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The Application of Remedial Methods for the Improvement of Music Sight Reading

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THE APPLICATION OF REMEDIAL METHODS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF MUSIC SIGHT READING

INTRODUCTION

A. General considerations in the problem of music reading

B. Need for improvement of music sight-reading

CHAPTER I -- JUSTIFICATION FOR THE APPLICATION OF REMEDIAL METHODS TO MUSIC SIGHT-READING

A. H. E. Weaver's statement concerning general principles of visual perceiving

B. The relationship of the eye-voice span in word reading to the eye-hand span in music reading

C. Ole Jacobsen experiment which shows that eye movements in reading music are about the same as in reading words

CHAPTER II -- EXPLANATION OF WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE COMPLICATED PROCESS OF READING

A. Ocular behavior in reading

B. Reading ahead and retaining a memory of tonal-rhythmic pattern

C. Two interpretations of music reading

D. Reading more than notes

E. Relationship between intelligence and music reading ability

F. When to improve sight-reading

CHAPTER III -- EXPERIMENTS IN REMEDIAL TEACHING METHODS

A. "A Comparative Study of Two Methods of Teaching Sight Singing in the Fourth Grade."

B. "Remedial Instruction in Reading with College Freshmen."

CHAPTER IV -- APPLICATION OF REMEDIAL METHODS TO MUSIC SIGHT-READING

A. Phrase Flash Cards

B. Phrase Excercises with the Tachistoscope

C. Eye-Voice Span Exercises

D. Phrase Exercises that Direct Eye Movement

E. Use of Line Markers

CONCLUSION -- JUSTIFICATION OF REMEDIAL METHODS IN MUSIC SIGHT READING

A. Principles of word reading and music reading are similar

B. Remedial methods for the improvement of both word and music reading.

THE APPLICATION OF REMEDIAL METHODS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF MUSIC SIGHT READING

INTRODUCTION

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THE PROBLEM OF MUSIC READING

From past observations made by high school band directors of this area, there has been general agreement that many high school instrumentalists are lacking in musical sight-reading ability. This paper is intended to offer a means, in the form of "remedial methods" that will help solve the existing deficiency in music sight-reading.

Good reading ability in music is a vital necessity in the reproduction of a musical composition or any part of a composition. Much valuable time would be wasted if the conductor of a musical organization found it necessary to play or sing each individual part in order that the performers might learn their scores by rote. It is quite evident that in order to correctly perform a musical composition, one must play from what he sees before his eyes and not from what he can recall from hearing the composition at some previous time.

Learning to read music is very vital for the purpose of furthering the use and enjoyment of music. The ability of sight-reading increases the interest for participation in an instrumental organization and favors insight into musical

structure and some types of listening activities. Reading music is not a feat in itself, but it is a part of authentic musical development. Reading is especially related to appreciation in music. Experience in singing, playing, listening, writing, analyzing and creating is the source from which music appreciation is derived. A background of understanding and knowledge is of utmost necessity to a student for the highest degree of appreciation.

Reading should be intended for the development of musical insight rather than musical technique. Teaching of music reading cannot be justified if we are to develop only a skill. The immediate purpose for teaching reading is to enable a person to look at music silently and reproduce it vocally or instrumentally. However, reading is not to be used merely for the development of accurate singing or playing; it is to be used as a method for developing musical thinking. Reading music can be used for directing attention to pitch and interval relationships, tonality trends and rhythmic values. The ability to understand music symbols is an aid to musical thinking, feeling and imagining. Mastery of notation alone will not provide the ability to feel or understand music. The ability for reading musical notation is a means to understanding music better but should not be an end in itself.

Musical meanings should be taught in music classes and not just the symbols that make music reading possible. The

notation of music is merely a picture. The student who has been taught to use notation has a much wider range of music open to him. If he is unable to read he must depend on someone else if he wants to know how a new song sounds or if he can't remember how a tune goes. He must always learn a song by rote instead of being able to look at the music and hear how it sounds. Each child should be able to do his own reading. If he can sing or play a piece, that piece becomes an individual possession. "The true aim of theoretic instruction is to promote an understanding of music through a growing awareness of musical structure in the terms of musical needs".[1]

As has been mentioned, the band directors of this area are aware of the deficiency in music sight-reading, but not many of them have offered any suggestions on how the situation may be remedied. Frank Friedrich[2] confirms the fact that this deficiency in the ability to sight-read is definitely true of piano sight-readers by his statement, "The inability of the average piano student to read simple school songs and folk tunes at sight has led to more printed panaceas than any other aspect of piano study and the problem

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[1]Howard A. Murphy, Teaching Musicianship (New York, 1950), p. 13.

[2]Frank Friedrich, "All Music Reading is Sight Reading," Etude, LXIX (November, 1951), p. 14.

today apparently remains about as unsolved as it ever was. There just aren't very many good sight-readers." As an example of the kind of advice given on the subject of improving music sight-reading, Karl W. Gehrkens'[3] contributions are typical:

> The way to become a better sight-reader is to require yourself to play through a great quantity of very simple music such as hymn tunes, folk songs, easy accompaniments, and simple piano pieces. Play through each one once (or at the most twice), then go on to another. If you can't do the piece at least fairly well the first or second time then take something easier. Go back to a single line of melody if necessary, but make yourself concentrate on it and do it at least fairly perfectly the first or second time.

This sounds well and good, but Gehrkens fails to even mention trying to read ahead of what is being played, and he also neglects to reveal that a person may be taught to use the eyes properly while reading and to retain what has been read in the process. In another statement Gehrkens indicates that he does encourage reading ahead by saying "Compel yourself to read ahead of where you are playing so as to anticipate not only melodic and chordal progressions but fingerings, tempo and dynamic changes, pedal markings, etc."[4] This is still not enough. The students should be informed how the eyes should function while reading and specific

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[3]Karl W. Gehrkens, "How Can I Learn To Sight Read and Transpose?", Etude, LXXII (January, 1954), p. 22.

[4]Karl W. Gehrkens, "How Can I Improve My Sight Playing?", Etude, LXVIII (January, 1950), p. 16.

methods should be presented to them to help them train the eyes in the proper movement that is required in reading ahead. Fundamentals should come first in anything, and the eyes are certainly fundamental in the reading process. Harold Berkley[5] says "There is no special exercise or other short cut to good sight reading; the only way to learn it is to do it." It is because of the reading problems as focused by these statements that this paper has been written.

Learning to read music at sight requires much understanding and effort from a good teacher. Sight reading music is "Psychological and calls for much patience, kindness and ingenuity."[6]

The methods in this paper are to be applied to students who play band instruments which play only a single line.

In the search for "remedial techniques" in music reading, it was found that the principles of word reading were very similar to those of music reading. Some research has been done to substantiate this by H. E. Weaver in his "Studies of Ocular Behavior in Music Reading" and by Ole Jacobsen in his experiments at the University of Chicago.[7] Both men reached the conclusion that word reading

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[5]Harold Berkley, "Reading Ahead an Aid to Sight Reading", Etude, LXXI (August, 1953), p. 25.

[6]R. Doorenbos, "Sight-Reading Helps", Etude, LXVII (July, 1950), p. 444.

[7]Friedrich, p. 14.

and music reading are closely related as far as the general principles are concerned. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter I.

Before anyone can become acquainted with how to use corrective methods for the improvement of reading, one must know what is involved in the process of reading. Chapter II makes inquiry into these involvements in terms of ocular behavior of the eyes while reading, reading ahead, retention and the type of material being read.

Some experimentation has been done with remedial methods in both word and music reading. Chapter III describes an experiment in music reading and one in word reading and compares the results of both.

Chapter IV contains some actual methods that are used for the improvement of word reading and explains how these methods may be applied to music sight reading.

CHAPTER I

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE APPLICATION OF REMEDIAL METHODS TO MUSIC SIGHT READING

This chapter is concerned with presenting evidence that the general principles of word reading and music reading are very similar. H. E. Weaver[1] states in his "Studies of Ocular Behavior in Music Reading" that the "General principles of visual perceiving which have been established by extensive research may be assumed to be applicable to music reading. Of these principles, those pertaining to the movements of the eyes in perceiving printed symbols and to the extent of the perceptual span are especially significant."

Regarding the "eye-hand span" in music reading, which is the distance between the notes that the musician is reading and the notes which he is performing, Weaver says:

> The eye-hand span in music reading corresponds to the eye-voice span in the reading of words. Quantz seems to have been the first to attempt to measure the distance between the word fixated by the eye and the word spoken by the voice in oral reading. He measured this distance by determining the number of words that could be read after a card had been unexpectedly slipped over the material being read. He reports that the span is greater at the beginning of a line than at the end and that special conditions, such as an unfamiliar word, may reduce the span to zero. Gray used a similar method but obtained a record

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[1] H.E. Weaver, Psychological Monographs, Vol. 55 (Evanston, 1943), p. 2.

> of the reading by means of a dictaphone. Buswell used a dictaphone and made photographic records of eye movements. His recording mechanisms were synchronized so that corresponding points on the two different records could be determined. He used school children as subjects and reports that "for all grades the good readers have a much wider span than the poor readers...." Also, "one of the characteristic features of the eye-voice span is its variation in width from word to word through the selection. The span is sometimes narrow, apparently expanding and contracting to the demands made by the material read." Butsch used the photographic method in a study of the eye-hand span in typewriting. He found that his subjects were usually looking at the next word ahead of the one they were writing. His most rapid writers did not read two words ahead more than half of the time. He found a few three word phrases that were read ahead of the writing.[2]

Frank Friedrich establishes further proof that word and music reading are closely related by his observation that "Ole Jacobsen photographed eye movements in reading music at the University of Chicago back in 1926. His experiments showed rather conclusively that eye movements in reading music are about the same as in reading words."[3]

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[2]Weaver, p. 6.

[3]Friedrich, p. 6.

CHAPTER II

EXPLANATION OF WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE COMPLICATED PROCESS OF READING

Before going further into the problem of improving sight-reading, it might be well to find out what is involved in the complicated process of music reading. Frank Friedrich has much to contribute on this matter:

> Early in this century psychologists worked out a method of photographing eye movements in reading, and modern reading techniques are based solidly upon their findings. To the surprise of most people it was found that the eyes do not move steadily along a line of print, from left to right, but rather in a series of jumps. At each landing the eye organizes a group of printed symbols, translates them into meaning and jumps to another spot for another group of symbols. A good reader makes fewer jumps per line of type and picks up more symbols at one landing. The amount of reading material taken in at one glance is called the reader's "eye-span." Modern reading techniques are aimed at increasing the "eye-span" of each reader and reducing the number of landings (or fixations) per line of type.
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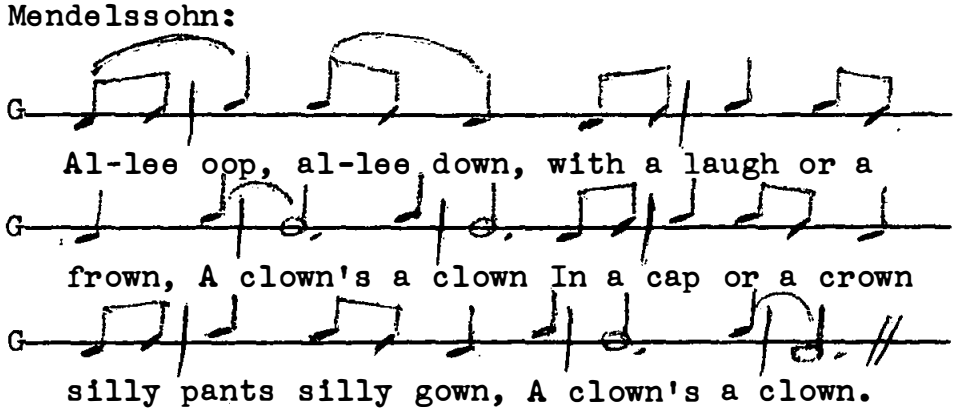
> This explains why word reading is taught in our schools before spelling is introduced, in fact, even before the alphabet is completely learned. The child recognizes the entire word as a symbol instead of laboriously having to decipher the individual letters. Since the word means an idea to the child, comprehension is reached much faster than if the word must be constructed from the individual letters before it can begin to mean an idea to him.
>
> Modern reading teaches words as "patterns". COW is a complete symbol and when seen, calls up the picture of the animal, not the letters C-O-W. Beginning reading material is confined to simple patterns using words that have quite distinctive symbol-outlines. When my own daughter was only four years old I was reading a school pre-primer to her and running my finger along under the words to give her an idea of what reading was. After we had finished the page she surprised me by pointing out the word "goodbye" which had appeared several times on the page. It is impossible to draw a picture of "goodbye" so she must have recognized it

from the distinctive "look" of the complete word.

Fortunately music notation is also made up of "patterns" that have distinctive shapes or outlines and if we can translate them into meaning without having to "spell them out," we should be able to develop more efficient readers at the piano than we have been producing by the traditional note-spelling.

For example, let us "look" at a tune borrowed from Mendelssohn:



First we should learn to recognize the tune as a "whole" by hearing it played or sung, or by singing it, for tunes have an overall unity which the mind recognizes at once. This tune consists of two phrases, alike except for the final note and we should try to make the student conscious of the different "feeling" in the phrase endings. The tune can then be broken down into four patterns clearly seen in the notes: (1) three notes ascending, (2) three notes descending, (3) two notes descending, and (4) the final skip. Each of these elements can be related to a corresponding direction of movement on the keyboard and a related movement in the sound.[1]

Ralph Rea reveals more of what is involved in music sight-reading by pointing out that, "previous experimentation in the field of music reading tends to indicate that the good sight-reader must: (1) maintain the lead of his eye movements far enough ahead of performance to enable him to comprehend all the tonal-rhythmic elements encountered

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[1]Friedrich, p. 14ff.

in musical notation, and (2) retain a memory of this tonal-rhythmic pattern in order to play it while obtaining another image."[2]

Most music teachers agree that in order to do a good job of sight-reading, a musician must read ahead of where he is playing. Weaver supports this point of view with the statement: "There is general agreement among music teachers that the eyes should be well ahead of the hands in reading but there is a great difference of opinion concerning the distance that a reader can or should maintain between the eye and hand. Published estimates and recommendations range from one or two measures to a whole page. This may indicate that individuals differ greatly in eye-hand span or it may be evidence that unaided observation is not adequate to achieve reliable estimates."[3] It would seem most practical, in this author's opinion, that the distance between the eye-hand span should depend upon the student's ability and the content of the material being read. Berkley makes this observation about reading ahead:

> There is, however, a very important element that you can practice every time you play from notes: the habit of keeping your eyes just ahead of the notes you are actually playing. This is a habit that is natural

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[2]Ralph C. Rea, "Music Reading Films," Research in Music Education, I (Fall, 1954), p. 147.

[3]Weaver, p. 6.

> to, or has been acquired by, every good sight-reader, though many of them don't know they are doing it. Your eyes should be at least one beat ahead of your fingers; in rapid rhythms, at least two beats ahead. At first, when you are trying to do this, your eyes will repeatedly fall back to the notes you are actually playing at the moment. You must consciously move them forward again and again, until they stay consistently ahead of your fingers. As in driving a car, you must always be aware of the road ahead. And how much more important this is when the road is new to you![4]

Harry A. King[5] defines the term "music reading" into two parts which may help describe what the reading of music is concerned with. He states:

> The term music reading may be interpreted in two ways. The most common interpretation is that it consists of reading a musical score with respect to pitch, time, rhythm, and expression, and reproducing the score either vocally or instrumentally. The second interpretation is similar except that the act of reproduction is omitted. This is the type of reading that is done silently by imagery alone. It is the act the professional musician performs when he reads ahead of the actual music.[6]

In other words, King means that in order to be a good sight-reader one must look ahead of where he is playing and be able to imagine, or hear in his own mind, what is coming next and how it is to be executed.

The process of reading music contains many small but important details which the amateur musician is likely to

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[4]H. Berkley, "To Develop Sight-Reading," Etude, LXVII (August, 1949), p. 477.

[5]Harry A. King, "A Study of The Relationship of Music Reading and I. Q. Scores," Journal of Research in Music Education, Vol. I (Spring, 1954), p. 35.

[6]Ibid

overlook. Weaver touches upon some of the most common of these details. In addition to reading just notes:

> The reader must be able to translate into appropriate action a very large number of special signs which are necessary parts of the notational system. "Accidentals" may alter the pitch of a tone; time values of tones may be varied by means of the "tie," the "dot," and the "fermata"; time values may be changed also, by the signs which indicate a change of tempo, such as "ritardando" and "accelerando"; variations in dynamics accompanying the normal rhythmic accents are indicated by many different signs such as "p," "sfz," "cresc," and "decresc"; a wavy line placed vertically beside a chord shows that the tones of the chord are to be played as a rapid arpeggio rather than simultaneously; the trill, the mordent, and the turn add embellishing tone groups to the tones represented by means of notes; legato and staccato playing are indicated by the slur and by dots above the notes; the fingering is given in many compositions and often the use of the pedal is indicated. These are only some of the more commonly used signs."[7]

Intelligence is most certainly an important factor to be considered in music reading. Harry A. King made a study of this. He concludes:

> This study set out to ascertain if there was a relationship between intelligence and music reading ability. It matched groups of good and poor music readers, and set up controls in a number of vital factors and in visual and auditory disabilities. It found a substantial difference in group means on I. Q. scores which favored the group of good music readers. This difference in means was found to be statistically reliable.[8]

All eyes and ears of the pupil involved in this test were checked thoroughly and found to be reasonable without de-

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[7]Weaver, p. 3.

[8]King, p. 37.

fects that would influence the test in any way.

A problem that might arise concerning music sight-reading is that of when to teach proper habits of good sight-reading. Friedrich says:

> It is a question whether we will have good sight-readers unless the elements of sight-reading are taught from the beginning of instruction. The problem is not unsolvable if we all realize that ALL music reading is SIGHT reading, for we can only learn to read music by using our eyes, and certainly we should at all times use them as efficiently as possible.[9]

Undoubtedly it is best to start a student in proper habits at the very beginning. These students have a much broader concept of music meaning. However, there are those students who have failed to develop proper reading habits during some years of musical experience, and the question arises, "Is it too late to help them?" Victor Seroff[10] answers with this statement:

> Many teachers consider sight-reading an art in its own right. They are also apt to think that unless the student began his training in sight-reading at the earliest stages, the art can never be obtained. This is definitely not so. Naturally, the earlier one begins, the easier it will be. But it is never too late, as long as the student really desires to master it.

This confirms the fact that if a student does get a slow start in music reading, he may be improved upon if a wise and understanding teacher helps him create a desire to further his ability in sight-reading.

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[9]Friedrich, p. 51.

[10]Victor S. Seroff, "New Ideas on Musical Memory, Sight-Reading, and Programs," Etude, LXVI (October, 1948), p. 585.

CHAPTER III

EXPERIMENTS IN REMEDIAL TEACHING METHODS

This chapter shall present an experiment in music reading, an experiment in word reading, and make a comparison of the results of both. Both experiments are concerned with the application of remedial methods to a group to determine the effectiveness of this type of instruction in reading. One experiment was done at the fourth grade level, while the other experiment was conducted at the college freshman level. This would tend to indicate that remedial methods may be employed with students having a fairly wide range of age.

The first experiment was conducted during the school year 1949-1950 in an elementary school of Austin, Texas. Two equivalent groups of twenty pupils each were selected after much careful testing.[1]

> In the teaching of music reading two methods of approach were used. The control group was taught sight-reading without the use of any special visual materials. In a few instances, the staff was drawn on the black-board to illustrate the relative distance between notes. The experimental group was taught sight-reading with the aid of flash cards, musical games, and slides used with the opaque projector. The flash cards used contained all of the intervals of all of the songs taught during the year. These cards had as few as two notes or as many as six. The musical game was one similar to Bingo. Musical

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[1]Doris Hutton, "A Comparative Study of Two Methods of Teaching Sight Singing in the Fourth Grade," Journal of Research in Music Education, Vol. 1 (Fall, 1953), p. 119.

symbols were on each card and the students became familiar with these symbols through repeated playing of the games. The slides that were used with the opaque projector contained the music to simple folk tunes such as "The Farmer in the Dell," "Mary Had a Little Lamb," "Three Blind Mice," "London Bridge is Falling Down," and others of like nature. The title as well as the words were omitted from each slide.

The above mentioned materials were used as much as possible during the music class time of the experimental group. Drill was conducted through the use of the flash cards and the music slides. Pupils were asked to sing back to the teacher the music that appeared on the cards and slides. At first, the class sang these drills; later as assurance was developed, individuals sang back to the teacher. When new songs were learned, the work done during the drill period were related.

The sight singing tests were conducted in the following manner: the beat was established by tapping on a desk, the pitch of the first note was given, and the pupil sang the tones with the neutral syllable "la." Because of the rhythmic and tonal change of the last two phrases, the pitch was given again at the beginning of the third line. The foregoing procedure was employed once for practice. The second time, the teacher recorded the number of notes the pupil sang correctly. Notes were counted as being correct if they were on pitch and in rhythm. The number of correct notes sung was used as the pupil's score.[2]

Conclusions pertaining to music reading ability were as follows:

(1) A significant increase was apparent in the sight-reading ability of both the control group and the experimental group.
(2) A pronounced difference in music sight-reading ability was apparent between the experimental and the control groups; the experimental group made a significantly higher average on the final sight reading test.[3]

The second experiment was conducted at Indiana Uni-

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[2]Hutton, A Comparative Study, Vol. 1, p. 119ff.

[3]Ibid.

versity, and was administered to a group of freshmen.

This experiment was concerned with word reading only.

The personnel of the experiment consisted of twenty-one students who were receiving financial aid through the National Youth Administration. Each student did four hours of work weekly in remedial reading as the work for which he was compensated by this organization. Thus this group of students worked in the capacity of paid subjects of research.

The experiment was started on October 1, 1937, and continued until May 28, 1938. The group as a whole met with the instructor for one hour each week; and other three hours per week were devoted to independent, but supervised work on the part of each individual student.

The students were selected with the view of having the group represent a wide range of ability. Edgar L. Yeager, Assistant Professor of Psychology at Indiana University, administered to all entering freshmen in Indiana University the Psychological Examination for College Freshmen which is published by the American Council on Education. The total percentile ratings resulting from this test for the individual students comprising the group involved in this experiment ranged from 99 to 3.

A comparison of the distribution for the group used in the study with the distribution for the entire body of college freshmen indicates that the group was representative in so far as range of ability is revealed by the psychological examination used.

It will be noted that these students were not selected on the basis of poor reading ability. They were selected on the basis of intelligence as a representative college group. The investigation was directed toward a study of the reading ability of this typical group of freshmen, and of the possibilities of improving the reading ability of good readers as well as of poor ones.

At the beginning of the experiment two reading tests were administered to the students. One of these was the Iowa Silent Reading Tests, Advanced Test: Form A. This test is designed to measure six different phases of reading ability:

1. Paragraph Meaning
   a. Science
   b. Literature
2. Word Meaning
   a. Social Science
   b. Science
   c. Mathematics
   d. English

3. Paragraph Organization
   a. Selection of Central Idea
   b. Outlining
4. Sentence Meaning
5. Location of Information
   a. Use of the Index
   b. Selection of Key Words
6. Rate of Silent Reading

The students were also given the Minnesota Reading Examination for College Students, Form A. This test consists of two parts: Text I, Vocabulary, and Test II, Paragraph Reading.

At the end of the experiment the B forms of both the Iowa Silent Reading Tests and the Minnesota Reading Examination for College Students were administered to all students in the group.

A control group was also given the Iowa Silent Reading Tests at the beginning and end of the year. This group was matched with the experimental group on the basis of total percentile scores resulting from the administration of the psychological examination previously mentioned. This control group did not receive any remedial instruction in reading throughout the year. The reading tests were given to this group for the purpose of obtaining data with which to compare the relative growth of students who received remedial instruction with those who did not.[4]

In the summary of this experiment, the following conclusions were reached:

1. Students who were given remedial instruction made substantial gains in all of the aspects of reading measured by the Iowa Silent Reading Tests, Advanced Test: paragraph meaning, word meaning, paragraph organization, sentence meaning, location of information, and rate of silent reading.
2. Students who were given remedial work made substantial gains in both aspects of reading measured by the Minnesota Reading Examination for College Students: vocabulary, and paragraph reading.
3. Students in the control group who had no remedial instruction in reading also made gains in aspects of reading measured by the Iowa Silent Reading

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[4]Nila Banton Smith, Remedial Instruction in Reading with College Freshmen, (Bloomington, Bureau of Cooperative Research, 1938), XV, 5-15.

Tests, Advanced Test. This change evidently was brought about through the normal reading which these freshmen students did during their first year in college.

4. The experimental group which received remedial instruction showed marked improvement over the improvement that was made by the control group which did not receive remedial instruction.

5. The students in the experimental group who were the best readers at the beginning of the experiment made the greatest total gains in both comprehension and speed as a result of their course in remedial instruction.

6. Students who were average readers in the experimental group made a total gain in speed which excelled the total in speed made by students who were the poorest readers at the beginning of the experiment.

7. Students who were average readers at the beginning of the experiment did not make as high a total gain in comprehension as did the students who were the poorest readers.

8. A comparison of the total gains for each of the three ability groups shows a wider difference between the high group and the middle group than between the middle group and low group.[5]

In comparing the results of these experiments, it is found that both the music reading and the word reading ventures have similar results in favor of the use of remedial methods for the improvement of reading. The important conclusion from these two experiments is the fact that the experimental groups made very noticeable improvement over the control groups who were given no remedial instruction.

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[5] Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

APPLICATION OF REMEDIAL METHODS TO MUSIC SIGHT-READING

In this chapter some remedial methods which have been used for the purpose of improving word reading ability will be presented. The author of this paper has devised a key which is to be used in the reading of these methods so that they may be applied towards the improvement of music sight reading.

KEY

The following word substitutions must be made in order to apply these methods to music reading:

FROM	TO
Phrase(s)	Note Pattern(s)
Story(ies)	Musical Composition(s)
Read(ing) (orally)	Perform(ing)
Eye-Voice-Span	Eye-Hand-Span
Word(s)	Note(s)
Voice	Hand
Type	Staff
Tell	Explain (in terms of like and unlike patterns)

PHRASE FLASH CARDS

Phrases from stories to be read may be placed on large flash cards for drill work, after the individual words have been taught in recognition exercises. Phrase flash cards are presented by the usual short-exposure method. The technique recommended is to place a phrase card in a holder; hold a large blank card in front of it; then raise and lower the large covering card quickly, so as to give the brief exposure desired. This technique is more satisfactory

than holding the phrase card in the hand and exposing it by turning it over. In the recommendation method the print of the phrases is stationary, while in the other it moves. However, the second method of exposure can be satisfactorily used.

Sometimes it is found the learning of phrases by flash cards does not transfer to the normal reading situation; the child can read flash cards but is not able to recognize the same phrases on the book page. This can be corrected somewhat by having the child underline or encircle on prepared typed lists the phrases presented by flash cards. Also the phrases as they appear in the story may be singled out by the use of a mask over the page, with holes cut out to reveal the phrases.[1]

PHRASE EXERCISES WITH THE TACHISTOSCOPE

The phrase tachistoscope insures the quick perception of phrases required for smooth oral and silent reading. Phrases may be typed on tachistoscope cards in random order or the phrases of an entire story may be presented in sequence.[2]

USE OF SPACED MATERIAL

The material to be read is arranged with the phrases separated by extra spaces in a manner such as the following:

By this time the big bear had disappeared

into the woods. Dick ran across the field

as quickly as he could and soon came

to the edge of the woods.

After the story has been presented in this way, the child turns to the book and reads it with the phrases unmarked. The practice thus carries over directly to the material in the book. Gradation of the emphasis on the phrasing may be accomplished by first separating the phrases by five spaces and

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[1]Donald D. Durrell, Improvement of Basic Reading Abilities (Yonkers, New York, World Book Company, 1940), p. 128.

[2]Ibid, p. 129.

later by only three. The child should be trained to observe the entire phrase carefully before he reads it aloud. This will provide practice in increasing eye-voice span.

In separating a story into phrases, either by typing or by pencil markings, the teacher will find it difficult to determine the beginning and the end of phrases. Certain phrases will appear long, while other divisions will leave individual words dangling by themselves. The best practice is to mark by voice units and to have no phrases with fewer than two words or more than six. One should not be too much disturbed if the phrases are not of uniform length.[3]

EYE-VOICE-SPAN EXERCISES

This is accomplished by placing a card over the material which the child is reading, and then asking him to recall as many additional words as he can of the covered materials. Another method is to present the material on lantern slides and have the children recall all the additional words they can after the light is off or the slide removed. This can also be accomplished by covering and uncovering the front lens of the lantern instead of removing the slide or shutting off the light.[4]

PHRASE EXERCISES THAT DIRECT EYE MOVEMENT

A manila envelope 9" by 12" in size is prepared as follows: The bottom and the top are cut off evenly so that both ends are open. Two inches from the top of the envelope front a slot $\frac{1}{4}$" wide is cut the entire width of the envelope. On a sheet of paper $8\frac{1}{2}$" by 11" are typed or printed phrases. Five or six spaces are allowed between phrases across the page, and two lines down the page, as indicated below.

By this time

the big bear

had disappeared

into the woods.

---

[3]Ibid,, pp. 129-130.

[4]Durrell, Improvement, p. 132.

Dick ran

across the field

as quickly as he could

and soon came

to the edge

of the woods.

If the story is a long one, several sheets may be glued together. The phrases thus prepared are inserted in the envelope and are drawn slowly past the slot. Each phrase appears separately and moves across the opening so that eye-movement practice as well as drill in phrase reading is provided.[5]

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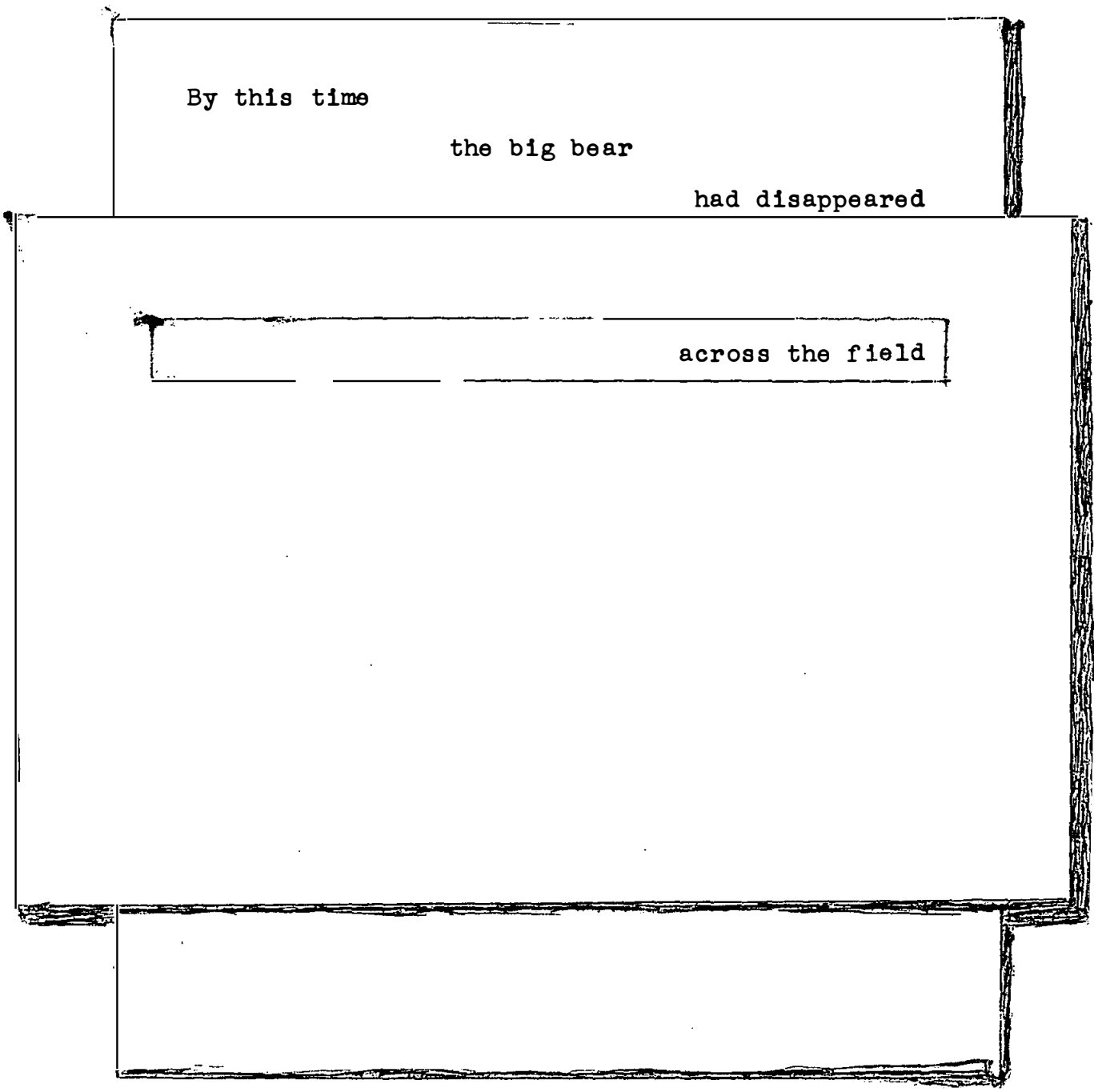
[5] Ibid., pp. 130-131.



Device for Directing Eye Movement[6]

[6] Ibid.

In the case of music reading, the slot in the envelope would have to be wide enough to reveal the staff plus room for any leger lines that might be employed in an exercise. This also applies to the following method making use of slots.

USE OF LINE MARKERS

> Often a child is confused by the many words before his eyes at one time. Such a child gains security by using a marker to exclude the lines not being read. The usual marker consists of a card which is placed under the line. This marker, concealing the material below, gives greater emphasis to the line being read. Another type of marker consists of a card with a slot in it which reveals one line of print at a time. (See Diagram) The length and width of the slot will vary with the size of the type and the width of the lines on the page.
>
> The third type of marker has the slot cut diagonally across so that the end of a line appears at the right side of the marker, while the beginning word in the next line appears at the left side of the marker. This type of marker reveals the phrase being read and also aids the child to overcome a difficulty in returning the eyes to the beginning of the next line.[7]

The question may now arise, "How does the teacher check the student in order to measure the amount of comprehension that has taken place?" Weaver answers in these words, "The expression and the appreciation of the emotional and non-tonal experience associated with a musical composition are achieved by means of the executed rhythmic, melodic, harmonic and dynamic forms. The primary meaning, then consists of these forms and the only objective evi-

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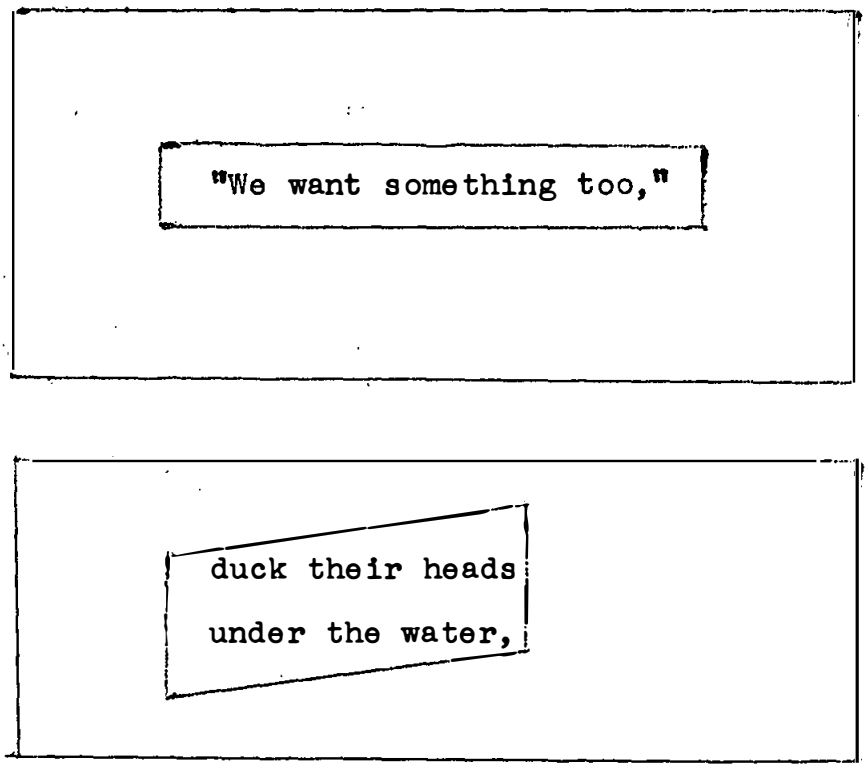
[7]Durrell, Improvement, p. 133.

dence of comprehension is the execution of the forms."[8]



Line Markers[9]

[9] Ibid.

It must be kept in mind that, when employing the remedial methods described in this chapter, the student must learn his basic rhythmic patterns by these methods before any melodic materials are used in combination with the rhythmic patterns.

Another important fact to remember is that the student must be given materials that are within his reading and performing ability. These materials may be increased in difficulty as the student progresses.

Of course the I. Q. of a student must be considered while applying remedial methods or any other teaching techniques. A teacher may expect his results to go accordingly.

CONCLUSION

JUSTIFICATION OF REMEDIAL METHODS IN MUSIC SIGHT-READING

At the termination of this paper, the author has arrived at the conclusion that the application of remedial methods that have been employed in word reading may be justifiably applied for the improvement of music sight-reading.

The important supporting factors of this conclusion are:

A. Experimentation has proved that the principles of word reading and music reading are similar; therefore, similar corrective methods may be applied to either.

B. Experimentation has proved that remedial methods have been applied successfully for the improvement of both word and music reading.

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