PRINCIPLES OF A DEVELOPMENTAL READING PROGRAM
APPLIED TO ROSSVILLE GRADE SCHOOL

by

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INTRODUCTION

Across the United States today the popular magazines, such as Redbook, McCalls, and Reader's Digest, are leveling the charge that students are not being taught to read properly. Most people interested and closely connected with education, such as Harris and Bond, realize the fallacy of this charge. They realize that children are being taught to read but they also realize the need for better reading programs, programs designed to teach necessary basic skills in reading and programs designed to meet the individual reading needs of each child.

Developmental reading programs are being established in schools to aid the low achievers and to accelerate and enrich the program for the good students. Strang, McCullough, and Traxler say:

> The aim of all developmental reading programs is to produce effective readers--readers who like to read, who are not deterred by any reasonable difficulty, who are independent and analytical in their reading, who are capable of literary appreciation, and who are interested in the possibility of a better life in a better world.[1]

A similar idea was stated by Huus when she said:

> Those children making normal progress for their age and grade who are accelerated still need help on skills that will make reading easier. Some need practice on reading by thought units. Most of them need instruction and practice in using the dictionary and glossary. All of them need guidance in adapting their reading techniques to the various types of content and methods of organization for various purposes. Compare the abilities needed in reading stories, factual materials, newspaper articles and advertisements,

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[1] Ruth Strang, Mary McCullough, and Arthur E. Traxler, The Improvement of Reading (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1961), p. 198.

catalogs, dictionaries, telephone directories, time-tables, graphs, maps, charts, dress patterns, blueprints, and so on. Compare the abilities in reading for recreation, for study, for analysis and criticism.

The first aspect, then of the reading program is the continued development of the basic reading skills.[1]

The developmental reading program is one which is carried on by the regular teachers in the school system. The developmental program should be a continuous program from kindergarten through college.

It is the belief of this writer that if a school is to establish an effective reading program it must involve teachers from all levels and all subject areas in the teaching of reading. In other words, every teacher should be a reading teacher.

Most educators today recognize the fact that children are individuals and have tremendous differences physically and mentally. They also realize that in the average sized classroom it is impossible to give each child individual attention for any appreciable length of time. The developmental reading program is designed to provide for a maximum of individualization with more efficient use of teacher time.

Statement of Problem

The purpose of this study was to (1) present the principles of a developmental reading program and (2) suggest methods whereby these principles could be instituted in the reading program of Rossville Grade School.

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[1]Helen Huus, "The Nature and Scope of Reading Programs Adapted to Today's Needs in the Intermediate Grades," Better Readers for Our Times, William S. Gray and Nancy Larrick, editors (International Reading Association Conference Proceedings, Vol. 1. New York: Scholastic Magazines, 1956), p. 25.

Limitations

Even though the effective developmental reading program should
be a continuous program from kindergarten through college, the princi-
ples and their implementation in this report were stated to apply from
kindergarten through the eighth grade. The reason for this is that this
is the situation found in Rossville Grade School.

Most textbooks on reading provide lengthy lists of specific read-
ing skills and their sequential development. Because of the length of
these lists, the writer will not include these lists in this report.
However, reference will be made during this report showing the reader
where he may find such lists.

Although the writer makes specific recommendations in this paper
for the implementation, he firmly believes that in the real life situ-
ation the administrator should not have firmly set ideas for implemen-
tation before the committees start their work. He believes that the
administrator should suggest ideas and assist the teachers in their
work, but the decisions must be made by the committee.

Definition of Terms

Reading. Dolch says, "Reading is getting ideas from printed mat-
ter; the student must think, feel and react to the ideas suggested in
the printed matter."[1] In order for the student to obtain ideas from the
printed matter he must recognize words, organize these words into thought
units and relate the thought units to his own experience and knowledge.

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[1] Edward William Dolch, Teaching Primary Reading (Champaign,
Illinois: The Garrard Press, 1951), p. 20.

Developmental reading. According to Harris, "Developmental reading activities are those in which the main purpose of the teacher is to bring about an improvement in reading skills--activities in which learning to read is the main goal."[1] In this report the term developmental reading also includes instruction in how to read for information and recreational reading.

Skimming. This is a very rapid reading which the reader uses for a specific purpose such as getting an overall view of the article or in looking for a specific item such as a name or date. Skimming often involves reading only the first sentence of each paragraph or may even be restricted to the reading of headings and sub-heads in the article. This is in agreement with Harris, though he identified two types of skimming: (1) "Skimming to find answers to specific questions." and (2) "Skimming to get a total impression."[2]

Phonics. Phonics is a study skill used in sounding out words through the use of the sounds made by alphabetical letters or combinations of letters. In this method the parts of the word are sounded first and then the parts are put together in order to pronounce the whole word. This is in agreement with Betts when he says phonics is, "a technique for pronouncing words by sound units".[3]

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[1] Albert J. Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1961), p. 12.

[2] Ibid., p. 434.

[3] Emmett Albert Betts, Foundations of Reading Instruction (New York: American Book Company, 1950), p. 614.

Elementary school. For the purpose of this report elementary school means kindergarten through grade eight.

Procedures Employed

The documentary method of research was used in the preparation of this report as the writer's objective was to outline the principles of a developmental reading program and show how these principles could be implemented in Rossville Grade School. The writer used personal observation and personal interviews with the teachers of Rossville Grade School to determine the type of reading program presently employed.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Personal interviews and observation revealed that the teachers at Rossville Grade School are sincerely trying to teach reading as well as they can under their present reading program, teacher training, and time allotments. There are presently no written objectives or goals for the teaching of reading in Rossville Grade School. The teachers are using basal readers supplemented with limited classroom libraries, some workbooks, and phono-visual charts for the teaching of phonics. There seems to be no planned coordination of the total reading program. Most of the teachers help to coordinate the program through informal conferences and "bull" sessions with other teachers both after school and on the playground.

The writer believes that some person on the faculty must assume the leadership role in the formulation of principles and objectives for the reading program of Rossville Grade School. The program can not

hope to meet the individual needs of all the students if the planning
and coordination is left on such an informal basis.

Probably the best time to stimulate the teachers into initiating
a new or revised program is just after a reading test has been adminis-
tered to all pupils of the school. After the results have been obtained
the administrator might hold a faculty meeting for the purpose of dis-
cussing the test scores, the present reading program, and what may be
done to improve the students' reading abilities. In this situation it
is likely the administrator will need only lend a guiding hand and the
teachers themselves will take the lead in determining the program. By
permitting the teachers to formulate the program, they are likely to
carry it out with a much greater degree of enthusiasm and understanding
than if it were forced on them by the administrator.

The administrator may or may not wish to use lay personnel from
the community during the formulation of the program. Witty and Ratz
say, "Many schools have found it's best to include the community in
their planning from the beginning, instead of waiting for criticism or
questioning."[1] In any event it is advisable to stress to the public
that a developmental reading program is not a completely new program
consisting of radically new ideas. Instead it is a revision of the
existing program with the main differences being (1) continued stress
in the active teaching of reading skills and techniques throughout the
entire school system, and (2) allowing for individual differences

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[1]Paul Witty and Margaret Ratz, A Developmental Reading Program
for Grades 6 Through 9 (Chicago: Science Research Associates, Inc.,
1956), p. 49.

through the process of grouping and other techniques for the purpose
of allowing each child to work at his current level of reading and to
progress at his own advancement rate.

PRINCIPLES OF A DEVELOPMENTAL READING PROGRAM

A developmental reading program should be based on definite prin-
ciples. According to Smith and Dechant, educators are in general agree-
ment that the following basic principles are necessary to make the
developmental reading program workable and effective.

The developmental reading program must:

1. . . . be an all-school program directed toward carefully
identified goals. It must receive the support and co-operation of
the entire school staff.

2. . . . be concerned with the social and personal development
of each student as well as his growth in the skill, understandings,
and attitudes necessary for successful reading.

3. . . . co-ordinate reading with the pupil's other communica-
tive experiences.

4. . . . be a continuous program extending through the elemen-
tary and secondary grades and college. It must provide instruction
and guidance in basic reading skills, in content-area reading, in
study skills, and in recreational reading.

5. . . . be a flexible program that is adjusted at each level
of advancement to the wide variations in student characteristics,
abilities, and reading needs.

6. . . . have a stimulating classroom setting in which atti-
tudes, interests, and abilities are developed effectively.

7. . . . provide plentiful reading material that covers a wide
range of difficulty and interest.

8. . . . include continuous measurement and evaluation of the
effectiveness of the program as a whole and of its more specific
aspects.

9. . . . provide for continuous identification and immediate remediation of deficiencies and difficulties encountered by any student.

10. . . . include differentiated instruction to meet the needs of each child, but it cannot ignore the commonality of needs, interests, and abilities among children.

11. . . . look upon reading as a process rather than as a subject. Reading is taught on all levels in all subject areas by all teachers.

12. . . . emphasize reading for understanding and aim to develop flexibility in comprehension and rate in accordance with the student's abilities and purposes and the difficulty levels of the materials.

13. . . . allow each student to progress at his own success rate to his own maximum capacity.

14. . . . seek to develop reading maturity. A mature reader reads all kinds of materials. He perceives words quickly and accurately and reacts with correct meaning. He reads both for information and recreation.[1]

The writer of this report used these basic principles to formulate headings for the major points of the suggested developmental reading program. This plan was followed to reduce the possibility of omitting or violating any of the basic principles.

Goals of a Developmental Reading Program

Once the need for a developmental reading program has been established the goals for such a program should be determined. A survey of the available literature indicated that the overall goals of a developmental reading program are:

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[1] Henry P. Smith and Emerald V. Dechant, _Psychology in Teaching Reading_ (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961), pp. 379-380.

(1) The student should have rich and varied experiences through reading which will help to broaden interests and improve his tastes in reading.

(2) The student should have enjoyment through reading.

(3) The student should grow in the fundamental reading abilities, such as the ability to recognize words, to understand the meanings of words, to comprehend and interpret what is read, to locate references bearing on a problem, to organize ideas gathered from different sources, and to read critically.

(4) The student should be a fluent, expressive oral reader.

For full achievement of these goals it is necessary that each teacher be familiar with the logical sequence in the developmental pattern of reading skills and abilities and know which ones are normally taught at her level of teaching. Lists of these skills and abilities may be found in textbooks on the teaching of reading. (Arthur W. Heilman, Principles and Practices of Teaching Reading, page 252.) A prime fundamental of the developmental reading program is that allowances must be made from any guides of specific instruction for variations in the student's individual needs. However, a guide for specific reading instruction appropriate for the various teaching levels is necessary to prevent chaos and confusion in the developmental program. A solution offered by Witty and Ratz is to adopt a reading textbook series, then adapt or enrich the instruction according to the nature and needs of each group, with special emphasis on a program of skill-building.[1]

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[1] Witty, op. cit., p. 252.

Personal and Social Development

The teaching of reading must not be thought of as an isolated subject without consideration to the personal and social development of the child. Gates says:

In wholehearted reading activity the child does more than under-
stand and contemplate; his emotions are stirred; his attitudes and
purposes are modified; indeed, his innermost being is involved.
That an individual's personality may be deeply affected by his read-
ing is a basic assumption of bibliotherapy--the treatment of person-
ality maladjustment by means of reading and reflecting carefully
selected materials.[1]

The child's individual needs, interests, and abilities must be considered in the teaching of reading if the teacher hopes to develop each student to his optimum potential. This end may be furthered by grouping within the classroom. This allows the youngster to read at his own level, progress at his own rate, and yet be in a class composed of his age and having the same personal and social interests. However, the grouping within the classroom must be flexible rather than fixed. Students should be grouped according to their specific interests and needs. Some schools have a rigid method of grouping where students are grouped at the beginning of the school year and they may not change groups during the school year. The student must be allowed to move from one group to another as his specific needs and interests change and develop. Research found that grouping for reading within the class-room affected the level of aspiration of the children; even when engag-ing in activities other than reading, the children tended to aspire to

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[1]Arthur I. Gates, "Character and Purposes of the Yearbook," The
Forty-Eighth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education,
Nelson B. Henry, editor (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949),
p. 4.

work with other members of their own group or with members of the next
higher group and not with children of a lower reading group or a group
two levels higher. The children in the top group did not choose child-
ren from lower reading groups as workers on any project.[1]

Smith and Dechant said that grouping within the classroom should
be directed toward the following objectives:

(1) It should foster desirable social relationships and atti-
    tudes.
(2) It should help to provide for the individual reading needs
    of each child.
(3) It should promote facility and independence in reading and
    study.
(4) It should help to provide each child with satisfying reading
    material.
(5) It should reduce the need for remedial instruction.[2]

The formation of groups within the classroom should help to meet
these objectives, but only if the classroom teacher is aware that the
methodology of reading indicates that adjustment of instruction to indi-
vidual differences depends largely on the alertness of the teacher.
Bond and Wagner said that each teacher, to be effective must:

(1) Know each child she teaches.
(2) Know the materials of instruction.
(3) Build adequate readiness for the material.
(4) Make reading purposeful to the child.
(5) Show the child how to go about his reading task.[3]

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[1]M. M. Buswell, "The Relationship Between the Social Structure
of the Classroom and the Academic Success of the Pupils" (unpublished
Doctoral dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1950).

[2]Smith, op. cit., p. 384.

[3]Guy L. Bond and Eva Bond Wagner, Teaching the Child to Read
(New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950), p. 213.

Coordination of Reading with Other Communicative Experiences

The need for coordination of all the communicative experiences is being recognized in most schools over the nation. Harris said:

> In recent years we have become aware of close interrelationships among the various forms of oral and written communication, and in consequence much attention has been given to an integrated approach to the language arts. People express themselves in speech and writing; they interpret the expressions of others by listening and reading. Basic to all four is a grasp of the structure of the language and the personal development of ideas, concepts, and attitudes. Successful teaching of reading must necessarily be related to the other phases of the language arts.[1]

This can be evidenced to some extent by noting that most schools and textbook publishers today are no longer teaching reading, English, spelling, speech, and writing as separate subjects but are including all of these in a comprehensive program called the language arts. This trend must be an integral part of each class regardless of the subject matter if the individual students are to reach their potential. Witty said that:

> The teacher of every subject has a responsibility for helping the child to read effectively the varied materials employed in instruction, for developing special vocabularies and for building concepts, for cultivating critical reading, and for fostering reading from varied sources.[2]

Reading without comprehension would not be reading for there would be no meaning, no pattern of events, nothing but word names associated only with the letters used to spell the words. Therefore, it is seen that reading is indeed dependent on the communicative experiences

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[1] Harris, op. cit., p. 5.

[2] Paul A. Witty, "How Can Efforts to Improve Reading in Curriculum Areas be Co-ordinated with Other Aspects of a Sound Reading Program," Improving Reading in All Curriculum Areas, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, November, 1952), p. 247.

of the student. For the student to have successful communicative experiences in any class, he must have proper instruction and the necessary background for fully understanding these experiences.

The classroom teacher should play a major role in providing a rich background of varied experiences and a growing vocabulary which the children may use as a basis for understanding the structure of the language and in developing ideas, concepts, and attitudes. Much of this necessary experience can be provided in the social studies field. The primary teachers provide experiences through the use of experience charts, field trips, and class discussion that deals primarily with a study of the home, school, and community. As the child grows and develops, the teacher expands the experience to include people of the world and how they live.

There are many devices that can be used to broaden the experiences of the children. A few of them would be field trips, experience charts, "show and tell", movies, film strips, pictures, reports by members of the class, and many others. These devices should be employed by the teacher on the basis of the material available, special needs of the class or individuals in the class, and subjects to be studied.

A Continuous Program Extending Through College and Covering All Reading Aspects

Harris said that educators used to believe that reading skills were taught in the primary grades and the student in the intermediate grades merely used the basic reading skills to learn subject matter.[1] They used to say that the primary student was learning to read and the

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[1]Harris, op. cit., p. 4.

intermediate student was reading to learn. Modern educators, such as Harris and Bond, realize that the effective reading program is one in which the students are both learning to read and reading to learn from the first grade through college. They now realize that specific reading skills for various subject matter must be taught along with the subject matter.

This means that each teacher must be aware of the development of reading skills and interests at their specific level. There are many fine references available for teachers to see what specific skills should be taught at each level. (Arthur W. Heilman, Principles and Practices of Teaching Reading, page 252.) However, just because specific skills were taught in the previous grades does not necessarily relieve the teacher of the responsibility of reteaching these skills to some students in her class. The writer feels that the coordination of the reading program can best be helped by teachers determining the basic skills to be taught at their particular level and then through the use of conferences or committees construct a scope and sequence chart of reading skills to be taught in their school.

A Flexible Program That Is Adjusted at Each Level of Advancement

As discussed earlier in this report, many schools or individual teachers use a system of grouping for reading that is set at the beginning of the year and never changes. Bond and Wagner suggest that the teacher should group students four different ways for four different types of reading. They say that students should be grouped for:

(1) basic instruction, (2) topical-unit reading, (3) personal reading, and (4) remedial work.[1]

The grouping for basic instruction is necessary because during basic instruction in reading the teacher must work closely with the children if skills and abilities are to be nurtured. This grouping enables the teacher to systematically introduce new words and teach the other skills and abilities necessary. The students must be able to move easily from one group to another as their special needs change.

In pursuing topics, many of which should stem from the basic reading program, the class should be subdivided into committees or groups according to the natural divisions of the topic itself. The children in this type of grouping would be grouped mainly on the basis of their particular interests, special skills, and their need to learn a special skill. In this type of grouping it is quite possible that the best and the poorest reader within the class might be on the same committee. This means that materials on varying levels of reading difficulty and dealing with the same content must be used with each committee so each child can make a contribution.

The grouping for personal reading is very unstructured and usually consists of each student working individually and reporting to the teacher. However, some students may be grouped for discussion if they are reading the same books or books by the same author for the purpose of sharing their personal reading experiences with other students.

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[1]Bond, op. cit., p. 375.

Assignment to the group for remediation should be based entirely
on specific skills in which students require additional drill or
reteaching. These groups will change in structure almost daily. The
purpose of this type of group is to provide the necessary remedial work
for the students who require such help without requiring the entire
class to study materials they already know.

Providing a Stimulating Classroom Setting

A stimulating classroom setting in which attitudes, interests,
and abilities may be effectively developed must be supplied by the
teacher. It is to be hoped that the physical plant will be sound, ade-
quate, and properly decorated and lighted, but the most important item
is a genuine interest in the students and their learning activities on
the part of the teacher. Bond and Wagner said:

> A classroom environment that is rich and vital, one that uses
> reading in most of its enterprises fosters growth in reading.
> Children are earnest learners; they react to a dynamic environment
> by attacking their reading tasks with energy and eagerness. Such
> an environment intrinsically gives the drive that is necessary for
> comfortable growth in reading.[1]

The stimulating classroom setting is built with attractive reading dis-
plays, posters, and bulletin boards, but the most important ingredient
to the stimulating classroom is the teacher with a sense of humor and
a genuine interest in children.

Plentiful and Varied Reading Materials

Any school using the basal reader system or completely individ-
ualized reading programs must have an abundance of material available

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[1]Ibid., p. 40.

for the students to read. If the school is going to meet the objectives
of the developmental reading program, it must have materials in each
room that are interesting and readable to the poorest reader and mate-
rials that are interesting and challenging to the best reader.

Broom, Duncan, Emig, and Stueber stated:

> The child's needs must be met on the level which he has attained
> if he is ultimately to gain the skills and abilities essential for
> effective reading. On the other hand, a pupil must be given read-
> ing material of sufficient difficulty to challenge his best efforts
> if he is to improve in reading ability.[1]

Gates suggested the following points be kept in mind when select-
ing material for the developmental reading program:

(1) The material should be highly interesting to the pupil.
(2) The material should be of proper difficulty.
(3) The material should be of various types.
(4) An abundance of easy reading should be provided as a substi-
    tute for review.[2]

The preceding discussion has been concerned with the range of
material within any class and the importance of the interests of the
students in selection of reading materials. More specifically Gray and
Reese list the following materials as necessary for an effective read-
ing program:

(1) Materials which provide for the development of basic habits
    and skills.
(2) Materials which give meaningful practice in basic habits and
    skills.
(3) Materials which provide for enriching and broadening child
    experiences by making it possible for the child to read
    wisely, for information, and to satisfy his interests.

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[1] Mybert Eustance Broom, Mary Alice Allen Duncan, Dorothy Emig,
and Josephine Stueber, Effective Reading Instruction, (New York: McGraw-
Hill Book Company, Inc., 1951), p. 167.

[2] Arthur I. Gates, The Improvement of Reading, (New York: The
Macmillan Company, 1928), pp. 26-29.

(4) Materials which give esthetic satisfaction, sheer fun and
    pleasure.
(5) Remedial reading materials for children who need such help.
(6) Materials supplying current news on the children's level.
(7) Dictionaries and other reference books.
(8) Audio-visual materials.
(9) Materials for testing progress and diagnosing difficulties.[1]

Continuous Measurement and Evaluation of the Program

No reading program, regardless of how carefully it is planned,
will be the perfect program for all schools. Even within a school's
designed program there may be changes and revisions. The revisions
should be made after the present program has been measured and evalu-
ated.

Broom, Duncan, Emig, and Stueber said, "The purpose of measure-
ment in the teaching of reading in the elementary school is to furnish
objective, unbiased, and impersonal evidence as to the pupil's learn-
ing of the teacher's instruction."[2]

The tests to be used should be administered, graded, and evalu-
ated by some person trained in the use of the particular test or tests
being used. Tests should be carefully selected, keeping in mind the
objectives of the reading program, which will determine the type or
types of tests to be used.

A careful evaluation of the reading program might suggest some
changes to be made, but these suggestions should meet the following
qualifications before they are made: (1) will the changes produce

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[1]Lillian Gray and Dora Reese, Teaching Children to Read, (New
York: The Ronald Press Company, 1957), pp. 429-430.

[2]Broom, op. cit., p. 400.

better reading students, (2) does the suggested change violate the
objectives of the developmental reading program, and (3) can the change
be carried out by the teachers without sacrificing some other vital part
of the curriculum?

Identification and Remediation of Deficiencies and Difficulties

Early identification of deficiencies and difficulties is impor-
tant because students must have successful experiences if they are to
grow and develop in reading skill. Blair lists the following ways to
help identify the poor reader:

(1) Observing pupils while they study.
(2) Using interest inventories.
(3) Using graded sets of books.
(4) Studying eye movements during reading.
(5) Using standardized reading tests.
(6) Using teacher made tests of reading skills.[1]

The writer believes that for effective identification of poor
readers most or all of these methods should be used. Included in the
use of standardized tests would be tests of mental maturity, because a
student may have a mental age and a reading level one grade below his
present grade assignment. Therefore, he is not, by definition, retarded
even though his reading level is below the rest of the class.

After identification of the students' needs the teacher must set
up some means for meeting these needs; Gray and Reese illustrate the
process with these six points:

(1) Each teacher determines the initial status of her pupils'
progress in reading by means of a standardized diagnostic
test, thus disclosing needs, as well as attainments.

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[1]Glenn Myers Blair, Diagnostic and Remedial Teaching, (New York:
The Macmillan Company, 1957), pp. 42-44.

(2) She sets up objectives of achievement in keeping with the
    revealed needs of pupils.

(3) She selects the materials and methods of instruction suit-
    able to the realization of desirable goals.

(4) After a period of instruction and guidance, she makes another
    appraisal to determine the amount of progress toward the
    realization of these goals.

(5) She interprets the results of the reappraisal and makes
    inferences regarding both the attained and unattained objec-
    tives. (Steps 3, 4, and 5 are repeated as often as neces-
    sary to attain any desired degree of achievement.)

(6) She reaches conclusions concerning needed changes in future
    instruction, choice of materials, grouping of pupils and
    develops appropriate plans.[1]

Unlike Blair, they do not seem to use any subjective evaluations

by the teacher concerning pupil progress. Blair believes that for

effective identification and remediation of the student's reading, both

objective testing and subjective observation and evaluations should be

employed by the teacher.

Providing for the Common Needs, Interests, and Abilities of Children

Thus far in this report much has been said concerning the impor-

tance of individualizing instruction to meet the special needs of each

child, but the common interests should not be neglected. Among the com-

mon needs of all children, we find the need to belong to or be associ-

ated with a group and the desire to attain a degree of success within

that group. One way the teacher can help meet these common needs is

through the use of both large and small groups for reading. Durrell

said:

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[1]Gray, op. cit., pp. 445-446.

The common interests and activities increase the sense of belonging to a group; there is economy of teacher effort when a single activity may be shared by all; and many areas of knowledge may be imparted to the whole class as effectively as to a small group. Skill learning generally requires small-group or individual instruction; the building of knowledges and appreciations may be done in large-group situations.[1]

Large-group, whole-class activities are appropriate when oral, visual, or various types of multiple-sensory presentations are used. Listening vocabularies of slower pupils are much larger than their reading vocabularies, so that oral presentation may utilize a much wider range of materials. Oral reading conveys meanings through expression even though strange words may be used. The visual materials convey meanings of their own and may be enjoyed equally by children of different levels of achievement. Some of the activities that can be used as whole-class activities are: field trips, movies, story hour, recordings, class planning, demonstrations, plays, and explanations or directions.

Reading as a Process

Educators today recognize the importance of teaching reading in all content fields as well as the importance of reading as a separate subject. Gray and Reese say: "No matter how excellent the instruction in basic reading, children need additional definite guidance in handling curricular reading, and some children will need more guidance than others."[2]

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[1] Donald DeWitt Durrell, Improving Reading Instruction, (New York: World Book Company, 1956), p. 125.

[2] Gray, op. cit., p. 376.

One of the major tasks of the teacher is to assist the students in developing the specialized vocabularies that go along with different content fields. Many specialized words that appear in content fields may have several definitions in the dictionary and the teacher must help the student to select the proper definition in each instance. Since different reading techniques are demanded by each content field, these techniques must be taught in the period set aside for that subject.

Developing Flexibility in Comprehension and Rate

Most writers emphasize the importance of the development of reading rates rather than a reading rate for effective reading. This implies that the effective reader is one who learns to adjust his reading rate to fit the type of material being read. This adjustment should be made in terms of the student's ability to comprehend what he is reading.

Gates said that comprehension depends on: (1) the accuracy of the perception of the words, and (2) the kinds of meanings that are evoked once the words are recognized.[1] This points out the responsibility of the teacher to see that students are introduced to new words and their meanings and that time is spent in class discussing the child's interpretation of the story.

Durrell said that the best motivation for improving comprehension is the simple desire to read and enjoy the story.[2] When the child encounters readings in the content field or stories that are too difficult for him he will most likely lose his motivation. The job of the

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[1] Gates, The Improvement of Reading, op. cit., p. 356.

[2] Durrell, op. cit., p. 181.

teacher then is to provide assistance to the student to help him through the trouble spots.

Several techniques may be employed by the teacher to assist the child. Most materials selected for reading should be relatively free from word and concept difficulties. Where difficulties will necessarily be encountered, preliminary help should be given on difficult words. This help may be given by presenting the words prior to reading the story, using the words in sentences before reading and asking the children to find the meanings through the use of context clues, and asking questions during the reading of the material.

Some recognition should be made, at this point, to the use of machines for the teaching of reading. It is the belief of Harris that the advantages of machines are greatly overemphasized in some ways.[1] Many machines place the emphasis on speed and eye movement with the idea of forcing the student to read faster to increase his rate of comprehension. Most modern writers agree that the poor eye movements and speed are symptoms of poor comprehension rather than the cause.

Harris believes that machines can be used effectively as supplementary materials for the reading program to teach special skills and give practice and drill, but that the machines should not dictate the type of reading program to be used

Continual Progression at the Individual's Success Rate to Maximum Capacity

The fact that pupils do not advance before they have mastered the needed skills for advancement and yet are allowed to advance

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[1] Harris, op. cit., p. 527.

immediately when these skills have been mastered is one of the most
significant principles of the developmental reading program. Smith and
Dechant expressed this clearly when they said:

> The developmental program focuses on individual needs and indi-
> vidual differences. Reading experiences and pupil progress are
> not dictated by a calendar. Grade-limits disappear and mass
> instruction in reading is replaced by an emphasis on pupil needs.
> It begins at each learner's current level and attempts to lead him
> at his own success rate to his maximum achievement.[1]

Constant student diagnosis by the teacher and regular testing
must be used to determine the child's current reading ability. After
the needs and abilities of the child have been determined the teacher
should use the media of flexible grouping and individualized instruc-
tion to develop the child at his own success rate to his maximum capac-
ity.

Developing Reading Maturity

The final objective of a developmental reading program is devel-
oping reading maturity in the reading student. The degree of success
achieved in developing mature readers will be dependent on the degree
of success which has been attained in developing the ability to read in
the students. As Bond and Wagner said, "Anything that is done to
improve the reading ability of children will tend to increase their
interests and improve their tastes."[2]

While they felt that improving the ability to read will also
increase the interests and improve the tastes of the youngsters, Bond

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[1]Smith, op. cit., pp. 378-379.

[2]Bond, op. cit., p. 392.

and Wagner felt the teacher should play an active role in guiding the
development of interests and improvement of tastes. They stated:

> The ways of developing interests and improving tastes are very
> many indeed. They seem, however, to focus around four major head-
> ings: (1) wide reading, stimulated and guided by means of many
> activities; (2) a recognition that reading interests are not
> achieved overnight, but are developmental in nature and that any
> interests therefore must grow out of previous interests; (3) the
> ability to read has a marked influence upon interest, and there-
> fore materials must be appropriate to the child's reading level;
> (4) the materials used for developing reading interests should
> come from all of the subject-matter areas of the elementary school
> grades if well-rounded reading interests for factual as well as
> fictional materials are developed.
>
> There are many ways of stimulating wide reading. When the child
> encounters in his reading program an excerpt from a larger story or
> an incident or a story from a collection of stories, he should be
> referred to the book from which the excerpt has come. If his inter-
> est has been sufficiently aroused by the excerpt, it will be rather
> natural for him to follow up the introduction to the book and read
> the story or other material particularly when time is allotted for
> personal-development reading. In the purchase of material it is
> wise to include the books from which excerpts have been taken. It
> will be recognized that the basal reading program is usually
> designed to introduce the reading of children's literature, science
> material, biography, and the like, in order that those materials
> should encourage a wide reading in many fields. At the same time
> the teacher can recommend other books by the same author, or upon
> the same topic, that she knows to be available.[1]

It is the teacher's responsibility to guide the development of
interests and improvement of tastes, but she must also be careful that
her suggestions are not made in such a manner that the students feel
they are requirements rather than suggestions. Forcing students to read
or prohibiting them from reading particular types of literature is
likely to cause the students to react against the teacher's requirements
and result adversely to the desired objectives. Harris cautioned
against this practice when he said:

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[1]Ibid., pp. 384-385.

One of the main objectives of a well-rounded reading program should be to develop a love for reading that will last beyond school days. Improvement of taste and literary standards is also important, but we have learned that this cannot be forced. Prohibiting of "trash" only makes it seem more desirable. Children who are encouraged to read freely in a wide variety of books usually show improved taste and discrimination as they grow older.[1]

Thus it may be seen that the main role of the teacher in developing reading maturity in youngsters is to teach them how to read well enough so that they possess the ability to read at their maximum potential. The mature readers should have mastered the art of reading to the point where they derive enjoyment through reading for information strictly for the sake of knowledge itself, as well as enjoyment from reading for recreation.

IMPLEMENTING THE DEVELOPMENTAL READING PROGRAM AT ROSSVILLE GRADE SCHOOL

As mentioned earlier in this report, the writer believes that the teachers and lay citizens should be involved in the determining of goals, developing courses of study, and selecting of materials. This section of the report is what the writer considers a set of suggestions for implementation of a developmental reading program that are similar to the suggestions the teaching staff and lay citizens might develop.

Size and Type of School Organization

Rossville Grade School is organized on a kindergarten through grade eight basis, employing eleven full time teachers, one principal, and has an enrollment of 225 students. The seventh and eighth grades

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[1]Albert J. Harris, "Three Kinds of Reading," NEA Journal, 52:1 (January, 1963), p. 42.

are semi-departmentalized, using three teachers who share blocks of
teaching time with the two upper grades. All other classrooms are
self-contained with the exception of the music classes. Each class
has a twenty-minute music class daily under the regular music instruc-
tor. With this arrangement it would seem that the teachers of the sev-
enth and eighth grades might tend to slight the teaching of reading in
favor of stressing their subject area. This slighting of reading
instruction can happen in any grade, however, and that is why it is
important that the major emphasis of a developmental reading program is
to make every teacher a reading teacher.

The grade school at Rossville is going into a unified district
next year and many of the teachers have been involved in curriculum
committee work this year. The writer believes that this work has been
beneficial to both the teachers involved in the committee work and those
teachers who were not on the committees but have received copies of the
committee reports, because this has been the first time in several years
that the teachers have been allowed to formulate the curriculum at
Rossville Grade School. Since the curriculum work has been started as
a district wide project this year, now is an excellent time to continue
this work and develop a reading program for Rossville Grade School.
The writer suggests that the developmental reading program be set up on
a two year plan, with the goal of fully implementing necessary ideas
and materials over a two year period. The writer feels that a two year
initial program is necessary to allow for planning time, study and eval-
uation of the program, purchasing necessary materials, and full teacher
orientation.

The writer believes that with the size of staff involved in this program it could effectively involve the entire staff as a committee with smaller subcommittees to study specific problems. The involvement of the total staff would be beneficial to the program, because by involving each teacher in the development of the program the likelihood of the teachers carrying out the program is greater.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FIRST YEAR

Recognition of the Need

The first step in developing the reading program would be to have the teachers recognize the need for such a program. All students in Rossville Grade School took the Gates Primary Reading Tests or the Stanford test so all students' reading scores are available to help the teachers see the need for a reading program. The administrator could discuss the reading scores in a faculty meeting and help the teachers recognize the need for a reading program to help all students become more effective readers.

Use of a Reading Consultant

Reading consultants are presently in the employment of the unified district and could be effectively used in the development of the Rossville Grade School reading program. The writer believes that a consultant can best be used in the initial planning stages as a source of inspiration. A meeting with the staff and the reading consultant can help the teachers realize the importance of developing a reading program. However, be careful that the consultant's proper role is conveyed to the teachers. He should be a source of inspiration and a

resource person during the planning, but do not allow him to take over the actual planning or let the teachers think that the consultant is going to have an absolute veto on their work. The faculty must at all times remain the actual work horses of the committee or they will very likely fail to carry out the program in their classroom. The reading consultant can inspire the teachers by lectures and demonstrations on the reading needs of all children.

Public Relations

At this point in the program, lay citizens should be selected to assist in the development of the program. Also it should be emphasized to both the faculty and the public that the developmental reading program is designed to help all students in their reading. With this type of reading program, the range of reading abilities within any class or age group will not become less but rather will become greater. This point is one which has caused many schools to feel their reading program was not effective. To counter this fear before it occurs, try to emphasize to the faculty and the public that the range of reading abilities is no measure of the effectiveness of the reading program, but the individual achievements of each child should determine the effectiveness of the reading program.

The administrator should assume the lead in seeing that the public is well informed about the developmental reading program. Since there is no PTA in Rossville, he should send newsletters to the parents and put an article in the local paper. The newsletters and the newspaper article should emphasize the difference between the proposed developmental program and a mere remedial program.

Developing a Set of Principles

One of the first things the teachers should do is to develop or adopt a set of principles or objectives for the developmental reading program. It is not necessary that the teachers write these from scratch. They may use a set already written, such as the fourteen principles presented earlier in this report. The use of a prepared set of principles usually results in a saving of time. However, the principles should be studied and discussed carefully and in some cases changed to fit the needs of Rossville Grade School before they are adopted.

The principles should be developed by the faculty as a whole. They should function as a committee with the administrator as a resource person. The writer believes that if the faculty develops a set of principles similar to the fourteen principles presented in this report it would not be necessary that the written set of principles be as detailed as those presented in this report. The principles briefly but clearly stated should be duplicated, after they have been adopted, and one copy given to each teacher to keep in his file.

Implementing Objectives into the Classroom

The writer believes that many educational programs fail because they are not implemented into the classroom quickly enough. In too many cases the faculty spends such a long time in the planning process that they are tired of the program and discouraged before the program is ever tried in the classroom. This does not mean that planning is a short process, but rather it should be a continual process whereby the program is initiated, evaluated, changed, and discarded when necessary.

It is impractical to think that the total program could or should be implemented immediately into Rossville Grade School, but at the same time teachers must be given something to use in the classroom now. The writer believes that a good place to start is with emphasis on reading skills needed in the subject matter areas. This could be the first job of the subcommittees to develop objectives, find materials, and demonstrate techniques for teaching these skills in each subject area. These skills should include techniques for teaching skimming.

A logical division for these subcommittees might be to assign two teachers to develop the specific reading skills needed in the subject matter areas. The subcommittee division at Rossville might be as follows: reading in mathematics and science, Mr. Bingham and Mrs. Wisely; reading in social studies, Mrs. Burket and Mrs. Copeland; reading of graphs, charts, and tables, Mrs. Bowers and Miss Hinz. The subcommittees might also develop sample exercises for teaching these skills at various grade levels.

The other teachers might form additional subcommittees to develop techniques such as phonics, word attack skills, use of reference books, and others. The subcommittees should present their reports to the faculty as a whole and summaries of their reports should be given to each faculty member for his personal use.

Evaluation of Present Reading Materials

Presently the reading materials at Rossville Grade School consist of basal readers and rather small classroom libraries. The writer believes that one of the first jobs of the faculty would be to survey and evaluate present reading materials in terms of interest of material,

reading level of material, and location in the building. This material should be catalogued and this catalogue should be kept in some central location for the convenience of teachers.

Purchasing Professional Materials for Teachers

At the beginning of the program some materials should be purchased for teachers to use in the development of the program. These should include some good books on teaching basic reading skills, teaching reading in the content areas, and the teaching of recreational reading. The professional library should also contain periodicals that deal with the teaching of reading, pamphlets, material catalogues, and other such materials. This does not need to be a large library, but the teachers must have reference materials if they are going to develop an effective program.

The writer recommends that the following books be purchased for the professional library: Albert J. Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability, and Bond and Wagner, Teaching the Child to Read. The writer suggests that the school subscribe to The Reading Teacher and Elementary English.

The two books recommended are encyclopedic in nature and will provide the teachers with some information on almost every phase of teaching reading. The two periodicals recommended have a great deal of research material to keep the teachers aware of new trends and practices in teaching reading. The school might also wish to subscribe to a periodical that has less research but is a good source of materials and ideas, such as The Instructor.

<u>Progress Records</u>

Some type of reading progress record should be constructed for each child. These could be sheets with the basic and special skills needed in reading. Each classroom teacher should check the skills that the child needs special help with. This sheet should also contain notation by the classroom teacher showing standardized test scores, special interests and abilities, and even behavioral incidents that might give some insight to the child's reading development.

These sheets should be kept in the child's cumulative folder. These sheets would be an aid each year when the child starts a new grade, because the teacher could have some idea of the type of work the child needs from the beginning of the year.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SECOND YEAR OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM

<u>Planning and Evaluation</u>

During the second year of the program the teachers should be able to move forward more rapidly after their experiences in trying to implement the program during the first year. The planning process, as mentioned earlier, is still going on, but by now the teachers should be able to do some evaluation of the program they have been using. The evaluation may be rather sketchy at this point, but the teachers may be able to have some idea of the strengths and weaknesses of the program.

<u>Purchase of New Materials</u>

Through the use of the central material catalogue the teachers should be able to determine what additional materials they require. It

may be impossible to order all the materials this year that teachers
need, so they should be instructed to request all materials they would
like to have but to specify the materials they consider most important.
It is the writer's belief that only now, during the second year, should
the faculty seriously consider the use of machines in the reading pro-
gram. The machines, if purchased, should be carefully selected with
the objectives of the reading program in mind.

Also during the second year the teachers may need to purchase
additional materials for the professional library. The professional
material purchased during the second year should provide the teachers
with materials that deal in depth in specific areas of reading instruc-
tion. The books that will be purchased can only be determined after
the first year when teachers begin to evaluate their reading program
and the areas that they feel they are weak in. One person on the staff
should be charged with the responsibility of surveying all new profes-
sional materials, particularly periodicals, and calling these materials
to the attention of the faculty or to the specific teachers to whom the
material pertains.

Central Library

After using the central material catalogue for the first year,
it would be a good idea to centralize the materials as well as the cat-
alogue. Ideally there should be a part-time librarian to take care of
the materials. By centralizing the library there should be less dupli-
cation of materials and the materials would be more accessible to the
teachers and students.

Use of the Reading Consultant

During the second year the function of the reading consultant would be to serve as a resource person. His job would be to assist the teachers in obtaining materials and helping solve problems encountered in the operation of the program.

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PRINCIPLES OF A DEVELOPMENTAL READING PROGRAM
APPLIED TO ROSSVILLE GRADE SCHOOL

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements of the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
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The purpose of this report was to present the principles of a developmental reading program and outline the methods for implementing these principles into the curriculum at Rossville Grade School.

The documentary method of research was used in the formulation of the principles of a developmental reading program. The writer used personal interviews with the teachers of Rossville Grade School to determine the reading program that existed at the grade school.

The first major section of the report outlined fourteen principles of a developmental reading program. These were: that the developmental reading program must: (1) be an all-school program with carefully identified goals, (2) be concerned with the social and personal development of each student, (3) coordinate reading with other communicative experiences, (4) be a continuous program from kindergarten through college, (5) be a flexible program that is adjusted to variations in student characteristics, abilities, and reading needs, (6) have a stimulating classroom setting, (7) provide plentiful varied reading materials, (8) provide for continuous measurement and evaluation of the program, (9) provide for continuous identification of student deficiencies and difficulties and provide for individual needs, (10) provide for common needs, interests, and abilities of children, (11) regard reading as a process, (12) emphasize reading for understanding, (13) allow each student to progress at his own success rate to maximum capacity, and (14) seek to develop reading maturity.

The last section of the report outlines a two year program for implementing these objectives. The writer believes that a two year initial program would be necessary to allow for proper planning, study,

and evaluation of the objectives, purchasing of necessary materials, and full teacher orientation.

It was found that a developmental reading program is not in opposition to the basal reader programs which many elementary schools are using today. The developmental program may use a basal reader with enrichment materials. The major emphasis in the developmental program is that the program is continuously employing every teacher to teach reading in such a manner that the individual and common reading needs of all students are met.