


Summer 8-1964

A Development of Readiness for First Grade

Elizabeth Turneaure Shoemaker

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/all_gradpapers

 Part of the [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), [Elementary Education Commons](#), and the [Language and Literacy Education Commons](#)

A DEVELOPMENT OF READINESS
FOR FIRST GRADE

A Research Paper
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington State College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

by
Elizabeth Turneure Shoemaker

August 1964

THIS PAPER IS APPROVED AS MEETING THE
PLAN 2 REQUIREMENT FOR THE COMPLETION
OF A RESEARCH PAPER.

John A. Schwenker

FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Grateful acknowledgment is extended to Mr. Schwenker for his assistance and guidance in the preparation of this paper. Thanks are also due Dr. Davis for serving as chairman of the committee, and to Miss Prather for assisting on the committee.

I am also deeply indebted to my family for their patience and moral support while working towards this degree.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE PROBLEM..	1
Statement of the problem	1
Limitations of the study	1
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	3
Literature on the meaning of	
reading readiness	3
III. DEVELOPMENT OF A READINESS PROGRAM FOR	
VISUAL PERCEPTION	7
Eye Movement	7
Aims	7
Pretest	7
Activities	8
Color	12
Aims	12
Pretest	12
Activities	13
Likenesses and Differences	15
Aims	16
Activities	16
Space Perception	18
Activities	18

CHAPTER	PAGE
IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	19
Summary	19
Conclusions	20
BIBLIOGRAPHY	21

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

"The first grade teacher has three main tasks in regard to the reading program: (1) how to discover readiness or a lack of it, (2) what experiences will compensate for lack of readiness, and (3) how to organize the classroom program and adjust it to the different needs and maturation levels of all the pupils" (10:122).

"The first grade teacher in a readiness program, accordingly, will plan a wide variety of experiences. The aim of these experiences will be to improve personal and social relationships in the group, build new concepts and abilities to express them, develop an interest in books, and lead up to simple reading skills" (10:129).

This paper is an attempt to develop a readiness program for grade one. In order to delimit this study, visual perception was chosen because it is of primary importance in the development of reading. It is, however, only one of the factors involved in the development of the reading readiness program.

"Reading is primarily a visual process. One essential visual skill is the ability to distinguish among forms. Hence it is essential to provide experiences with picture

sequences to help a child read a line, recognize likenesses and differences, classify things together that look alike, observe internal details in pictures of objects, see part-to-whole relationship in pictures of objects or in actual objects themselves, associate ideas in a sequence, and make associations to help create visual imagery" (5:125).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Much has been written in regard to reading readiness, but only a brief summary as to the meaning of readiness will be given in this review.

LITERATURE ON THE MEANING

OF READING READINESS

"The modern concept of readiness is that it is based on a combination of physical, mental, social and psychological factors. General and specific maturation are important, but so are information, attitudes, and abilities gained through experiences. The teacher cannot just wait for readiness to be achieved. General maturation is important, but the teacher must also do something: he must provide experiences which contribute to the growth of reading readiness" (10:121).

As Gates has suggested, readiness means somewhat different things to different persons. Some regard readiness as only an expression of interest or purpose. Others regard it with emphasis upon general maturation which occurs in rather regular physical, mental, and other ways in most individuals. Some teachers and authors stress

maturation in specific matters such as visual equipment or being secure enough emotionally to talk in a group. Still others believe that readiness depends upon information or abilities developed during educational experiences. It seems likely that readiness is usually a composite of all of these, with the influence of any one factor depending upon the type of activity involved. All of these factors seem to be involved in reading readiness (4:495-506).

One important factor of physical development is that of speech. The child should have a normalcy of his speech organs. "Reading, speech and thinking are all part of the same function--that of organizing experiences into useful meanings; of communication of those meanings in order that social life and order become possible; of relating the individual to his society" (2:3).

Good health is a second factor of physical development. "Some first grade children may enjoy good general health; others may be too frail to be burdened immediately with so difficult a task as learning to read" (5:93).

Vision is another very important development. "Muscular coordination and the rounding of the eyeball are essential if the eyes are to fixate properly as they progress along each line of print" (3:33). Harrison states

that the child must have sensation and preception. With this comes binocular vision, visual acuity, fusion abilities, and eye-muscle balance. An eye-dominance must be developed. And there must be a freedom from aphasias and word-blindness (7:fig.2).

Another factor of physical development is hearing. A child must have auditory preception, ability to fuse sounds into words, auditory acuity, and auditory frequency range in order to read.

By the time a child starts to school he has usually developed a hand dominance, but occasionally this must be given special attention.

The second important factor of readiness is mental development. Martha Lucile Harrison has divided this factor into two major areas. The first of these is inner maturation. This includes the organization within the nervous system. Normally a child who is six and one half years in mental age is ready to read. He must be able to see likenesses and differences. There must be a freedom from reversal tendencies experienced by younger children. A child must have an ability to remember word forms. Again he must have freedom from reversal tendencies as well as a freedom from aphasias and word-blindness. The child must have a memory span of ideas. He should have the ability to

do some abstract thinking as well as an ability to correlate abstractions with definite modes of response (7:fig.1).

The second area of intellectual development is that of training and experience. Since the children in a classroom come from different home environments, they come to school with a different background of knowledge. The readiness of the child will be dependant on the following factors: the breadth of their experiences; the interest of the home in the schools; the education and intelligence of the parents; and the co-operation of the home with the schools.

The next factor is that of social development. "Entering first grade children also display varying degrees of skill in social readiness. Some know how to say please and thank you, while others lack these social graces." (5:93).

CHAPTER III

DEVELOPMENT OF A READINESS PROGRAM FOR VISUAL PERCEPTION

Eye Movement. Your eyes are movable organs and were not meant to remain stationary. If they were stationary you would have to move your head continually. However, the eyes were made to move from left to right, up and down, and around.

The following are some activities that will train the eye movement. Remember to keep the training period short. Watch the eyes to observe their movement. The child will usually tell you when he has had enough.

Aims:

1. To move the eyes smoothly from left to right.
2. To move the eyes up and down.
3. To use proper eye movements in looking and seeing.
4. To increase visual efficiency (1:22).

Pretest:

1. Move a pencil or a finger from left to right before the child's eyes (about 18 inches away). Do his eyes follow it? (use red polish on the fingernail)
2. Move the pencil or finger up and down and check the eye's movement.

3. Move the pencil or finger around in a circle from left to right. Do his eyes follow it? The child may not perform this eye movement smoothly and with a consistent rate of speed, but if the correct training is given, he is bound to improve (1:22-23).

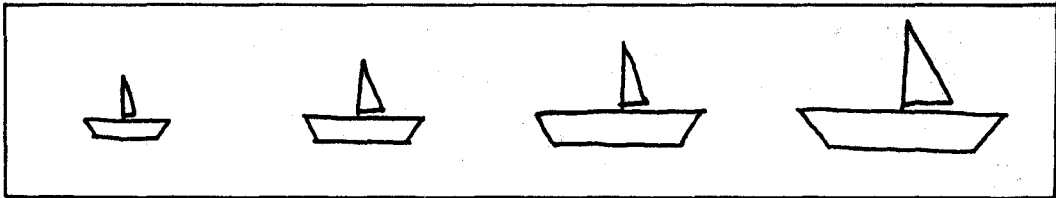
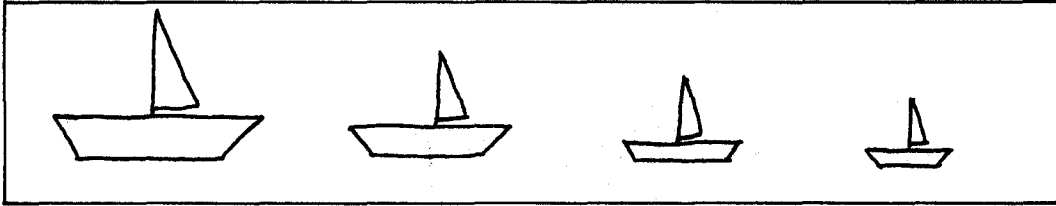
Activities taken from Help Your Child Learn How to Learn (1:23-25).

Read carefully and know the things you will say before you begin giving the directions to the child. Choose two objects, such as furniture. Place them ten to twelve feet apart on the same side of the room. The child should stand or sit about ten feet away from the objects. First have the child look at the object on the left; then move his eyes to the one on the right. Ask him if he moved his head. If he is not sure have him do it again, but this time placing your hand on his head so he can feel the movement if there is some. This should be done slowly at first and then faster.

Another activity would be to place an object in the center of a table. Have the child move his eyes from the object to the corner of the table and back; to the next corner and back and so forth. Two times around is sufficient at first. The action should be speeded up as his ability improves.

A third activity is to have two rows of boats or other

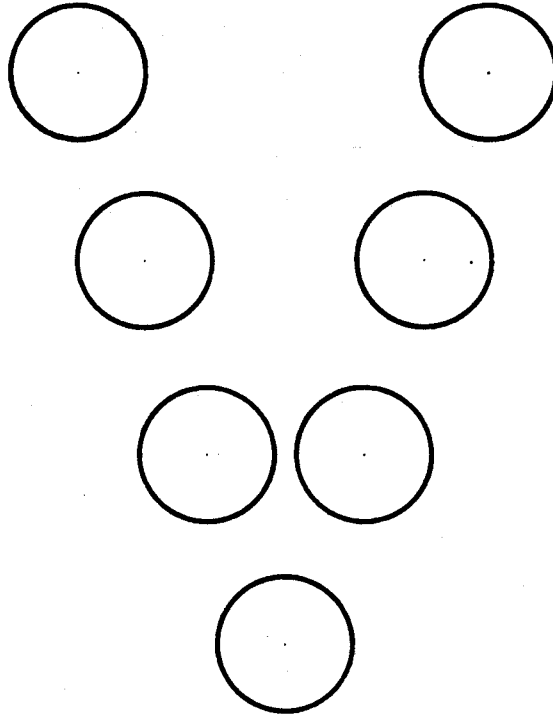
objects in the following manner.



This activity is done at reading distance. First of all talk about the objects. The first boat is larger than the last one in the row. In the second row the first boat is the smallest. Explain to the child when he reads, he will start at the top on the left where the largest boat is and move his eyes along to the smallest one. Have the child do this without moving his head. When he is through explain that his eyes must now go down to the next row beginning with the smallest boat and again move across to the largest one. Let him know that this is the way your eyes move when you read.

Objects can be drawn on the chalkboard and the same procedure used.

The following activity is used to train the eyes to converge.



This skill is necessary in reading when the child looks up from a book and then back down to find his place. His eyes must refocus each time. Cover up all of the balls except the top two. Have the child look at them and talk about them. Slide the paper down and let him compare the two rows. Continue down to the bottom. Practice this eye movement going both ways.

The following are a number of games which will help in the development of quick focusing of the eyes.

Let the children find new pictures, books or objects in the room.

Play games with objects by rearranging objects while the eyes are closed, then guess what was moved.

Place several familiar objects on a table and cover them. Remove the cover for a few seconds while the children look. Replace the cover and the children try to name as many of the objects as they can remember. Gradually increase the number of objects used as the children are able to remember most of them.

Repeat the above, but take one of the objects away and rearrange the others after the children have seen them. Then uncover them again and see if the children can identify the one that is missing.

Playing store games with different objects on different occasions gives training in observation, memory and language. The children seat themselves in a circle. Objects are placed in the center (the store). One child (the storekeeper) names the objects and then goes out of sight (to the bank). While he is gone one or more objects are sold by the clerk. The storekeeper then returns and tells what has been sold. The game may be played by changing the positions of several or all of the objects (9:57).

Summary. After this practice the child should be able

to move his eyes properly. Continue watching him as he looks at books. When you read to him, let him follow the words with his eyes as your finger moves across the page.

Color. Color is an important part of our world. It adds to the depth and breadth of perception. It is important even to those who are color blind, since the rays that are reflected from objects vary and change with the tone or density of color.

For this training six colors will be considered. Red, yellow, and blue are the primary colors; orange, green, and purple are the secondary ones.

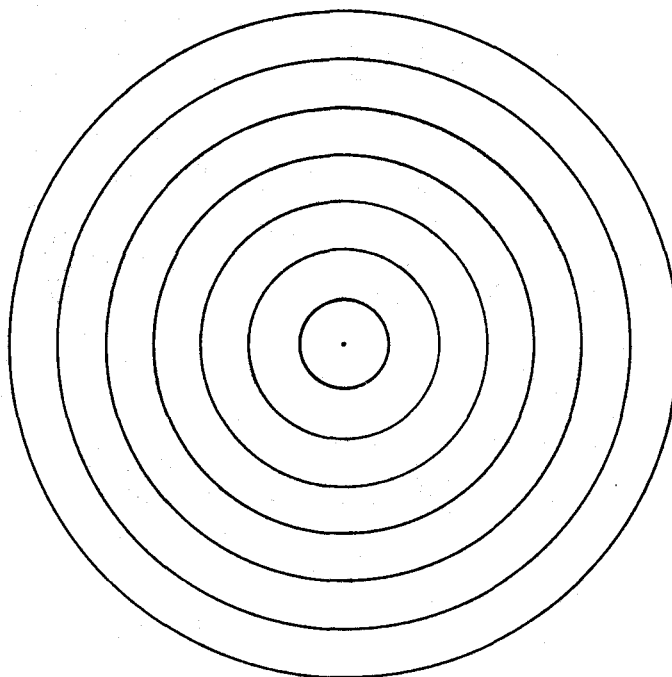
Aims:

1. To give skill in recognizing and identifying colors and their proper sequence.
2. To help the child to recognize similarities and differences of colors.
3. To help him recognize degrees of intensity of color.
4. To help him learn primary and secondary colors.
5. To lead him to an understanding of color in nature (1:26).

Pretest:

1. Can your child name and identify the six basic colors?
2. Can he name colors in a proper sequence?
3. Does he understand the process of mixing colors to make other shades and completely new colors (1:26)?

Activities. Give each child a picture of concentric circles.



Have the child color the band farthest from the center red. Be sure he has time enough to do a good job. Have him continue so the sequence is red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet. The center should be left white. Explain that this is the way a rainbow would look if it were round.

Next together make a rainbow using the three primary colors of paint. This will let the children experiment with mixing their own colors. After the group picture is made, let the children make their own rainbow picture with paint. Be sure the child is using the equipment correctly

and is putting the colors in the right sequence (1:27-29).

There are a number of color games to aid in visual ability. Among them are:

"Musical Chairs. Place a different colored piece of paper under each chair. The extra child calls a color. The child sitting on the chair with that color under it, stands and starts skipping. When all colors are skipping, the music stops. Each time the child has a different color, so he must know all the color names."

"Color Game. (1.) The children are seated in a circle. One child closes his eyes while the teacher holds up a colored yarn ball for the rest of the class to see. She pins this ball on some child's back who remains standing in the circle. The first child now opens his eyes and tries to get around so as to see the ball pinned on the second child's back. The group learns self-control, for they are all in on the secret but must not tell. When the child sees the color he must tell its name."

"Color Game. (2.) Materials used:

Sucker sticks

Covered milk bottle tops

Make tops of various colors. One child spins his top and calls the name of some child. The child called must name the color of the top before it stops spinning. Later the

second child runs to the chalk rail where word cards are and takes up the correct color card."

"Color Game. (4.) Materials used: pint ice cream cartons with colored band pasted on. (Later remove band and replace with name of color.) Child rolls a ball and must name the color of the carton the ball touches"(9:55-56).

Likenesses and Differences. "Young children tend to form a total impression of a visual object without paying much attention to the details. Beginning first-grade pupils vary greatly in their ability to look at two alphabet letters or two printed words and be able to see if they are exactly alike or somewhat different. Before the child can learn to recognize a word like "house", he has to be able to distinguish it not only from long words like "handkerchief" and shorter words like "he" but also from words like "mouse" and "horse", which resemble it much more closely. The common tendency of first graders to confuse "and" and "said" is due to the resemblance in size and shape, the difference in first letter not being noticed."

"Since many first-grade children are not yet sensitive to directional orientation, they tend to make reversal errors. Thus, b, d, p, and q look alike to them, and they confuse on with no, was with saw and tap with pat" (6:25).

Aims:

1. To attain a sense of direction and position.
2. To recognize likenesses and differences.
3. To learn to sort, match, and measure.

The following is a list of games which can be played to determine likenesses and differences.

Read several very short stories to the class. After reading the stories show large pictures without too much detail to the class. Have the children match the pictures with the stories.

Have the children find similarities in designs, shapes, and colors in pictures or in various materials or objects with which they are working.

Let the children play various matching games which develop their progressive symbolization of ideas; such as, choosing one or two objects or shapes that match a third one; matching pictures with objects; matching pictures with pictures; matching colors; matching like designs among other dissimilar ones; matching like designs among other similar ones; matching the child's own name with a card which he knows has his name; and matching labels around the room.

Another game is to make two pictures containing the same objects, but in different positions. The first child points to an object in picture number one and the second

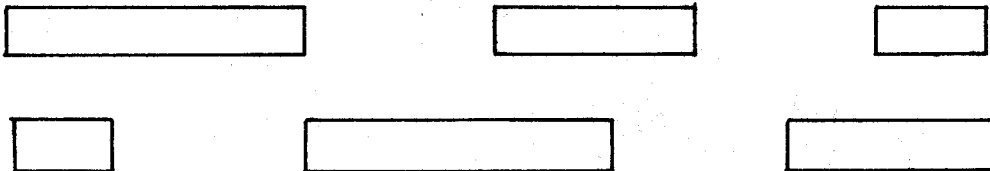
child must show where that same object is in picture number two.

Have pictures of mother, father, doll, baby, girl, and so forth pasted on a sheet of paper with the word written below the picture. The same words are then written on loose slips of paper and can be matched to the words under the pictures.

All of these matching games may be played with the original object first visible and then covered to develop visual memory (9:58-59).

A set of pictures, such as the one distributed by the Society for Visual Education, is excellent for children to determine the likenesses and differences between animals. First you would have the children begin with two pictures. Then later on they could compare more pictures at a time. This is very good for small groups to work on. Then they should report their findings back to the entire group.

Another activity is to distinguish size relationships. The following activity could be used.



Have similar shapes on large piece of newsprint so all of the children can see. Call on different children to show which is longest, shortest, and so forth, beginning with the first row. Discuss how we could show which is the longest or shortest in each row. Have the children arrange some. Next let them begin to work on their own paper. Allow them to make some of their own on the paper.

Space Perception. "Space perception and sensitivity to spatial relations develop steadily from babyhood through the child's own experiments in reacting to his environment. Block building, looking at pictures, drawing and painting, and the use of readiness picture booklets contribute naturally to growth in this skill" (8:153).

Allow the children some time to use building blocks to make different types of houses or buildings. Let them see how high they can build the blocks. Discuss how strong their building is and how they could improve it so it would not fall over.

Another idea would be to let the children make designs using colored cubes. This would not only develop space perception, but also give them practice in eye-hand coordination.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

I. SUMMARY

"Work habits and skills developed in the earliest phases of classroom activity will frequently determine children's successes or failures at school. Those children who enter school from homes where little responsibility is expected of them, or where training of character traits is lax, will have a much more difficult time adjusting to the more social, gregarious aspects of classroom activity. The impulsive child, the demanding child, the extremely shy child, will reflect characteristics that will take added understanding on the part of the teacher if she is to help them make a happy group adjustment. Sharing, planning, and playing together will present entirely new problems for many of the children.

"The teacher's task is to see that each child finds some measure of happiness and security in this new situation. Pupils must be made to feel that they belong--that they are accepted by the teacher and the other children. It is within the ability of every teacher to find some area where a child can make his contribution, for it is only through discovering the possibilities for success that children can

find security and happiness. By developing personality traits, by learning to accept responsibility for himself and to the group, by contributing to group planning, and by thinking and working to solve group and individual problems, each child will be developing traits essential to a successful start at school and indicative of future success" (8:165).

II. CONCLUSIONS

The individual pupil's needs would finally dictate the need and importance of these and other approaches which would be apparent as teacher-pupil relationships developed. A careful observation of the new pupils initial responses and developmental traits would be of prime importance at this stage.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Avery, Marie L. and Alice Higgins. Help Your Child Learn How to Learn. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962.
2. Boney, C. DeWitt. Children Learn to Read. Chicago: National Council of Teachers of English, 1949.
3. Dawson, Mildred A. and Henry A. Bamman. Fundamentals of Basic Reading Instruction. New York: Longmans, Green and Company, Inc., 1959.
4. Gates, Arthur I. "Basal Principles in Reading Readiness Testing," Teachers College Record, 40:495-506, March, 1939.
5. Gray, Lillian and Dora Reese, Teaching Children to Read. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1957.
6. Harris, Albert J. Effective Teaching of Reading. New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1962.
7. Harrison, Martha Lucile. Reading Readiness. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1939.
8. Hildreth, Gertrude. Readiness for School Beginners. Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York: World Book Company, 1950.
9. Lamoreaux, Lillian A. and Dorris May Lee. Learning to Read through Experience. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc, 1943.
10. Russell, David H. Children Learn to Read. Palo Alto, California: Ginn and Company, 1949.