A SURVEY OF TYPES OF MATERIALS USED IN TEACHING
READING SKILLS IN GRADES ONE THROUGH SIX IN
THE SCHOOLS OF PELLA, IOWA

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by
Judy De Jong
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by

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ASSOCIATE Dean of the School of Graduate Studies
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The methods and materials used in the teaching of reading in elementary schools of today varies greatly. An abundance of materials is available to almost every elementary teacher. A recent survey conducted by the National Educational Association Research Division indicated that a vast majority of today's elementary teachers have motion picture projectors, phonographs, filmstrip projectors, overhead projectors, maps, and charts available as resources.¹

The basal reader has long been the method that maintains priority in the schools. The extent to which the basal readers compile the reading program varies with teachers and school systems. Educators should realize the importance of a more complete offering of materials to the elementary school child who is learning to read.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which elementary teachers actually depend upon basal readers for teaching reading skills. Writings of most

authorities in reading indicate that use of a wide and varied amount of material is necessary for a good reading program. This information is available to all elementary teachers via in-service programs, educational course offerings, and personal reading. This study has been initiated to determine if elementary teachers are making use of the findings of those who have conducted research in methods and materials used for teaching reading and reported it in educational literature.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

A survey, according to Clifford L. Bush, is justified in that it (1) provides an inventory of present practices, curriculum, and teaching methods; (2) provides facts to aid in answering critics; (3) aids new teachers in organization and teaching; and (4) identifies problems and organizes facts so that proposals for solutions to problems may be presented. ¹

The survey was constructed to determine the practices used in use of aids for teaching reading, provide the writer with facts concerning the question of the extent of teacher use of supplementary materials in teaching reading, aid new teachers through recommendations for teaching and organization

of the reading program, and identify the sources of difficulty, if any, in providing a well-balanced reading program for the Pella schools.

The importance of an increasing amount of reading materials other than basal readers in the reading program is consistently cited by authorities such as Gertrude Whipple, who believes that the first step to be taken in the improvement of the reading program in many of today's schools is that of increase in the "amount, quality, and variety of the supply of reading material and other aids to learning."¹

Present American schools have the best and most numerous materials in reading that we have ever had.² Do teachers make use of them? It is imperative that they do!

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is limited in scope in that the survey included only the teachers of grades one through six of the Pella school system. The schools involved are the Pella Christian system, which is housed in one building, and the Pella Public system, which has four buildings: Lincoln, Webster, Leighton, and Otley.

¹Gertrude Whipple, Upgrading Elementary Programs. Citation Address: Eleventh Annual Reading Convention. International Reading Association (Newark, Delaware), 1966, p. 2.

Recommendations will be specifically applicable to the schools of Pella, but generally applicable to all teachers involved in the teaching of reading.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following defined terms will be used throughout this report.

**Audio-visual materials.** Audio-visual materials may be defined this way:

The term audio-visual material is employed as designation for a wide range of instructional materials and devices that are less symbolic than the printed word—field trips, demonstrations, dramatizations, synthetic devices (contrived experiences), objects, specimens, models and exhibits, silent motion pictures, television, sound motion pictures, sound filmstrips, radio recordings, stereographs, flat pictures, charts, maps, graphs, and diagrams.¹

**Basal reader.** The basal reader is the structured reading program put out in a series of books by various companies which is geared to be a foundation for systematic instruction in the skills of reading.

**Content areas.** The content areas are those areas directly related to the reading area (science, social studies,

history, and geography) in that proper skills of reading are needed by the student for success in this area.

**Study skills.** Those skills of reading which include location of information, effective use of library sources, organization and evaluation of material, and adjustment of the rate of reading to the purpose and the material read are known as study skills.

**Supplementary readers.** The books other than the adopted basal series which are used by children in the reading process are known as the supplementary readers. Basal readers of a series the school has not adopted are often used for supplementary readers.

**Trade books.** Books that refer to specific areas of occupations in varied manners are referred to as trade books.

**Reference books.** Reference books are those books such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, and almanacs that are used for gaining specific facts and information.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Much has been written concerning the necessity for a wide and varied amount of materials for the teaching of

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reading. The following is actually but a brief summary of some of the writings concerning this area.

The reader may feel that the material presented here is somewhat repetitious, but the writer asks that the purpose of the study be kept in mind. This review of literature is to illustrate that a great deal of information concerning the nature of reading materials is available to all elementary teachers, and that numerous authorities agree on the use of these materials.

Hubert J. Davis felt that the school limits the effectiveness of instruction in reading if experiences which develop meanings of the printed page are neglected. Direct experiences, radio, television, fieldtrips, movies, pictures, magazines, newspapers, and pamphlets are essential in developing the meanings to be derived from reading. According to Davis, "Printed materials and audio-visual materials are complementary, not competitive."¹ Veatch categorized the necessary variety of materials into the tangible and intangible materials. Intangible materials to be used in the teaching of reading included childrens' thoughts, beliefs, oral expression, and reaction to others' oral expressions. Teacher directions to children and their invitations to share ideas also were considered as influential intangible materials.

¹Hubert J. Davis, "Teaching Reading the A-V Way," Educational Screen, XXXI (December, 1952), 417.
The tangible materials were considered to be those which recorded intangibles through written language, mechanical devices, and spontaneous art work. The mechanical devices and printed materials included the various audio-visual aids.¹

Arthur S. Trace, noted critic of the basal reading program, stated this in his book, Reading Without Dick and Jane:

A recent report by James A. Conant entitled, "Learning to Read," which was signed by almost every influential Dick-and-Jane type reading expert in the country tells us this:

The fact must be kept in mind that reading instruction and reading experience in the primary grades in American schools should not be limited to the pages of the basal readers and are not in good schools. Primary grade children read other books, including literature, social studies, arithmetic, science, and health, with the consequence that their reading vocabulary and language experience are far greater than provided in the basal readers. Furthermore, the children are at the same time reading supplementary books from the school libraries that are rich in words and complex in structure.²

Several research studies have been conducted that indicate that materials are available for most teachers if they want them. A report made by National Educational Association Researchers found that elementary teachers had

¹Jeannette Veatch, "The Materials and Diagnosis of Reading Problems," The Reading Teacher, XIV (September, 1960), 19-25.

many and varied resources available. Nearly ninety-six per cent of the teachers had phonographs, ninety-three per cent had filmstrip projectors, eighty-eight per cent had charts and maps, eighty per cent had motion picture projectors, seventy-nine per cent had overhead projectors, seventy-six per cent had tape recorders, sixty-eight per cent had opaque projectors, forty-nine per cent utilized educational TV, and thirty-six per cent had programmed instructional materials available to them.¹

A study conducted by Norman Frame and involving thirty schools ranging in student population from ninety-two to nine hundred and forty-three students, revealed that (1) the number of trade books per classroom met or exceeded the figures suggested by reading authorities; (2) most schools provided some filmstrips for use in teaching reading; (3) more than twenty-five per cent of the interviewed teachers scheduled a library period for their students, and most teachers allowed their children to read when assigned seat work had been completed; and (4) all of the teachers interviewed were utilizing workbooks and requiring all pupils of the grade to complete each workbook.²


Fitzgerald and Fitzgerald reiterated the importance of a varied approach when they stated that

The basal books are generally supplemented by trade books, library books, current literature, and reference materials. An important objective for children in the early stages of rapid progress is reading widely for enjoyment and information. Readers and supplementary sources should supply appealing literature and other selections.¹

When evaluating materials necessary for a good program of reading, Fitzgerald and Fitzgerald included in their list of valuable materials the basal readers, workbooks, teachers' guides, supplementary readers, trade books, story books, dictionaries, reference books, word cards, "flash cards, filmstrips, and children's newspapers and magazines."²

Bush added to the list of necessary items for the well-equipped classroom, programmed materials, teacher-made materials, multi-level kits of reading and study aids, films, and maps.³ Dechant added items such as collections of poems, fairy tales, riddles, rhymes, games, magazines, booklists, and catalogs of books for teachers. He indicated also the necessity for various mechanical devices such as the

¹James A. Fitzgerald and Patricia G. Fitzgerald, 

²James A. Fitzgerald and Patricia G. Fitzgerald, 

tachistoscope, controlled reader, and other directional and accelerating devices.\(^1\) Bond advocated that experience charts, child prepared books and materials, and context subject texts should be included in the list of materials necessary for a proper reading instructional program.\(^2\)

One of the most desired outcomes of the reading program is that the child is able to read widely and read for many purposes. The school which produces children who do not apply reading skills to gain clear understandings and to perceive relationships historically and socially, and do not gain a permanent interest in reading should more closely inspect its reading objectives.\(^3\)

Reading is founded upon both incidental and planned experiences. Therefore it is related to various other language arts and cannot be taught as a separate entity. Integration of the various skills in the language arts area is essential and must be constant. Reading instruction must include listening, oral communication, spelling, writing, and vocabulary enrichment.\(^4\)


Cushenbery stated several principles for effective reading instruction which inferred that effective teaching must center around the individual needs of the pupil, and that therefore a wide variety of approaches is necessary in order to properly deal with all children.¹

Heilman summarized it in this way:

Any given technique, practice, or procedure is likely to work better with some children than with others. Hence, the teacher of reading must have a variety of approaches.²

Guy Bond concluded from an overview of first grade reading studies that no one method could be so outstanding that it merited usage of that approach and excluded others, but that the actual effectiveness of any worthy approach is heightened and broadened when other instructional aspects are added.³

De Boer and Dallmann have stated that "visual aids are a very effective means of awakening the child's desire to read."⁴

Whipple in an address at a reading convention made this statement:

¹Cushenbery, op. cit., p. 3.
²Heilman, op. cit., p. 9.
The resources at the teacher's disposal should provide a systematic and enriched program, meet the individual differences of children, and furnish enough books and selections on a given theme to relate the reading and studies under way to centers of interest for the group and the individual child. Without enough appropriate materials and equipment, adequate instruction cannot be given either in reading as such or in the entire school program.

Teachers should be provided with every helpful aid to learning and should make use of these resources effectively. Today there are new media of reading instruction as well as the older media of printed instructional materials.¹

The basal reader itself has been the subject of much praise and much criticism. Heilman recognized the value of basal instruction when he argued that although the basal series provide the foundations for systematic skill instruction, they may be considered dull and repetitive, their use of language is removed from that of the child, the stories lack literary value, and the content is geared to the middle class strata.²

Chall stated that research conducted revealed that authors of the basal series saw that their readers were designed for teaching basic skills and could not possibly meet all the child's reading needs.³

¹Whipple, op. cit., p. 2.
²Heilman, op. cit., p. 108.
Ford and Koplyay investigated the story preferences of young children and found that stories in primers and preprimers provided striking differences between what the children get and what they actually want in story content. The children indicated that they did not like the character and environmental settings.\textsuperscript{1}

Spache and Spache advocated that the basal reader has been criticized for failing to provide a proper foundation for the reading skills necessary for the content areas. Training in map and library skills and proper use of references is hardly touched upon in most basal programs.\textsuperscript{2}

Trace centered his criticism upon vocabulary. He stated that the typical sixth grade basal reader vocabulary was less than half of the speaking and understanding vocabulary of the typical kindergartener.\textsuperscript{3} Gates conducted a study of the control and meaning of "new" words in basal reading material and concluded that average ability third graders appeared to have no more difficulty with so called "new" words in basal reading material for fourth grade than with words that they had previously encountered in basal

\textsuperscript{1}Robin C. Ford and James Koplyay, "Children's Story Preferences," \textit{The Reading Teacher}, XXII (December, 1968), 237.


\textsuperscript{3}Trace, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 39-40.
instruction. Therefore, listening to a conventional explanation of the new words in the basal lesson is seemingly meaningless and time-consuming.¹

Many teachers and administrators interviewed by Austin and Morrison criticized the basal reader for its lack of literary quality. Some felt that the basal reader content was not challenging and did not have sufficient relation to children's lives.²

Stewart told us this:

>We must remember: the basal reader is merely a tool. The values and limitations ascribed to the basal reader really constitute a commentary on schools and teachers. The way in which we use what we have will continue to determine our effectiveness as educators.³

The workbook has been a greatly misused item in the reading program. Clarence R. Stone has stated that the practice of providing workbooks merely to accompany reading books "without providing intrinsic vocabulary preparation for each selection is unfortunate."⁴


The adoption of workbooks within a school is directly proportionate to the number of basal series used. The school which adopts a single basic series is much more apt to utilize the accompanying workbook than the school which uses two or three reading series.¹

Heilman challenged the effectiveness of workbooks by stating that although workbooks are established to teach pupils functions of the index, table of contents, and appendix, it is not uncommon to find that the student who can correctly complete the workbook cannot get help from a real index.²

Workbooks should not "just happen" to be chosen for use by children.

A good reading program should mean careful selection of guide books, readers, and workbooks to insure the development of basic skills and abilities so that our boys and girls may continue to thrill to the printed page.³

Middle grade children interviewed by Thomas Fleck felt that workbooks were irrelevant, made reading boring, and didn't teach anything.⁴


²Heilman, op. cit., p. 374.

³Martha Thompson, "The Purposes of Workbooks and Teachers' Guides," Readings on Reading Instruction, op. cit., p. 368.

Preparation of children reading in the content areas is sadly neglected in the lower grades.

Sometime during the course of transmission of opinions, beliefs, and customs from one generation of teachers to another, a legend evolved that reading should be taught during special periods set aside for the express purpose of giving the child control over the skills of reading. Likewise, legend has dictated that arithmetic, science, geography, and history should be taught at specific times in the daily program for the purpose of developing distinctive skills and imparting characteristic knowledge in each of these fields, usually with little or no consideration for the development of reading skills as one aspect of this specialized instruction.

Reading proficiency could be improved immeasurably if more attention were given to the development of study skills in the primary and intermediate grades. Perhaps this is one way of reducing reading casualties in high school and college, where knowing how to study is the most important category of all reading skills.\(^1\)

The teaching of reading in the content areas demands a great deal more than just reading facts and figures. The basic reading skills of comprehension of history, geography, and other social studies should be an integral part of the teaching of reading skills.\(^2\)

**SUMMARY**

Authorities in the reading field have written much concerning the materials necessary for the teaching of

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\(^1\) Nila Banton Smith, "Teaching Study Skills in Reading," *Elementary School Journal*, LX (December, 1959), 162.

reading. Basically, each one advocated usage of varied materials for the individuals within the classroom. The practice of using the basal reading series and accompanying workbooks without proper supplementation is inexcusable for today's teachers.

Snider has summed it up in this way:

Reading is the process of interpreting completely abstract marks that represent people, things, and ideas we may never have seen or experienced. It would seem logical, than, that less abstract devices, particularly audio-visual materials dealing with reading content, would be indispensable for the teaching and improvement of reading.¹

CHAPTER II

PRESENTATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF DATA

PROCEDURE

Within this chapter, the investigator will report the data which were accumulated throughout the study. The survey of types of materials used in teaching reading skills in grades one through six in the schools of Pella, Iowa, was conducted by means of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was constructed with reference to the advocacy of the use of various types of materials for the teaching of reading. The validation of the questionnaire was completed by four members of the Drake University summer class, Social Psychology of Education, all of whom were elementary teachers.

The results of the survey are based upon information obtained from the questionnaire submitted to elementary teachers. The questionnaire appears in the appendix.¹ Many of the results of the questionnaire are presented in table form. All tables are calculated in per cent of responses.

Copies of the questionnaire were presented to the principals of the Pella Christian School and the Pella Community Schools on September 11, 1970, with the request that each teacher of the grades one through six was to

¹Appendix B.
receive a copy. The letter accompanying each questionnaire asked that the completed questionnaire be returned by October 1, 1970.\(^1\) Forty questionnaires were distributed. Thirty-five completed questionnaires were returned by October 1, making an eighty-five per cent response.

**ANALYSIS OF DATA**

The response to the first and second questions of the questionnaire indicated that approximately fifty per cent of those responding had eleven or more years of experience, eleven per cent had six to ten years, nine per cent had three to five years, and twenty-six per cent had two or less years of experience. Table I shows the distribution of the years of experience and corresponding grade level of those responding.

**TABLE I**

PERCENTAGE OF FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE TEACHERS OF PELLA, IOWA, WITH A GIVEN NUMBER OF YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AND GRADE LEVEL TAUGHT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of years of experience</th>
<th>Grade level taught</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 or more years</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.42</td>
<td>2.85**</td>
<td>8.57</td>
<td>14.28*</td>
<td>11.42</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-2 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>11.42</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(\text{**2.85 per cent had a combination second and third grade.} \)

\(\text{*2.85 per cent had a combination fourth and fifth grade.} \)

\(^1\)Appendix B.
The third question concerned the use of basal readers. One hundred per cent of those responding utilized the basal reader for teaching reading. Seventy-one per cent indicated that they used a co-basal series. Twenty per cent did not use more than one basal series. The remaining nine per cent failed to respond to the question concerning co-basal readers. None of those who responded that they used only one basal was a teacher of first grade. The majority of those using only one basal were teachers of grades four, five, and six.

Sixty-nine per cent of the teachers responding did not use the same basal program for every child. Twenty-six per cent used the same for each child.

The responses to the questions concerning the use of workbooks are illustrated in Table II.

**TABLE II**

**PERCENTAGE OF FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE TEACHERS OF PELLA, IOWA, UTILIZING WORKBOOKS CORRELATED WITH THE BASAL SERIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Used workbooks correlated with basal</td>
<td>88.57</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required all children to complete workbook for each basal level</td>
<td>57.14</td>
<td>37.14</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The use of basal materials for the teaching of reading varied. One hundred per cent used a basal series. Fifty-seven per cent used programmed materials also. Table III shows the manner in which the programmed materials were used and supplemented by those who used them.

**TABLE III**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE TEACHERS OF PELLA, IOWA, UTILIZING PROGRAMMED MATERIALS AS SUPPLEMENTARY WORK FOR SOME OR ALL STUDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used programmed materials for all students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemented programmed materials with other instructional materials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of those who supplemented the programmed material indicated that they did so with library sources and/or the basal reader. One teacher stated that he used texts other than the basal, but gave no further explanation as to the kind of texts used.

Several questions dealt with the categories concerning the audio-visual equipment available within the school and the actual use that was made of that material. Table IV illustrated the equipment which the schools possess and have available for teacher usage.
TABLE IV

PERCENTAGE OF FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE TEACHERS OF PELLA, IOWA, WHO HAVE AVAILABLE THROUGH THEIR SCHOOLS VARIOUS ITEMS OF AUDIO-VISUAL EQUIPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item of Equipment</th>
<th>Per cent of teachers having item available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overhead Projector</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filmstrip Projector</td>
<td>97.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motion Picture Projector</td>
<td>94.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonograph</td>
<td>97.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictionaries for each child</td>
<td>85.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Cards</td>
<td>68.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Games</td>
<td>57.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tachistoscopes</td>
<td>11.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlled Readers</td>
<td>40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pocket Charts</td>
<td>40.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the teachers indicated that they did not utilize the equipment often for the teaching of reading. The actual teacher usage of the audio-visual materials is presented in Table V.
TABLE V

PERCENTAGE OF TIME FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE TEACHERS OF PELLA, IOWA, UTILIZE AUDIO-VISUAL EQUIPMENT FOR THE REINFORCEMENT OF READING SKILLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item of Equipment</th>
<th>More than weekly</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overhead</td>
<td>31.42</td>
<td>17.14</td>
<td>22.85</td>
<td>28.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filmstrips</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>8.57</td>
<td>34.28</td>
<td>54.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Films</td>
<td>11.42</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>42.85</td>
<td>25.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>8.57</td>
<td>37.14</td>
<td>51.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tape Recorder</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>28.57</td>
<td>62.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlled Readers</td>
<td>17.14</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>71.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tachistoscope</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>91.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Games</td>
<td>8.57</td>
<td>28.57</td>
<td>14.28</td>
<td>48.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Cards</td>
<td>31.42</td>
<td>8.57</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>57.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Books</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>14.28</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The responses to the question concerning the incorporation of study skills into the reading program indicated that basically, teachers of Pella feel that they are incorporating into their reading program the study skills of locating information, use of references, evaluation of reading material, and adjustment of reading rate to the purpose for reading.

The question which dealt with the amount of content reading that teachers felt they included in their reading skills elicited the responses recorded in Table VI.

**TABLE VI**

PERCENTAGE OF FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE TEACHERS WHO INCORPORATE CONTENT AREAS INTO THEIR READING PROGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content area taught</th>
<th>Percentage teaching the area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skimming</td>
<td>48.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map Reading</td>
<td>62.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>85.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outlining</td>
<td>42.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading for Details</td>
<td>80.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eighty per cent of the teachers who were polled stated that they had a classroom library. The number of volumes in the classroom libraries varied from twelve to four hundred.

Table VII exhibits the response of teachers to the question concerning the frequency that children may visit the library to choose a book.

TABLE VII

FREQUENCY OF VISITS MADE TO THE CLASSROOM OR SCHOOL LIBRARY CALCULATED BY PER CENT OF FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE TEACHERS OF PELLA, IOWA, RESPONDING TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency of visits</th>
<th>Per cent visiting at that frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>22.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twice-three times weekly</td>
<td>24.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>41.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than weekly</td>
<td>11.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION

SUMMARY

It was the purpose of this study to determine the extent to which elementary teachers depend upon the basal reader for the teaching of reading skills. Related literature was discussed in Chapter I. Authorities cited in the review indicated the necessity for a wide variety of materials in the teaching of reading.

The study was conducted by means of a questionnaire. The study was limited to the five elementary schools of the Pella, Iowa, school district. The questionnaire was distributed to the teachers, collected, and results compiled in the fall of 1970. Tabulations of the results were reported in Tables I through VII in Chapter II of this study.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings reported in Chapter II elicit the following varied conclusions:

The response to the first question indicated that the majority of the teachers of grades one through six in the Pella schools had eleven or more years of experience.¹

¹Table I, p. 19.
Staiger, as reported in Chapter I, has stated that the adoption of workbooks within a school is in direct proportion to the number of basal series used: the greater the number of series used, the less possibility for the use of workbooks.¹

This, however, does not seem to be true of the Pella schools. Despite the fact that seventy per cent of those who responded reported that they used a co-basal series, eighty-nine per cent reported that they used the workbooks correlated with the basal, and fifty-seven per cent reported that each child was required to complete the workbooks for each basal level.²

Although the schools seemed to rely heavily upon the basal readers for their instructional program, other materials were available and utilized. Fifty-seven per cent used some sort of programmed materials along with the basal. Of the fifty-seven per cent, eighty per cent used the programmed material for all students.³

Despite the fact that the schools had much equipment available for teacher usage, a high percentage of teachers used the audio-visual equipment very little if at all.

¹Staiger, op. cit., p. 215.
²Table II, p. 20.
³Table III, p. 21.
Table VIII indicated the availability of materials to teachers as compared to the amount of actual use.

### TABLE VIII

PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS OF FIRST THROUGH SIXTH GRADE IN THE SCHOOLS OF PELLA, IOWA, HAVING AVAILABLE AUDIO-VISUAL EQUIPMENT AS COMPARED TO PER CENT OF TEACHERS USING THE EQUIPMENT IN THE READING PROGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment</th>
<th>Per cent having equipment available</th>
<th>Per cent using equipment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overhead Projector</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>48.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filmstrip Projector</td>
<td>97.14*</td>
<td>11.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film Projector</td>
<td>94.28</td>
<td>31.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonograph</td>
<td>97.14</td>
<td>11.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlled Readers</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>22.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tachistoscopes</td>
<td>11.42</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>57.14</td>
<td>37.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Cards</td>
<td>68.57</td>
<td>39.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Many filmstrips are available through the county office. The Christian school also has access to the filmstrip libraries of the neighboring Christian schools.

The teachers who responded to the questionnaire indicated almost unanimously (94.28 per cent) that they utilized library books to supplement their reading programs. The response revealed, however, that library books were not easily accessible to the children.\(^1\) Although eighty per cent

\(^1\)Table VII, p. 25.
of the teachers stated that they had a classroom library, nearly fifty-three per cent of the teachers allowed their children to visit the library only once per week or less.

Whipple has stated that teachers should be provided with the necessary helpful aids to learning, but they should also effectively use these resources. Pella's teachers have reported that although resources are provided, not all teachers are making use of them.

Stewart stated this concerning the basal reader:

We must remember: the basal reader is merely a tool. The values and limitations ascribed to the basal reader really constitute a commentary on schools and teachers.

Pella's teachers value the basal reader to assist them in the teaching of reading skills, but have shown a recognition of the importance of co-basal, supplementary materials, and programmed materials in the reading program.

Reading must be taught in a variety of ways and includes a variety of skills. Basal readers have been criticized for failure to provide proper foundations for reading skills in the content areas. Training in map skills is rarely touched upon. Smith has said:

---

1 Whipple, op. cit., p. 2.
2 Stewart, op. cit., p. 363.
3 Spache and Spache, op. cit., p. 97.
Reading proficiency could be improved immeasurably if more attention were given to the development of study skills in the primary and intermediate grades.\(^1\)

Those who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they are including study skills within their reading program already at the primary grade level.\(^2\)

Teachers of today must be aware that no one method or material of reading is so outstanding that it can either preclude others or be used for every child in the same manner.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study stimulated possibilities for further investigation.

The response of the Pella teachers indicated that fifty per cent of the teachers had eleven or more years of experience. A study could be made of the similarity or difference in the method of teaching of reading by those who have taught more than ten years as compared to those who have taught less than five consecutive years.

Another topic for further study could be the understanding that teachers have concerning the process of reading. Smith has said:

\(^1\)Smith, op. cit., p. 162.

\(^2\)Table VI, p. 24.
Sometime during the course of transmission of opinions, beliefs, and customs from one generation of teacher to another, a legend evolved that reading should be taught during special periods set aside for the express purpose of giving the child control over the skills of reading.¹

It would be interesting to note how much teachers feel they incorporate reading skills into every aspect of their teaching program as contrasted to depending upon the "reading period" to teach all reading skills.

¹Smith, op. cit., p. 162.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Books


2. Periodicals

Betts, Emmert Albert. "How Well Are We Teaching Reading?", *Elementary English*, XXXVIII (October, 1961), 377-381.


3. *Publications of the Government, Learned Societies, and Other Organizations*


Dear Fellow Educator,

I would like to ask you to take a few moments to respond to the attached questionnaire. The questionnaire is a vital part of my field report which is to be submitted to Drake University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science in Education degree. The field report is a study concerning materials used in teaching reading.

Your responses will be anonymous and at no time will you be identified in any way. If you wish information on the results of the questionnaires, please send me your name and address, and I will be happy to comply with your request.

Would you please return the questionnaire to me in the attached addressed, stamped envelope by October 1, 1970? I am very grateful for your assistance!

Sincerely,

Miss Judy De Jong
APPENDIX B

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE MATERIALS USED FOR THE TEACHING OF READING

(Please check the response that best describes your situation)

1. What grade level do you teach?
   1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___

2. How long have you taught?
   0-2 years ___ 3-5 years ___ 6-10 years ___
   11 or more ___

3. Do you use a basal reader?
   yes ___ no ___
   If yes, do you have a co-basal?
   yes ___ no ___

4. Do you use the workbook correlated with your basal?
   yes ___ no ___

5. Do all children complete the workbook for each basal level?
   yes ___ no ___

6. Do you use the same basal program for all children?
   yes ___ no ___

7. Which of the following materials does your school have?
   overhead projector ___ pocket charts ___
   filmstrip projector ___ word cards ___
   motion picture projector ___ reading games ___
   phonograph ___ tachistoscopes ___
   dictionaries for each child ___ controlled readers ___
8. Approximately how often do you use the following materials in teaching reading?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>More than once per week</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>overhead</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>filmstrips</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>films</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>records</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tape recorder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>controlled reader</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tachistoscopes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reading games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>word cards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>library books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Do you use programmed materials?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If yes, do you use them for all children?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you supplement the programmed materials?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If yes, with what do you supplement them?

- library sources
- basal readers
- other (please indicate)

10. Which of these study skills do you incorporate into your reading program?

- locating information
- use of references
- evaluation of reading materials
- adjusting rate to purpose
11. Do you give special instruction in content reading?
   yes____  no____
   If yes, in which areas?
   skimming____  outlining____
   map reading____  reading for details____
   comprehension____

12. Do you have a classroom library?
   yes____  no____
   If yes, approximately how many books does it contain?____

13. Do children visit the library
   on a preset schedule____
   or whenever they desire to choose a book?____

14. How often do your children visit the library?
   daily____
   2-3 times weekly____
   weekly____
   less than weekly____