A HIGH SCHOOL READING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
IN THE MAXWELL COMMUNITY SCHOOL

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Harold Eugene Smith
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Much has been written about improving reading in the elementary school but recent research has shown that junior and senior high students profit greatly from further training in reading. Miller stated that the origin of this new interest in reading was an outgrowth of World War II.

The recent impetus upon developmental reading originated with an experiment carried on during World War II. In an effort to shorten the time needed for military personnel to identify enemy aircraft, silhouettes of the craft were flashed on a screen. The visual exposure time was reduced progressively until many could identify aircraft with amazing speed and accuracy. This tachistoscopic device was publicized and subsequently influenced a significant amount of research.¹

Not only have educators been interested in improving reading, but the changing world has increasingly been placing more value on reading. In the labor market many more occupations require greater use of reading skills than formerly. Automation is taking over many of the routine unskilled jobs while occupations requiring more reading and training are demanding more people. Many jobs in the labor field are changing so rapidly that workers need to be retrained to

keep employable and often times retraining and study involve a great deal of reading. This situation, along with the sharp increase in the number attending college and an emphasis on a longer formal education for all, demands better reading programs in today's schools.

In the school, high school teachers complain to counselors that many of their students do not know how to read. If, as some critics of education would have people believe (although there is no empirical evidence of this),¹ that there are more poor readers in our high schools today than in the past, the reason is not that the teachers are failing to teach reading, but that these students are kept in school longer to help them prepare better for living in our changing world. Until recently the poor reader either failed or repeated grades so often that he never did get to high school. So now, with more students attending school longer, and with stricter compulsory education attendance requirements, there are more of these poorer readers in our schools. Also, the policy that some elementary schools maintained for some years, of automatically promoting to the next grade all or nearly all the students who were trying, has fed the junior and senior high schools with students

¹This study is cited later in Chapter III.
who have reading problems. Another factor is that there are more trained teachers who recognize these students who have reading problems. Through the availability and use of better tests we have come to recognize that often the so-called dull pupil is only a poor or retarded reader with a limiting disability.

All schools then need to face realistically this problem of teaching reading, because they are the only institution committed to this task and the public expects the schools to perform this job well.

Thus with the change in the occupational outlook so that more reading and following directions will be required, with more students going to college where they need reading skill, and with the number of poor readers in our high schools, reading needs to be a matter of prime concern. Recognizing these problems and the value of a reading improvement program the writer was encouraged by his graduate advisors and by the local teachers and administrators to carry out a project in reading in the Maxwell Community High School.
CHAPTER II

PROBLEM AND PROCEDURE

It was the purpose of this study to set up and describe a twelve-week reading improvement program in the senior high school of the Maxwell Community School, and to make a tentative evaluation of the results. The first part of this study was a preliminary survey of literature related to high school reading. This survey included (1) the nature of the high school reading problem, (2) current issues in the teaching of reading, (3) the various ways of approach to a high school reading improvement program, (4) organization of high school reading programs, and (5) conclusions to this survey.

The second part of this study involved the setting up of a reading improvement program using the information from the preliminary survey. The project was carried on at the Maxwell Community High School, with an enrollment of 104 students in grades nine, ten, eleven, and twelve, during the school year 1959-60. At the beginning of the project, the Iowa Silent Reading Tests, Advanced Form AM, was administered to establish a starting reading achievement level. The reading improvement program included the 95 high school students of the Maxwell Community School.
enrolled in English classes. Reading instruction was given to the students using three plans of procedure with three different groupings.

Group A was composed of all high school students enrolled in English classes exclusive of groups B and C. Group B was composed of the members of the Industrial English class who were in this class because of low achievement in the regular English classes. Group C was composed of those students who had high ability and average or above average reading achievement, and was referred to as the Advanced Reading Group. At the conclusion of the project, form BM of the Iowa Silent Reading Tests was administered. This attempted to measure the reading development during the project, and the results were used in discussing the relative merits of the three programs.

Part three of this project was the concluding summary and evaluation of the whole reading improvement program.
CHAPTER III

A PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF LITERATURE RELATED TO HIGH SCHOOL READING

I. THE NATURE OF THE HIGH SCHOOL READING PROBLEM

In the past several years there has been a growing awareness that there are many "Johnnys Who Can't Read." Cooper stated that:

Reading disability among high school students today produces more wide-spread concern than any other educational problem. Many believe that from fifteen to twenty-three percent of our students are handicapped in reading. In addition to those thus handicapped, there are many average to bright readers who are not reading up to their potentials. All those who have an undeveloped reading potential can benefit by special training.1

The critics of education would lead us to doubt the effectiveness of modern methods of instruction. Parents also ask, "Is my child learning to read as well as children did two or three decades ago?" Witty and Ratz stated:

Actually, a conclusive answer cannot be given to the question, "Is my child learning to read as well as children did two or three decades ago?" Comparisons of the past with the present are difficult to make

1 Jess V. Cooper, "What Should We Do About Reading In The Senior High School?" The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, XLII (April, 1958), 105.
with a high degree of accuracy. Yet, in spite of the changes in school populations, the increased demands on schools today, and the many activities, such as watching TV, which compete for the pupils' time, studies show that children are learning as much, perhaps more, than pupils of twenty-five or thirty years ago. And many children are reading more today, as books and materials available to children grow more numerous and attractive.¹

We need to realize that reading is one of the most important if not the most important of skills a person can acquire. R. C. Guy said:

Since school work consists largely of reading for comprehension, the ability of a student to read adequately determines to considerable degree his success in school. It is the chief difference between good and poor students. There are also many indirect effects of poor reading such as personality disturbances and dropping out of school. Thus we can readily see that the effects of reading ability are far reaching. Consequently, the teaching of reading can not be disregarded.²

Dolch stressed the importance of reading in the total life of the individual:

Failure in reading is likely to mean failure in the child's whole educational life. It means shortening of schooling, going into a lower level of work, wrong attitudes of many kinds, and development of poor citizenship.³


²R. C. Guy, "What Should We Do About Reading In The Senior High School?" The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, XLII (April, 1957), 50.

Carmichael stated in the editor's introduction to Glock's book, *The Improvement of College Reading*:

If one walked his way rather than read his way through school the fact that some students were over four times as fast as others would surely be a subject of comment and action. Remedial training would be prescribed for all very slow walkers—especially if it could be demonstrated that by proper training walking could be speeded up without increasing fatigue or cause discomfort.1

Seeing then the importance of reading and the need for improving the high school reading program let us move on to discussing a few of the current controversial issues involved.

II. CURRENT ISSUES IN THE TEACHING OF READING IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

Patterson listed five issues that are currently being discussed in the teaching of reading.2

The first issue. "The first issue concerns the assertion that reading is not a high school subject and ought to be taught only in the elementary schools."3 It

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2Walter G. Patterson, "How Can We Improve the Reading Skills and Habits of Senior High School Students?" *The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals*, XLIII (April, 1959), 91-96.

3Ibid., 92.
has been suggested that "If reading were taught well enough in the elementary grades, there would be no need for teaching reading in high school." Those who favor the teaching of reading in high school do not subscribe to the idea that all students can be taught in the elementary school all the reading skills that they will need throughout their life. Elkins stated:

There will probably always be children who leave the elementary school unable to master the reading materials of the junior and senior high schools. At one time, these children would never have been encountered in the secondary schools; they simply dropped out somewhere along the line before that point. Now they are with us and, most certainly within the near future, will continue to be.

Because students do not all grow at the same rate one can never deny opportunity for educational growth to a student simply because he has not acquired the skills that belong to a certain grade level. The answer seems obvious then that reading needs to be taught in the high school. Later on in the paper the various ways and places in which a reading program can be placed in the high school will be discussed.

The second issue. "The second issue consuming much

1Ibid.

2Deborah Elkins, Reading Improvement in the Junior High School (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1963), p. 3.
time in discussion is that reading can not be taught by machines. Martens reported testing the reading growth of students who used a reading pacer as against that of students who received equal training but without the pacer in the Junior High Department of the Convent of the Visitation School in St. Paul:

Therefore, in this experiment the null hypothesis must be retained, namely, that there is no real difference in improved reading skills between the group using a reading pacer in conjunction with other methods of improving comprehension and the group using other methods only. Finally, the reading pacer, while admittedly useful for its motivational appeal, is not absolutely necessary for the success of such a program.

Brawn and Patterson in evaluating a reading course in the Drury High School, North Adams, Massachusetts, said this about reading machines:

Supplementary to the instruction and application of reading skills, two machines are used in the reading course--the tachistoscope and reading accelerator. This kind of motivation is not to be ignored as they do produce real results. The drill with the tachistoscope aids greatly in broadening the eye span, in overcoming the habits of unnecessary regression, and increasing the speed of reading. The accelerator's main functions are to force the reader to make increasingly fewer fixations per line of print, overcome habits of regression, and

1Patterson, loc. cit.

increase concentration on reading and speed of reading. All these aid in improving comprehension.¹

Machines do have their place in the reading program, but we cannot be fooled into thinking they will do the whole job. Basically, machines are motivating and disciplinary devices and are liked by many students who relate that they are helped in reading, to do faster thinking and reach higher goals, than they thought possible.

There are numerous instruments available and many have their place in the hands of those persons who know where, when, and how to use them. Blank has done a service for reading teachers in making an annotated list of machines, filmstrips, recordings, and programmed instructional devices to aid in the teaching of reading. No attempt has been made to evaluate any device, but a listing is made for those who may want to investigate specific machines.²

The third issue. "The third issue is that the English and social studies teachers ought to be assigned

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¹Martha B. Brawn, and Walter G. Patterson, "Reading Improvement In The High School," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, XLI (March, 1957), 63.

to teach reading in the high schools. The assumption is that because so much reading is required in these fields these teachers will know how to teach their students to read.

Because teachers in the secondary school specialize in certain curricular areas when they prepare to teach, they know little about the teaching of reading and frequently feel no responsibility for guiding their students' reading.2

Jewett stated:

Yes, a school-wide reading developmental program should be initiated under the direction of a reading specialist. Schools with such programs have found that they have fewer pupils failing in reading subjects and fewer retarded and disabled readers.3

These and many other reading authorities feel that this is a job for specially trained reading teachers, who will develop a systematic method of teaching high school students to read, using the present day tools and techniques, rather than adding reading on to an already heavy load of the English and social studies teachers.

1Patterson, loc. cit.


3Arno Jewett, "What Should We Do About Reading In The Junior High School?" The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, XLI (April, 1957), 75.
The fourth issue. "The fourth issue concerns whether emphasis is to be placed on remedial reading or developmental reading."\(^1\) Patterson explained the two types of programs as follows:

Remedial reading is here defined as the type of help given in a clinical situation to the three to five percent of the poorest readers. In remedial work, the student is examined carefully and help is either individual or given to small groups with similar problems. The developmental reading is a classroom approach to teaching reading to groups of students. Both remedial and developmental programs are valuable. The problem is one of deciding where the major emphasis is to be placed.\(^2\)

Witty and Ratz stated:

More than remedial instruction is needed in today's schools. Most authorities recognize the need for a continuous reading program, beginning with readiness activities for the child who is just starting to school, and extending throughout junior and senior high school and even into college. Of course, in many schools practice lags far behind theory. Formal reading instruction often ceases after the sixth grade is reached, and sometimes earlier. Reading instruction is usually given only incidentally during the remaining elementary school years, with remedial teaching sometimes provided for serious cases. The purpose of a developmental program is to offer systematic instruction throughout the full range of education. It is geared to interest and to needs and seeks to offer in addition the special reading skills and guidance required at various stages of growth and development.\(^3\)

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\(^1\)Patterson, loc. cit.
\(^2\)Ibid., 93-94.
\(^3\)Witty and Ratz, op. cit., pp. 5-6.
The fifth issue. "The fifth issue concerns the relationship of the reading teacher to the subject matter teachers."¹ We often hear that every teacher is a reading teacher, but as was pointed out in discussing the third issue, regular high school teachers just don't know how to teach reading. Patterson reported, "A popular proposal at meetings of reading teachers is that the reading teacher's main job is to teach other subject matter teachers 'how' they can teach reading."²

Weiss urged that:

The administrator should make sure that his reading teachers are qualified to teach reading and that they have time to work with other teachers in the school. He should encourage and plan in-service training courses for his staff so the entire faculty can take a more active, responsible part in implementing the objectives of the total school reading program.³

As stated before, those in the reading field see that the reading specialist can help the teachers be more effective in their own subjects, but that a reading program under the direction of the reading teacher offers the best prospects for a systematic approach to improving reading abilities.

¹Patterson, op. cit., 94.
²Ibid.
III. WAYS OF APPROACHING READING IMPROVEMENT

Various plans and methods have been used to promote better reading habits. In this section we will attempt to look at several of these approaches and briefly list their contributions to the high school reading program.

The special reading class. Until only recently few schools offered any systematic training in reading beyond the sixth or seventh grade because the junior and senior high teachers are for the most part subject minded teachers and not reading minded. Jess V. Cooper, principal of the Liberty High School in Pratt, Kansas, expressed how skeptical his teachers were at the thought of adding another subject, reading, to the school's curricular offerings. He stated that after discussing some of the facts about high school reading:

The faculty decided that reading must be a part of the curriculum, to develop the most effective general education program possible for boys and girls in grades seven through twelve. General education is that part of the curriculum required of all on the ground that it provides for the understanding, the skills, and the appreciation needed by all citizens in a democratic society. The reading program beginning in the first grade and continuing as long as the pupil is in school, provides continuous curriculum experiences. These experiences are regarded as "threads of continuity" which give unity to the pupil's experience, which in turn, relate directly or indirectly to the major values
Many new and different programs are being tested and tried every year.

In some cases these classes are additions to the regular curriculum. Frequently they are labeled "developmental" to show that they provide for all pupils—slow, average, and superior—at a given grade level. Sometimes they are called "corrective" when they are designed for students with specific reading disabilities. When individual or very small group instruction is provided for retarded readers, the program is sometimes designated as "remedial," although this term has fallen into disrepute because it carries unattractive connotations.

In place of the regular English course, corrective classes sometimes are offered for a semester or two.

Another common approach, especially in smaller schools, is to charge English teachers with the responsibility of developing the reading skills of all students as part of the regular English courses. Emphases differ and variations occur within these patterns, but essentially these four types—the special reading class, the substitute English class, instruction within the regular English class, and developmental reading as part of the core course—are the practices commonly recommended and followed.

The easiest type of program to plan is the reading-within-the-English-class. There is no need to schedule extra classes and no additions need to be made to the staff. Instead of the selection of some students for special classes, the problem becomes that of grouping all the students for English classes.

Jewett described these and similar programs in the following:

These intensive courses in reading include the use

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1 Cooper, loc. cit.

of textbooks which emphasize the development of study skills and vocabulary. Sometimes they require the use of reading pacers, tachistoscopes, reading films and filmstrips, and reading inventories and tests.¹

Often times a manual or workbook is used as a guide. One of the most useful workbooks this writer has seen is one published by Prentice-Hall.² This workbook is designed to develop special skills needed for effective reading in the areas of science, social studies, arithmetic and literature. It also offers helps in improving the basic common skills needed in reading all types of material. This book could be used for either remedial or developmental instruction for junior high or high school. It comes complete with teacher guide and suggestions for its use. Miller set up some criteria for evaluating a developmental reading workbook and presented an analysis of leading workbooks in college and high school reading programs.³

Many studies could be cited showing the remarkable results from such classes as those mentioned above. Witty and Ratz reported that the average junior high pupil can

¹Arno Jewett, "How Can We Improve The Reading Skills and Habits of Senior High School Students," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, XLIII (April, 1959), 97.


³Miller, op. cit., pp. 16-26.
increase his reading rate by 50 percent or more after as little as a semester of systematic reading instruction.¹ Brawn and Patterson reported significant pupil growth in the reading skills for all grade levels at Drury High School, with the greatest gains taking place in the senior year.²

A do it yourself project. If a person is interested enough it is not impossible for him to improve his reading ability by himself. It is obvious that a teacher cannot teach a student anything that he does not want to learn, and that the student must take an active part if learning is to take place. If the student then has the motivation, is willing to work hard, and has adequate assistance from an interested teacher or reading improvement manual, he will achieve success by his efforts which will be in proportion to the time and effort he spends. Maxwell described the main objective of a self-help reading program at the University of Maryland which was to help motivate the student and emphasize self-help and the importance of the individual's responsibility in directing and evaluating his

¹Witty and Ratz, loc. cit.
²Brawn and Patterson, op. cit., 55-64.
own improvement. This self-help program would seemingly be more successful with the more mature students, probably the eleventh and twelfth grades and older, as this is the approach taken in many adult and college reading programs.

There are a number of books, manuals, and workbooks on the market. It has been mentioned before that Miller in his book, *Teaching Reading Efficiency*, has ten pages developing criteria, analyzing, and listing workbooks available for secondary and college level reading.

*Let the classroom teacher do it.* This position and approach have been discussed in an earlier part of this paper, "Current Issues in the Teaching of Reading in the High School." In his own field each teacher should be a teacher of reading but because of lack of training many are limited in the extent to which they can do this. Certainly all teachers can and need to teach vocabulary, spelling, capitalization, pronunciation, sentence structure and grammar as related to the various fields of study. But

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2Miller, loc. cit.
to help students achieve their greatest potential a developmental reading program needs to be outlined with each teacher, not only the reading teacher, seeing his part of it.

Jewett, in outlining an effective reading program, also suggested placing much of the responsibility on the classroom teacher. Jewett, a specialist in Secondary School English in the United States Office of Education, quoted the position taken by the Commission on English Curriculum which stated:

Each teacher should make systematic provision for teaching reading skills important to his subject... Teaching of reading skills should be a functional part of the regular class work. The teacher does not teach English or social studies at one point and reading at another. Although some pupils may need special remedial work in comprehension skills, reading skills should be dealt with when they are needed in doing an assignment.¹

What then are some of the practical ways by which every teacher can help promote more and better reading in her students?

1. In giving assignments, the teacher needs to point up the purpose of the reading material, offer key or guide questions related to this purpose, and also teach the specific reading skill needed to succeed with the assignment. Reading readiness

¹Jewett, loc. cit.
should then be developed during the giving of the assignment which would include interest readiness, background readiness, and purpose readiness.\(^1\)

2. Preferably with the help of the reading teacher, the subject matter teacher should learn to present more effectively the vocabularies peculiar to his own subject and help students discriminate in selecting reading materials.\(^2\)

3. In conjunction with the reading teacher, the subject matter teacher needs to encourage and promote with students the practice and use of study and reading skills learned in developmental reading classes.\(^3\)

Cooper summed up the position of the subject teacher by saying:

It is especially important that teachers at the secondary-school level become concerned with the reading growth of pupils, since growth in reading achievement is a continuous process. Each student who reads becomes a better reader, each student who fails to read becomes a poorer reader.\(^4\)

With the development of core curriculums and team teaching the teacher will get to know her pupils better and

\(^1\)Ibid.

\(^2\)Patterson, op. cit., 94.

\(^3\)Ibid. 95.

\(^4\)Cooper, op. cit., 106.
have more opportunities to teach the reading of their subjects in the extended and double periods. If used in the right way this familiarity could be beneficial in the teaching of reading.

The home room and assembly programs. Various types of home room and assembly programs have been used to try to motivate students to improve their reading and study skills. They are effective only in proportion as the students apply and practice on the skills suggested.

Several good reading films are available for junior and senior high use. These are listed below:

"Better Reading," (Paul Witty, consultant), produced by Encyclopedia Britannica Films. This film shows why and how one could improve his reading.

"How Effective Is Your Reading?" (Ruth Strang, consultant), produced by Coronet Films. This film shows how to improve reading habits.

"Improve Your Reading," produced by the University of Illinois. This film shows the most common reading difficulties and remedies for each.

Besides the several reading films available, various films on certain study skills have been produced. Coronet Films have the following listed:

"Build Your Vocabulary"
"Choosing Books to Read"

"How to Read Newspapers"

"Look It Up" (Dictionary Habits)

"How to Read a Book"

"How to Remember"

"How to Study"

"How to Think"

"Know Your Library"

"Keep Up With Your Studies"

Almost all of these films are available in our area from either Iowa State University or the University of Iowa, Visual Education Services.

One could also use such films as the Harvard or Iowa University Reading Films. Carroll and Thalberg listed the seven ways in which they can be utilized to help an individual improve his reading rate:

1. decreasing the number of regressions he makes;
2. reducing the length of his fixation period;
3. increasing his span of recognition;
4. perfecting his return sweep;
5. forcing him to make more rhythmic saccadic movements;
6. decreasing his subvocalizations;
7. increasing his motivation to read better and faster.1

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1Hazel Horn Carroll and Stanton F. Thalberg, "The Role of Reading Films," (in) Oscar S. Causey and William Eller (ed.), Starting and Improving College Reading Programs, Eighth Yearbook of the National Reading Conference (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, April, 1959), pp. 44-45.
Although these films have their limitation where there is a wide range of reading ability, they still arouse the interest of the student in going further to seek help to become a better reader.

Reading pacers and controlled reading devices could also be used in conjunction with a filmstrip machine in this group situation. Johnson made a good defense for the use of machines and stated:

The effectiveness of a reading improvement device will vary greatly, depending upon who is using it. And the greatest part of the variation will be due to the method which the user employs. Because of the importance of the method of using such equipment, this paper has been prepared to present a description of one successful method of employing the widely used devices known as reading pacers.¹

Both of the above articles from The Eighth Yearbook of the National Reading Conference give some of the proven methods of using these devices in group situations.

The place of the library. Certainly the library has an important place in any reading program and the librarian's role is just as important if not more so than the library itself. The librarian with her broad background in books, reading, knowledge of reading interest, and skill in locating materials, becomes a valuable asset to any

¹Harry W. Johnson, "A Way To Use Reading Pacers," (in) Causey and Eller, Ibid., p. 35.
reading program. The library needs to be stocked with a variety of materials to suit the needs of all readers, the slow and reluctant as well as the gifted.

Selection of books should be a cooperative responsibility involving the faculty and students. The library is really a reading laboratory where skills taught in the classroom are used for study and recreation. Its attractive, friendly atmosphere invites browsing or research. The librarian needs to work closely with students and note their reading needs and habits.

The librarian is often creative and inspired in her efforts to motivate and guide reading. She tempts and stimulates by advertising, displaying and talking about things that are too good to miss. A year-round program of exhibits and displays can do much to arouse and maintain interest in reading.

Helen R. Sattley, Director, School Library Service, New York City, said:

Every child from elementary school through high school should have the opportunity to have frequent contacts with an active school library every week. ... If the librarian and the teacher, at both the elementary and high school levels, will continue to reinforce each other and to recognize that the need for their common knowledge is increasingly great, the gap between our individual programs will be closed and the school children will be the beneficiaries. As the librarian assumes more responsibility for understanding the child and the curriculum, and the teacher assumes more responsibility for knowing books and bibliographic
information in his own field, we will be able to reinforce each other as we never have been able to do before. No teacher can get along without an adequate library today, and no librarian can make his program meaningful unless it is basic to the reading program - and to all of the other programs of the school. ¹

Indeed, it is as Lillian Batchelor stated, "The school which conducts its reading program without the librarian's professional assistance is doing itself a disservice.² It is encouraging to note that the role of the librarian is increasing in importance to the whole school program and that administrators are quick to see the library as one of the real teaching aids.

A combination approach needed. Although we have discussed various ways of approach separately, it does not take much imagination to see that one of these approaches by itself is inadequate. The reading class is a worthwhile goal for schools to strive to establish but it is not an end in itself nor will it operate in a vacuum. To be really successful it needs the helping hand which each of these areas may furnish.

¹Helen R. Sattley, "An Adequate School Library Program Is Basic To The Reading Program," The Reading Teacher, XII (April, 1959), 245.

The subject matter teacher needs to promote the use of the reading and study skills covered in the reading program in working out his daily assignments. Likewise, the individual to be successful in any reading class needs to be interested in helping himself improve through much drill and practice on his own as in the self help program. Motivation and awareness that reading skills may be increased through building a bigger vocabulary, reading in phrases, preventing lip movements, and reading for new ideas as presented in visual aids are valuable in any reading program but seeing and hearing about them is of no value unless the student practices and uses them often enough to break the faulty reading patterns that have been established in the previous years of his life. Certainly the library, as it was pointed out, is a necessary part of any reading program. How can the student have experience in doing research if books are not available and how can he learn to enjoy leisure time reading when there are few if any books on his reading level that he is interested in? Can a student be really challenged to read when the teachers and administration are not interested in building an adequate library with the necessary facilities? Then to have an effective program all these approaches need to be used in their proper sense to support and reinforce the whole reading program.
IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE HIGH SCHOOL READING PROGRAM

With the renewed interest in high school reading, more books are available in the field. Most newer books and articles about the subject have suggestions for organizing and setting up different types of programs. Witty and Ratz listed several steps and considerations:

Teachers and administrators know that much practical planning is necessary before the program can be started. The factors that determine the practicability of various reading programs must be evaluated—among them the personnel resources, the curriculum, and the materials the school has available. No teacher can be expected to start the program on her own; school-wide cooperation is needed. An important step, then, is to interest every member of the teaching staff in cooperating on a reading program.

A group within a school may be given the responsibility for studying how to set up a reading program as well as for evaluating the program as it now stands. Then suggestions for improvement can be made. The group should include not only reading teachers but other teachers and administrators as well. Before much actual planning can be done, answers to the following questions should be found:

1. Is the school equipped with the reading materials necessary for good reading instruction?
2. Are there enough resource people on the staff to carry out the proposed program?
3. What is the present teaching set-up?1

The principal, guidance director, and English teacher, are people who could initiate a formalized high school reading program. A group may even be given this responsibility. They start by studying test results to see how

1 Witty and Ratz, op. cit., pp. 42-43.
many students there are who need to read on a level more in line with their ability and grade placement. This may be done very easily by using the Bond and Tinker formula\(^1\) for discovering reading expectancy grade level and comparing it with the student's actual reading grade level.

Several books have check lists that will aid in finding the problems and evaluating the present reading practice in the secondary school. The book, *Reading Instruction in the Secondary Schools*, has such a list and guide in organizing a reading program.\(^2\)

Being responsible for all that goes on in the high school, the principal's job with the help of the reading teacher is to organize, administer, supervise, evaluate and re-evaluate the program through testing, student evaluation, and opinions of others on the faculty.\(^3\)

Patterson also discussed the problem of obtaining teachers of reading and suggested the following three sources:

1. The college is one source but few high school

---

\(^1\)Reading Expectancy equals I. Q. times years in school plus one.

\(^2\)Hamman, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-37.

\(^3\)Walter G. Patterson, "What Should We Do About Reading In The Senior High School?" *The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals*, XLII (April, 1958), 111.
reading teachers are being trained. (2) The elementary teacher interested in teaching in high school is another source. (3) High school teachers who take special training in teaching of reading are still another source.1

V. CONCLUSION

In this review of the literature we have tried to point out some of the real reading problems we have in our high schools and suggest several ways of approach of treating the causes and symptoms of them. Schorling said that a high school reading program should include the five basic points listed below:2

1. Provide stimulating environment.
2. Begin at the pupils' level.
3. Strengthen his basis of experiences.
4. Avoid stigmatizing the slow reader.
5. Recognize that every teacher is a teacher of reading regardless of his subject area.

These points follow the basic psychological principles of learning that should be practiced by all teachers. If all teachers would teach according to these basic principles of learning, we possibly would not have all the problems in reading we have today. In a recent bulletin from the University of Miami, Dr. Pearson, President, said,

1Ibid., 112.
2Cited in Dolch, op. cit., p. 142.
"Our guidance counselors tell me that 50% of the difficulty that people have with their studies is due to poor reading habits." Schools need to be aware of the problem and when they choose their teachers take into account courses in teaching of reading and psychology of pupil learning.

Another preventive action that the administration could employ to help improve the total reading program is to draw up a well defined developmental reading program from kindergarten through the twelfth grade to help all teachers see their part in the total reading program. Dr. Weakly, in her class, Psychological Foundation of Basic Skills, suggested that this be done by all teachers of reading and that it would be a good plan in other skill areas as well. This program would aim at trying to keep students from missing certain skills needed to go on to further development and unnecessary repetition of certain other skills.

Dolch drew one of the best conclusions that could be considered at the close of this discussion. In saying that reading problems will always be with us, he concluded:

The best laid curriculum plans will always miscarry

1Dr. Hazel Weakly, Professor of Elementary Education, Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa.
to some extent. There will never be an adequate supply of the ideal teacher. With every possible motivation, we shall never be able to get the full cooperation that would be needed if each child were to reach his maximum achievement. And finally, there will always be sickness that keeps children out of school and the moving about of parents that disrupts school attendance. All these factors will operate to keep school work from being all that it should be.\(^1\)

\(^1\)Dolch, *op. cit.*, p. 172.
CHAPTER IV

A DESCRIPTION OF THE READING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
IN THE MAXWELL COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

The second part of this project involved using the information from the preliminary survey in designing and setting up a reading improvement program in the high school of the Maxwell Community School. After permission had been secured from the superintendent and principal, a plan was made which included all the high school English students of the Maxwell Community School, and put into operation during the school year 1959 - 1960.

The Otis Quick Score Mental Ability Test, Gamma Form FM, which is administered to all entering freshmen, was used to help select students for the various phases of the project. The Iowa Silent Reading Tests, Advanced Form AM, was administered the first week in February, 1960, and used to establish a beginning reading grade level, rate, and comprehension for each student. The twelve week reading improvement program followed.

I. GROUPS RECEIVING INSTRUCTION

Three groups of students received reading instruction. The entire high school student body in English classes, less
those in the other groups mentioned below, constituted one group; those in the Industrial English Class made up a second group; and those who had high ability and at least average reading rate and achievement made up the third group, to be referred to as the Advanced Reading Group.

**Group A, The High School Student Body.** This group of 75 students, 43 boys and 32 girls, included all the high school English students not in the Industrial English Class or the Advanced Reading Group. Members of this group received reading instruction through the use of a Wednesday afternoon group guidance period, in which six films on correct reading habits and study skills were shown and discussed by the writer. The subject matter teachers were asked not only to see the films with the students but also to encourage their students to practice these skills which lead to better reading in preparing their daily assignments.

The films were valuable but when using them in the assembly room, with over one-hundred students present, there was not the opportunity to discuss and go over the material as one would in a classroom situation. The films presented were as follows and in this order:

How Effective Is Your Reading?
How To Think
Choosing Books To Read
How To Study
Building Your Vocabulary
How To Read A Newspaper

The producers of these films are listed in Chapter III and are available in our area through both State University film libraries.

Because of her cooperation and interest, the English teacher was the key teacher in our reading program. In all the regular English classes there was an emphasis on reading. This group worked on reading only once or twice a week in their respective English classes. The larger portion of 20 class sessions were devoted to reading improvement. The student section of the school edition of the Reader's Digest was used several times each week. The section "Improve Your Reading" is designed to help students read better and faster. A set of questions to check comprehension and the word count to check the reading rate are given for five very readable articles in each issue. A chart is also included by which reading time may be converted to rate of reading from 200 to over 600 words per minute. The reading of books was encouraged by the arranging of book displays by the librarian and by having

---

1The Reader's Digest was required for all students in English.
the second semester book report, required of each student, fall due during this period.

**Group B, The Industrial English Class.** This was a regular class set up at the start of the school year by the principal and English teacher. This class, taught by the English teacher, was made up of slower students that found the regular level English classes too hard for them. The average Otis intelligence quotient for this group was 94.4. Most of these students had reading problems and had received a failing grade in their regular English classes. The students elected voluntarily to come into this class and regular credit was given. Nine boys and two girls made up the membership of this class.

In addition to the instruction in the Wednesday afternoon group guidance period, the members of this class received special help in reading. A workbook, *Be A Better Reader*, Book A, by Nila B. Smith, published by Prentice-Hall, 1958, was selected and used in this group. The student section of the *Reader's Digest* was also used. Because of the needs in this group, the emphasis was largely on vocabulary and comprehension. This class met daily and approximately 50% of the class time was spent on vocabulary and reading improvement using the workbook and *Reader's Digest*. 
Group C, The Advanced Reading Group. This was a hand-picked group of above-average students with at least average reading rate and comprehension who were available Tuesdays and Thursdays the first period. This was a purely voluntary class in which no credit was given. Of the twelve students invited to participate in this group only nine (two boys and seven girls) were willing to give up their study time to work on reading improvement. The average Otis intelligence quotient for the group was 121.7 with none below 114. The class met twice a week the first period in the morning and was taught by the writer. Besides the work on reading in this class, these students received help in reading during one period once or twice a week in their regular English classes, and they also saw the series of films on better reading and study habits during the Wednesday afternoon group guidance session.

This group worked primarily on increasing their speed and comprehension and used the mechanical devices for increasing reading rate mentioned below. A filmstrip machine with a tachistoscope was used with a set of filmstrips on words and phrases. Our county superintendent had an old set of the Iowa Reading Films that were in very brittle condition and were broken in several places, but we were able to use them. We followed up each reading selection
with the comprehension questions and recorded the speed and comprehension in the students' notebook. We were able to borrow an Educational Developmental Laboratories (E.D.L.) Controlled Reader for two days' use and felt that this machine had advantages over the reading films, in that the speed could be readily adapted to the needs of the group. The top four levels from the Science Research Associates Reading Laboratory, Intermediate Level, were also used in this group to help the students make the transfer from reading projected material to reading the printed page. Due to conflicts with music contests and other activities the class was able to meet only once a week for the last month of instruction, but a total of 20 class sessions was held. A typical class session would include using the tachistoscope for three or four minutes and following this with a selection from the Iowa Reading Films. The comprehension questions were then answered, checked, and recorded in the students' notebook along with the date, reading selection, speed, and comprehension percentage. In the remaining time in the period each student progressed through the Science Research Associates Reading Laboratory material at his own rate, and again recorded the information in his notebook.
II. EVALUATION

At the conclusion of the project the Iowa Silent Reading Test, Form BM, was administered. This attempted to measure the reading development during the period in reading grade level, reading rate, and comprehension. Because of absences during either the February or May testing, complete test data was available for only 66 of the 75 students in Group A, the High School Student Body. The tables in the following chapter show the changes in reading performance during this reading improvement program.
CHAPTER V

RESULTS OF THE READING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The results of the Reading Improvement Program as indicated by tests, Total Reading, Reading Rate, and comprehension of the Iowa Silent Reading Tests, have been summarized in a series of tables which are presented in the following discussion.

I. MOVEMENT AMONG QUARTILE GROUPINGS

Table I

Table I shows the number of students in each quartile grouping at the beginning and end of the reading program for the three groups. In all three groups, the percentile placement scores for Total Reading, Reading Rate, and Comprehension show a consistent movement to the top two quartiles. The gain column shows this movement by number of students.

Column one, Total Reading. In the Total Reading column, Group A had a 100% gain in the number of students in the top quartile and 36% fewer in the bottom quartile. Group B did not have any student reach the top quartile but registered a 300% increase in the number of students in the
TABLE I

COMPARISON OF THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN EACH PERCENTILE PLACEMENT FOR THE THREE READING GROUPS
IOWA SILENT READING TESTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups Receiving Reading Instruction</th>
<th>Percentile Placement</th>
<th>Total Reading</th>
<th>Reading Rate</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group A</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The High</td>
<td>75 - 99</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>50 - 74</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>25 - 49</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body</td>
<td>1 - 24</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>66 Students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group B</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The</td>
<td>75 - 99</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>50 - 74</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>25 - 49</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>1 - 24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11 Students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group C</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The</td>
<td>75 - 99</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>50 - 74</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>25 - 49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>1 - 24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9 Students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
50-74 quartile. Eight of the nine students in Group C ended up in the top quartile for a 33% increase.

**Column two, Reading Rate.** In Reading Rate, Group A had a 170% increase in the number of students in the top quartile, an 85% increase in the 50-74 quartile, and 72% fewer students in the bottom quartile. Group B made a 300% increase in the number of students in the top quartile and Group C recorded a 100% increase, leaving all but one student in the top quartile.

**Column three, Comprehension.** In the Comprehension column, Group A registered a 64% growth in the number of the students in the top quartile and a 100% decrease in the bottom quartile. Group B registered a 150% growth in the students in the 50-74 quartile grouping. Group C made very little growth as only one student raised quartile placement.

**Table II**

Because of the limitation in interpreting numbers of students and percentages of gain in groups of unequal quantity, Table II was constructed using the same data as Table I, but converting the number of students in each quartile to the percentage of the total of each group. The percentage of students in each quartile is comparable from one group to the other.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups Receiving Reading Instruction</th>
<th>Percentile Placement</th>
<th>Total Reading</th>
<th>Reading Rate</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group A</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>75 - 99</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>50 - 74</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body</td>
<td>25 - 49</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>-14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66 Students</td>
<td>1 - 24</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>-7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group B</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The High</td>
<td>75 - 99</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>50 - 74</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>25 - 49</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>1 - 24</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>-18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group C</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Advanced Reading</td>
<td>75 - 99</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>50 - 74</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>-11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>25 - 49</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>1 - 24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Column one, Total Reading. In Total Reading, Group C had the greatest percentage of gain in the top quartile, equal to 22% of the group. Group A had a gain of 16% at the top quartile. Another way of indicating the increase is to note the percentage of students in the top two quartiles at each testing. Group A had 44% and ended up with 65% of the students in the top for a gain equal to 21% of the group. Group B had 9% and ended with 27% of its students above the 50th percentile for a gain of 18%, but no student scored in the top quartile. Group C had 89% of its members in the top quartile group and ended up with 100% of the students in the top half. The gain in the top quartile group equaled 22% of Group C.

Column two, Reading Rate. In the Reading Rate column Group A and C both had increases equal to more than 40% of their respective groups in the top two quartiles. Group B had only an 18% increase in the top quartile. Group A had 35% and ended with 77% in the top half, while Group C started out with 55% and ended with 100% of the students above the 50th percentile. Both Group A and C made noticeable increases in the Reading Rate area.

Column three, Comprehension. In Comprehension, there was an increase equal to 20% of the students for Group A,
with 56% ending above the 50th percentile. Group B does not have any students in the top quartile but shows an increase equal to 27% of the group with 45% of the students finishing in the 50-74 quartile grouping. Group C registered only an 11% gain in number of students in the 50-74 quartile.

In summary, Tables I and II indicate that Group C made slightly higher gains than Group A in Total Reading and Reading Rate, and that Groups A and B made more improvement in Comprehension than Group C.

II. MEDIAN STANDARD SCORE INCREASES

Table III

On Table III the Median Standard Scores for each grade level have been listed for each of the three tests. The Gain columns show there was a positive change in all but four instances. In Group A, the largest Median Standard Score increase was made by the 12th grade in sub-test, Reading Rate. This increase of 18 is the greatest shown in the table except for the one 11th grade student in Group C, who had a Median Score increase of 21. The highest composite or Group Median Score, 200, was in Group C, Total Reading. The greatest composite gain in Reading Rate was in Group A, with Group C only one score point behind. Group A also made the greatest gain in Comprehension. Group B increased
### TABLE III

**COMPARISON OF GROUP MEDIAN SCORES IN EACH GRADE LEVEL FOR THE THREE READING GROUPS**

**IOWA SILENT READING TESTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups Receiving Reading Instruction</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>No. of Pupils</th>
<th>Total Reading</th>
<th>Reading Rate</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The High</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body (Composite)</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
<td>168</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Industrial</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class (Composite)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>151</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Advanced Reading</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Group</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composite</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Composite)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
in Total Reading by two points but did not increase in Reading Rate; however, their greatest gain of four points in Comprehension was only one point more than that of Group C.

III. INCREASES IN STANDARD GRADE PERCENTILES

Table IV

The Median Standard Scores in each test on Table III as converted into Standard Grade Percentiles are shown in Tables IV and V. The Median Standard Grade Percentiles for Total Reading on Table IV, not only show the growth in reading but also indicate the wide range in reading ability from the 22nd to the 99th percentile. The 9th grade in Group A made the greatest improvement in Standard Grade in percentile points and also had the highest Grade Percentile (80) in Group A. This compares to a Total Reading increase of 2.6 grades during this twelve-week period, as shown in the last column. As indicated on Table III, all grades in Group C scored higher than 174 in Total Reading, and no grade level norms are available beyond this score which is the 13th grade. In Total Reading Ability, Group A as a whole recorded a 1.7 grade growth during the twelve weeks, whereas Group B had only a .3 increase.
COMPARISON OF THE STANDARD GRADE PERCENTILES AND GRADE EQUIVALENTS
BASED ON THE MEDIAN TOTAL READING SCORE FOR EACH GRADE
LEVEL IN THE THREE READING GROUPS, TOTAL READING
IOWA SILENT READING TESTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups Receiving Reading Instruction</th>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>No. of Pupils</th>
<th>Standard Grade Percentiles</th>
<th>Grade Equivalents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feb. Test</td>
<td>June Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The High</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>40th</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>93rd#</td>
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</table>

* Plus sign indicates achievement beyond the 13th grade level - grade equivalents given on norms only through Median Score 17 1/2.

* Equivalent grade percentiles are for specific grades - these composite scores were figured by averaging the individual grade percentiles.
Table V

Table V is a continuation of Table IV, but compares the Standard Grade Percentiles for Reading Rate and Comprehension. In Reading Rate, the 12th grade in Group A made the greatest gain, as pointed out in Table III. This represents a gain of 32 percentile points. The group started out at the 26th percentile and ended up at the 58th. In Group C, the greatest improvements were also in the 11th and 12th grades. This gain is 24 percentile points for the 12th grade and 39 percentile points for the 11th. The greatest increase in Comprehension was in Group A with the 9th and 11th grades showing 20 and 21 percentile points of increase respectively. Group B shows little improvement in Reading Rate, but a greater gain than Group C in Comprehension.

IV. COMPARISON OF QUARTILE POINTS

Table VI

Table VI compares the quartile points of the Median Standard Scores in each test for the three reading instruction groups. In comparing the quartile points the range of reading ability is readily seen. In all tests, Group C consistently scored the highest and Group B the lowest. In the February testing the lowest Q1 score overall was 135
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Groups Receiving Reading Instruction</th>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>No. of Pupils</th>
<th>READING RATE (Standard Grade Percentiles)</th>
<th>COMPREHENSION (Standard Grade Percentiles)</th>
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<td>Groups Receiving Reading Instruction</td>
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<td>Total Reading</td>
<td>Median Standard Scores</td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
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and the highest 196. In the May testing the highest $Q^3$ score over-all was 213 and the lowest, 144.

**Column one, Total Reading.** In the Total Reading column, Group C made greater increases in quartile point scores than any other group. Although little gain is indicated in the Median Score, Group B made more gain at $Q^3$ and $Q^1$ than Group A.

**Column two, Reading Rate.** The Reading Rate column indicates that both Groups A and C made noticeable increases. In Group B, no gain is indicated at the Median Score, but substantial increases at points $Q^1$ and $Q^3$ were made. Group C registered the highest $Q^3$ score on the test and the greatest gain at any quartile point, (24) at $Q^1$.

**Column three, Comprehension.** In Comprehension, Groups A and B show a greater gain than Group C. The Media Scores for Group C and B are nearly equal but in the comparison of quartile points it is revealed that as a group, Group B made increases equal to 17 more quartile points than Group C. Because of these increases at points $Q^1$ and $Q^3$, Group B made a larger total quartile point gain than Group
V. DISCUSSION

The gains made by the High School Student Body (Group A) seem to be nearly as great as those in the special reading classes. Since viewing a film on how to improve your reading does not, by itself, increase one's reading ability, the writer must suppose that the work done in the regular English classes on the Reader's Digest, one or two periods a week, helped this group make significant gains. It also should be pointed out that the low ability students in grades 9 and 10 were not in this group but in the Industrial English Class (Group B).

Column three, on Table VI, indicates that the students in the Industrial English Class whose average intelligence quotient was 94.4, increased more in Comprehension than Group C, where the average intelligence quotient was 121.7.

In evaluating the results of the Advanced Reading Group it should be remembered that the Median Percentile Score in Total Reading for this group was at the 92nd percentile in February and 99th in May. Since all students scored above the 13th grade level in both February and May, and because there are no norms available, this group perhaps reached the limit of this test in several places.
VI. SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

The test results show some reading improvement for each group. As to which type of instructional program produced the best results the test results were not conclusive. It is easy to point out who scored the highest on the different tests but as to which group made the most improvement the results are inconclusive. As pointed out, each group had at least one test where it scored higher or reported more growth than the others.

It is enough for the writer to summarize the results by saying that during the 12-week reading program all groups scored higher in Total Reading, that Groups A and C made more improvement in Reading Rate than Group B, and that Groups A and B made considerably more improvement in reading Comprehension than Group C.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

I. SUMMARY

It was the purpose of this study to set up and describe a twelve-week reading improvement program in the senior high school of the Maxwell Community School, and to make a tentative evaluation of the results. A survey of the literature related to high school reading was made and the information from it was used in planning the program.

Three different instructional methods were used with three different groups. Group A, the High School Student Body, excluding those in Groups B and C, and those not in English, received reading instruction through the use of a Wednesday afternoon group guidance period in which six films on reading and study habits were shown. In addition, one or two periods a week in the regular English classes were devoted to reading improvement. Group B, the Industrial English Class, was a regular class set up for students who had or were failing regular English classes. This group saw the six films but used a Reading Workbook in class. Group C, the Advanced Reading Group, was a hand-picked group of above average students who met
two periods a week. In addition to seeing the films on Wednesday afternoon this class used a tachistoscope and the Iowa Reading Films. The growth during this program was evaluated by a before and after reading test.

II. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions concerning this Reading Improvement Program can be summarized within limitations inherent in the study, by the following statements:

1. High school students can improve in reading ability, even with inexperienced teachers and inferior equipment.

2. The reading program as designed did not provide any clear-cut answer as to the most effective instructional methods.

3. Groups A and C showed more improvement over-all than Group B. Caution must be exercised in attributing this difference primarily to the methods used, because the students in Group B were slower students with limited ability.

4. There was evidence in the test results that Groups A and B had greater increases in comprehension. Again this statement should be qualified as to evaluating methods of instruction, by the fact
that Group C started out at a higher level and that there was some doubt as to how well the test measured those above the thirteenth grade level.

III. COMPARISON WITH THE REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In the survey of the literature, several different types of programs were discussed. In designing the Reading Improvement Program for the Maxwell High School, the writer wanted to compare the growth of the three groups and say, conclusively, that students receiving certain types of instruction made superior reading growth. The comparisons made in Chapter IV do not warrant any such rash statements.

The writer found, as Brawn and Patterson reported\textsuperscript{1} that some of the greatest gains in high school reading programs were made at the 12th grade level. This was pointed out in Chapter IV in discussing Tables IV and V.

In trying to evaluate the various machines and reading aids used in the improvement program, the writer confirmed Martens' finding,\textsuperscript{2} that reading films and pacers

\textsuperscript{1}Martha B. Brawn, and Walter G. Patterson, "Reading Improvement In The High School," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, XLI (March, 1957), 55-64.

\textsuperscript{2}Mary Martens, "The Role of a Pacer in Improving Comprehension," Journal of Developmental Reading, IV (Winter, 1961), 137.
are not absolutely necessary for the success of a reading program. Group A, which worked only with printed material, made nearly as much growth on reading rate as Group C, which used the tachistoscope and Iowa Reading Films. The writer believes that the results could be improved by using the new edition of the Iowa Reading Films where the number of exposures per line is decreased and the over-all technical quality is improved.

Our experience was similar to that reported by Brawn and Patterson,¹ about the motivational effect of reading pacers. During the brief time (two days) we used the controlled reader, we sensed this machine could provide the spark and motivation to help students and teachers do something about reading.

Because of the difficulty of scheduling a time for the Advanced Reading Class to meet, the writer would be quick to agree with Early,² when she said that the easiest type of program to schedule is the "reading-within-the-English-class." Group A proved that this was an effective method even though easiest.

¹Brawn and Patterson, op. cit., 63.

The Reading Program in the Maxwell Community School was chiefly a project of the writer. As suggested by Witty and Ratz,\(^1\) a committee should be set up to study, plan, and help direct the program. This would make reading improvement a part of the total school program rather than one teacher's responsibility.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of this study, including his survey of related literature, the writer would leave the following recommendations to all those interested in improving high school reading:

1. All high schools should do something about reading improvement either in a regular or special class. This is based on the premise that reading will become more important in our changing world and that reading improvement programs get results.

2. Committees should be set up in schools to study needs of the students, existing programs, and present a program of action.

3. An outline of a developmental reading program

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from kindergarten through twelfth grade should be made to help each teacher see his part in the total program.

4. In-service training in high school reading should be given to all high school teachers to help them understand reading problems and how they can teach reading in their content fields.

5. Credit should be given to students in reading improvement courses whenever possible. Special classes and credits are given for improvement in other skill areas, why not reading?

6. Because special reading equipment is expensive, and its usefulness debatable, schools should investigate and have demonstrated various reading machines, films, and materials, and evaluate them as to their usefulness in the local situation.

7. Since reading is an important problem in high schools, the use of State and Federal monies should be considered for improving reading programs in public schools, as it presently is for mathematics, science, foreign language, testing, guidance, and vocational education.

8. More studies and further investigation should be
made in high school reading programs to help refine and evaluate teaching methods, machines, and materials.
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