

1973

## The Electric Company: A Survey of its Use in Iowa

Sharon K. Rose

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## The Electric Company: A Survey of its Use in Iowa

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THE ELECTRIC CO.

A Survey of Its Use In Iowa

A Research Paper

Presented to the

Faculty of the Library Science Department

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In Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for 35:299

and

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

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Sharon K. Rose

May, 1973

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Accepted by Department  
Elizabeth Martin

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Date May 7, 1973

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## INTRODUCTION

Fifty million persons in the United States are estimated to have some form of reading problem.<sup>1</sup> That amounts to one out of every four people in the country. Bringing it even closer to the educational system, the United States Office of Education estimates that approximately thirteen million students in our country have significant reading difficulties.<sup>2</sup> These figures are alarmingly high and it has become a matter of national concern that all young Americans have the right to read. President Nixon has endorsed the Right to Read program as a major educational goal for the 1970's.<sup>3</sup> If this is to become a reality, every possible resource available will have to be implemented to help today's young people learn to read.

In 1970, the Children's Television Workshop, producers of the television program Sesame Street, turned their attention to finding a possible way of using television to teach reading. Joan Ganz Cooney, president of the Children's Television Workshop, has said,

Television is associated with pleasure, and if an educational program can be constructed so as to resemble popular entertainment programming, the educational content can be assimilated with pleasure.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Children's Television Workshop, The Electric Company, (Children's Television Workshop, 1971), unp.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

The result of the research and planning by the workshop was the program The Electric Company, which began its second season of broadcasting in the fall of 1971. It has been designed to supplement classroom instruction, not to replace it. Dr. Sidney P. Marland, Jr., has said of the program, "As a teacher, I view this new resource as a significant additional tool in the teacher's portfolio, to be used by the teacher, not in place of the teacher."<sup>5</sup>

As Ms. Cooney stated, "I can assure you that if dedication, talent, energy and a deep sense of commitment count for anything, then The Electric Company has a very strong potential for making a contribution."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

## THE PROBLEM

In Iowa, The Electric Company is broadcast over the IEBN (Iowa Educational Broadcast Network). Approximately 65 percent of the population of Iowa is capable of receiving a clear signal from one of the IEBN stations.<sup>7</sup> According to a national survey by Drs. R. J. Liebert and R. E. Herriott, in the fall of 1972 23 percent of all elementary schools in the United States were using The Electric Company in some way.<sup>8</sup> When the statistics are limited to areas of the country where The Electric Company is actually being broadcast the percentage of schools that are using it in some way increases to 26 percent.<sup>9</sup> In schools with full technical capability 44.5 percent of the schools were using The Electric Company.<sup>10</sup> Of these schools, 88 percent of the teachers using the program reported that their students had had increased reading interest as a result of watching the program.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Charles W. Adams, "The Media Center and ETV," Library Lines, (Iowa School Library Media Association, Spring 1972), p. 1.

<sup>8</sup>Keith W. Mielke, "Research Reviews: 'The Electric Company In-School Utilization Study,'" Educational Broadcasting Review, (February 1973), p. 60.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

The above figures are based on a national survey, but how does the state of Iowa compare in its usage of The Electric Company? This researcher suggests that, in areas of Iowa capable of receiving the program it is not used in a majority of school buildings. It is further hypothesized that there are definite reasons many schools are not using the program in their elementary reading curriculums.

The study will be conducted to find out four main things. First, if the program is being used in the elementary schools of Iowa. Second, if it is being used, in what ways this is being done. Third, in schools that are not using The Electric Company, reasons why they are not doing so. Last, this research will look for possible things that would encourage schools in Iowa which presently are not using The Electric Company to begin to use it. There is a definite need to see if The Electric Company is being used in Iowa. This need will be shown in the next section of the paper.



## IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

A nation-wide study has been conducted on the use of The Electric Company,<sup>12</sup> but there is a definite need to study the use of the program in the state of Iowa. The results will be important for several reasons. If the research shows that the program is being used in most places where it is available, the IEBN will know to keep broadcasting it as is now being done. It might possibly encourage more broadcasting of similar programs, and perhaps lead to consideration of increasing the broadcast range of IEBN. If, however, The Electric Company is not being used, the reasons for not using it will be of benefit. They will give possible changes that could be implemented to facilitate more effective usage of this valuable program.

Much background research was conducted before the format for The Electric Company was designed. Forty different classroom instructional systems were examined, fifty reading classes in different parts of the country were observed, and over one hundred specialists in reading and in fields related to reading were consulted during the development of the curriculum for the program.<sup>13</sup> There was almost unanimous agreement from the consultants involved in the planning of the curriculum that it was impossible to have a comprehensive curriculum. They also agreed that it would be much better to limit the number of goals,

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<sup>12</sup>Who Watched The Electric Company: "The Electric Company In-School Utilization Study: The 1971-72 School and Teacher Surveys," (Children's Television Workshop, 1972).

<sup>13</sup>The Electric Company, unp.

and give the viewer a chance for mastering them than to widen the set of goals to the point the child becomes too frustrated.<sup>14</sup> The focus of the program is on skills that lead to inferential thinking and decoding unfamiliar words, since it has been found that these skills are noticeably absent in children with reading difficulties. A wide variety of approaches are used in the presentations to maximize viewer interest and provide different learning options for all children. There is something that appeals to almost every child.

In light of the background work which has been done for The Electric Company and the thought that has gone into the curriculum and presentation methods, The Electric Company appears definitely to have a contribution to make in the process of helping children learn to read. It is, therefore, urgent to see if Iowa classrooms are using the program in their reading curriculums, and if they are not using it, why this is so. Television has the capability to directly help in the learning process, including the process of learning to read.

We must abandon the idea that learning is transmitted from the teacher directly to the student. Rather, educators must finally accept the reality that learning is best transmitted in meaningful images. ... Television can bring these images from far and near at minimum cost to the taxpayer.<sup>15</sup>

With so valuable a resource as The Electric Company available, it would be unwise not to make use of it.

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Adams, p. 1.

## ASSUMPTIONS BASIC TO THE STUDY

It was assumed by the researcher that the principal of each school building would be the one who would have knowledge of, or would be able to obtain the needed information on whether or not the teachers in the building use The Electric Company in their reading programs. Each school building does not have a librarian/media specialist, so the questionnaire could not be sent to that person.

Sending the questionnaire randomly to individual teachers within the building could possibly result in hitting one teacher that does not use the program, while the other teachers in that building who might use The Electric Company would not be contacted. Admittedly, the most complete study would have been conducted if each teacher in each school building had received a questionnaire. However, with the limitations of time and financial resources, it was assumed that the best way to get the total "picture" of how each school building in the survey used The Electric Company was to send the questionnaire to the building principal. There were some limitations to this study, as seen in the next section of the paper.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The population of this study includes only elementary school buildings within the broadcast range of the IEBN (Channel 11--KDIN, Channel 12--KIIN, and Channel 32--K32AA). Cable television areas were not included because it was not possible for the researcher to determine which areas have cable television and also pick up one of the above channels from it. The whole state of Iowa was not included because the researcher was concerned with ways The Electric Company is being used, or reasons it is not used, in Iowa. There would be no benefit in sending the questionnaire to schools outside the broadcast range, because they have no chance to use The Electric Company.

The building principals who received the questionnaire were selected randomly from the population, and a complete census of all school buildings in the broadcast areas was not attempted. It is acknowledged by the researcher that more complete information would have been gathered if a complete census had been done. However, this was not possible due to limitations of time and lack of sufficient funds.

As questionnaires were returned, some minor weaknesses in the format of the questionnaire came to light to the researcher. These weaknesses included: some persons answered both the questions designed for those who used the program and for those who do not use it, and some schools within the broadcast ranges replied they could not receive the program.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The researcher has done reading of the literature on The Electric Company gathered from many sources. Much of this was found through indexes such as Library Literature and Education Index, and was used as background material. It was of the "popular" nature, and mostly tried to introduce the program to the public, give general information on it, and to convince people that it was a valuable program for their children. Almost without exception this material had positive comments to make about the program. Gains in reading skills and reading enjoyment as a result of viewing the program were reported.

The paperback book entitled The Electric Company<sup>16</sup> gave the researcher excellent background on the aims and curriculum goals of the program. It also lead her to a further appreciation of what had been involved in planning the program, and reinforced the idea that The Electric Company definitely could be of value in the reading programs of elementary schools.

The major research study that has been done on The Electric Company was by Dr. Robert E. Herriott and Dr. Roland J. Liebert of Florida State University.<sup>17</sup> This study was nation-wide and very detailed. Three charts which summarize the major statistical breakdowns of usage by area and size of community are found in Appendix one of this paper. Their survey was really two questionnaires; one sent to the principals followed by one sent to teachers using the program.

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<sup>16</sup>The Electric Company, unp.

<sup>17</sup>Who Watched The Electric Company.

Only 1 percent of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire had negative reactions to The Electric Company and only 7 percent said they were less positive at the end of the first season than at the beginning. In general, there was a marked shift toward approval by teachers as the series progressed.

Students responded favorably to the program, according to their teachers. Eighty percent said their students were "very interested" in The Electric Company, 17 percent said there was "slight interest," and only 1 percent said their pupils were "disinterested."<sup>19</sup> In addition, 80 percent of the teachers surveyed said that some specific gains in specific reading skills were obtained by students who viewed the program.<sup>20</sup> More specifically, 38 percent of the teachers noted "a great improvement" in the ability of typical pupils to decode words, 21 percent noted "a great improvement" in students ability to spell words, and 33 percent reported "a great improvement" in basic sight vocabulary.<sup>21</sup> All of these gains were attributed to students' viewing of The Electric Company.

As can be noted from the graphs and map in appendix one, there is a significant difference in percentage of viewing in different parts of the country. The largest initial acceptance was in the urban centers of the East and West, and in poor

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid. p. 5.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid. p. 5.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid. p. 5.

communities. A little less involvement was found in the Midwest and suburban communities; "middle America." The lowest usage and adoption was in the rural areas, the Southeast, and in small town communities.<sup>22</sup> These breakdowns do not, however, give a completely accurate picture, since some of the schools classed as "not involved" simply could not receive the program; they were "blacked out." Even in some areas capable of picking up the transmitting signal from a television channel the program was not viewed because there were no television receivers available.<sup>23</sup> A careful look at the third part of appendix one will show an interesting example of how not including the "blacked out" areas can change the usage figures. Although the Southeast has, in general, the lowest percentage of schools viewing the program, the percentage of schools in that area with full television capability who are using The Electric Company (37.7 percent) is only one percentage point lower than schools in that area with full television capability that are viewing the program (38.7 percent).<sup>24</sup> "Even in the Southeast, the adopt-level moves up fairly close to the national use average for the program when only capable schools are considered."<sup>25</sup>

Of course, many other comparisons can be made from the survey by Drs. Herriott and Liebert, and many other facts concerning usage are presented. The researcher recommends that for a

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid. p. 6.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid. p. 18.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid. p. 12.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid. p. 7.

complete summary of this important study, the reader consult "Who Watched The Electric Company: 'The Electric Company In-School Utilization Study: The 1971-72 School and Teacher Surveys.'"<sup>26</sup>

In late March 1973, the Educational Testing Service reported on a study they had conducted of school children in four cities that view The Electric Company. They concluded that viewing the program regularly in school "made significant gains over non-viewers in certain reading skills."<sup>27</sup> The cities in which the study took place were Fresno, California; Youngstown, Ohio; Washington, D. C.; and Richmond, Virginia. The Richmond and Washington studies involved at-home viewing and these were inconclusive because children not in the test group were watching almost as much as those in the testing group.<sup>28</sup> The Fresno and Youngstown studies, which took place in school, seem to be much more valid and conclusive. In this controlled condition, there was an 8.7 percent "average advantage" of viewers over non-viewers, with increased reading abilities ranging from 2.5 percent to 19 percent.<sup>29</sup> In seventeen of the nineteen categories of reading skills at which The Electric Company is aimed viewers scored "significantly more than nonviewers."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Who Watched The Electric Company.

<sup>27</sup>"Tell Reading Gains From 'The Electric Company' Show," Des Moines Register, March 28, 1973.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.



Because this report has just been released, it was impossible to get the complete study in time for ~~the~~ more <sup>of the</sup> results to be reported in this paper.

Nowhere in the literature surveyed did this researcher find mention of a study of the use of The Electric Company in Iowa elementary schools. This study has been done in an effort to gain some knowledge of Iowa's usage of this program.

Before discussing the design and results of this study, the researcher will discuss the program of usage of The Electric Company at Jewett elementary school, Waterloo, Iowa.

## JEWETT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL--A PROGRAM IN ACTION

Jewett elementary school in Waterloo, Iowa, has a dynamic, growing program of use of the IEBN, and especially of The Electric Company. The following discussion is included in the paper to show how some persons at Jewett who are involved in the program feel about it, how the program had been implemented, and plans for future usage. Their program has been in use for almost one school year, and everyone involved is thoroughly "sold" on its value. An interview with the school principal, the media specialist in the school, and with one of the teachers involved in use of The Electric Company was obtained, and, with their permission, it is included in this paper on the cassette tape attached to the paper.

Ms. Strausser, a first grade teacher, saw The Electric Company in her home, and was so excited about it she began a campaign at Jewett to get the necessary equipment to use the program in school. She said that at first teachers told her that the program was not needed, that the teachers could do the same thing in their classrooms. After they viewed it, however, they realized they could not. The building principal agreed with the teachers, and a color television receiver was purchased for the building. The video-tape recorder is now shared with a junior high school, but they are attempting to purchase one for use in their building.

Ms. Hazen, the media specialist, is involved in the program of use of The Electric Company in two main ways. She does the scheduling of recording and viewing of the programs. Also, the video-tape recorder and television receiver are in the learning resource center. Ms. Hazen commented that she felt the teachers could learn to use the video-tape recorder, and is planning to have an in-service workshop next fall to instruct them in the use of the equipment. She feels this is important so that the teachers feel that the video-tape recorder is not "her VTR" but the whole school's VTR.

Jewett elementary school has an excellent program of use of programming on IEBN, the most involved of which is their use of The Electric Company. I feel that their example shows that schools can indeed implement a program of use and that it can be of benefit to students and teachers.

The next two sections of the paper deal with the design of the survey, its results, and an analysis of these results.

## DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Four major kinds of information were desired in this study: if the school building teachers used The Electric Company in their reading program; if they do use it, in what ways this is done; if it is not used, reasons why this is so; and possible things that would encourage usage of The Electric Company. Gaining this information will prove, or disprove, the hypotheses put forth in the section of this paper titled "The Problem" (p. 3).

The persons most likely to have this information were the principals in each elementary school building. To obtain this information from them, a questionnaire accompanied by a cover letter and self-addressed, stamped envelope was sent to principals of the school buildings selected randomly from the population. A copy of the cover letter and questionnaire may be found in appendix two of this paper.

The population for the study was determined as follows. A map showing the broadcast ranges for television channels 11, 12, and 32 was obtained, and from this map the school districts falling inside these areas were noted. The Iowa Educational Directory was used to determine all the elementary school buildings in each of these school districts. To determine which school buildings would be in the sample of the population receiving the questionnaire, each building was assigned a number, one through 741. A random number table was used to select the seventy-five school buildings to be included. (Seventy-five is approximately 10 percent of the total population).

A pilot study was sent out to ten schools in advance of the total study. This was done to make certain the questionnaire was valid. The ten schools were chosen randomly, and these schools were not included in the final survey. Eighty percent of these initial questionnaires were returned. They appeared to validate the survey design and to support the hypotheses that had been set forth.

Sixty-four of the seventy-five questionnaires (85 percent) were returned. Many of the persons answering the questionnaire made additional comments which were very helpful and enlightening. The design seemed to be valid and gained the desired information. This information will be discussed in the following section.

## RESULTS OF THE SURVEY/DATA ANALYSIS

As stated earlier in this paper, sixty-four questionnaires were returned. Of these sixty-four schools, fifty-three were able to receive The Electric Company. The eleven that said they could not receive the program are all in the broadcasting areas of channel 11, 12, or 32, although they were in the "fringe area." This suggests that if an outdoor antenna was utilized, the program could be picked up for viewing.

Of the sixty-four schools who said they can receive The Electric Company, 51 percent use the program in some way, 47 percent do not use it, and 2 percent of the questionnaires returned were invalid. The 2 percent invalidity resulted from one questionnaire that was sent to an elementary school that had only seventh and eighth graders in the building. (The Iowa Education Directory listed this building as an elementary building so there was no way to know the grade span in it.) This 51 percent of schools who use it in some way might tend to be compared to the national figure for usage (37.1 percent),<sup>31</sup> which makes it appear that Iowa is above the national average of schools using The Electric Company. However, this is not the case. The national figure is based on schools with minimum television capacity that view The Electric Company as a regular part of their classroom program, and this makes a big difference. Of the twenty-seven schools (51 percent) who use the program in some way, only four said they were using The Electric Company

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<sup>31</sup>Who Watched The Electric Company, p. 7.

as a regular (daily) part of their reading program. In percentages, this amounts to 7.5 percent of all the schools receiving the program. There is quite a difference between a national average of 37.1 percent and an average in Iowa of 7.5 percent.

Principals tallied the way their schools use The Electric Company. Their responses are shown graphically in figures two and three of appendix three. The majority of use was as supplemental material to the basic reading program, while some schools used it as remedial material. When used as supplemental material, it was used most often on a twice weekly basis, followed by the response, "whenever the students have free time they wish to use to watch the program." For complete details on how The Electric Company is used, refer to appendix three. A list of comments made by those using the program may be found in appendix four.

Figure four of appendix three graphically shows the results of the question asking reasons for not using The Electric Company. Overwhelmingly, the biggest reason given was poor time of broadcast. The Electric Company is broadcast at 12:30 p.m. (Monday - Friday) and 6:30 p.m. (Tuesday - Saturday). The next two largest reasons for not using the program were "does not fit into existing reading program," followed by "classroom teachers do not want to use it." Fourth on the list of reasons was "lack of television receiver in the building." Four schools

said they do not use The Electric Company because there is no certified librarian to administer it. Only in two schools did the reading supervisor not want to use The Electric Company. A list of comments made by schools who do not use the program may be found in appendix five.

A comment should be made at this time concerning some of the reasons expressed for not using The Electric Company. A common reason for not using the program seems to be that it doesn't fit into the reading program and/or the teachers do not want to use it. I asked one elementary teacher if these things had held true in her building and her response was that they definitely were not true. She admitted that it will sometimes involve more creative thought on the part of the teacher for follow-up activities and ways to carry-through the concepts introduced, but that this was usually voluntary because the teacher also gets caught-up in the excitement of the program. Also, teachers using the program admit that The Electric Company does many things and has ways of presenting concepts that the classroom teacher just does not have available.

Among the items that would encourage those not using The Electric Company to begin to do so are video-tape recorders so the program could be taped, broadcasting it at a different time, television receivers in the building, and more available information on the program. For a graphical representation of the breakdown on this question and the responses, see figure five, appendix three.



Figure one of appendix three shows the results of question one of the survey: "Does your school have a certified librarian?" No outstanding correlation was found between those that use The Electric Company and have certified librarians, and those that do not use it and have certified librarians. Ms. Hazen, media specialist at Jewett elementary school, says that the librarian would not have to be involved in the program of use if there was a separate room for viewing The Electric Company and if the teachers were instructed in running the VTR. Her main job is scheduling, and conceivably, this could be done by someone besides the media specialist.

There are some conclusions to be drawn from the study and the results of the study. They are discussed in the final section of the main body of this paper.

## CONCLUSION

This researcher definitely feels that the study conducted has been of value. The Electric Company is being used in a majority of schools in the broadcast range, but it is a very slim majority (51 percent). The schools that use it do not do so on a daily basis, for the most part. There do seem to be definite reasons why many schools are not viewing The Electric Company. Most of these evolve around poor broadcast time and/or lack of necessary hardware.

It would probably be impossible to select a viewing time that would suit every school building's schedule, so changing the broadcast time will not solve all the problems. In schools where video-tape equipment is in use, it is easy to tape the program and run it several times to different classes, thus necessitating only one receiver and eliminating extra large classes viewing the show at one time. Unfortunately, video-tape recorders are very expensive so they are not considered until a real need for them is shown. Perhaps there needs to be more "selling" of the value of the program to schools by schools that are using it, and by others who are convinced of the value. Teachers need to see that they are not being replaced by the television set, but that programs like The Electric Company are doing things to relate concepts that the teachers cannot possibly do in the regular classroom environment.

With a program available that has been given much study and thought in the area of its curriculum goals and methods, and has been so successful in most places it has been implemented, optimum use of it should be made. It is hoped that this research has shown that many schools, too many schools, are not using The Electric Company, and will in some way make people aware of this problem.

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**APPENDIX 1**

Table at left shows percentage of adopter schools among the total of the 50,703 schools in the U.S. in localities where The Electric Company was being shown, where at least one TV set was available, and where some pupils viewed the series as part of their regular classroom program during the fall of 1971. Table at right shows percentage of adopter schools among the total of the 42,272 schools in the U.S. having full TV capability, which are defined as those having access to broadcasts and workable TV sets in sufficient quantity and quality to permit viewing of the series in classrooms.

Schools with minimum TV capability	Percent of Schools	Schools with full TV capability	Percent of Schools
United States	37.1	United States	44.5
<b>By Region</b>		<b>By Region</b>	
North Atlantic	36.3	North Atlantic	46.8
Great Lakes & Plains	30.0	Great Lakes & Plains	38.7
West & Southwest	48.5	West & Southwest	56.0
Southeast	36.2	Southeast	37.7
<b>By Size of Community*</b>		<b>By Size of Community*</b>	
Large City	64.2	Large City	70.4
Medium City	33.5	Medium City	40.4
Small City	41.1	Small City	48.1
Other	29.4	Other	39.1
<b>By SES of Community*</b>		<b>By SES of Community*</b>	
High	39.2	High	47.9
Low	42.8	Low	48.9

\*Public schools only.

↑  
**PART 1**

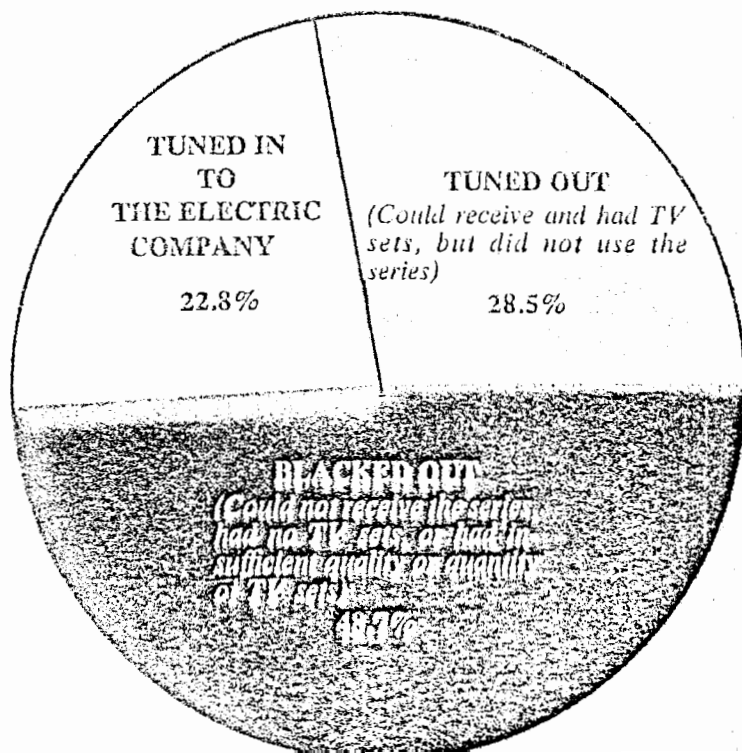
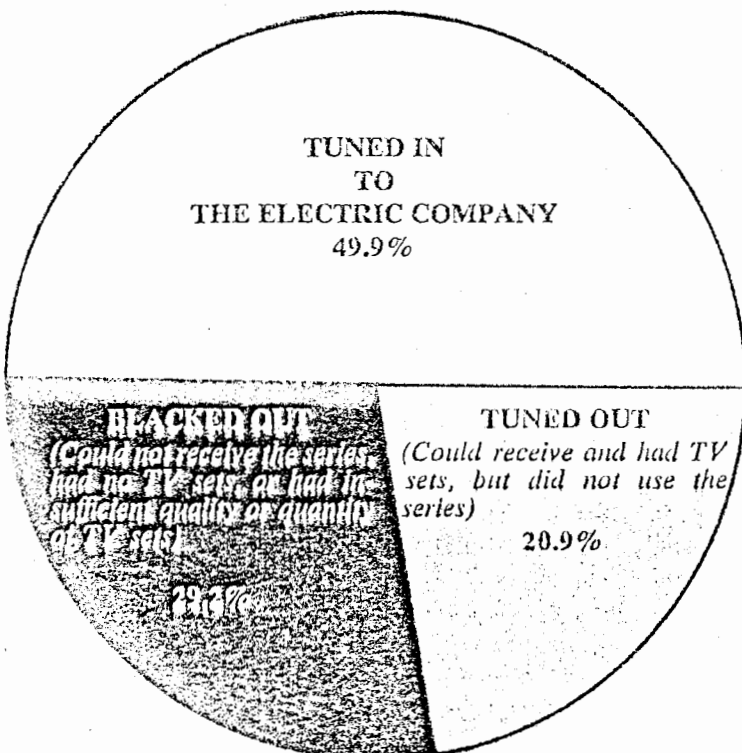
**Classroom Television in the U.S.: 1971-72**

About 97 percent of all homes in the U.S. have television sets. But only about 51 percent of all elementary schools have sets. Forty five percent of the schools with full television viewing capabilities tuned into the first weeks of The Electric Company. Graph at right depicts national percentages of viewing schools; graph at left shows percentages of viewing schools in cities of more than 180,000 residents. (Both tables are based on all elementary schools in the country.)

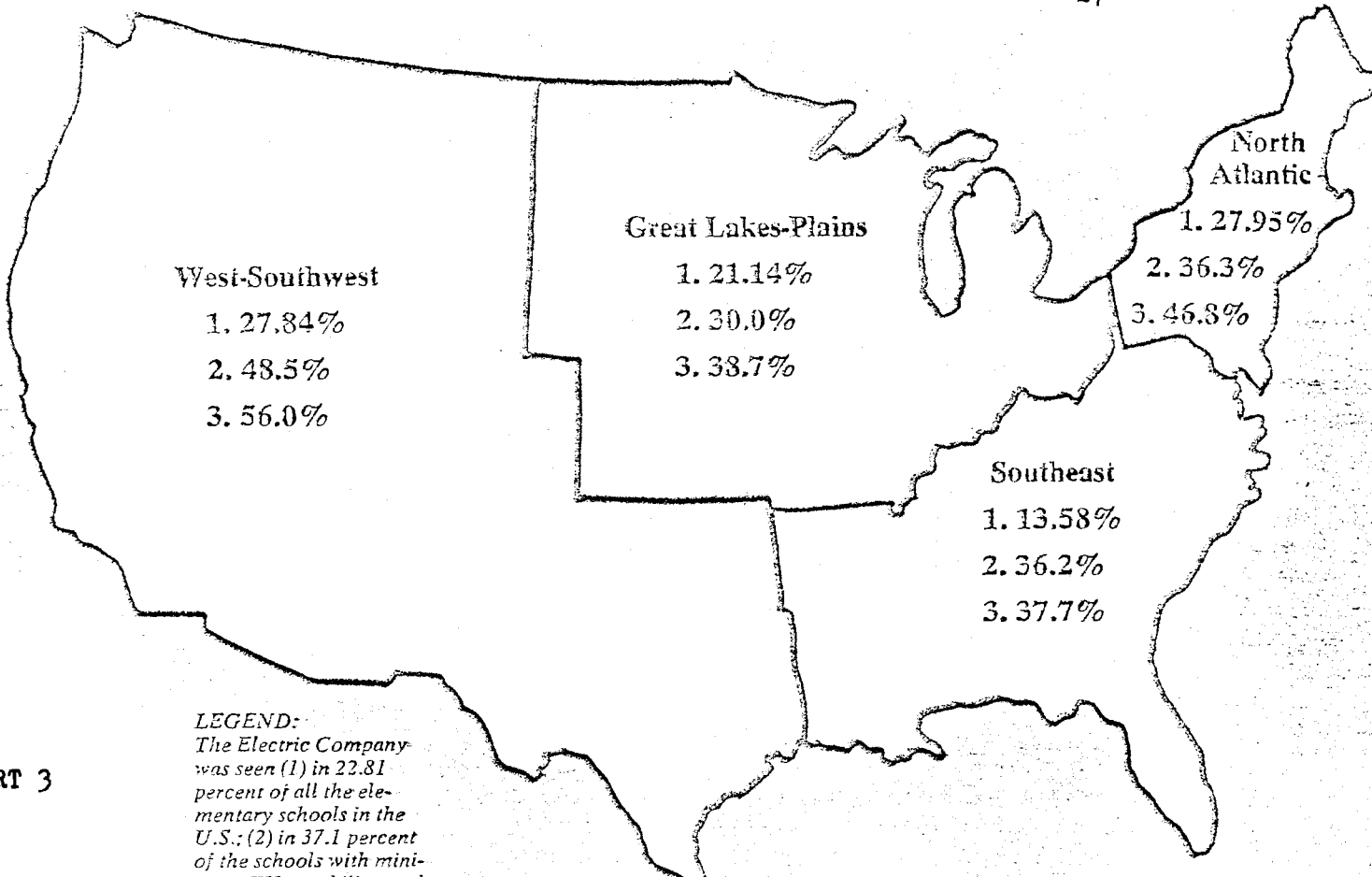
**PART 2**

**LARGE CITY SCHOOLS**

**ALL SCHOOLS**



# The Electric Company: patterns of use



**LEGEND:**  
 The Electric Company was seen (1) in 22.81 percent of all the elementary schools in the U.S.; (2) in 37.1 percent of the schools with minimum TV capability, and (3) in 44.5 percent of the schools with full TV capability. Figures show percentages of viewing schools in these categories, by region.

PART 3

## Why Some Schools Couldn't Use The Electric Company

*Percentage of schools reporting one or more technical deficiencies*

Degree of Deficiency	Percent of Schools
Could not receive broadcast	12.6%
Could not receive, or had no TV sets	38.5%
Could not receive, had no TV sets, or had insufficient quality or quantity of TV sets	48.7%

PART 4

APPENDIX 2





UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA · Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613

143B Bartlett Hall  
University of Northern Iowa  
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613

Dear Building Principal:

The enclosed questionnaire is part of a survey being conducted as my research project in the University of Northern Iowa department of library science. I would appreciate your cooperation in completing it and returning it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope by Thursday, February 15, 1973. The results of this study will be of interest to the researcher and to the library science department.

The program "The Electric Company" referred to in the questionnaire is a reading program produced for educational television by the Children's Television Workshop. It is broadcast in Iowa over channels 11 (KDIN), 12 (KIIN), and 32 (K32AA). The survey being conducted will attempt to determine if there is any connection between the program "The Electric Company" and the reading programs of the elementary schools. Possible reasons for not using the program when it is available are also being sought.

Thank you for your cooperation in this survey. The information you can supply will definitely be of use. At no time in this research will schools be named. The information gathered is for statistical purposes only. Thanks again!

Yours truly,

Sharon Rose,  
Graduate student, UNI Department of Library Science

encl.

1. Does your school have a certified librarian?

\_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

2. Are you able to receive the program "The Electric Company"?

\_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

IF YOU ANSWERED "NO" TO QUESTION 2, PLEASE STOP HERE AND RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

3. Do you use "The Electric Company" program in your reading program in any way?

\_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

IF YOU ANSWERED "YES" TO QUESTION 3, ANSWER QUESTION 4 and QUESTION 7. IF YOU ANSWERED "NO" TO QUESTION 3, SKIP TO QUESTION 5 AND ANSWER IT AND THE REMAINING QUESTIONS.

4. In what capacity(s) do you use "The Electric Company"? (Check those that apply to you.)

\_\_\_\_\_daily part of the beginning reading program

\_\_\_\_\_supplement to the basic beginning reading program

\_\_\_\_\_twice-a-week

\_\_\_\_\_once-a-week

\_\_\_\_\_whenever the students have free time they wish to use to watch the program

\_\_\_\_\_remedial material for middle and/or upper elementary grades

\_\_\_\_\_other (please explain)

5. Why isn't "The Electric Company" part of your reading program? (Check those that apply to you.)

\_\_\_\_\_no certified librarian to administer it

\_\_\_\_\_lack of television receiver in the building

\_\_\_\_\_lack of an outdoor (or rooftop) antenna

\_\_\_\_\_time of broadcast is poor

\_\_\_\_\_classroom teachers do not want to use it

\_\_\_\_\_reading supervisor does not want to use it

(PLEASE CONTINUE ON NEXT PAGE)

- does not fit into the existing reading program
- do not fully understand the purpose of the program
- is not, in my opinion, an effective teaching tool
- other (please explain)

6. Check those of the following items which would encourage you to use "The Electric Company" in your reading program.

- more available information on the program
- broadcasting it at a different time
- availability of video-tape recorders so the program could be taped for re-use
- television receivers in the building
- none
- other (please explain)

7. PLEASE MAKE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS YOU HAVE ON THE PROGRAM "THE ELECTRIC COMPANY" AND YOUR USE, OR NON-USE OF IT.

APPENDIX 3

SCHOOLS HAVING A CERTIFIED LIBRARIAN

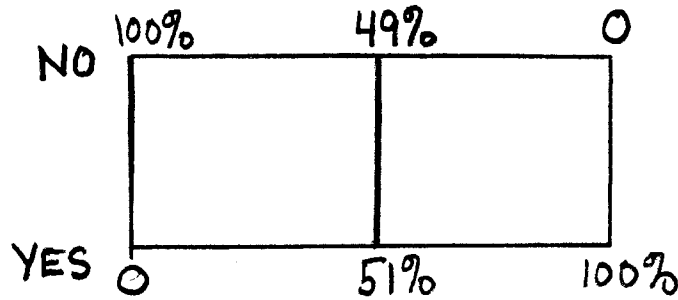
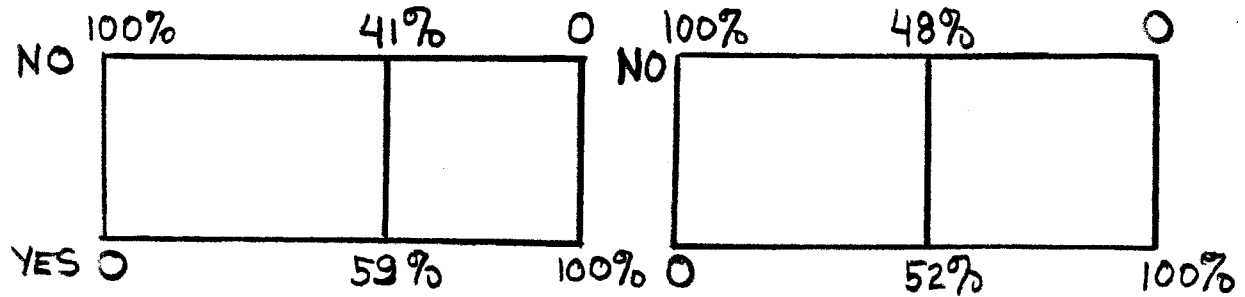


Figure 1



CORRELATION BETWEEN SCHOOLS  
USING THE ELECTRIC  
COMPANY AND HAVING A  
CERTIFIED LIBRARIAN

CORRELATION BETWEEN SCHOOLS  
NOT USING THE ELECTRIC  
COMPANY AND HAVING A CERTI-  
FIED LIBRARIAN

HOW THE ELECTRIC COMPANY IS USED

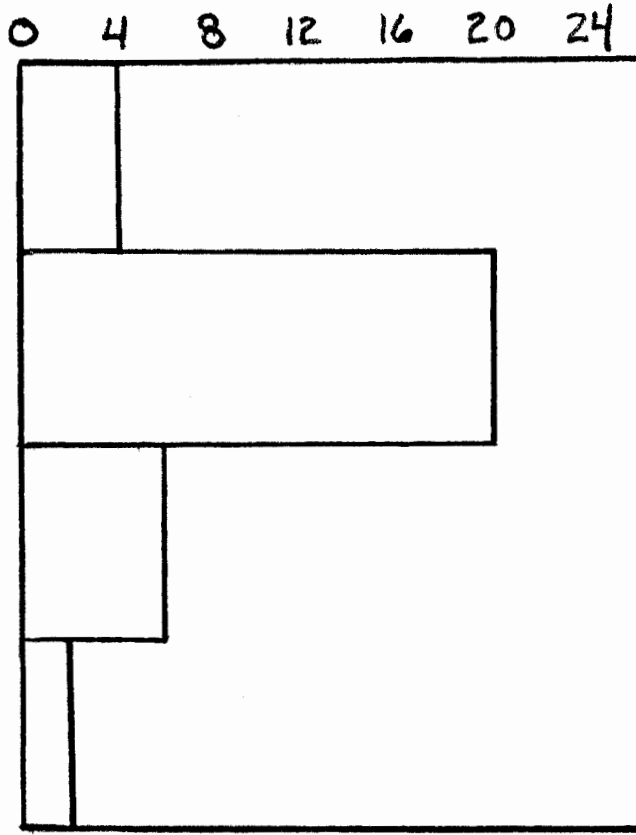
DAILY

SUPPLEMENTAL

REMEDIAL

OTHER

FIGURE 2



BREAK-DOWN OF SUPPLEMENTAL USAGE

1/Week

2/Week

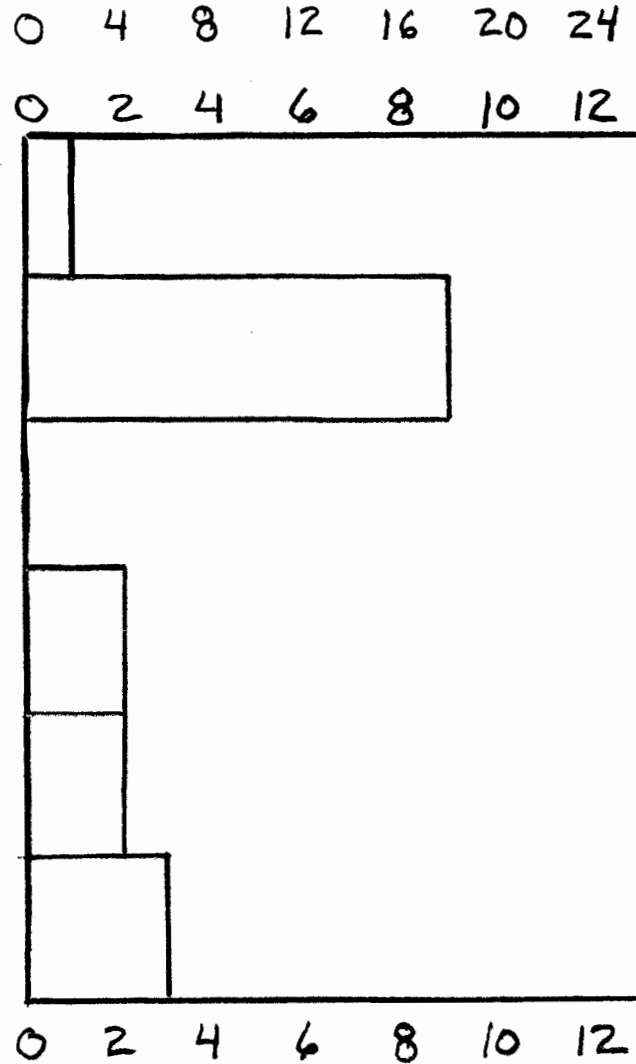
3/Week

4/Week

5/Week

Whenever

FIGURE 3



REASONS FOR NOT  
USING THE ELECTRIC  
COMPANY

34

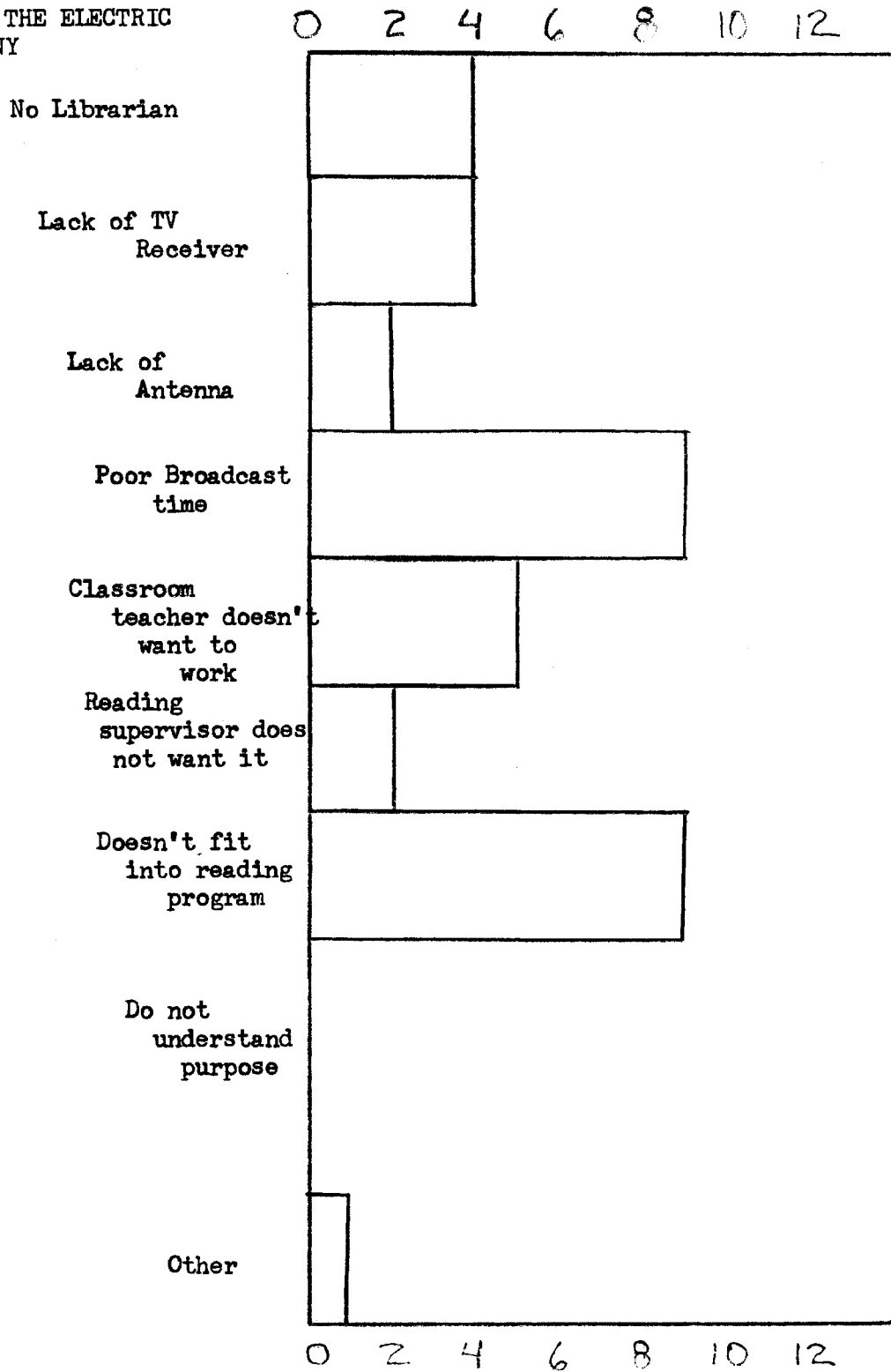


Figure 4

ITEMS THAT WOULD ENCOURAGE  
USE OF THE ELECTRIC COMPANY

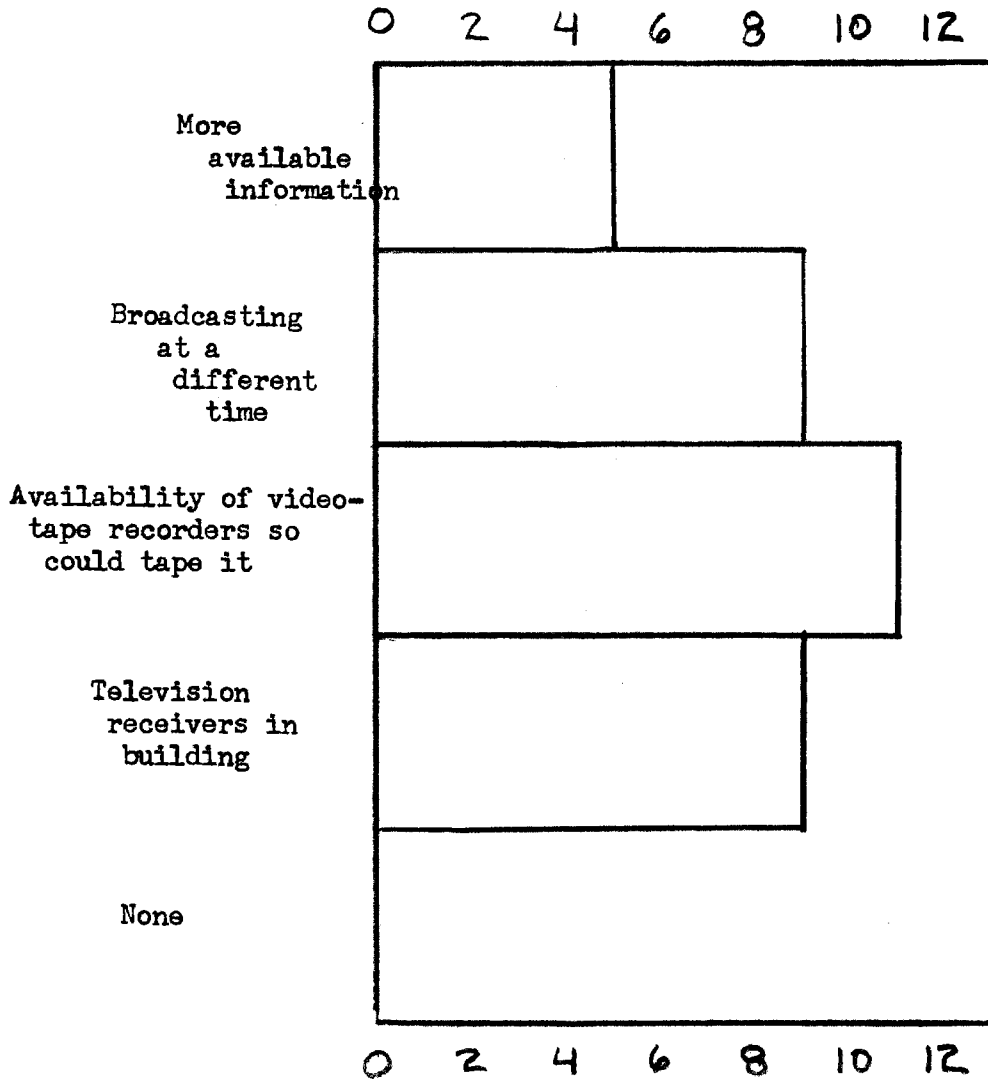


FIGURE 5



**APPENDIX 4**

## COMMENTS FROM THOSE THAT USE THE PROGRAM

- We use the "Electric Company" teachers guide and correlate programs with areas we are working on.
- I realize that the Electric Company does not wish to dictate its use to the classroom teachers, but perhaps if it could make suggestions or recommendations more teachers would be willing to use it. A "catalog" which lists and briefly explains how teachers across the country have utilized this program might encourage others to try it.
- Children have to come in off the playground to watch the program.
- So much better this year than last year. It is really wonderful. Children just hate "Love of Chair": like "Letterman". Could more literature be introduced? Perhaps paperbacks or cheap edition of books encouraged be sold in grocery store, etc.
- Very exciting techniques uses.--Children are highly motivated, captivated if you will--Fantastic in color; but great as well for those of us who watch it at school in black and white.
- I think the teacher should have follow-up work to reinforce the things learned, if it is to help reading. My second graders like it every day, listen intently, and laugh and laugh over the jokes, follow along with the songs.
- We have just installed educational T.V. so have not yet completed a well developed program.
- (by 2nd grade teacher) I also subscribe to the "Electric Company Guide" and, since we are allowed to duplicate it, I follow nearly every day's lesson with a 10 minute seatwork session. I find some of their pages very interesting and reinforces one or more of the phonics skills presented. Some sheets are pretty complicated even for my 2nd graders, and require quite a lot of explanation and directions--Other days they are too simple--I suppose this is to give variety, since the program is interesting to 1, 2, and 3 grades. I also use the guide to do more work on the sounds or words it tells us we will have. We're glad they stopped "Love of Chair"--kids were getting sick of it. They really cheer when "Letterman" comes on in his "heroic" episodes, and they like the "short, short stores." My one objection to the program--too much yelling and loud talking--doesn't exactly foster a quiet learning situation in the room after the program ends. I heartily endorse the program, however, and feel it is an effective teaching tool. No one misses the silent e words now.

- We use it for 2nd and 3rd grades daily strictly as a supplement to our program.
- The factor of scheduling P.E., music, etc. around the program is impossible. Some teachers do not have access to a TV outlet so we share the best we can. We would like to use it more but at the present time are limited for space, time, and facilities.
- The program is used by one second and two third grade classes as a supplemental and extending activity in reading, phonics, and language. Also as starting ideas for creative writing.
- Good program.
- The program is excellent. It supplements Ginn 360 well.
- I teach 1st grade, and for our children, this is a good supplementary program. The children enjoy it. Many watch it after school as well. It would be helpful if it were offered at another time or several times (we only get it at 12:30). Our librarian has no contact with this program.
- The material is supplemental to my reading program. I use the workbook and the kids enjoy the fun work.
- Our librarian is not involved. The second grade teacher use suggested pre and follow-up activities.
- The broadcast begins before the children are back in session making it difficult to use on a regular basis. Teachers feel the program is worthwhile and are using as much as is practical. Goes with our reading program well.

**APPENDIX 5**

## COMMENTS FROM THOSE THAT DO NOT USE THE PROGRAM

- If and when we decide to use "The Electric Co.", we do not intend to involve the librarian.
- Activities are very clever. Most reading blocks are in the a.m. and the program would probably be used more if it was on the air in the a.m.
- Our TV is on the closed-in stage of a building built in 1918. Instrumental music classes meet ther 4 half days daily and the gym noises interfere. I am a strong supporter of "The Electric Company" program.
- We used it for some children in grades 2 and 3 last year when the primary lunch was prior to intermediate lunch time. This year, due to scheduling, the lunch times had to be changed.
- We just started a new reading series and are spending a lot of time on it. We will probably use it next year if it is still on the air.
- Time element--we cannot afford the time. It is a good program for individual use. Our own basal reading program does the job--this would be supplemental.
- Poor time for us when it is shown--is during our lunch hour; also not able to videotape it for later use.