

1956

A survey of the use of the guidebook in the teaching of reading.

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A SURVEY OF THE USE OF THE GUIDEBOOK
IN THE TEACHING OF READING

UMASS/AMHERST

MARGARET E. SULLIVAN

1956



A SURVEY OF THE USE OF THE
GUIDEBOOK IN THE TEACHING
OF READING

A PROBLEM
PRESENTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN EDUCATION

by
Margaret Elizabeth Sullivan
May 1956

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Survey. The purpose of this survey is to determine how widely used and closely followed is the guidebook in the teaching of reading.

Reason for Interest. The method in which reading is taught in our public schools today is a highly controversial subject. Educators as well as lay people are quite concerned, as can be seen from the wealth of material published every month in our leading magazines. Why is it that more and more of our students are reaching high school and college age unable to read well enough to participate in their classes? In an attempt to counteract the situation, remedial reading classes have been set up in our grade schools all over the country. At the present time more and more of these classes are being formed in our high schools and colleges.

The author has always felt that if reading were properly taught in the regular classroom, there would be no need for these special classes. Since it is obvious that these classes are needed, we must assume that something is drastically wrong in our methods of teaching in many of our grade schools.

stressed in that grade. Realizing that this organized program, set up by reading experts, could be the answer to the problem, the author felt it would be significant to determine what value the average classroom teacher placed on this guidebook, and to what extent most teachers used it.

Definition of the Term Guidebook. In this study the term guidebook is used to refer to the directions and suggestions included in the teacher's edition of the basic reader. In some series this book is referred to as the manual. This guidebook is most often a section at the beginning of a regular basic reader although some companies publish them in a separate book. The guidebook usually states the educational philosophy of the reading series and gives a complete set of directions to be used in the development of each phase of the reading lesson.

Brief History of Reading Methods. In a speech given at the University of Chicago Conference in Reading, William S. Gray states that, ". . . prior to 1900 the problems of teaching reading were defined largely in terms of the steps essential in developing good oral reading.¹" At this time

¹Gray, William S. University of Chicago Conference on Reading - Basic Instruction in Reading (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948), pp. 2,3.

emphasis in reading instruction centered largely on the mechanics of word recognition. This emphasis seems logical at this point in our history. Most children of that time were taught reading in order to enable them to read the Bible on Sundays and at family gatherings. They were taught to read by the A B C method. This method, which had been used since time immemorial, was based on the theory that the single letter is the unit of recognition and that the natural sequence was from letter, to word, to sentence. For generations this assumption was not challenged. While this method did develop some facility in spelling and encouraged forward movement of the eye, it was highly mechanical, developed short recognition span, and produced slow, laborious reading.

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century experimentation and scientific method in research evoked a questioning attitude toward the traditional procedures. In rapid succession, new methods of instruction were introduced. From the Gestalt school of psychology the word method was developed. This method offered immediate success, increased speed, and lengthened the eye span. However, this method provided no means for distinguishing between words which were similar in structure or for

deciphering new words. This method broke down when the memory was filled to capacity.

From the word method there developed the phonetic method. This method was systematic, helpful in spelling, and conducive to independence. This method, however, was like the A B C method in that it was a slow, labored process. It neglected the thought process and was helpless in dealing with words not phonetic in structure.

Around 1915 the sentence and story method had its beginning. This method emphasized meaning and interest in reading, but it lacked scientific vocabulary control. It led to an overdependence on context clues and memory reading and to word guessing.²

After the story method came the experience or activity method. Here again the emphasis was placed on meaning. It provided for a well-integrated program, and offered excellent opportunity for teacher and pupil initiative. This method, too, had serious drawbacks. It provided for little or no vocabulary control, encouraged memory reading, and offered no method of word attack.

²Jones, Daisy Marvel. "Patterns of Basic Instruction in Reading: Their Advantages and Limitations" University of Chicago Conference on Reading, pp 23-27.

The intrinsic method appears to be the next method which was commonly used. In this method the whole word was recognized prior to its component parts.

The intrinsic method of developing phonetic and related abilities consists in providing a number of exercises which requires the child to use both context clues and word-form clues simultaneously. These exercises introduce a relatively large number of different phonograms and requires the discrimination of many words which are similar in letter arrangement, sound units, and general configuration.³

In our teaching today we are attempting to take the best from each of these methods and to avoid, if possible, the disadvantages of all. Most systems today have either an intensive or extensive program. If the intensive program be followed, one basic text is used. Although this type of program allows little enrichment for the mentally alert pupil, its lower vocabulary load does have advantages for the slower learner. When this program is supplemented with wide library reading it is considered to be quite satisfactory.

In systems where the extensive program is followed, the children read many texts at the same level before going on. This program gives the child a broader background, teaches him to take a research attitude toward reading, encourages

³Gates, A. I. Interest and Ability in Reading (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930), p 209.

him to think of books as references and source materials rather than as texts which give the answers. Unless this program be carefully organized it can lead to confusion. In some places this program is pursued so completely that all children are reading from single copies of library-type materials or story readers. Only an extremely accomplished teacher can use this method successfully.

Brief History of the Reading Textbook in the United States. The New England Primer, published about 1683, seems to be the first reading textbook published in this country. Most editions of the book were oblong in shape, usually $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The book started with the alphabet and then proceeded to lists of words which the child learned to sound. It also contained the Lord's Prayer, the Creed and finally the famous couplets. In the back of the book were many sentences from the Bible. The printing in this book was extremely fine and the illustrations, which accompanied the couplets, although many and varied, were taxing to the eye.

As a supplement to the New England Primer, the hornbooks were often used. These were not really books, but consisted of a short-handled paddle four or five inches by two inches

in size. Metal strips were placed around three sides of the paddle leaving one side open so various pages could be slipped in and out as certain lessons were learned. From the hornbook, the student learned the alphabet in small and capital letters and the Lord's Prayer. It is believed that all the hornbooks used in this country were imported from England where they were quite popular at that time.⁴

At this same period in the history of our country girls were taught the alphabet but little else in the way of formal education. A girl embroidered the alphabet, excerpts from the Bible, her name, her age, and the date on samplers.

In 1790 the American Spelling Book, commonly known as the Blue-back Speller, was published. This book was one of the most influential texts this country has known. While supporting his family from the profits received from the sale of this book, Noah Webster started work on his famous dictionary.

Lionel Cobb is accredited with compiling the first set of carefully graded readers in this country.

⁴Smith, Nila Banton. A Historical Analysis of American Reading Instruction (New York: Silver, Burdett, and Company, 1934)

William Holmes McGuffey's Eclectic Readers were the most popular of the graded series prominent at this time. From 1836 - 1920 it is estimated that more than 122,000,000 copies of these books were sold. McGuffey emphasized commendable character traits, and threatened the wrong-doer with dire punishment.

The Ward Readers, published in 1894 by Silver, Burdett and Company, were printed in a more readable type. These books stressed the significance of sight vocabulary before attempting phonetic analysis. They were popular, but never became as widely used as the McGuffey series.

History of the Guidebook. Guidebooks to accompany the basic reading series have been in existence for some time. This is indicated in a letter received from Mildred Tromp, Assistant Elementary Division Editor of the American Book Company. In her letter she states:

We know that when this company was founded in 1890 and took over the publication of the famous old McGuffey's Eclectic Readers, there was already in existence (probably dating from ten years or so earlier) a very simplified, abbreviated kind of teachers' guide to certain parts of these readers. This guide was listed in the catalogs of houses selling the McGuffey's Readers. Since that time, no reading series have been published for forty years or more that did not include a teachers' manual as an integral part of its program. We are sure that this is true of reading textbooks in general as well as of our own.⁵

⁵Tromp, Mildred. Assistant Elementary Division Editor, American Book Company, letter dated March 6, 1956.

Although guidebooks have been in existence for some time, they have undergone a great many revisions since the beginning of World War II. Helena Hyde, Editor of the Elementary Department at D. C. Heath and Company explains these changes in a letter in which she states:

Teachers' manuals have been an integral part of the Reading for Interest Series since its original publication in 1942. However, in the first revision of the series, the manuals were expanded to provide more detailed suggestions for teaching each lesson. At a time when classes were becoming larger and a number of inexperienced teachers were entering the schools, it was felt that the teachers' manuals should give more detailed assistance than they had previously.⁶

Cost of the Guidebook. Because the cost of the guidebook varies considerably depending on the length of the book and the number of illustrations, it was impossible to secure a definite figure. All companies agreed that the guidebooks were extremely expensive to produce, but most companies were not willing to state any definite price. Marion A. Anderson whose work includes the planning and supervision of the teachers' manuals for Ginn and Company did, however, make this statement about the cost:

Our reading manuals are comprehensive and consequently quite long. Each of them costs several

⁶Hyde, Hellean, Editor, Elementary Department, D. C. Heath and Company, letter dated February 27, 1956.

thousand dollars for plates alone. The cost of printing and binding is an additional expense. The exact figures are not available for general distribution, but I can say the manuals are an expensive part of the total program.⁷

L. S. Hance from the John C. Winston Company offered this information in a letter, "Manuals cost anywhere from 20¢ each to \$1.65 to produce depending on the kind".⁸ At the University of Chicago Conference on Reading Philip A. Knowlton made this statement, "A new set of elementary readers today costs its publishers initially anywhere from \$150,000 to \$500,000 to produce".⁹

Value Placed on Guidebook by Leading Educators. In making this study it was felt that the opinion of leading educators would be of value in placing the guidebook in its proper perspective in relation to the total reading program. William Kottymeyer in speaking at the University of Chicago Conference on Reading had this to say about the guidebook:

The notion that the great majority of teachers of reading need only stimulating children's books

⁷Anderson, Marion A. Supervisor of Manual, Ginn and Company, letter dated March 1, 1956.

⁸Hance, L. S. The John C. Winston Company, letter dated April 3, 1956.

⁹Knowlton, Philip A. "Basic Texts and Materials" University of Chicago Conference on Reading - Basic Instruction in Reading, p. 90

and their own ingenuity in order to turn out competent and enthusiastic educational products is a pleasant one - but is just not true. Too many teachers do not read the guidebooks. And probably the most reasonable and practical guidance for the efficient conduct of reading programs appears in these teachers' manuals . . .¹⁰

It was at the same reading conference that Martha J. Cottrell made the statement:

At the heart of the basic reading program is the manual through which the philosophy underlying the series is interpreted to the teacher . . . While the teacher follows the manual, she goes beyond it as her group, her resources, her enthusiasm and her purpose demand.¹¹

E. W. Dolch also attaches a great deal of importance to the guidebook. He says:

A basic reader is really one part of a 'system for teaching reading'. This 'system' includes the basic books themselves, the work-books that go with them, and the teacher's manual which tells what to do with the textbooks, what to do with the work-book, and also tells all the other activities a teacher should go through in order to do a complete job of teaching reading. Consideration of any basic series should, therefore, include a study of the three - the textbook, the work-book, and the manual. If such a study were made, it might well be found that the most important item is the method in the teachers' manual together with all the accompanying suggestions for teaching reading.¹²

¹⁰Kottymeyer, William. "Criteria of a Sound Program of Basic Instruction in Reading", University of Chicago Conference on Reading Basic Instruction in Reading, p. 22.

¹¹Cottrell, Martha J. "Essential Instruction for Basic Instruction in Reading", University of Chicago Conference on Basic Instructions in Reading, 109.

¹²Dolch, Edward W. Teaching Primary Reading (Champaign, Illinois: The Garrard Press, 1927) p. 319.

Emmett A. Betts in Foundations of Reading Instruction

says:

Most teachers' manuals or guides are well written and contain a wealth of suggestions for teachers using basal textbooks. In so far as she observes basic principles of learning, the teacher should feel free to modify the suggestions and to capitalize on her own enthusiasm, resourcefulness, and imagination.¹³

Gerald A. Yoakham also attaches great significance to the manual in his statement:

The manuals for teachers which accompany basal readers are of great value to the beginning teacher and of use to experienced teachers in learning to use the basal materials for the purposes for which they were designed. These manuals should be regarded as sources of valuable ideas and suggestions rather than as books to be followed slavishly by the teacher.¹⁴

Philip A. Knowlton at the University of Chicago Conference on Reading has this to say in comparing teacher-made devices to the following of the outline recommended in the manual:

For exceptionally talented and resourceful teachers with exceptionally small classes the textbook may not be indispensable. The great question, of course, is whether the theoretical possibility of more intimate adaptation of specially created teaching materials to the needs of individual pupils offsets the practical and inescapable fact that published readers are made

¹³Betts, Emmett A. Foundations of Reading Instruction (New York: American Book Company, 1950), p. 757.

¹⁴Yoakham, Gerald A. Basal Reading Instruction (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, Inc., 1955), p. 205.

by experts and are the product of vast expenditures of labor and money, whereas most improvised materials have merit only as judged by the complacency of their perpetrators.¹⁵

Paul McKee and others in stating the purpose and aims of the guidebook to accompany With Jack and Janet makes these very strong statements:

Somewhat as an engineers' blueprints provide clear and adequate directions for the building of a great bridge with nothing omitted from their specifications, the teachers' editions give detailed guidance for each and every piece of teaching that is essential to sound instruction in reading. Furthermore, with the teaching activities arranged step by step in sequence according to the needs and learning difficulties of pupils, the teachers editions present a thoroughly organized and delicately integrated guide to successful instructions in reading.

As a guide the teachers' edition omits nothing. Failure to pay close attention to their content and to do the teaching jobs in the sequences recommended will result in inferior achievement by pupils. Such failures will lead to teaching that is inadequate because some of the essential instructional activities will not be carried on, to instruction that is confusing because it presents too many new difficulties at the same time or in the wrong order and to actual misrepresentation of and lack of practice in skills that are essential to the pupils' balanced and continuous growth in the power to read. It must be remembered that the best results to be achieved through the use of Reading for Meaning can come only by using the readers, the manual pages, the workbook, and other supplementary materials in the way they are intended to be used and that this way is clearly and completely described by the contents of the manual pages.¹⁶

¹⁵Knowlton, Philip A. "Basic Text and Materials," University of Chicago Conference on Reading Basic Instruction in Reading, p. 93.

¹⁶McKee, Paul and others. Teacher's Manual for With Jack and Janet (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952), pp. 15, 16.

William S. Gray stresses the necessity for a systematic approach to the teaching of reading in the opening pages of the guidebook to accompany The New Streets and Roads when he says, "Each Child follows his own particular time table for growth in any area. But for all children, first steps must come first and no stage of growth can be omitted along the way."¹⁷

Among some of the other outstanding people in the field of reading who have spoken out in favor of following the guidebook are Guy L. Bond, Eva Bond Wagner, Mabel O'Donnell, and David H. Russell.

Although she would probably not be counted among the outstanding leaders in the field of reading, a sixth grade teacher with more than ten years' experience made this comment on her questionnaire:

For the first two years I taught, I had no guidebook. When I finally did get one I was shocked to realize how poor my teaching had been - how little I was actually doing with the material compared to what I should have been doing with it.

These comments, in the opinion of the author offer strong support to the school of thought which favors the following of the guidebook. If these people, having spent years in studying the way in which children learn, believe there is value in following the outline set up by the authors, it seems only reasonable to

¹⁷Gray, William S. and others. Guidebook to Accompany the New Streets and Roads (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1952), p. 5.

to assume that the ordinary classroom teacher, lacking the advantage of these years of study, faced with larger and larger classes, and constantly pressed for time, would be more than willing to accept any help which could be obtained from the guidebook.

Value Placed on Guidebook by Publishers. All publishers who were contacted in this survey agreed that the guidebook was of great importance in the selling of their series. L. S. Hance of the John C. Winston Company had this to say: "We feel the guidebook is of great importance and becoming more so as there are more and more inexperienced teachers".¹⁸

Mary Clint Irion, reading editor of the Macmillian Company made this statement in her letter:

We can assure you that the teacher's manual is essential to the effective use of the basal reading series; that teachers demand a good manual and use it; and that we revise our manuals frequently in response to changing curriculum patterns and to increasing knowledge of how children learn.¹⁹

In discussing the importance attached to the guidebook by the publishers, John Freeman, Manager of the educational department at the Houghton, Mifflin Company says:

¹⁸Hance, L. S. The John C. Winston Company, letter dated April 3, 1956.

¹⁹Irion, Mary Clint. Reading Editor, The MacMillian Company, letter Dated February 24, 1956.

Our authors and editors consider it of extreme importance that such a technical subject as reading have an efficient and workable teacher's guide to the reading series. Such a teacher's guide not only helps to an understanding of the author's philosophy and recommended technique but, if it is well done, it saves the teacher a great deal of time in preparation and class use. It is our feeling that this time can be used in working with the individual pupils²⁰

Helean Hyde, Editor of the Elementary Department at the D. C. Heath and Company, publishers, says that although their company has not done any real research to determine the value of following the guidebook in teaching reading, their company feels that:

Following the guidebook is of great value. One very important reason is that teaching reading consists mainly of developing a number of different skills in word recognition and in comprehension, and it is in the guidebook that the skills program may be found. This program has been carefully worked out by the authors so that the skills₁ are presented gradually and in logical sequence.²¹

They feel that the guidebooks are very important in the selling of their reading series because, "Teachers are taking an increasingly active part in the selection of textbooks, and teachers want not only good texts but also good guidebooks".²²

²⁰Freeman, John, Manager, Educational Department, Houghton Mifflin Company, letter dated February 23, 1956.

²¹Hyde, Helean, Editor, Elementary Department, D. C. Heath and Company, letter dated February 27, 1956

²²Ibid.

It was learned from Marion A. Anderson of Ginn and Company that they feel that, "The manual is essential to the selling of not only our reading series but of all our elementary books. As a matter of fact, she says, "The teachers manual is becoming increasingly important at the high school level."²³ Miss Anderson further states:

Because manuals are considered to be important, neither time nor expense is spared in their preparation. You may be interested that we find that manuals are used much more extensively than was the case several years ago.²⁴

Walter Brackman, Editor in Chief of Row, Peterson and Company makes this statement:

Our company has not done any controlled research in determining the value of following the guidebook in teaching reading. Many teachers have told us how valuable the guidebooks are. Some of them, according to their statements, knew nothing about the teaching of reading when they began. The guidebook enabled them to do what their school and parents regarded as a successful job.²⁵

He goes on to say:

We feel that the guidebook is most important in connection with the reading series. The instructional program is there rather than in the textbooks themselves.

²³Anderson, Marion A. Supervisor of Manual, Ginn and Company, letter dated March 1, 1956.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Brackman, Walter, Editor in Chief, Row, Peterson and Company, letter dated March 13, 1956.

Even teachers who are ingenious might find it wise to read the guidebook to find out what the philosophy of that particular publisher is.²⁶

Recent Developments in the Teaching of Reading. At one time it was thought that children learned to read in the first three grades and that, after that, they read to learn. This attitude was shown in the fact that publishing companies published basic reading books only through the sixth grade. Today, however, we realize that systematic instruction in reading should continue up through the eighth grade. We often find classes in reading held in the high schools and even in colleges.

At one time teachers in the high schools looked down on anyone who taught the primary grades, believing the subject matter taught at the high school level to be far more important than the teaching of reading. This attitude probably developed from the fact that higher standards were set for teaching in the high schools and consequently there was a considerable difference in salary. Our whole new philosophy in reading today is shown by the numbers of high school teachers who are found to be taking courses in the teaching of reading.

²⁶Brackman, Walter, Editor in Chief, Row, Peterson Peterson and Company, letter dated March 13, 1956.

Within the past twenty-five years all the basic reading series have introduced the pre-primers. These generally come in sets of three paper-covered books which introduce many of the words found at the beginning of the primer of that particular series. In these books the greater part of the story is told in the pictures. The new words are introduced so gradually that the child has a much better chance of meeting success in beginning reading.

One of the new series even goes so far as to recognize the partial loss of reading skills during the summer vacation. This series provides a reading readiness textbook to be used at the beginning of the second and third grade to compensate for these losses.

Another company provides a book written below the level of the basic text which can be used for the slower learning children in the class. This book contains the same stories, approximately the same vocabulary, but is written in a much more simple style. This series provides an excellent opportunity for working with the class as a whole during part of the reading period.

Another series is providing film strips to go along with each story in the series in the primary grades.

Public Interest in Education. During recent years the public schools of the United States have met with a great deal of criticism. Employers all over the country are complaining about the unpreparedness of our high school graduates. Colleges have been forced to set up remedial reading classes for incoming freshmen of high intelligence. After twelve years in our public schools, these young men and women are unable to read with enough comprehension and at a sufficient rate of speed to keep up with their daily assignments. At what point are our schools failing? What can we, as educators, do to remedy this situation?

Rudolph Flesch, in his recent best-seller, Why Johnny Can't Read, came up with an idea which seemed to be the answer for many people. He feels that the schools are failing in the teaching of reading because of their neglect to teach phonics. He says in part, "There is only one way to teach reading and all our schools obstinately persist in using another method that doesn't work".²⁷

²⁷Flesch, Rudolph, Why Johnny Can't Read (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), p. 43.

He claims that the children in school today are taught "word guessing" rather than reading. Flesch offers this suggestion to parents:

By far the best thing you can do is to teach your child to read before he ever gets into the habit of word guessing. My advice is, teach your child, yourself, how to read - at the age of five.²⁸

Although any educator should know how unfounded were Flesch's claims, Why Johnny Can't Read did cause a great stir among many parents whose children were having difficulty in learning to read. Some parents in the vicinity of Salt Lake City were so aroused that:

A newspaper in that city commissioned a Utah educator to prepare an instructive series which relied heavily on phonics. The parents began using these daily lesson plans. Educators in turn criticized this series for not co-ordinating it with the methods actually used in the classroom.²⁹

The numerous books and magazine articles dealing with education published each year indicate a continuing interest on the part of the people in what is happening behind the doors of our public schools. The Public School Scandal by Earl Conrad, parent and journalist, points out some of the shocking deficiencies in the public schools in New York City. He says, in effect, that New York, heart of the world's wealth, has three hundred fifty people employed in the Bureau of Attendance to patrol the

²⁸Flesch, Rudolph. Why Johnny Can't Read. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), p. 43.

²⁹"Big Row over Reading," Life, 39:57-8, October 31, 1955.

the youth of the city, yet does not have half that many remedial reading teachers or guidance workers.³⁰

In a Life Magazine article, "Why Do Students Bog Down on the First R"³¹ a citizens' committee from Fairfield, Connecticut report their findings after inspecting the schools in that vicinity. The group criticizes the textbooks being used as well as the theory of having children progress at their own rate. They feel that valuable time is being lost because of this system.

The following magazine articles offer suggestions to parents interested in improving a child's reading ability: "If your Child Can't Read" by J. Morrison³² and "Help Your Child Learn to Read" by B. Feder.³³

³⁰Conrad, Earl. The Public School Scandal (New York: The John Day Company, 1951), p. 117.

³¹Hershey, J. "Why Do Students Bog Down on the First R," Life, 36: 136-40, May 24, 1954.

³²Morrison, J. "If Your Child Can't Read," McCall, 80: 14, October, 1952.

³³Feder, B. "Help Your Child Learn to Read," The Womens Home Companion. 82: 26, March, 1955.

Other articles such as "Reading Failure: A Warning Signal"³⁴ by Harrower and "The Magic in Room 136"³⁵ by J. L. Block point out relationships between failure in reading and delinquency.

The articles mentioned here are but a sampling of those which have appeared recently in the leading magazines. Many newspapers too, have been bringing to the attention of the public the problems being faced by public school teachers and administrators.

³⁴ Harrower, M. "Reading Failure: A Warning Signal," Womans Home Companion, 82: 43, July, 1955.

³⁵ Block, J. L. "The Magic in Room 136", Womans Home Companion, 82: 43, July 1955.

CHAPTER II

METHOD OF PROCEDURE

CHAPTER II

METHOD OF PROCEDURE

Problem Defined. The importance of following some definite system in the teaching of reading seems to be well established. The guidebook is set up in such a way that all skills necessary to intelligent reading are introduced and developed systematically. Since these manuals are prepared by reading experts, it seems reasonable that classroom teachers would be wise to use them. The purpose of this survey is to determine to what extent the classroom teacher does follow the guidebook and to discover why some teachers ignore this available material.

Review of Research in This Field. The Journal of Educational Research was checked for the past ten years. According to their records, no research to determine the extent to which the guidebook was used has been undertaken.

Limitations of the Survey. A survey of this type has some obvious limitations. All teachers will be

asked whether or not they feel satisfied with the results of their teaching of reading. It must be recognized that some of the best teachers will be most critical of their achievements. Many of the poorer teachers may be willing to accept the fact that there are some poor readers in every class. They may feel that there is nothing they can do so they assume their results are satisfactory.

The number of questionnaires returned will be from only a small proportion of the teachers in the area. Perhaps it will be the poorer teachers and the ones who are not satisfied with the results of their reading programs who will not return the questionnaires.

The possibility also exists that the superintendents, upon receiving the questionnaires, will distribute them to the better teachers in the system. If this were to happen, the results obtained would not give a true picture of the teaching that is going on in the average classroom.

Materials and Subjects. Questionnaires were sent to two hundred and fifty teachers in the surrounding area who teach grade one through six. Letters were also sent to the publishers of reading textbooks

to obtain their opinions of the importance of the guidebook to the total reading program.

Developing the Questionnaire. Upon considering various methods of reaching the two hundred and fifty classroom teachers, the author decided a questionnaire would be the most satisfactory. Realizing that teachers are already overburdened with clerical work, a very simple, check-sheet type of survey seemed best. A sample of the questionnaire used may be found on page 50 of the appendix.

The first three questions (1) grade or grades taught, (2) years experience, (3) educational background were asked to determine the general background of the subjects. Checking the responses on these first three items as the questionnaires were returned insured a more even distribution in all three categories.

The responses on the next two questions: (4) "Do you enjoy teaching reading?" and (5) "Are you on the whole satisfied with the results of your reading program?" were used to determine the subject's attitude towards the reading program. Question (6) "Are your children strong in independent word analysis?" and (7) "Are your children strong in the locational skills?" were used to check on questions

(5) "Are you on the whole satisfied with the results of your reading program?" Questions eight, nine and ten were all on grouping children for reading instruction.

Question (11) "Do you feel it is necessary to follow the guidebook in the teaching of reading - always, sometimes, or never?" was inserted to determine the extent to which the subject uses the guidebook. Question twelve checked whether or not the subject felt it was more important to use the guidebook with some groups than with others - superior, average, or slow students. Question thirteen was planned to check which parts of the guidebook were referred to most often and which were considered of least importance. Questions fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen were intended to determine the experience and educational background of those teachers who felt the need for the guidebook most. On question seventeen the subjects were asked to check the reasons why they did not use all parts of the guidebook. On question eighteen the subjects were requested to list ways in which the guidebook might be improved.

Methods of Procedure. Letters were sent to all the large publishing companies to secure information on the compiling and publishing of the guidebooks. A copy of this

letters may be found on page 54 of the appendix.

Upon completion of the questionnaire two hundred and fifty copies were sent to superintendents in surrounding towns. Self-addressed envelopes were enclosed for the returns. It was necessary to attach a letter to each questionnaire to explain the purpose of the survey. Separate letters were sent to each superintendent. Copies of these letters may be found on page 49 and 53 of the appendix.

As some replies were received, more were sent to other towns to insure the return of at least one hundred. At the final count one hundred forty-six questionnaires were returned, of the two hundred and fifty sent out. This represents a return of 58.4 per cent. Questionnaires were sent to Amherst, Belchertown, Ware, Ludlow, Holyoke, Northampton, South Hadley, Monson, Wilbraham, Agawam, East Hartford and West Hartford, Connecticut. Friends from Springfield, New Bedford, Lynn and Bridgeport, Connecticut also helped by distributing these questionnaires in their respective school systems.

The results of the questionnaire will be found in Chapter III.

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE RETURNS

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The guidebook contains complete directions for introducing the reading skills in a logical order. Many lessons are planned to give practice in these skills before something new is introduced. When every lesson is followed completely, the child receives a sound foundation in all the essential reading skills. This is the way it is intended that the guidebook be used. An occasional lesson from the guidebook will result in little or no learning and may, in fact, cause much confusion. Therefore, in summarizing the results of this questionnaire, those teachers who indicate that they "sometimes" use the guidebook will be considered as not using it.

One hundred forty-six of the two hundred fifty questionnaires sent out were returned. This number represents a return of 58.4 per cent. On the one hundred forty-six returned questionnaires sixty-three teachers indicated that they always used the guidebook, eighty-two stated that they used the guidebook "sometimes", while one of the subjects reported that she never consulted it. In this group we find that 43.2 per cent use the guidebook while 56.8 per cent do not use it.

Table I indicates the years of experience and the grades now being taught by the one hundred forty-six subjects included in this study. As can be seen from the table the subjects in this study include a good random sampling of our present day teachers.

TABLE I
YEARS EXPERIENCE OF AND GRADES TAUGHT
BY THE SUBJECTS

Grades	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Comb [*]	Total
First Year	0	3	3	4	2	2	1	15
Two to five	6	6	10	5	7	11	0	45
Six to ten	9	0	2	3	5	2	2	23
More than ten	10	15	15	10	8	5	5	63
Total	25	19	30	22	22	20	8	146

*Combination grades

Table II shows the years of experience and the educational background of the subjects. It is interesting to note that there were no returns from persons holding a bachelor of science or arts degree in something other than education without having had education courses.

TABLE II
YEARS EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATIONAL
BACKGROUND OF SUBJECTS

Experience	First Year	Two to Five	Six to Ten	Over Ten	Total
Normal School	0	2	1	30	33
B. S. in Education	11	27	15	21	74
B. A. or B. S. not Education	0	0	0	0	0
B. A. (Not Education) plus Ed. Courses	4	12	2	4	22
Masters or Six Years	0	4	5	8	17
Total	15	45	23	63	146

Figure I shows the percentage of teachers in each grade who use the guidebook. Third grade teachers and teachers of combination grades used the guidebook most often, while the teachers in grade one and six used it least often. From these figures it would be impossible to state that one group used the guidebook more than another.

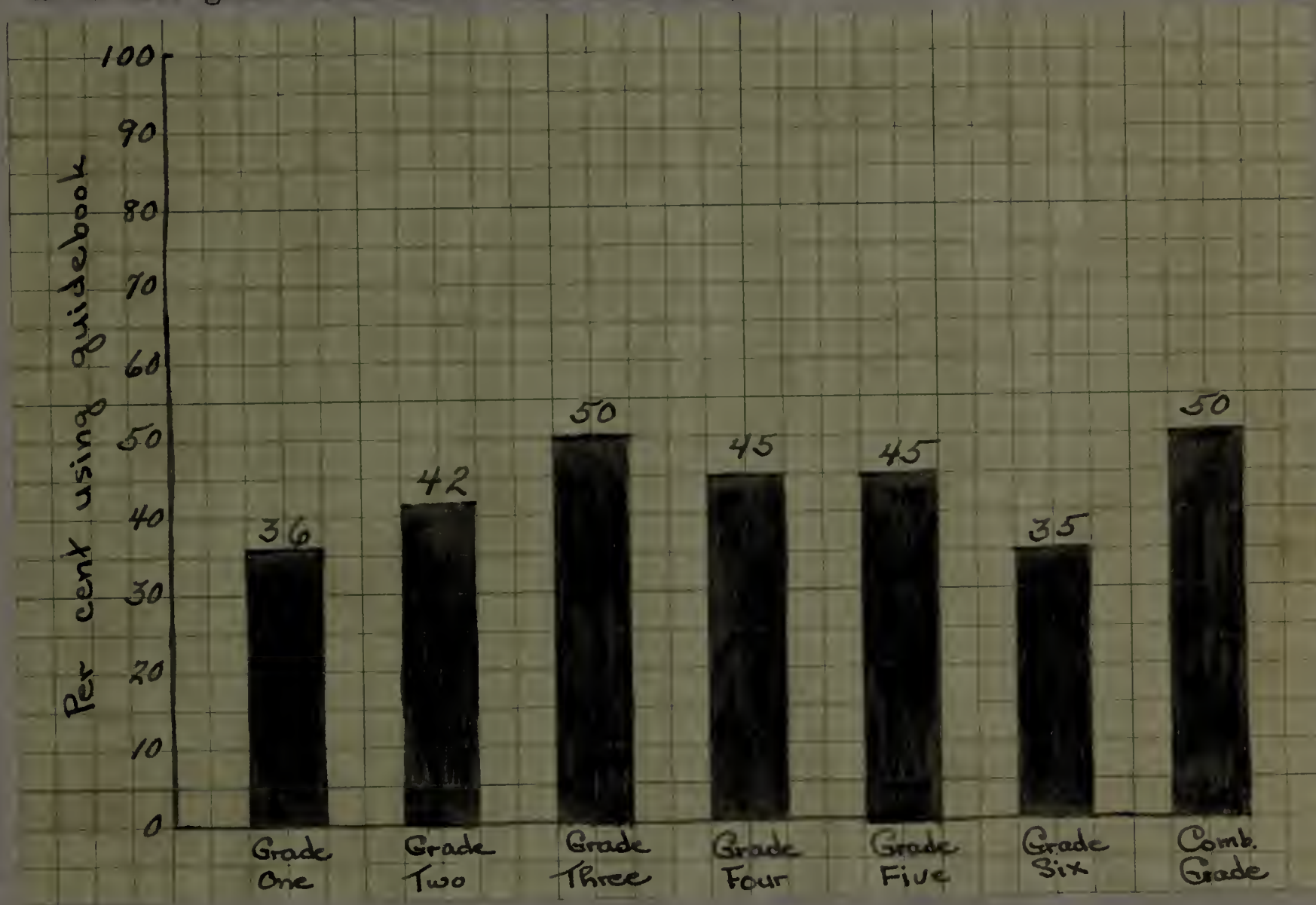


FIGURE I
USE OF THE GUIDEBOOK
BY GRADES

Figure II shows the percentage of teachers using the guidebook according to their teaching experience. Here it is interesting to note that the teachers with more than ten years experience use the guidebook most often. First year teachers were next while teachers with from six to ten years experience used the guidebook least often.

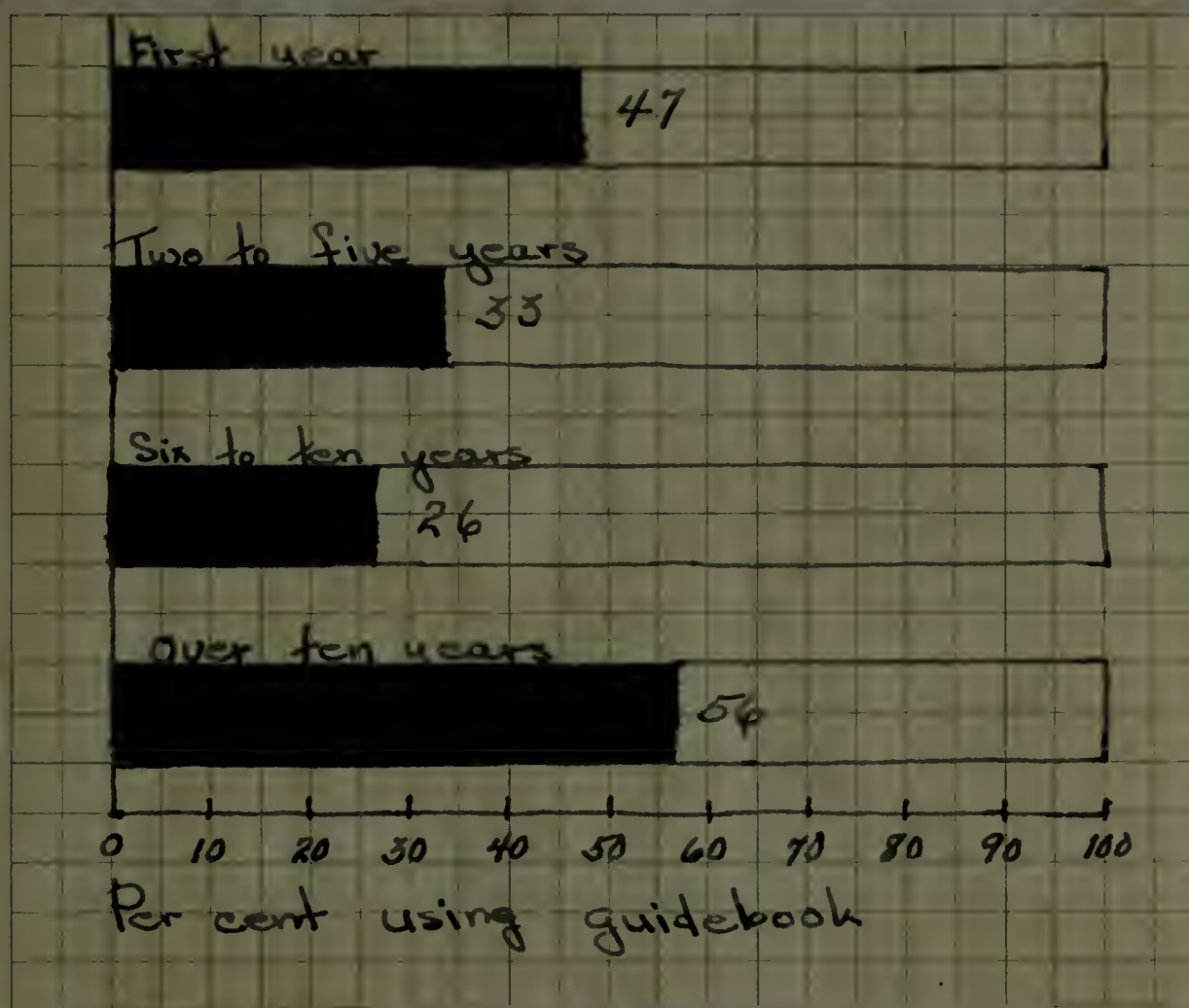


FIGURE II

USE OF THE GUIDEBOOK ACCORDING
TO YEARS EXPERIENCE

Figure III shows the percentage of teachers using the guidebook according to their educational background. Those who graduated from normal schools ranked highest (58 per cent) with people holding masters' degrees next (47 per cent). Those people who have degrees (other than educational) and have taken education courses used the guidebook least often (32 per cent).

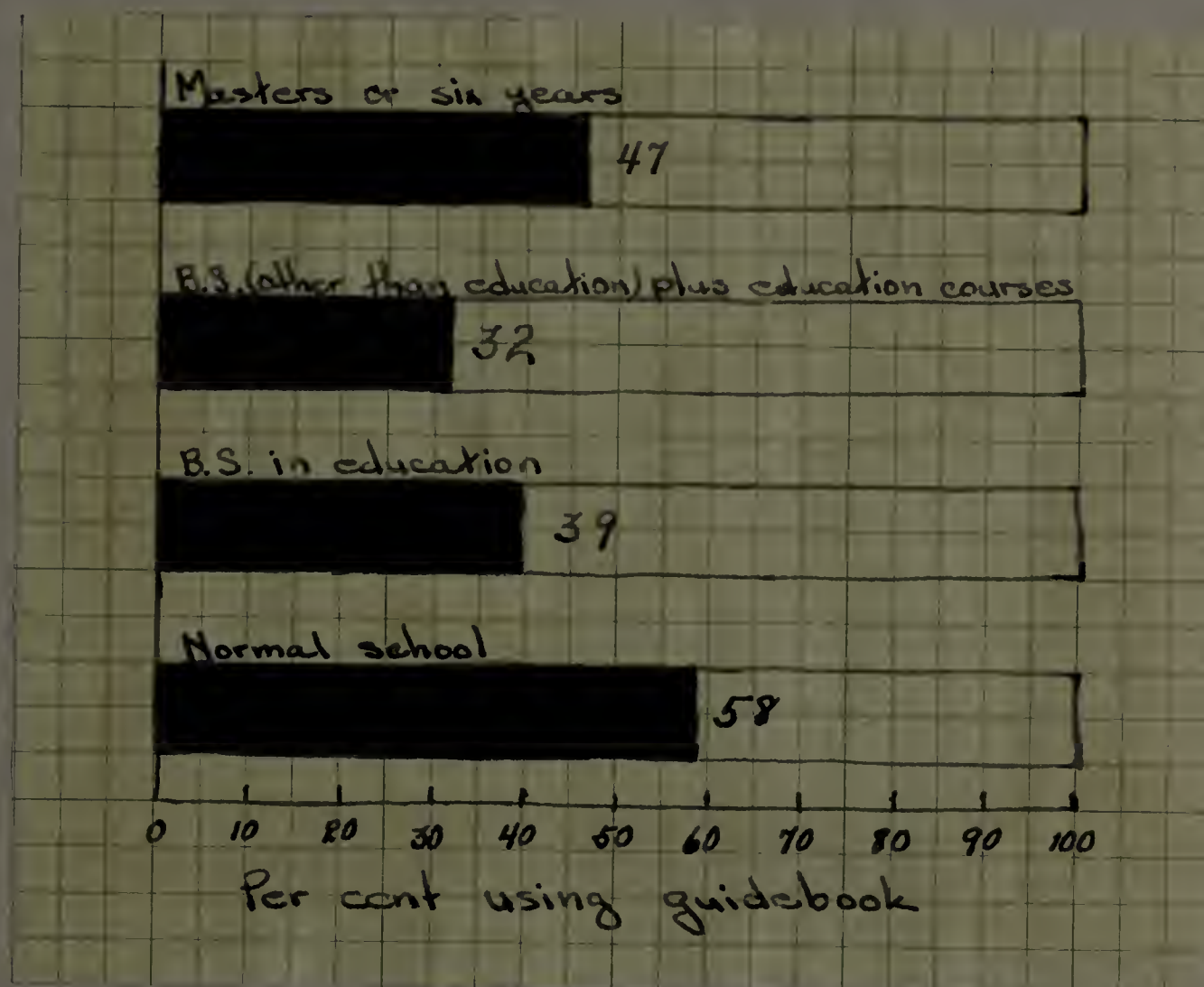


FIGURE III

USE OF GUIDEBOOK ACCORDING TO
EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Do you enjoy the teaching of reading? (Yes)

Those who use guidebook	Those who do not use guidebook
98 per cent	89 per cent

Are you on the whole satisfied with the results of your reading program? (Yes)

Use guidebook	Do not use guidebook
76 per cent	70 per cent

Are your students strong in independent word analysis? (Yes)

Use guidebook	Do not use guidebook
67 per cent	50 per cent

Are your students strong in the locational skills? (Yes)

Use guidebook	Do not use guidebook
63 per cent	59 per cent

There was only one teacher who felt it was not necessary to group children for reading instruction. Sixty-eight per cent of the subjects had three reading groups, while twenty-four per cent had four reading groups. Sixty-four per cent of the teachers said all their groups were reading from the same series. In answer to this question, many teachers stated that not enough books on different levels were available, so they were forced to use different series.

Some teachers felt the use of the guidebook was more important for some groups than for others.

Superior pupils		22	per	cent
Average	"	37	"	"
Slow	"	41	"	"

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In checking to determine which parts of the guidebook were most frequently used, it was found that the part called "preparation for reading" was used most frequently (34 per cent). This part lists the new vocabulary words and suggests ways of introducing them. It also suggests a purpose for reading the story.

The part called "extending skills and abilities" was used by 33 per cent of the teachers. This part of the lesson varies considerably depending upon the skills taught at that grade level.

"Reading and discussion" was used by 27 per cent of the teachers. This part suggests questions to check the children's comprehension.

Only 9 per cent of the teachers use the part called "extending interests". Here are suggestions for outside reading as well as projects and activities which may be carried on by the children.

Below are listed the reasons checked by teachers for not using the guidebook in the order of their frequency:

- 1) Not time to do all the things suggested when have three or four groups - 50 per cent.
- 2) Classroom teacher better able to provide for needs of her group - 27 per cent.
- 3) Enjoy using own ideas to make lessons interesting - 27 per cent.
- 4) Requires too much time to prepare lessons when have three or four groups - 20 per cent.
- 5) Includes too much material brighter children already know - 20 per cent.
- 6) Slow pace bores children - 17 per cent.
- 7) Time involved cuts down on actual reading time - 12 per cent.
- 8) Includes much material which tends to confuse slower children - 12 per cent.
- 9) Provides too much technical material not needed by the children - 10 per cent.
- 10) No guidebook available for those not reading on grade level.
- 11) Suggestions too vague to be of value.
- 12) If reading well taught in first three grades, it would not be necessary to spend that much time in intermediate grades.

Many suggestions to improve the guidebook were given. Some of these are:

- 1) More tests on vocabulary.
- 2) More stress on comprehension.
- 3) More exercise on structural analysis.
- 4) More exercise on phonetic analysis.
- 5) More word games and puzzles included.
- 6) More seatwork activities which could be duplicated by the teacher.
- 7) More suggestions for activities which children could carry out on their own.
- 8) More than one approach to story suggested so children reading story later in year would have some change.
- 9) More suggestions for supplementary reading.
- 10) Separate plans for fast, medium, and slow groups.
- 11) Questions for discussion underlined so easier to locate.
- 12) Answers to questions included to save time.
- 13) Lesson plan and story together to save turning pages.
- 14) Guidebook in loose-leaf binder so separate pages could be used each day.
- 15) Plans in outline form to save time in reading.
- 16) Larger print so easier to read.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

There was a 58.4 per cent return on the questionnaires sent out. Approximately 43 per cent of the teachers use the guidebook. No conclusions could be drawn to show that teachers of certain grades or with certain educational background use the guidebook more than any other group. This survey does show that teachers who use the guidebook enjoy the teaching of reading more and are more satisfied with the results of their reading program than those who do not use it. Children in classes where the guidebook is used are stronger in independent word analysis and in the locational skills.

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CHAPTER IV
RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS OF SURVEY

INDEX

CHAPTER IV
RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions of The Study. This study has shown that in classes where the guidebook is used the teacher is more satisfied with the results of the reading program. Sixty-seven per cent of the teachers who use the guidebook stated that the children in their classes were strong in independent word analysis while in classes where it was not used only fifty per cent made that statement. The children were also stronger in the locational skills where the guidebook was used.

Future of The Guidebooks. This study has shown that 43.2 per cent of the teachers today are using the guidebook. It is believed that this is a much higher percentage than in the past. The publishing companies are constantly revising these guides to make them more complete and easier to follow. As they are improved it seems safe to assume that more and more teachers will be taking advantage of them.

Possibility for Further Study. In determining the value of the guidebook in this study, the opinion of the teachers was the only criteria on which to judge the achievements of the children. In order to get a true picture of the value of following the guidebook, standardized reading achievement tests could be given to a great many children. Only by checking the results of a great many tests and comparing these results with the teaching procedure, could a true picture of the situation be obtained.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

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Dear _____:

I am conducting a survey to determine how widely used the guidebook is in the teaching of reading. This survey is to be used as partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Science degree at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts.

As this survey is to be used to determine the value of the guidebook to the average classroom teacher and is not in any way intended to check the integrity of the teacher, I prefer to have it returned to me unsigned in the self-addressed envelope.

I am sincerely grateful to you for your help in this survey.

Yours very truly,

(Miss) Margaret E. Sullivan

Enclosures

The Questionnaire

1. What grade or grades are you now teaching?
_____, _____, _____, _____,
2. Teaching experience (check one)
 First Year
 Two to five years
 Six to ten years
 More than ten years
3. Educational background (check one)
 Normal School
 BA or BS (in education)
 BA or BS (other than education)
 BA or BS (other than education plus education courses)
 Six years or Masters
 Other (explain) _____
4. Do you enjoy teaching reading?
 Yes No
5. Are you on the whole satisfied with the results of your reading program?
 Yes No
6. If you are a teacher of grade two or above, are your students strong in independent word analysis (ability to attack new words)?
 Yes No
7. If you are a teacher of grade four, five, or six, are your students strong in the locational skills (use of dictionary, encyclopedia, index, etc.)?
 Yes No
8. Do you find it necessary to group children for reading instruction?
 Yes No
9. How many groups do you usually have in reading?
 One
 Two
 Three
 Four
 More than four (Please insert number used)
10. Are all your groups using the same basic reading series (different levels)?
 Yes No

11. Do you believe that it is necessary to follow the teachers' guidebook in the teaching of reading?
 Always Sometimes Never
12. Perhaps you feel that it is necessary to follow the guidebook for some of your reading groups?
 Superior pupils
 Average pupils
 Slow pupils
13. Perhaps you do refer to the guidebook for help in some steps in the reading lesson:
- a) Do you use the section called preparation for reading (story background, vocabulary, sets up purpose for reading story)?
 Always
 Frequently
 Rarely
 Never
- b) Do you use the section called reading and discussion (presents questions to ask during silent reading and gives suggestions for discussion following the reading)?
 Always
 Frequently
 Rarely
 Never
- c) Do you use the section called extending skills and abilities (lessons in phonetic and structural analysis, finding lines to prove statements, recognizing figurative language, etc.)?
 Always
 Frequently
 Rarely
 Never
- d) Do you use the section called extending interests (gives suggestions for reading and listening to stories not found in basic reader)?
 Always
 Frequently
 Rarely
 Never
14. If you do not now feel it necessary to follow the guidebook, was there a time when you did use it?
 Yes No

15. If you answered question (14) in the affirmative after how many years experience did you feel you no longer needed the help of the guidebook?

16. Which of the following teachers, in your estimation, should use the guidebook?

- Inexperienced teachers
- Teachers of Primary grades
- Teachers with liberal arts background
- All teachers

17. Teachers who do not use the guidebook mention the following reasons: (Check the reasons you consider valid).

- a) The time involved cuts down on time spent in actual reading
- b) There is not time to do everything suggested with three or four reading groups
- c) Going through the book at this slow pace bores children - They lose interest in reading
- d) The classroom teacher knows the needs of her group and can provide for that need much more efficiently
- e) The guidebook provides too much technical material not needed by children
- f) Too much time would be spent in preparing lessons if the guidebook were used for all groups
- g) Enjoy using own ideas (makes lessons more interesting)
- h) Includes too much material brighter children already know
- i) Includes too much material which tends to confuse the slower children
- j) (Other)
-

18. What changes would you recommend in the guidebook to make it more useful to you?

South Street
Belchertown, Mass.
December 29, 1955

Superintendent of Schools
_____, Massachusetts

Dear Sir:

As part of the requirements for my Master of Science degree at the University of Massachusetts, I am making a survey on the use of the guidebook in the teaching of reading.

I would appreciate it very much if you would give these questionnaires to teachers of grades one through six in your system.

Thank you very much for your help.

Sincerely yours,

(Miss) Margaret E. Sullivan

LETTER TO PUBLISHERS

South Street
Belchertown, Massachusetts

Educational Consultant
Publishing Company

Dear Sir:

As partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Science degree at the University of Massachusetts, I am conducting a survey to determine how widely used and closely followed is the guidebook in the teaching of reading. In conducting this survey, many questions have come up which I feel you may be able to answer:

- 1) Has your company done any research to determine the value of the guidebook?
- 2) How important does your company feel the guidebook is in the selling of your particular reading series?
- 3) Do you have any information on the approximate cost of producing this guidebook?
- 4) Is there any information available on the history of the guidebook in connection with your reading series?

I will appreciate any help you can give me in this matter. Your company will be acknowledged in my report.

Sincerely yours,

(Miss) Margaret E. Sullivan

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