ability, other educational outcomes.

12. Provides efficient instruction.

13. Provides systematic appraisal of reading.

14. Interprets the child's progress to both the child and his parents.

II. To show the child how to read, the school:

1. Provides the framework through which the reading abilities, skills, and techniques are introduced and around which they are built.

2. Gives opportunities which establish readiness for each of the various phases of the reading program.

3. Provides the proper motivation for reading.

4. Gives experiences in comprehension abilities as follows:

    a. Sets a purpose for reading.

    b. Provides a wide background of experience.

    c. Develops vocabulary.

    d. Provides experience in reading interpretation - "reading between the lines."

5. Provides reading instruction in how to read in the different subject areas.

6. Provides background training in various reading skills, using the skills, later appraising and refining it.

III. To provide a program of experience units, the school:

1. Furnishes a reading situation which is stimulating, but frees the child of undue pressure.

2. Gives many opportunities to read, with purposes which are real.

3. Provides experiences which compare reading with other tools of collecting information.

4. Furnishes an opportunity for the child to work independently to pursue his own interests.

5. Guides the children to appreciate the worthwhileness of reading.

6. Develops the habit of thinking carefully through

his reading to see how he can apply his information.

7. Provides activities that enable the child to acquire a background of meanings for reading.

8. Furnishes experiences which help in developing a meaningful vocabulary for reading.

9. Provides a reading program which is pleasant for the child and the teacher.

10. Uses and encourages the child's initiative.

IV. The school offering a program of personal development through reading.

1. Arouses reading interests through classroom activities and through the basal reading program.

2. Provides an opportunity during the total reading instruction to pursue his individual interests through reading.

3. Allows the child freedom to explore books selecting topics about which he reads.

4. Lends itself to individualization of instruction.

5. Recognizes the strength and limitations of each child.

6. Provides guidance in teaching the child when and where to read when they are seeking information.

7. Guides pupils to select and evaluate what to read.

8. Teaches appraisal of adequacy of material in terms of purpose.

9. Guides pupils to know how to use ideas gained from reading.

V. To offer a program of re-education in reading, the school should:

1. Recognize and correct persistent and accumulative faulty learnings.

2. Constantly study reading growth.

Interpreting Criteria and Expressing them in Terms of Behavior

To build a reading program which teaches the child to read effectively the school seeks to provide an adequate physical environment, instruction supplies, and reference materials. In a school which provides these materials with instruction in their use, allowing adequate time to use the supplies, the child enjoys using the materials and refers to available books to answer his questions.[1] The instruction includes showing the child how to select his reading, teaching him to comprehend what he reads, and using reading as a means of experience.[2] The reader who receives this in-

1. Helen R. Sattley, "An Adequate School Library Program is Basic to the Reading Program", The Reading Teacher, April 1959, pp. 247-248.

2. Russel G. Stauffer, "A Directed Reading Activity - Group Type", The Reading Teacher, April 1959, pp. 266-267.

struction at the appropriate level adjusts his reading to his
purpose, applies what he reads in the solution of his pro-
blems, and interprets what he reads in terms of his personal
experiences. Consequently,he enjoys his rich heritage of
literature as a use of leisure.

To show the child how to read the school provides the
framework through which the reading abilities, skills, and
techniques are introduced and around which they are built.
The pupil therefore understands how to go about his reading
tasks. It also necessitates the school to afford experiences
in comprehension, interpretation, evaluation, perceiving re-
lationships, and in the various reading skills.[1] Having these
experiences the pupil evaluates, organizes, interprets, and
appreciates what he reads. He uses each skill, later
appraising and refining it.[2]

The program of experience units is designed by the
school to stimulate a desire to find out more about a subject
enabling students to work independently to pursue their own
interests. The school also gives many opportunities to read
with purposes that are real, helping the students to appre-

1. Paul McKee, The Teaching of Reading in the Elementary
   School, pp. 386-398.

2. Donald L. Cleland, "The Significance of Developmental
   Reading Skills," The Reading Teacher, February 1955,
   pp. 137-138.

ciate the worthwhileness of reading.[1]   The instructors help
the students compare reading with other tools of collecting
information, so that he gains a functional understanding of
the uses reading can and should serve. The school provides
opportunities for discussion which develop in the students,
the habit of carefully thinking through his reading to see
how he can apply his information.

The school offering a program of personal development
through reading arouses reading interests by means of class-
room activities, trips, and in the basal reading program.
Arousing reading interests naturally creates a desire to
read. The school which provides an opportunity during the
total reading instruction for the student to pursue his
individual interests through reading discovers that the stu-
dent finds pleasure in books and gains greater satisfaction
from reading. By allowing freedom for the child to explore
books, selecting topics about which he reads, the student
browses through various types of reading material before
making a decision about what material suits his purpose.
An important consideration in the program which develops
personal interests is the school library. Attractive read-
able books which may be taken home are provided. Students
are allowed time to use the library and time to read. The

1. Guy L. Bond and Eva Bond Wagner, Teaching the Child to
    Read, pp. 377-379.

students do voluntary out-of-school reading of material that is not assigned.

To offer a program of re-education in reading the school constantly studies reading growth in order to detect persistent and accumulative faulty learning. The child studying under this program of re-education in reading will overcome serious reading difficulties and show growth in reading ability.

CHAPTER IV

THE EVALUATIVE INSTRUMENT

One of the interpretations of the evaluation process regard evaluation as the "process by which the values of an enterprise are ascertained."[1] Saylor and Alexander note that "to evaluate is to determine the value of."[2] This study is concerned with determining the value of our present reading program as compared to the previous program. After determining goals and expressing the criteria in terms of behavior of learners, the next step in my evaluation was to secure evidence regarding the desired behaviors.

As one method of obtaining this evidence, I selected to build an evaluative instrument which would help to find evidences of desired behavior from various sources available to the teachers. This instrument gave the personnel teaching under the new reading program an opportunity to express their opinions regarding the curriculum and showed weaknesses and strong points in our curriculum.

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1. E. R. Smith and Ralph W. Tyler, Appraising and Recording Student Progress, p. 5.

2. Galen J. Saylor and William Alexander, Curriculum Planning, p. 579.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS

This instrument was developed to evaluate our present intermediate grade reading program as compared with the program used in previous years. Previously reading was taught by the classeoom teacher, with each teacher teaching three or four groups. The teachers felt that they never spent enough time with each group, that the greatest part of the school day was spent in teaching reading, and there was a great deal of time wasted by children in the room while their group was not reading. The administration, in going from room to room noticed a great duplication of effort.

This year it was decided to try a new reading program whereby all the pupils in grades four, five and six are placed in seven ability groups for reading, meeting one hour each day. We try in our new program to meet the requirements of a good reading program.

USE OF THE INSTRUMENT

The instrument endeavors to describe practices characteristic of a good reading program. Check the practices found in our previous program and those found in the present program. Please check under the columns as follows:

A - ALWAYS

S - SOMETIMES

N - NEVER

The instrument was used with the six teachers who had
taught under both the previous and present reading programs.
It was explained to these teachers that the instrument was
built by incorporating all features of a good reading program.
Their part in the evaluation was to check the instrument
comparing the present reading program with the previous one.
After explaining the instrument and its use the teachers were
allowed several days to work on them. One teacher was
assigned to collect the unsigned instruments and return them
to the evaluator, thus the teachers could state their opin-
ions without fear of repraisal.

To accurately interpret my instrument the following
values were given to the checks on the completed instruments:

Always   -   2

Sometimes-   1

Never   -   0

I then tabulated the composite results numerically.
These results are found in red in the instrument which is
reproduced on the following pages. The highest possible
score received by any one item is 12, made possible by six
checks in the Always column. The lowest score found on any
item was 3, making a range of 9 points.

AN INSTRUMENT FOR EVALUATING A READING PROGRAM

IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES

RITA CERATO

		Present			Previous		
		Program					
		A	S	N	A	S	N
		TOTAL			SCORE		

I. In building a reading program which teaches the child to read effectively the school:

A. Provides a physical environment conducive to study.

	A	S	N	A	S	N
1. Functional classrooms	11			11		
2. Adequate lighting	11			10		
3. Uninterrupted class periods	11			8		
	33			28		

B. Provides adequate materials of instruction.

	A	S	N	A	S	N
1. Basal texts	12			12		
2. Supplementary texts	12			12		
3. Workbooks when needed	12			12		
4. Standardized appraisal devices	12			12		
5. Dictionaries	12			12		
6. Encyclopedias	12			12		
7. Maps	12			11		
8. Globes	12			10		
	96			93		

C. Furnishes a variety of reading materials.

	A	S	N	A	S	N
1. Magazines	9			8		
2. Newspapers	8			8		
3. Attractive, readable, library books	12			9		
	27			25		

D. Allows time in the school program for reading instruction.

	A	S	N	A	S	N
	10			8		

E. Encourages flexibility in the program of reading instruction to allow for variety in the reading lessons.

	A	S	N	A	S	N
	8			3		

	Present Program			Previous		
	A	S	N	A	S	N
	TOTAL			SCORE		
F. Provides an adequate library.						
1. Central library	12			12		
2. Classroom library	10			7		
3. Adequate number of books	12			10		
4. Sufficient time in the day's schedule to use the library	12			6		
5. Provides supervision in the selection of books and use of the library	11			5		
	57			40		
G. Groups the children for reading instruction.						
1. Using teachers' judgment	11			10		
2. Using results of standardized tests	10			9		
	21			19		
H. Plans the reading program so there is organized instruction	12			10		
I. Makes the reading process meaningful to the child	12			9		
J. Builds favorable attitudes toward reading	11			8		
K. Develops, in addition to reading ability, other educational outcomes.						
1. Children learn to cooperate in the group	10			9		
2. Develops a resource of reading for the use of leisure	10			7		
L. Provides efficient instruction	10			7		
M. Provides for the student, systematic appraisals of reading comprehension and speed	11			6		

	Present Program			Previous Program		
	A	S	N	A	S	N
	TOTAL SCORE					
N. Interprets a child's progress to both the child and his parents	10			5		

II. To show the child how to read, the school:

A. Provides the framework through which the reading skills, abilities, and techniques are introduced, and around which they are built.

	A	S	N	A	S	N
1. Teaches reading skills						
a. Use of context clues	12			12		
b. Structural analysis	12			11		
c. Phonetic analysis	12			12		
d. Dictionary skills	12			12		
	48			47		
2. Teaches reading abilities						
a. Finding the main idea	11			9		
b. Reading to get details	10			9		
c. Reading to summarize	10			9		
d. Reading for appreciation	10			8		
	41			35		
3. Teaches reading techniques						
a. Gives experiences in comprehension abilities						
(1) Sets a purpose for reading	12			9		
(2) Provides a wide background of experiences	10			8		
(3) Develops vocabulary	10			8		
(4) Provides experience in reading interpretation	10			6		

	Present			Previous		
	Program					
	A	S	N	A	S	N
	TOTAL SCORE					
(5) Recognizing sequence	10			8		
(6) Following directions	9			8		
	61			47		
B. Gives experiences in developing reading speed	10			12		
C. Teaches adjusting reading rate to material read	9			6		
B. Gives experiences which establish readiness for each of the various phases of the reading program	9			8		
C. Provides the proper motivation for reading	12			8		
D. Develops skills in locating information by teaching the use of:						
1. Table of contents	12			10		
2. Glossary	12			10		
3. Index	12			10		
4. Dictionary	11			10		
5. Encyclopedia	11			10		
6. Other reference books	10			9		
7. Maps, graphs and charts	11			10		
	79			69		
E. Provides reading instruction in how to read in the different subject areas.	7			5		
III. To provide a program of experience units, the school:						
A. Furnishes a reading situation which is stimulating, but frees the child from undue pressure.	12			7		

		Present Program			Previous		
		A	S	N	A	S	N
		TOTAL	SCORE				
B.	Gives many opportunities to read with purposes which are real	11			9		
C.	Provides experiences which compare reading with the other tools of collecting information	9			8		
D.	Furnishes an opportunity for the child to work independently to pursue his own interest	8			7		
E.	Guides the children to appreciate the worthwhileness of reading	11			8		
F.	Develops the habit of thinking carefully through his reading to see how he can apply his information	11			8		
G.	Provides activities that enable the child to acquire a background of meanings for reading	10			9		
H.	Furnishes experiences which help in developing a meaningful vocabulary for reading	9			7		
I.	Provides a reading program which is pleasant for the child and the teacher	10			9		
J.	Uses and encourages the child's initiative	10			10		
IV.	The school offering a program of personal development through readings						
A.	Arouses reading interest through classroom activities and through the basal reading program	11			9		
B.	Provides an opportunity during the total reading instruction to pursue his individual interests through reading	11			8		

	Present Program			Previous Program		
	A	S	N	A	S	N
	TOTAL SCORE					
C. Allows the child freedom to explore books selecting topics about which he reads	12			9		
D. Lends itself to individualization of instruction	11			4		
E. Recognizes the strength and limitations of each child	11			10		
F. Provides guidance in teaching the child when to read to seek information	11			9		
G. Guides pupils to select and evaluate what to read						
1. Teaches what book to use for a specific purpose	8			7		
H. Teaches appraisal of adequacy of material in terms of purpose	8			7		
I. Guides pupils to know how to use ideas gained from reading	9			6		
V. To offer a program of re-education in reading, the school:						
A. Prevents persistent and accumulative faulty learnings	9			8		
B. Constantly studies reading growth	12			10		

INTERPRETATION OF THE INSTRUMENT

General Interpretations

Careful examination of the total results of the instrument revealed that the present reading program was considered better than, or equal to, never poorer than, the previous program. Using the point value system explained on page 29 the present program accumulated a total of 828 points compared with 678 points for the previous reading program.

Specific interpretations

1. Teaching the child to read effectively

The results of the instrument showed that although the physical environment had remained constant, our new reading program provides for less interruption of the reading period. The materials of instruction were adequate in our previous program and still are. We have provided each classroom with a sufficient number of maps and globes. We are not doing noticeably better in the provision of magazines and newspapers.

The library services rated much higher under our present reading program. Many more attractive, readable books have been purchased. We have provided time in the school program for use of the library and also provided greater supervision

in using the library and selecting books.

It was interesting to note that even though we allow
one hour in the day's schedule for reading, some teachers
felt that there is still not enough time for that subject.
They also felt that the previous program did not allow for
flexibility in the program and even though the present pro-
gram encourages flexibility, we still do not have the answer
to this problem. The instructors did feel that they were
able to provide more effective instruction under the new
program.

The present program compared with the previous one in
grouping the children for reading, but it was shown that
presently we plan the reading program so there is more or-
ganization in instruction. It also makes the reading process
more meaningful to the child and builds a more favorable
attitude toward reading.

The results of the instrument showed that the program
we are now using develops reading as a leisure activity. It
also showed that we now provide more systematic appraisals of
the child's reading progress both to the child and his parents.

II. Showing the child how to read

The present reading program provides the framework
through which reading skills are taught as well as they were
in the previous program, but the results of the instrument
showed that the present program provides more experiences

in teaching the reading abilities of finding the main idea,
reading to get details, reading to summarize, and reading for
appreciation. The present program rated higher than the
previous program in teaching reading techniques, the points
being in setting a purpose for reading, providing experience
in reading interpretation, giving experience in developing
reading speed, and adjusting the reading rate to material
read, and purpose. The evaluators felt that the present
program provides greater motivation for reading, but develops
skills in locating information as well as previously. We
did not rate well in providing instruction in the subject
matter areas, but we are doing more than we did in previous
years.

III. Providing a program of experience units

The instrument conclusively proved that we now provide a
more stimulating reading situation, and that we are freeing
the child of undue pressure. We also provide many more oppor-
tunities to read with purposes which are real than we did
previously. We are presently guiding the child to appreciate
the worthwhileness of reading and developing the habit of
thinking through information gained through reading. We are
doing better in the following areas than we did previously,
but still need to improve our instruction in providing ex-
periences which compare reading with other tools of collect-
ing information, and in furnishing an opportunity for the

to work independently to pursue his interests.

IV. Offering a program of personal development through reading

The evaluation showed that we are providing a good program of personal development as compared to our previous program. The area rating the highest in the opinions of those teachers who had taught under both reading programs was that the present program lends itself to individualization of instruction. This one characteristic rated the highest difference in the two reading plans. I make note of this fact because one of the greatest criticisms of our present reading program by notable reading authorities is that this program does not lend itself to individualization of instruction.

It was shown that our program is providing more opportunities for personal development through reading by arousing reading interests, and by recognizing strengths and limitations of each child.

Although our present program is teaching the child to select, evaluate, and appraise what he reads better than we did before, we can still improve in these areas.

V. Offering a program of re-education in reading

The results of the evaluation showed that our present program rated only 9 in preventions of persistent and accumulative faulty learnings as compared with 8 points for the previous program. This fact shows me that as the person

responsible for the reading instruction in the school, I
must find a solution to this problem.

The present program rated a perfect score in constantly
studying reading growth. This fact is accomplished because
in addition our regular reports to parents, once each month
we evaluate the growth of each individual child, testing him
if necessary, then placing him in a different reading group
if it is deemed advisable.

CHAPTER V

EVALUATING RESULTS OF STANDARDIZED READING TESTS

The term evaluation is often associated with the testing movement or the measurement movement in education. The next step in my appraisal of our reading program was to compare the results of scores earned on reading achievement tests which had been administered under the previous reading program with the results of the tests which were administered after the new reading program had been in effect for one year.

To accurately interpret statistics compiled from the test results it was necessary to control factors effecting the test results. It was fortunate that the same test, Science Research Associates Achievement Series had been administered in a different form in May of the last three years. It was test scores of the previous three years, 1957, 1958, and 1959 with which this study was concerned. I further controlled the group by only using the scores of those children who had attended our school system for the last three years.

To compile the statistics for this report the grade placement score was used. In establishing the groups for the purpose of comparison the groups were based on the group membership as of June 1959. The mean score for each group was used. The score used was the total reading score which is an average of the comprehension and vocabulary sections of the test. The

results of these tests are tabulated in figure three.

CLASS	SCORES		
	1957	1958	1959
I	2.3	2.8	3.6
II	4.1	5.1	5.3
III	2.7	3.4	3.9
IV	3.6	4.0	4.9
V	4.3	5.2	6.5
VI	4.1	4.8	6.2
VII	6.5	7.3	8.1

Figure 3.   Results of Standardized Reading Tests

Interpretation of the Test Results

In the interpretation of these test results we must con-
sider the fact that Groups I, III, IV, and VI are the groups
which are either receiving remedial instruction or are unable
to compete with the fast readers, so they are receiving in-
struction which is geared to their needs. Also consider that
in 1957 and 1958 the test results were based on our previous
reading program where the children were grouped and taught in
their individual classrooms. The 1959 score is the result of
one year of reading instruction in the new reading program
where pupils are grouped with children from other grades and
in larger groups than previously. They are receiving one
hour of reading instruction as compared with twenty minutes

or one half hour of reading instruction under the former
program.

Group I was, and still is a remedial group. They were
the poorest readers in the intermediate grades. The group was
comprised of seven fourth and fifth grade children. The
results of the tests in this group are most surprising, showing
a growth of eight months since working in the new program as
compared with a growth of three months under the previous
program. These children read the basic third grade texts
plus supplementary texts. They are beginning the second year
of the reading program in a transition reader of the basic
series, Just Imagine. The teachers' guide for this text
outlines lessons in reviewing basic reading skills which were
taught in the first three grades. It is expected that these
children will be able to read at the fourth grade level by the
end of the current school year.

Group II was considered fast moving, being comprised of
thirty children reading at a fourth grade level. They read
the basic fourth grade texts, two supplementary fourth grade
texts and the first fifth grade basic text. The test results
for this group are most disappointing. These children showed
a growth of one year while working under the previous program,
but showed a growth of only two months in our new program.
In analyzing the reasons for these poor test results, the
intelligence quotients of all these children were studied.

It was found that all IQ's were above normal. Materials of
instruction were equal to those of other groups. The instruc-
tor of this group was the only teacher in the reading program
who had no teaching experience. Furthermore, this teacher
had little teacher training, having attended a teachers'
college for only one summer. Although many factors effect
test results it is recommended that supervisors work more
closely with this teacher to try to determine the cause of
the poor test results.

Group III was a remedial group of twenty three pupils
from all intermediate grades who were working at the fourth
grade level. Simplified editions of fourth grade texts were
used and the fourth grade basic texts were also completed.
These children showed a growth of five months as compared to
a growth of seven months during the previous year. This may
be due to several factors. These children have below average
IQ's, consequently they may have reached a leveling point.
A two month difference is a normal deviation, but it still
shows that this group will need special help this year. The
reading supervisor will teach some lessons to this group and
also observe them more often to try to diagnose their dif-
ficulty.

Group IV was a remedial group of thirty fifth and sixth
graders. The test results of this group showed that under
the new reading program there was a growth of nine months as

compared with a four months growth under the previous program.
These children read a fourth grade supplementary text, the
fifth grade basic texts, and other supplementary texts. The
fifth graders who were in this group are continuing their
progress in the group this year by first reading a fifth
grade supplementary text, then going on to the basic sixth
grade texts. The sixth grade pupils are now in the Junior
High School program.

Group V was comprised of thirty fifth graders who were
of average and above average intelligence, and who were
capable of working at a fast pace. Many fifth grade texts,
both basic and supplementary, were completed, and the first
sixth grade basic text was read. These children showed a
growth of thirteen months in the new program as compared to
nine months in the previous program. This year they are con-
tinuing in the sixth grade, by reading the second text in the
basic sixth grade series. They expect to read the seventh
grade basic text, supplementary texts, and several novels.

Group VI was a group of sixth grade pupils who were work-
ing slightly below grade level and could not, for various
reasons, compete with a faster sixth grade group. They read
supplementary sixth grade texts, the basic sixth grade texts,
and some novels. Tests results showed a growth of fourteen
months under our new program as compared with a growth of
seven months in the previous program.

Group VII was the most advanced reading group working at the sixth and seventh grade level. This group was comprised of thirty sixth grade pupils. Test results showed a growth of eight months which was the same growth as was shown under the previous reading program. It is felt that these results do not show a true picture of the progress shown. The achievement test which was administered seemed invalid for these pupils as it did not provide norms for the best readers in the group. Next year we plan to use a form of the achievement test which is designed for grades six through nine.

In summarizing the test results of the seven reading groups involved in this study, it is apparent that four groups showed greater growth in the present reading program than the previous one. One group showed equal growth under both programs. Two groups had poorer results under the present program than under the previous one.

CHAPTER VI

FURTHER EVALUATIVE EVIDENCE

In evaluating the present reading program as compared
with the reading program as it was in the past, I found that
there were other evidence that the program may be a success
which would not be evident from examining the results of the
standardized tests or the evaluative instrument.

Each reading group was able, because of the extended time
in the reading period, to read many more texts and supplemen-
tary materials than they had ever been able to accomplish
formerly. The slower groups read not less than three texts
and some read as many as five texts. The fast groups all
read at least five texts, supplementary novels, and they also
read the first reader in the basic series for the next grade.
As an illustration, the fast fifth grade group read two basic
fifth grade texts, Days and Deeds and More Days and Deeds.
They then read two supplementary fifth grade texts, and the
first book in the basic sixth grade series, People and Progress.
Consequently, beginning in September 1959 this group will read
More People and Progress.

To further clarify terms, when I refer to a class as hav-
ing read a book, I interpret the term "read" to include learn-
ing reading skills, and abilities which are necessary for the

successful reading of the book, using the accompanying work-book and developing skills in interpretation and comprehension of the story.

Increased use of the library portrays further evidence that the children were reading to a greater extent than ever before. In addition to the weekly library period, reading groups went to the library during the reading hour. The library was also open for the use of the intermediate grade pupils during the last half hour of the school day. At this time the reading supervisor was in the library helping the children select books. The library circulation figures are shown in figure four.

	1957 - 1958	1958 - 1959
September	650	1094
October	767	1205
November	741	1008
December	475	873
January	608	916
February	538	781
March	666	1078
April	618	704
May	622	1014
June	562	676

Figure 4.   Library Circulation Under the Past
and Present Reading Programs

In interpreting the library circulation figures which include only those books taken out by the children of the intermediate grades, we realize that all these books were not read. However, it is the opinion of the teachers that pupils read many more books than previously. There often was time in the reading hour to discuss the books which the children were reading. It was surprising to the teachers to hear these discussions and to note the enthusiasm with which they recommended the books. Some children kept records of the books they read. One girl in the sixth grade kept a record of approximately one hundred books.

Parents were enthusiastic about our new reading program. Several commented that their children who had never before shown an interest in reading were now bringing home, and reading, library books. It was also gratifying to hear children say "the reading hour goes so fast," and "I never liked reading before, but now it's fun."

It has been mentioned before that sets of novels were purchased so that the classes could read and enjoy novels together. Pocket editions of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn were purchased and read. We are reviewing other novels, but it is difficult to find novels in pocket editions which are suitable for intermediate grade children and the purchase of bound editions is quite expensive.

After the evaluative instrument was used in the early

spring showing that there was a lack of variety of reading materials available, it was decided to provide daily newspapers for reading groups which were capable of reading them. A good local paper, The Middletown Record was purchased daily for the four highest reading groups. Each student was provided with a copy of the newspaper. Instruction was provided in the various parts of the newspaper and how to read a paper. This unit continued three weeks. The children were allowed to take the paper home and at the end of the unit, many pupils had become so interested in reading the daily paper that they continued reading it at home.

The four groups working at the most advanced reading levels worked on improving their reading speed and comprehension. The Science Research Associates Better Reading Book I was used. This book contains articles of uniform length and difficulty. Pupils record the time spent in reading the article, then figure their reading rate. They also recorded their comprehension score. Instruction was provided in how to improve the reading rate and comprehension. No marks were given for this, so pupils improved their comprehension and reading rate for their personal improvement. For this reason no formal records were kept of progress made, but many in the sixth grade reading group invariable received a perfect score in comprehension and had doubled their reading rate.

It is felt that the evidence listed above further illustrates the effectiveness of our new reading program.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the detailed study of the evaluative instrument, the test results, and other evaluative evidence, it was decided to continue the new reading program for another year. It was evident that the new program is an improvement on our previous reading program, but there are still many areas in the program where we need to work for improvement. The following recommendations are made for improving the present reading program:

1.   Provide more newspapers and magazines as materials of instruction.

We now supply weekly newspapers printed especially for the elementary grades and single copies of magazines are found in the library. Newspapers were supplied to the four most advanced reading groups, each pupil being provided with a daily paper. Continue this policy.

2.   Each room have a classroom library.

There is no reason for the neglect of this as books are available for use in the classroom.

3.   Suggest to the teachers ways that they may improve the following:

a.   Have flexibility in the program of reading instruction to allow for variety in the reading lesson. The teachers are provided with a variety of materials. In order that they use these materials

to the best advantage to produce variety in the

reading program I suggest:

    (1). Panel discussions about the story read in

        the text.

    (2). Using texts from other subject matter areas

        to teach the pupil to read in that area.

    (3). Use the library and reference books to look

        up the background of a story.

    (4). The school provides sets of books in the

        fiction area. Use these for variety in the

        reading program.

    (5). A program of individualized reading using

        library books, allowing the child to work

        independently pursuing his own interests.

b. Guide the pupils to select, evaluate, and appraise

material read.

Reading in the reading text does not provide the
opportunity for selection and evaluation of read-
ing material. Teachers who follow suggestions
above will find that the material suggested above
better lends itself to selection evaluation, and
appraisal of reading material.

4. Teachers work on ways of building vocabulary. This

should be a cooperative project.

5. Work on a solution to the problem of preventing persist-

ent and accumulative faulty learnings. This should be

discussed with the teachers involved. A possible

solution is:

a.   Freeing the reading supervisor for one half hour

so that she can help individuals having difficulty.

6.   Work with those individual teachers who need assistance

in improving instruction.

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