A COMPARISON OF CONCEPTS IN ELEMENTARY
READING AS REVEALED IN YEARBOOKS OF THE NATIONAL
SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF EDUCATION,
1924, 1936, AND 1948

BY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the editor's preface to the Twenty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, entitled Report of the National Committee on Reading, it is stated that this is not the first time that a committee has dealt with reading. But despite the many references reading is so obviously the key subject of the elementary grades and has so many ramifications and contacts with other school subjects and with important attitudes and habits of work that too much research and study cannot be made in this area.¹

At a conference of representative school men held in December, 1922, the members voted to recommend to Commissioner Tigert of the National Society for the Study of Education that a committee be appointed to make a study of important problems in one subject, namely reading, and to prepare recommendations on that subject based on experimental evidence as far as possible, and on expert opinion

where such evidence is lacking. The committee meeting of 1923 started the Yearbook which was published in 1925.

In its report in 1925, the National Committee on Reading recommended that subsequent yearbooks on reading should be published at more or less frequent intervals. This suggestion was based on the conviction that problems relating to instruction in any subject should be reviewed deliberately from time to time and recommendations prepared in harmony with changing needs and the results of experimentation.

For several years following the 1925 report many notable changes in teaching reading occurred based directly upon the Committee's recommendations. In the course of time, however, an increasing number of other reforms in the teaching of reading which were based upon new social demands, upon important changes in educational theory and practice, and upon the findings of hundreds of scientific studies were introduced. As a result of such developments the recommendations of a decade ago no longer provide adequately for current educational and social needs.

Accordingly, the Board of Directors of the National Society for the Study of Education appointed an advisory

1Ibid., p. vi.


3Ibid.
committees in December, 1935, to consider the need for a new Yearbook on reading and to make recommendations concerning its purpose and scope. As a result of this committee's efforts, the Society's Thirty-sixth Yearbook, The Teaching of Reading: A Second Report, was published in 1937.

The Forty-eighth Yearbook, Part II, Reading in the Elementary School, is the second volume of the Society's current publications in the field of reading. Reading in the Elementary School furnishes ample evidence of the committee's realization of the primary objective of providing an authoritative interpretation of the significance of new knowledge and of emerging problems in the field of reading. In this respect, this Yearbook may reasonably be expected to provide a stimulus to continued progress toward the improvement of instruction in reading comparable to the recognized influence of the Society's earlier contributions to the scientific study of educational problems in this important area.

Statement of the Problem

Through the continued improvement of instruction in reading, a need arises for the investigation of these

1Ibid.


Procedure

The need for a study between specific periods of time is essential in investigating the changing concepts of reading education. The N. S. S. E. Yearbooks of 1925, 1937, and 1949 were selected as the basis for the comparison in that they represent sufficient time elapse for changes to take place in methods and techniques of reading.

The major areas which seemed most comprehensive for the study of the changing concepts in reading were philosophy, psychology, curriculum, methods, and testing.

Chapter II is subdivided into five divisions, one for each of the above areas. The data from the three Yearbooks on each topic are reported within these five sections, respectively.

A discussion of comparative concepts in reading is included in Chapter III.
CHAPTER II

PRESENTATION OF DATA

The data pertinent to the five areas of investigation, (1) philosophy, (2) psychology, (3) curriculum, (4) methods, and (5) testing, are presented within the five subdivisions of this chapter. These divisions have been made to present the major areas of the changing concepts in reading. If the divisions prove to be obstacles, they will be disregarded. Sharp lines of division are contrary to the nature of the teaching activity and to the area of research.

Philosophy

The philosophic aspect considered in this section will pertain to the science of the methods of teaching reading in relationship to their limits and validity.

Courses of study reflect philosophical aims of education. As reading was taught prior to the writing of the National Society for the Study of Education (N.S.S.E) Twenty-fourth Yearbook, Report of the National Committee of Reading, its content was determined largely by three aims, namely: (1) to master the mechanics of reading, (2) to
develop habits of good oral reading, and (3) to stimulate keen interest in and appreciation of good literature.\(^1\)

The Yearbook Committee felt that the social needs of society had changed. To meet this need, a revision in the curriculum produced a greatly enriched course of study. Reading was considered essential to intelligent participation in the activities of modern life and vitally related to practically all classroom activities. The current aims of reading should be correspondingly broad and should prepare pupils to engage effectively in all essential school life activities that involve reading.\(^2\)

After a detailed study of the desirable reading habits of children and adults in regard to attitudes, habits, and skills, the Committee adopted the three following major objectives of reading:

1. The primary purpose of reading in school is to extend the experiences of boys and girls, to stimulate their thinking powers, and to elevate their tastes.

2. A second objective of reading instruction is to develop strong motives for, and permanent interests in reading that will inspire present and future life of the reader and provide for the wholesome use of leisure time.

3. A third aim of reading is to develop the attitudes, habits, and skills that are essential in the various types of reading activities in

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\(^1\)Report of the National Committee on Reading, p. 9.

\(^2\)Ibid.
which children and adults should engage.\textsuperscript{1}

With records of the normal progress of children in fundamental reading habits and studies of their interests, accomplishments, and needs in other phases of reading, the Committee justified the organization of a reading program into the following five divisions or periods:

1. \textbf{Period of preparation for reading}.--This period includes the preschool age, the kindergarten, and frequently the early part of the first grade. Its primary purpose is to provide the training and experience which prepare pupils for instruction in reading.

2. \textbf{The initial period of reading instruction}.--The most important purposes of this period are to introduce pupils to reading as a thought-getting process and to develop ability to read independently and intelligently very simple passages such as are found in the first readers in common use.

3. \textbf{The period of rapid progress in fundamental attitudes, habits, and skills}.--The distinguishing characteristic of this period is rapid development of the attitudes, habits, and skills on which intelligent interpretation, fluent, accurate oral reading, and rapid silent reading depend. Appropriate instruction is provided in the second and third grades, and frequently in the fourth grade.

4. \textbf{The period of wide reading to extend and enrich experience and to cultivate important reading attitudes, habits, and tastes}.--The essential purposes of this period are to extend the experiences of pupils, to quicken their thinking powers, to cultivate a wide variety of interests and tastes in reading, to develop speed in silent reading, and to lay the foundation for study habits. Instruction should also be provided to improve oral reading after habits of silent

\textsuperscript{1}\textit{Ibid.}
reading have been well established. This period usually includes the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades.

5. The period of refinement of specific reading attitudes, habits, and tastes. -- During this period, reading and study habits are refined in each content subject as well as in the literature period. Wholesome interests in reading, the habit of reading current events and books and magazines of real worth, the sources of different types of reading materials, and standards of selection are emphasized. Appropriate instruction is provided in the junior and senior high school grades.\(^1\)

The Committee offers three important cautions concerning the above-mentioned divisions:

1. The first caution is that the pupils of a given grade or class probably belong to two or even three different stages of progress and therefore have a great variety of needs.

2. The second is that a given pupil may be at one stage of progress in some phases of reading and at different stages of progress in other phases.

3. The third is that only the most important characteristics of each period have been described.\(^2\)

The Thirty-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, *The Teaching of Reading: A Second Report*, makes its philosophic stand to correspond to the recent social changes. The general nature and direction of these developments may be reviewed briefly.

\(^{1}\)Ibid., pp. 24-25.

\(^{2}\)Ibid., pp. 25-26.
1. Education is conceived primarily as a process of growth toward desirable goals, rather than as a series of lessons that aim merely to promote the memorization of facts. This view implies a clear understanding of the processes of child development (mental, social, physical, and emotional), including growth toward understanding, independence, and maturity, and an appreciation of the effect of growth on child interests, abilities, responses, and needs.

2. The process and direction of growth are determined by all the experiences that children encounter, both in school and out of school.

3. In organizing school activities persistent attention is given to the interests, and capacities of the learners, with the view to promoting types of growth that harmonize with the learner's level of development and that are most helpful in meeting vital situations.

4. Many of the problems studied are organized around basic functions and major interests of society. Of special significance are the experiences that promote social understanding, develop power to solve personal and social problems intelligently, and build up appreciations that are directly valuable in promoting the best in contemporary civilization.

5. Improved plans of classifying and promoting pupils are being developed in order to adapt instruction more effectively to varying capacities and needs of children and to provide longer periods of successful progress.

6. The fact that education is a continuous process that extends throughout life is now widely recognized. Accordingly, schools are attempting to equip individuals with the understandings, interests, and controls essential for continuous growth and efficient living in a changing civilization.¹

The Committee for the Thirty-sixth Yearbook of the N.S.S.E., Part I goes on to say:

In keeping with the trends described above, instruction in reading should be based on a clear recognition of the needs of child life. Desirable type of growth should be achieved through activities that are purposeful, challenging, and enriching. This implies less formal practice in establishing desirable reading habits and greater reliance on activities in which reading serves other valuable purposes. The materials provided should be highly charged with interest and adapted to the level of reading achievement of the learners. The basic instruction given should be organized so as to provide more widely than in the past for continuous successful progress from one stage of development to another.¹

The Committee for the Thirty-sixth Yearbook, Part I recognized a need for expansion in the current reading program and new emphases in its teaching.²

In developing such a program, the Committee attempts to identify significant facts, basic principles, and assumptions that underlie an adequate program of instruction in reading. They give due recognition to the needs of child life, to current social demands, and to valid trends in educational theory and practice. Here is a brief summary of the platform:

1. Instruction in reading should increase in breadth and efficiency in the immediate future if reading is to serve its broadest function as an instrument of intellectual and social life.

¹Ibid., p. 14.

²Ibid., p. 17.
2. The broad objectives of reading, namely, to enrich experience, to broaden interests, to develop appreciations, and to cultivate ideal and appropriate attitudes have changed but little during recent years. However, many of the specific aims of reading assume a new significance in the light of contemporary social and educational developments.

3. If schooling is to contribute more largely in the future than in the past to intelligent self-direction and social progress, it is imperative that children and young people acquire greater independence and efficiency in reading.

4. Paralleling the need for greater independence and efficiency in reading is the imperative need of abundant materials that can be read with ease and understanding by those at different levels of advancement from the primary grades to adulthood. This implies noteworthy improvement in the quality and readability of materials in various curricular fields for pupils of various levels of ability; it implies also the development of much simple material that will intrigue or enlighten young people and adults of limited reading ability.

5. Experience and the results of experiments show that rapid progress in learning to read and in making intelligent use of reading in study activities presupposes careful planning and guidance on the part of teachers. In this connection reading is conceived as a component part of a unified program rather than an end in itself.

6. Until further evidence develops, the Yearbook Committee recommends the use of specific periods for carefully planned guidance in reading throughout the elementary-school, secondary-school, and college periods.

7. The teacher of every curriculum field is recognized as a teacher of reading in the sense that he stimulates and directs the experiences of pupils and promotes increased efficiency in the various activities required. In the judgment of the Committee, the greatest opportunity for progress in teaching reading during the next decade lies in an intelligent attack on reading problems that arise in the content fields.
8. In planning special guidance in reading, teachers should recognize that a requisite of first importance is a stimulating purpose, a motivating drive, on the part of the learner that leads to vigorous application, along with such guidance as will insure rapid progress and optimal achievement.

9. The development of sound reading interests and the elevation of standards and tastes in reading present problems of major importance.

10. School and classroom libraries are of primary importance in initiating and establishing satisfactory reading attitudes and habits.

11. The results of studies of individual differences emphasize the importance of adapting instruction effectively to the capacities, interests, and needs of pupils.

12. The need for permanent records of attainments for continuous diagnosis and for corrective and remedial instruction is imperative at all levels.¹

David H. Russell comments on the philosophic change expressed in the Society's Forty-eighth Yearbook, Part II. He says that previously the elementary school program in reading has been determined by tradition, by philosophies of education, by social demands on the school and by textbooks. He continues by saying that the reading program has been influenced by everything except the one most concerned, the child himself.²

The one main mark of distinction between this Yearbook and the previous Yearbooks on reading, is the particular

¹Ibid., pp. 17-21.

²Reading in the Elementary School, p. 10.
emphasis given to the relationships between child development and the activities of the reading program.¹

Russell goes on to present evidence of the significances of this relationship:

The attempt to relate the reading program to child-development data must be considered as a new and distinctive approach to the study of reading problems. In the past many reading programs have been organized chiefly in terms of habits and skills which all children should acquire at assigned levels. The modern point of view arising out of the child study movement sees reading not as a set of skills but as a part of the well-rounded development of children and adults. It is a means to greater knowledge of a topic, more understanding of one's own and others' behavior, and better adjustment to social situations rather than a program for producing rhythmic eye-movements or accurate word recognition. This does not mean that reading skills are of no consequence. Rather, it implies that, because the emphasis in the reading program is not upon isolated skills but upon reading purposes and needs, the skills and habits acquired will be more efficient and more functional. In addition, it means that reading abilities may contribute to some of the more subtle aspects of personality development in a way they never would in a program emphasizing only the mechanics of reading.²

The Committee outlines its eight criteria of a good reading program in an elementary school:

1. Is consciously directed toward specific, valid ends which have been agreed upon by the entire school staff.

2. Coordinates reading activities with other aids to child development.

¹Ibid., pp. 10-11. ²Ibid.
3. Recognizes that the child's development in reading is closely associated with his development in other language arts.

4. At any given level, is part of a well-worked-out larger reading program extending through all the elementary and secondary school grades.

5. Provides varied instruction and flexible requirements as a means of making adequate adjustments to the widely different reading needs of the pupils.

6. Affords, at each level of advancement, adequate guidance of reading in all the various aspects of a broad program of instruction: basic instruction in reading, reading in the content fields, literature, and recreational or free reading.

7. Makes special provisions for supplying the reading needs of cases of extreme reading disability; in other words, the small proportion of pupils whose needs cannot be satisfied through a strong developmental program.

8. Provides for frequent evaluation of the outcomes of the program and for such revisions as will strengthen the weaknesses discovered.  

Psychology

In America during the nineteenth century there was no educational psychology as a subject of instruction. Educational practices, as well as the curriculum, were based on the doctrine of formal discipline. Methods of instruction were formal and exacting, but toward the end of the century the influence of the European educational reformers was felt. The conviction that education should be based on laws governing the natural development of the

\[1\text{Ibid.}, \text{ pp. 34–38.}\]
child became prevalent among the leaders of educational thought.  

Educational psychology has developed from the realization of the need for organizing educational procedures. It aims to provide the teacher with sound information concerning children and insight into the learning process that will enable him to carry on his work most effectively. The contributions of educational psychology are primarily in the field of teaching method. 

The Twenty-fourth Yearbook Committee subscribes the following summary of recommendations to improve reading instruction which reflects psychological as well as philosophical concepts:

1. A broad conception of the aims of reading instruction, based on a clear understanding of its wide significance in school and other life activities.

2. Vigorous emphasis from the beginning on reading as a thought getting process and the subordination of the mechanics of reading to thoughtful interpretation.

3. A clear recognition of the vital contribution of wide experience to good interpretation, with special emphasis on pre-reading experiences and the temporary postponement, if necessary, of formal instruction in reading.

4. Provision for wide reading as an essential means of extending experience and of cultivating strong motives for, and permanent interests in, reading.

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2. Ibid., p. 21.
5. A significant increase in the amount and variety of reading materials and a corresponding improvement in their quality.

6. A clear recognition of the fact that both recreatory and work-type reading are essential in a well-balanced program of instruction.

7. Definite provision for the systematic development and independent use of specific reading and study habits in all school subjects.

8. Emphasis on the enjoyment of literature as a means of fuller living, rather than on analysis and detailed study technique in this field.

9. New types of organization and procedure in classes made necessary by the adoption of broader aims of reading.

10. Adequate provision for differences in individual capacities, needs, and tastes.

11. The classroom use of informal tests as essential means of discovering group and individual needs.

12. The continuous study of progress toward the essential objectives of reading, namely, wide experience, strong motives for, and permanent interests in reading, and effective habits and skills.¹

The Thirty-sixth Yearbook Committee in The Teaching of Reading: A Second Report believes that any conception of reading that fails to include reflection, critical evaluation, and the clarification of meaning is inadequate. The Report recognizes that this very broad use of the term implies that reading includes much that psychologists and educators have commonly called thinking. It takes the position, however, that, since efficient readers do think

¹Report of the National Committee on Reading, pp. 305-306.
about what they read while they are reading it, the teacher should provide needed stimulus and guidance both in securing ideas from the page and in dealing reflectively with them.\(^1\)

William S. Gray, a member of the Committee, points out that in the future teachers should increase their efforts to guide pupils in the deliberate study of the meaning and significance of what they read. Related concepts, experiences, and principles should be recalled and the facts apprehended should be interpreted in the light of them. It follows that, beginning in the earliest grades, there should be much clear thinking and weighing of values during the act of reading as well as subsequent to it.\(^2\)

Gray continues by saying:

It is not sufficient that pupils merely recognize the words of a passage and comprehend and interpret their meaning. If they are aided through reading in acquiring adequate power of self-direction and ability to solve personal and social problems, they must learn to apply successfully the ideas gained from the printed page. Desirable results are attained most economically when pupils make application of what they learn from the page while in the act of reading. It follows that reading includes not only recognition, comprehension, and interpretation, but also the application of the facts apprehended in the study of personal and social problems.\(^3\)

He adds to this by saying:

Inherent in the foregoing discussion is the con-
ception that reading is also a form of experience that


\(^2\)Ibid.

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 27.
modifies personality. Teachers should realize that such emotional responses are often aroused without adequate understanding on the part of the reader and that there may be decision and action without due consideration of all the facts involved. A properly conceived and intelligently directed reading program should reduce such responses to the minimum and should aid materially in developing a generation of citizens with social, stable, and enriched personalities. The fact is recognized that all children and young people will not rise to equal heights. It is essential, however, that everyone receive appropriate stimulus and guidance. 1

Gray makes this observation in regard to reading:

"Reading is not conceived as a psychologically unique mental process but rather as a complex of mental activities having much in common with other complex operations and also some elements that are unique." 2

Gray concludes by saying:

The attainment of reading attitudes and habits, appropriate for contemporary needs, requires a much more comprehensive program of reading instruction than has been provided in the past. It will not be sufficient to plan merely for the development of habits that underlie accurate recognition, speed, and comprehension in silent reading and fluent oral reading. Equally, if not more, important is the need for the development and refinement of interpretation, critical evaluation, and the application of the facts apprehended. Since these processes are of primary importance in all fields, appropriate guidance should be provided wherever reading aids in enriching experience, in stimulating thought, and in modifying personality. 3

Turning now to the data in the N.S.S.E. Forty-eighth Yearbook, Part II, the Committee states its concept

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1 Ibid., p. 28. 2 Ibid. 3 Ibid.
of the reading process:

Reading is not a simple mechanical skill; nor is it a narrow scholastic tool. Properly cultivated, it is essentially a thoughtful process. However, to say that reading is a 'thought-getting' process is to give too restricted a description. It should be developed as a complex organization of patterns of higher mental processes. It can and should embrace all types of thinking, evaluating, judging, imagining, reasoning, and problem-solving. Indeed, it is believed that reading is one of the best media for cultivating many techniques of thinking and imagining. The reading program should, therefore, make careful provision for contributing as fully as possible to the cultivation of a whole array of techniques involved in understanding, thinking, reflecting, imagining, judging, evaluating, analyzing, and reasoning.

A most significant principle underlying this Yearbook is that child development, in its broadest sense, is influenced by the individual's reading interests, abilities, and habits. The teaching of reading is frankly recognized by the Committee as conspicuously a problem of child development. Reading taught merely as an organization of intellectual skills without full regard for the child's developmental problems in general falls short of the ideal program. A flexible program adjusted nicely to individual needs and capacities is advocated. The Committee also feels that a major need in education is to provide continuously effective guidance throughout the entire period of schooling and into adult life to insure unceasing development.

1Reading in the Elementary School, p. 3.
to an optimum level of proficiency for each individual.¹

Curriculum

The third study, curriculum, is approached by an investigation first into the Twenty-fourth Yearbook, Part I. The Committee on reading for this Yearbook says that "The curriculum is not books, but experiences. The educational value is always what happens in one when he reads."² This Yearbook defends its reference to reading by saying that reading is the key subject of elementary curriculum. Also that the justification of any subject in the curriculum is that it enables pupils to engage effectively in desirable life activities.³

The most important change of recent years in classroom instruction is the enrichment of the course of study and of the opportunities offered to children. Instead of few textbooks relating to a limited number of topics, the progressive school today provides wide reading opportunities in many fields.⁴

These tendencies have resulted in establishing a very close relation between reading and practically every

¹Ibid., pp. 4-6.
²Report of the National Committee on Reading, p. 5.
³Ibid., p. 1.
⁴Ibid.
school activity. As a special subject of instruction, reading is intimately related to children's daily experiences and language activities, and should be taught in connection with them. As a means of gaining information and pleasure, reading is essential in every content subject, such as history, geography, arithmetic, science, and literature. In fact, rapid progress in these subjects depends in a large degree on the ability of pupils to read independently and intelligently.¹

In pointing out the shortcomings of the reading program to date, the Committee says:

A serious weakness of reading instruction in former decades lay in the fact that the selections used were organized primarily for use in teaching pupils to read. In the future, reading should not only accomplish this purpose well, but in addition it should broaden the horizon of the reader and stimulate his interests and thinking powers.²

In addition to the above statement, the Committee adds that:

The ultimate measure of the vitality of the reading experiences in school is the extent to which they lead to desirable interests, standards, tastes, and habits which carry over into life outside of school, such as interest in current events, in books and selections of genuine worth, and in the wholesome use of leisure time. The accomplishment of this aim makes it necessary to acquaint pupils with the sources and values of reading materials of both the work and recreational types, and to develop standards which may be used in selecting reading materials.³

¹Ibid., pp. 1-2.  
²Ibid., p. 10.  
³Ibid., p. 11.
The Committee relates that, if school systems are justified in spending millions of dollars each year in teaching pupils to read, it is imperative that permanent habits of reading be established in order to secure intelligent participation in personal and social activities for which society makes such generous provision. In this connection, special attention should be given to those pupils who learn slowly, who encounter unusual difficulties, or who fail to respond to the motives that appeal to most pupils.  

The proportion of failures in reading generally is small as compared with other subjects. The Committee says that the apparent reason is that:

The reading done in the so-called 'reading period' has been largely narrative. Yet studies have demonstrated that the pupil who reads narrative material quite well may read very poorly when the passages tell the conditions of an arithmetic problem or give directions to be followed in the study of grammar. Such situations indicate that there must be a broader conception of the variety of skills and habits to be developed before pupils can be said to read adequately.

The Committee states that a partial solution of the problem of training pupils to read effectively lies in the cultivation of appropriate reading habits in every school subject and activity. Just as spelling and language habits must be emphasized in every subject, so essential reading

\[1^{\text{Ibid.}}, \text{p. 11.}\] \[2^{\text{Ibid.}}, \text{p. 97.}\]
habits must be cultivated in the study of literature, arithmetic, history, geography, and other content subjects. Each subject, in addition to the general habits employed in reading, requires specific skills peculiar to its purposes and subject matter.¹

The Report of the National Committee on Reading reveals the conflicting opinions that have prevailed for many years regarding the place of phonetic training. The main controversy is whether phonetic training should or should not hold a place of primary or secondary importance in the teaching of reading. The Committee feels that there is abundant evidence that phonetic training has some values and that phonetic training should be provided according to the needs of individual pupils. They also express the need for scientific investigations in the field of phonetics.²

The need is expressed for more real literature and fewer "books about books." More books of genuine interest to children are needed and fewer romance and character studies and books of adult nature-interest, particularly in the lower grades and the junior high school. The Committee says that general practice in the school places poems from one to three grades too early in the curriculum.³

¹Ibid. ²Ibid., pp. 85-87. ³Ibid., p. 149.
This Yearbook Committee classifies reading experiences into two types. These are work-type and recreational. They are emphasized vigorously on the assumption that they have either been neglected or sadly confused.¹

The work-type reading is associated with the demands of vocations, civic duties, and other phases of daily life. Since schools are organized, in large part, for definite increase of knowledge, a great deal of the reading assigned there belongs primarily to the work type. Most lessons in history and civics, geography and other sciences, mathematics, and language also require work-type reading.²

Typical situations that lead children and adults to reading of the work-type are:

1. Crossing streets, finding stores and houses, and making longer journeys; reading signs, railroad folders, maps, road guides.

2. Understanding assignments and directions in both school and life activities.

3. Working out complicated problems or experiments: reading scout manuals, materials on radio, cookbooks, problems in arithmetic, or other textbooks and science manuals.

4. Finding or verifying spelling, pronunciation, meaning, use of words; using the dictionary, encyclopedia, and other reference books.

5. Gathering material for fuller understanding, for talking or writing on one's hobby, for assigned papers and discussions in school or club, and for experiments.

¹Ibid., pp. 4-5. ²Ibid., p. 5.
6. Informing or convincing others; reading aloud.
7. Finding out what is going on.
8. Deciding how to act in new situations.
9. Reaching conclusions as to guiding principles, relative values, or cause and effect.¹

Recreational reading is associated with the wholesome enjoyment of leisure time. It is in general directed by no conscious purpose, but rather by random, healthy curiosity and the search for pleasant occupation.²

Typical situations that lead children and adults to reading of the recreational type are:

1. Reliving common everyday experiences.
2. Seeking fun or sheer enjoyment during leisure time.
3. Enjoying sudden changes or sharp contrasts.
4. Getting away from real life.
5. Enjoying ready-made emotional reactions.
7. Giving pleasure to others.
8. Reading aloud parts of plays and dramatic dialogue.
9. Satisfying curiosity about animals, strange regions and times, and current happenings away from one's own environment.
10. Pursuing a hobby.³

¹Ibid., pp. 5-6. ²Ibid., p. 7. ³Ibid., pp. 7-8.
Directing attention now to the curriculum concepts by the Committee of the N.S.S.E. Thirty-sixth Yearbook, Part I, it makes this statement in regard to the above-mentioned types of reading:

The importance of both work-type and recreational reading has increased conspicuously during the last decade. The enrichment of the course of study and the growing complexity of social life have greatly enlarged the demand for reading of the study type. Likewise, the need for diversion, enjoyable pastime, and the satisfaction of interests and curiosities has stimulated greater interest in recreational reading. By and large, the more versatile and broader one's interests, the more frequent the occasion for recreational reading. It is obvious that any reading program organized at this time should make adequate provision for both types of reading.¹

Bess Goodykoontz, a member of the N.S.S.E. Thirty-sixth Yearbook Committee, discussing the place of reading in the curriculum says, "One of the fundamental problems in the teaching is to determine its place in the whole curriculum."² Her reason for this statement is the numerous demands the present day makes for ability to read widely and understand. This places an increasingly heavy role on the schools in which the curriculum affords opportunities for the growth of reading interests, habits, and skills.

Goodykoontz writing about the evolution of reading in the curriculum goes on to say:

¹The Teaching of Reading: A Second Report, p. 33.
²Ibid., p. 41.
Succeeding periods of the nation's economic and cultural development brought new demands upon reading, at one time emphasizing nationalistic ideals, at another, content values, at another, cultural values, and still later almost exclusively the 'service function' of reading; that is, promoting the development of abilities essential to carry on reading-study obligations successfully. But different as the emphasis was in one period and another, reading always carried an important share of the responsibility put upon the schools by society.¹

The curriculum of this period recognizes educational values not only in the academic experiences but also in all the experiences in which pupils engage both at school and, through school direction, at home. This involves the inclusion of many types of experiences among them some that contribute primarily to development of social understanding; that provide for participation in significant aspects of social understandings; that acquaint the child with the physical environment in which he lives; that contribute to healthful living; that offer opportunity for individual and group creative activities; and that provide for the development of efficient methods of work. To do this the curriculum must be thoroughly responsive to the changing demands of contemporary life.²

Goodykoontz defends the curriculum of the schools by saying:

The position is sometimes taken that the new curriculum places less emphasis on reading than was

¹Ibid., pp. 41-42. ²Ibid., p. 42.
true in the early schools. As a matter of fact the opposite is the case. As the variety of activities included in the curriculum increases, the greater the need is for reading ability, because children must read in so many different types of situations. On every hand children must read in order to accomplish the ends for which they are striving. The contrast, then, between reading in the modern school is that the early school tended to see reading as an end in itself, whereas the modern school sees reading as an essential whereby children may realize their varied purposes. In brief, the modern school is characterized by reading for a purpose.1

The Committee on reading in the N.S.S.E. Thirty-sixth Yearbook, Part I advocates no single pattern of reading instruction in the school program. It points out that the first responsibility in program-making as it pertains to reading instruction is to assay the reading habits and needs of a particular group. Only after this step is taken is it possible to plan the types and amounts of reading instruction required for individuals and for groups.2

Goodykoontz says that studies have shown that there is very close relation between reading ability and success or failure in schoolwork. She adds that these studies support the conclusion that the greatly increased emphasis upon learning through a variety of activities does not lessen the need for efficiency in reading, but rather increases this need.3

1Ibid., p. 44.  
2Ibid., pp. 44-45.  
3Ibid., p. 46.
In regard to the reading period in the present day curriculum, the Committee recommends specific periods for guidance in reading throughout the elementary school. Since the functions are not the same, the Committee further recommends that basic instruction in reading and guidance in literature be provided during separate periods.¹

Specific functions served by a separate reading period include the following:

1. The basic reading period prepares for various reading situations by initiating appropriate interests and skills.

2. The basic reading period provides supplementary instruction and practice in reading activities initially developed in other parts of the school program.

3. The basic reading period provides for continuity in the development of successively difficult steps in the various reading skills, habits, and attitudes.

4. The basic reading period serves as a constant reminder and provides examples of what to do in other parts of the school program in order to develop reading ability.

5. The basic reading period provides opportunity for continuous examination of the achievement and needs of children.

6. The basic reading period provides opportunity for promoting wide reading interests and habits of fluent, intelligent reading.²

In regard to the amount of time required for the basic reading program outlined above, the Committee says

¹Ibid., p. 52. ²Ibid., pp. 53-54.
that the current progressive practice points toward a weekly time allotment of from 150 to two hundred minutes per week in primary grades, with daily periods of thirty to fifty minutes for basic reading instruction, and additional time for literature and reading activities. However, in the upper grades of the elementary school considerably less time will be needed for a separate period for basic instruction in reading, provided that instruction in the earlier grades has been efficient and that reading instruction and independent reading are continually emphasized throughout the whole school program.¹

One obligation of the school, Goodykoontz says, is to encourage independent reading for constructive purposes in every possible way, to include both time and place for such experiences in the program, and to provide acquaintance with appropriate materials for fulfilling these purposes.²

Relating to the situations conducive to growth in voluntary reading, Goodykoontz has made the following listing:

1. Abundant materials of a wide variety and range in difficulty.

2. Extensive opportunity throughout the school program for pupils to report or to use the results of their individual reading encourages more reading.

¹Ibid., pp. 54-56. ²Ibid., pp. 58-59.
3. Easy access to books, freedom to examine and choose, and time for browsing provide the stimulation necessary for some readers.

4. Frequent reference to books and recourse to books to illustrate difficult concepts, or to prove points, or to settle controversies help to develop habits of reading.

5. Opportunities to hear good reading of a wide variety of types of materials open new doors for many readers.\(^1\)

Gray has this to say in regard to recent changes in the curriculum.

During recent years curriculum makers have given increased attention to child growth and development, and to the factors that condition learning and insure maximal educational growth. Because the traditional types of subject matter and teaching procedures had little or no relation to child activities and needs, they have broken down under the increasing emphasis placed upon the changes involved in child development—physical, mental, emotional, and social. Facts pertaining to child growth now from the body of much of the basic literature of the modern curriculum and methods of teaching. Research in these fields reveals significant correspondence between a child's stage of development and the success with which certain types of subject matter and different kinds of method can be employed. To organize units of learning opportunely is, therefore, a challenging aim of the curriculum maker. To fit content and method to the enlarged experiences and expanding interests of pupils means increased economy and efficiency in learning.\(^2\)

The N.S.S.E. Thirty-sixth Yearbook Committee on reading lists the following problems in curricular organization in relation to reading:

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 59. \(^2\)Ibid., pp. 71-72.
1. Providing reading curriculums for beginners that is full of meaningful experiences, training in language, enjoyment of stories, and other activities that serve excellently as an introduction to the use of books . . .

2. The selection of units for which there is reference material satisfactory in degree of difficulty and adequate in amount . . .

3. Providing a curriculum for pupils of limited reading ability . . .

4. Modification of systems of school and class organization and of promotion to facilitate curricular objectives. The Committee feels that it is commonly agreed that the fixed grade organization and regular periodic promotions, especially for primary grade children, are not conducive to the all-round development of pupils. . .1

The Yearbook Committee says in conclusion:

Reading is essential to successful study in all fields of the curriculum and that the various curricular fields in turn motivate reading and provide a basis for acquiring efficient reading habits. A record of poor reading ability in a school is an unmistakable indication of a general low level of thinking and study in all the subjects of the school. Hygiene, history, geography, and civics could not have been studied efficiently without definite training in reading skills as they were needed for specific purposes, and such training would have improved the ability to read. Nor could these subjects have been well taught without stimulating new and permanent interests, encouraging thoughtful and extensive reading, affording opportunities for critical thinking, and giving broad training in organization and interpretation.2

Directing attention now to the curriculum concepts as conceived by the Committee of the N.S.S.E. Forty-eighth

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1Ibid., pp. 60-62. 2Ibid., p. 163.
Yearbook, Part II, it has this to say about reading in relation to the other language arts and to the curriculum as a whole:

The quality of reading interests, abilities, and habits developed in any school depends greatly upon the character of the total school curriculum and the way in which the reading instruction is integrated with it. A plan for instruction in reading must be based upon a sound theory of curriculum organization as well as upon valid principles of learning and child development. Reading must be coordinated with the total school program in the manner that enables it to make the greatest possible contribution to the Fruitfulness of the curriculum as a whole and to secure the maximum reciprocal benefits. The relationship of reading to the other language arts--oral language, literature, spelling, writing--is especially close, and these several phases of language must be organized as an integrated, mutually facilitating, program.¹

The N.S.S.E. Forty-eighth Yearbook Committee on Reading in the Elementary School suggests that children's characteristics should influence the content, the organization and the methods used in a reading program. Six of the generalizations or principles of development which must always influence the planning and execution of any reading program are as follows:

1. All children go through similar stages of development as their reading abilities mature . . . .

2. Development of reading abilities is a continuous and gradual process . . . .

¹Reading in the Elementary School, p. 7.
3. Although children go through similar patterns of continuous development, there is wide variation in the times individuals reach certain points in reading achievement.

4. Although reading is a continuous development, at various levels different needs and interests tend to accelerate certain phases of growth in reading abilities and attitudes.

5. In general, there is a positive relationship between reading achievements and general physical, mental, and social development and among the various reading achievements themselves.

6. The effect of environmental influences related to reading varies with the stage of maturation reached by the child.

Each of these above statements has been discussed by their authors. Regarding item one, they point out that, since this similarity in development exists in children, it is possible for teachers, textbook writers, and other curriculum workers to plan a developmental series of reading activities for all children. Item two points out that modern reading programs provide for gradual growth in reading abilities, and the reading program must be considered as a continuous vertical development stretching at least from kindergarten through the junior college. In item three the authors point out that in planning the reading program the teacher or other curriculum worker must avoid suggesting materials and methods suitable only for some of the group in class. Item four states that curriculum

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1Ibid., pp. 16-18.
planners need to know characteristic activities and interests of children at various age levels, and the teacher has to know some of the changing motivations of her individual pupils if a reading program is to be planned and executed most efficiently. Regarding item five, the illustrators point out that, since reading achievements contribute to one another, the teacher or other curriculum worker plans a well-rounded program of reading activities rather than concentration upon one aspect of reading, such as speed or phonetic analysis. In item six the authors indicate that reading methods and materials must always be closely related to the child's maturation or growth status as affected by both hereditary and environmental influences.  

Earlier in this chapter the criteria of a good reading program were utilized. This, too, will throw considerable illumination on the curriculum development.

Gertrude Whipple, a member of the N.S.S.E. Forty-eighth Yearbook Committee, makes this observation about the curriculum of elementary schools:

The factor indispensable to a sound program is a staff deeply concerned with the welfare of children and at work in improving its philosophy of reading instruction and in making careful plans to insure that all the desirable types of reading experiences will be incorporated into its program.  

1Ibid., pp. 16-18.  2Ibid., p. 53.
William S. Gray says that a well-adjusted curriculum is one that is well adjusted to the interests and developmental needs of the boys and girls taught. He continues by saying:

The learning activities provided should insure rich, well-balanced experiences at each level of advancement. They should aim, among other things, to promote the personal well-being of children, including health, safety, and a feeling of security, to develop social understanding, to provide practice in cooperative activities, to acquaint children with the natural world and the laws that govern it, and to foster a growing understanding of the beautiful and the good. The importance of these and other common learnings cannot be overemphasized.1

Gray also says in regard to curriculum development that:

The improvement of ability to use reading effectively in learning activities is a responsibility of every teacher. The foundation of such growth is laid in well-planned basic reading lessons. Building upon the habits and skills thus developed, teachers should seek daily to identify the reading problems faced and the kinds of help pupils need in each learning activity assigned. These problems are as challenging as, if not more so than, those of the basic reading period. They merit persistent study and attention in every elementary school classroom.2

The fault Dora V. Smith finds with the current curriculum in the elementary schools is that "Literature and personal reading are in some respects the most neglected phases of education today." Smith comments that:

Literature and personal reading contribute notably to the enrichment of the human spirit and the molding of human personality; yet curriculum

1Ibid., p. 234. 2Ibid., p. 253.
makers frequently are willing to reduce both reading and expression to their 'tool' aspects alone, seeking time for health or physical education or additional science and social studies at the expense of personal interests and delight in books. Or perhaps they attempt to relate all reading to social and ethical purposes with the result that children merely 'extract instruction from what should give them joy.'

Relating to the scope of a planned program in literature, Smith says:

If one were to stop with relating reading to personal experience and to all the activities of the school day, he would deprive children of that direct contact with literature in and for itself which demands an important place in the basic reading program. A planned program in literature includes alertness in the use of literature in all the normal personal interests of childhood. It demands in addition, some time in each school day for the independent reading of literature, for reading aloud by the teacher, for sharing pieces of literature for the sheer joy they can bring, for storytelling for the fun of listening, and for sharing poetry for the enjoyment of rhythm, of music, and of imaginative power.

According to Ernest Horn and James F. Curtis there are marked differences of opinion on the place of oral reading in the elementary school. Those in favor of giving oral reading a more important place in the curriculum list the following points to support their conviction:

1. That oral language is basic to written language.

2. That the pupil comes to school with a relatively large speaking and hearing vocabulary.

\[\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 205.}\]  
\[\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 217.}\]
3. That oral reading facilitates the association of meanings and symbols.

4. That it aids in establishing and improving the basic habits common to both oral and silent reading.

The authorities opposed to the importance of oral reading in the primary grades list the following reasons:

1. That oral reading in the primary grades is detrimental to the development of silent reading ability.

2. That oral reading enhances the personality and warns of possible harmful effects.

3. That oral reading contributes to lip reading and sub-vocal articulation.

Horn and Curtis present theory and evidence which should be taken into consideration in deciding upon the place oral reading takes in the curriculum:

1. Oral reading is more difficult than silent reading since, to be effective, it not only presupposes the ability to understand and appreciate the selection to be read, but, in addition, involves many other attitudes and abilities some of which are difficult to acquire.

2. In the process of good oral reading, the eyes lead by a considerable distance the words being spoken.

3. The dominant influence in effective reading, whether oral or silent, is not the peripheral processes, such as eye movements, but the central processes, including purpose and understanding.

\[1 \text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 254-255.} \quad 2 \text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 255.}\]
4. Both theory and evidence indicate that the best results are obtained when the material to be read orally is first read silently.¹

Gray suggests that, if the potential contributions of oral reading are to be realized and its detrimental effects prevented, it must not only be balanced by silent reading experiences, but must itself be skillfully taught, and chiefly as a worth-while end in itself, not merely as an approach to silent reading. Horn and Curtis say that the labored word-calling found in primary reading cannot be called oral reading. They observe that it is very probable that such practice may have harmful effects on silent reading and on oral reading as well.²

The N.S.S.E. Forty-eighth Yearbook Committee on reading views phonics as one means of recognition which should not be used alone but in conjunction with context and visual clues. The Committee decries, as harmful to well-rounded development in reading, the mechanistic, elaborate, involves systems of phonetic analysis which have been revived recently and which have been accepted in certain schools. It is their opinion that:

These elaborate systems divorce practice from the reading situation, emphasize overanalytic techniques, consume time that should be spent on reading itself, and give children set, rigid ways of dealing with words.³

¹Ibid., pp. 258-259. ²Ibid., p. 257.
³Ibid., p. 180.
Method

The Twenty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, compiles the concepts of method by using the following divisions of students:

1. The period of preparation for reading includes the kindergarten and early part of the first grade.

2. The initial period of reading instruction includes the first grade.

3. The period of rapid progress in fundamental attitudes, habits and skills includes the second and third grades.

4. The period of wide reading to extend and enrich experience and to cultivate important reading attitudes, habits, and tastes includes the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades.

5. The period of refinement of specific reading attitudes, habits, and tastes includes the junior high school grades.¹

Each of these groups needs to be considered individually for a picture of method change.

In discussing the first group of students, the National Committee on reading states methods of providing essential training and experience. Changing method has been influenced by changing concepts in areas such as:

1. Providing wide experience.

2. Training pupils to use ideas.

3. Training pupils in the use of English.

4. Stimulating a desire to read.

¹Report of the National Committee on Reading, pp. 24-25.
5. **Inadvisability of formal instruction in reading in the kindergarten.**

Each of the above points will be discussed separately, listing the methods of providing essential training and experience.

**Providing wide experience.**—Kindergarten and primary teachers should provide a wealth of interesting and vivid experiences about the home, the community, animals, flowers, trees, and the common relations of group and community life. Various group activities should be organized. Simple stories, poems, and songs form another source of valuable experience.

**Training pupils to use ideas.**—Well-planned construction lessons, play activities, and discussions of the problems in which the children are interested provide excellent training in the use of ideas.

**Training pupils in the use of English.**—The following principles should be observed:

1. Provide abundant opportunity for pupils to talk freely about matters in which they are keenly interested.
2. Secure freedom and spontaneity in speaking and genuine audience situations.
3. Provide real motives for speaking and genuine audience situations.

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4. Encourage pupils to speak freely and naturally, at first in relatively short units, if necessary. Later aid them in presenting longer series of ideas in good sequence.

5. Encourage pupils to use whatever new words fit naturally into class discussions and activities.

6. Present good models of enunciation and pronunciation at all times.

7. Depend primarily on the imitation of right models in correcting and refining the speech habits of pupils.

Stimulating a desire to read.--Keen interest in reading develops naturally from experiences which reveal to pupils that reading contributes to their pleasure and satisfaction.

Inadvisability of formal instruction in reading in the kindergarten.--Because a great wealth of training and experience should be provided for children of kindergarten age, formal instruction in reading should not be given to most pupils before they enter the first grade.

The Committee recommends the classification of the first grade children. In order to provide appropriate instruction for them they must either be taught individually or in groups which are more or less homogeneous. The instruction in reading should be effected with a clear realization that pupils advance at different rates of

\[\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 29.\]

\[\text{Ibid.}\]

\[\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 30.\]
progress and that frequent changes will be necessary. ¹

The general aim of early first grade lessons is:
"To introduce pupils to reading as a thought-getting process
and to develop a sight vocabulary of frequently recurring
words."²

The specific aims for early first grade lessons
include the following items:

1. To stimulate keen interest in reading activities
   and a desire to read independently.

2. To associate meanings with symbols, to cultivate
   a thoughtful reading attitude, and to stimulate
   the habit of thinking about what is read.

3. To acquire from meaningful reading activities
   and from phrase and word practice a sight vocab-
   ulary sufficiently rich to enable pupils to
   read under direction the simplest stories of
   the first book or reader to be used.³

The method recommended by the N.S.S.E. Twenty-
fourth Yearbook Committee on reading for providing essen-
tial training for the first grade is as follows:

1. Essential activities.
2. Training pupils to read from books.
3. Broader reading program after books are intro-
duced.
4. Variations in program to meet the needs of
   special groups or of individuals.⁴

A discussion of the above methods follows.

¹Ibid., pp. 32-34. ²Ibid., p. 36.
³Ibid., p. 36. ⁴Ibid., pp. 37-41.
Essential activities. -- In order to secure rapid progress in early reading lessons, at least five types of activities are essential:

1. Interesting experiences which serve as a basis for reading lessons.

2. Oral and silent reading lessons based on interesting experiences.

3. The story hour and dramatization period.

4. Frequent opportunities to read in connection with numerous classroom activities.

5. Interesting games and drill exercises to aid in the recognition of words and groups of words which appear most frequently in incidental reading activities and in the early selection of the books which are read first. ¹

Training pupils to read from books. -- As soon as pupils have made sufficient progress to justify the use of printed material, specific training should be provided in the technique of using books and in reading from them. ²

Broader reading program after books are introduced. -- As soon as pupils have learned to read from books, the possibilities of a reading program become wider and more varied. The Committee recommends the following program:

1. Regular practice in reading each day for the purpose of developing attitudes, habits, and skills that are essential in all reading activities.

2. Reading for information and direction in connection with all classroom problems and activities.

¹ Ibid., p. 37. ² Ibid., p. 38.
3. Independent and directed reading for pleasure and enjoyment in order to stimulate keen interest in, and to promote the development of, permanent habits of reading.¹

Variations in program to meet the needs of special groups or of individuals.—The above outlined program is planned to meet the needs of pupils who are prepared for reading at the beginning of the first grade and who advance at a normal rate of progress. Changes in the program should be made to meet the needs of special groups or of individual pupils within a group.²

The third period, the second and third grades, has been distinguished as one of rapid growth in the fundamental attitudes, habits, and skills on which intelligent interpretation speed of silent reading, and fluent, accurate oral reading depend.³

The normal problems to be confronted during the third period are namely:

1. That pupils who enter the second grade differ widely in achievement and require instruction at different levels of advancement.

2. That they move forward through the second and third grades at different rates of progress.

3. That many pupils who learn rapidly are prepared for more advanced work much earlier than at the completion of the third grade.

¹Ibid., p. 39. ²Ibid., p. 41. ³Ibid.
4. That pupils who learn slowly require in the fourth and even the fifth grades instruction similar to that recommended for this period.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 45-46.}

The specific aims of instruction in reading for pupils who make normal progress during the second and third grades are as follows:

1. To provide a rich variety of reading experience based on the world's greatest stories for children and on informational material relating to numerous topics which are studied in content subjects or which challenge the pupils' interest in other activities.

2. To stimulate keen interest in reading wholesome books and selections for pleasure and information and to establish the habit of reading independently.

3. To secure rapid growth in habits of intelligent interpretation.

4. To increase the rate and accuracy of oral reading and of silent reading. This includes rapid progress in habits of accurate recognition, rapid recognition, a wide eye-voice span, and the rhythmical progress of perception along the lines.

5. To provide for the development of desirable habits of interpretative oral reading and of appropriate standards in specific oral reading situations.

6. To continue training in the skillful use of books, to familiarize pupils with the privileges and opportunities of libraries, and to teach them to withdraw and return books.\footnote{Ibid., p. 46.}

In order to accomplish these aims in the second and third grades, provision must be made for at least three general types of activities, namely:

1. Daily reading lessons.
2. Wide reading in connection with numerous classroom problems and activities.

3. Much independent reading, both in and out of school.¹

The fourth, fifth, and sixth grades are distinguished by provision for wide reading to extend experience, to stimulate the thinking powers of the reader, and to further develop important reading attitudes, habits, and tastes.

The specific aims of reading instruction which are appropriate for the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades are as follows:

1. To provide rich and varied experiences in practically every field of thought and activity for which pupils are prepared, such as history, biography, geography, travel, science, art, recreation, and literature.

2. To continue the development of interest in entertaining, instructive, and worth-while reading, and to give elementary training in the sources and values of different types of reading material.

3. To promote rapid growth in habits of intelligent interpretation.

4. To improve and refine the habits of recognition in both oral and silent reading.

5. To improve the quality of oral interpretation and to develop standards for use in oral reading situations. It is important that strong motives for reading and real audience situations be provided.

6. To provide systematic instruction in the economical and skillful use of books, in the privileges and opportunities which libraries afford, and in the intelligent use of library privileges. Special

¹Ibid., pp. 46-47.
training is necessary during this period in the use of dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other sources of information which well equipped schools provide.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 56-57.}

In order to accomplish the aims of reading instruction in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, provision must be made for at least the following types of reading activities.

1. Supervised silent reading during the daily library period.

2. Systematic instruction in reading and study habits; testing; diagnostic and remedial work.

3. Specific instruction in each content subject concerning habits of effective reading and study peculiar to that subject.


5. Opportunity for motivated oral reading and for the development of standards appropriate for use in oral reading situations.

6. Ample provision for independent reading during free periods and at home.\footnote{Ibid., p. 57.}

The distinguishing characteristics of the junior high school grades are the refinement of specific reading attitudes, habits, and tastes. The specific aims of reading in junior high school are as follows:

1. To extend further the experiences of pupils and to increase greatly their intellectual apprehension. Each subject studied should require wide reading of books, selections, newspapers, and
periodicals that contribute to a broader understanding of the problems studied. Both recreational and work-type reading should be included.

2. To promote and refine reading interests and tastes which will direct and inspire the present and future life of the reader and provide for the wholesome use of leisure time.

3. To promote vigorously on all occasions habits of intelligent interpretation, to improve and refine the habits that are involved in reading for different purposes, and to stimulate and direct keen critical interpretations of what is read.

4. To provide individual or group instruction in the fundamental habits of silent and oral reading whenever the need for it exists.

5. To improve and refine habits of expressive oral reading, particularly of literary and dramatic selections, and in connection with public and class activities that require it.

6. To develop a high degree of skill in the use of books and library privileges, and to make rapid progress in locating, collecting, and summarizing printed materials.¹

In order to accomplish these aims, six types of reading activities should be provided and carefully directed. They are as follows:

1. The work or study type of reading in practically all subjects.

2. Extensive reading of assigned or suggested references to supplement the information gained from intensive study and class discussions.

3. Group recreational reading and enjoyment of selections of good literature.

4. Interpretative oral reading in class when occasion demands, in connection with public appearances, and in the enjoyment of literary and dramatic selections.

¹Ibid., p. 65.
5. Free and independent reading in school or at home of current events, periodicals and books, and selections for information or pleasure.

6. Group or individual instruction in the fundamental habits of silent and oral reading for pupils who are unable to read satisfactorily.¹

In the area of reading in relation to literature, the Committee stresses that in the first six grades the principal objective should be the cultivation of habits of real enjoyment of books. They add that this is no place whatever for consideration of style or structure or for anything save the happy pursuit of experience for its own sake.²

The Committee has this to say in regard to literature in the junior high school:

There is no essential difference to be observed in the teaching of literature in the junior high school from that in the intermediate grades. Both should lead to 'experiencing literature,' in the best sense of the word. Children's interest is still chiefly in simple adventure and humor and homely everyday happenings. A growing search for reality, suggesting a change of emphasis in selections used, require a greater wisdom and finesse of approach in the junior high school years.³

Method concepts as revealed in the N.S.S.E. Thirty-sixth Yearbook report on reading are discussed by William B. Gray. He points out the specific aims of basic instruction in reading:

¹Ibid., p. 66. ²Ibid., p. 151.
³Ibid., p. 153.
The broader objectives of most reading activities in which pupils engage are to extend and enrich their experiences, to promote social understanding and elevate tastes, to stimulate broad reading interests, to cultivate appreciations, and to develop stable and alert personalities; and, of special importance, to contribute measurably to growth in all of these directions.\(^1\)

The current aims of teaching reading are divided into two groups by Gray. The first includes those shared jointly by the reading period and the various curricular fields which are the broader outcomes of instruction in reading. These aims are as follows:

1. To arouse keen interest in learning to read.
2. To promote increased efficiency in both silent and oral reading.
3. To extend and enrich experience and to satisfy interests and needs.
4. To cultivate strong motives for and permanent interest in reading.
5. To elevate tastes in reading and to promote discrimination in selecting books, magazines, and newspapers to read.
6. To acquaint pupils with the sources and values of different kinds of reading material and to develop ability to use them intelligently and critically.\(^2\)

The second group includes those aims that are concerned more directly with the development of fundamental reading attitudes and habits, and that help to distinguish

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\(^1\) The Teaching of Reading: A Second Report, pp. 65-66.

\(^2\) Ibid., p. 66.
the functions of the reading period from those of the various curricular fields. They may be defined as follows:

1. To provide for the continuous, orderly, and economical development of the fundamental attitudes and habits involved in efficient silent reading and good oral reading. This aim includes also the systematic study of pupils in reading and the provision of corrective and remedial instruction, as needed, adapted to their individual difficulties and needs.

2. To aid in promoting the development of the attitudes, habits, and skills common to study situations in the various curricular fields. Frequently the motives for such training arise in connection with the study activities in which pupils engage. Not infrequently the needs of pupils in the different curricular fields are anticipated and provided for during the period, in order that the pupils may participate in essential reading activities at a higher level of learning.1

The basic reading program recommended in the Thirty-sixth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, is organized in terms of five stages of development which correspond to the division of students made in the N.S.S.E. Twenty-fourth Yearbook, Part I. In discussing the reading readiness stage, Gray feels that the methods which are used to prepare students for reading have been greatly extended and the views concerning the implications have been modified in several respects.2

The N.S.S.E. Thirty-sixth Yearbook, Part I, takes the position that readiness for reading is something that

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1 Ibid., pp. 66-67.  
2 Ibid., p. 79.
can be developed to a considerable extent through intelligent direction rather than the view held by some that readiness for initial instruction in reading is attained best through the so-called "natural processes" of growth and development. ¹

Gray says that the chief purpose of kindergarten is not to teach children but rather to adjust the pupil to an enlarged social environment through activities appropriate to his stage of development. He points out, that when this purpose has been effectively accomplished, the attitudes and habits that prepare for reading will in large measure have been developed.²

In commenting on the appropriate kinds of guidance in regard to the essential prerequisites to reading, Gray justifies the conclusion that reasonable attainments of at least seven specific types are essential to rapid progress in learning to read.³

Gray feels that reasonable accuracy in visual and auditory discrimination should be added to the methods of providing essential training and experience for the pupils in the reading readiness stage. He reasons that ability to observe likenesses and differences in word forms is a good index of readiness for reading.⁴

¹Ibid., pp. 79-80. ²Ibid., p. 280. ³Ibid., p. 81. ⁴Ibid., p. 84.
Stage two, which includes initial guidance in learning to read, comes about as soon as pupils are adequately prepared for reading. The chief aims of the instruction provided in stage two, according to Gray, are: (1) to stimulate keen interest in reading, (2) to cultivate a thoughtful reading attitude, and (3) to establish the habits involved in reading simple material, both orally and silently, with ease and understanding.\(^1\)

In the judgment of the Committee, reading has a legitimate place in the program of activities for first grade pupils. The members of the Committee believe that reading is not only a very desirable activity at this level of advancement but is also an essential means of attaining the objectives of an enriched curriculum. They add that informal reading activities of a very simple type may be introduced early. They feel this will stimulate favorable attitudes toward reading and enable children to enjoy early some of the pleasure that simple reading affords.\(^2\)

In the type of program recommended in this report, the reading period supplements opportunity for much reading in connection with vital units of work by providing a sequence of equally interesting, challenging, and purposeful activities designed to promote rapid growth in learning to read. They point out that by utilizing every phase of the

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\(^1\)Ibid., p. 86.  \(^2\)Ibid., p. 87.
school's program for incidental, basic, and correlated reading, children learn to engage earlier and with greater efficiency in the various opportunities for reading that the classroom provides.¹

Gray adds to the above statement by saying:

Teachers are in general agreement that the early activities provided should introduce pupils to reading as a thought-getting process. Some believe that this end can be best achieved through the so-called 'experience-activity' approach; others definitely prefer the use of commercially prepared materials.²

The Committee recognizes that each of the foregoing methods has its advantages and limitations. It recommends that:

The total program of activities provided should utilize the advantages of both procedures. At times reading materials based upon experience should be employed in order to gain as full benefit as possible from the values that attach to the use of immediate interests, pupil planning, and symbols with which vivid meanings may be associated. To an increasing extent, however, as pupils learn to read, use should be made of the books the content of which is sequential, that are skillfully prepared with respect to word frequency and distribution, and that provide opportunity for varying amounts of practice in harmony with individual needs.³

In terms of school organization, stage three normally occurs during the second and third grades. This stage is characterized by rapid progress in the fundamental attitudes, habits, and skills on which clear comprehension

¹Ibid., p. 89. ²Ibid. ³Ibid., p. 91.
and interpretation, speed of silent, fluent, and accurate oral reading depend.\(^1\)

The means by which the major aims of this stage of development may be attained are described by Gray as follows:

1. **Developing power as a reader.**—By this is meant securing rapid growth in ability to deal successfully with reading situations of increasing difficulty. Suggested activities of value in developing power are as follows:
   a. Providing strong motives for reading.
   b. Stimulating growth in comprehension and interpretation.
   c. Reading for specific purposes.
   d. Promoting growth in accuracy and independence in word recognition.
   e. Improving the quality of oral interpretation.
   f. Increasing the rate and span of recognition . . . .

2. **Making desirable habits permanent.**—Directed reading of relatively simple selections should be a frequent part of the basic reading program. One of its chief values lies in the fact that it promotes the permanent establishment of the habits and skills that have been partly developed through the types of training described above . . . .

3. **Correcting or eliminating poor reading habits.**—Of major importance is the fact that corrective measures should be adopted as soon as errors develop or difficulties arise. By identifying and treating reading defects at the outset, severe cases of reading deficiencies may be prevented . . . .

4. **Promoting the establishment of permanent interests in reading.**—The teacher can promote the establishment of permanent interests by reading parts of stories or books to the pupils and leaving the remainder for independent reading; by permitting pupils who read well to do likewise; by keeping a record of pupils’ voluntary, independent reading; by

\(^1\)Ibid.
encouraging reports and discussions of outside reading; and by providing time in the daily program for independent reading for pleasure . . . .

By the end of the third stage of development, Gray follows that:

Pupils should be able to read independently and intelligently, both silently and orally, the various types of reading materials used widely at the beginning of the fourth grade. Not all pupils will attain this goal equally well. Furthermore, they will not attain it at the same time nor in the same way. Hence, adjustments must be made here, as at earlier stages, to fit the program of basic instruction in reading to the abilities and needs of each pupil. The fact cannot be overemphasized that instruction in reading must be adapted to individual differences.

The extension of experience and the increase in reading efficiency are included in stage four. In the judgment of the Committee schools in general are achieving far less satisfactory results today in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades than in the preceding grades. It recommends vigorous effort during the next decade to increase the efficiency of the instruction given the middle grades and to provide corresponding improvement in the reading attitudes and attainments of pupils.

In the N.S.S.E. Thirty-sixth Yearbook entitled Teaching of Reading: A Second Report, Part I, the Committee states that:

1Ibid., pp. 103-107.  
2Ibid., p. 99.  
3Ibid., p. 108.
A well-rounded program of basic instruction in reading, supplemented by systematic guidance in the various curricular fields, is essential for most pupils in the middle grades. The evidence available shows conclusively that rapid growth in desirable reading attitudes and habits can be secured through carefully planned guidance. In view of marked deficiencies today in the reading accomplishments of pupils in the middle and upper grades, the Committee believes that reading problems during the fourth stage of development are among the most challenging that elementary schools now face.  

Gray feels that the more or less futile types of instruction in reading that have often been provided in the middle grades may be attributed in part at least to the absence of clearly defined purposeful objectives. These objectives and methods of obtainment follow:

1. To extend and enrich experience. — Of special importance is the fact that the materials selected for basic instruction in reading should contribute richly to the expanding experience of children from nine to twelve years of age. The total reading program should give a balanced vision of the various things that make up the world past and present . . . .

2. To stimulate interest in reading. — The stimulation of broad interests in reading is of special importance during the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Every opportunity should be utilized, to broaden and deepen the reading interests of children. In harmony with good teaching procedure, each unit taught should be closely related to the present interests of the children. Through discussion, explanation, carefully directed questioning, the use of pictures, and the provision of attractive readable material present interests should be strengthened and new interests developed . . . .

1Ibid., p. 109.
3. **To develop greater power and efficiency in various fundamental phases of reading.**—We are concerned here with a series of problems for the solution of which, basic instruction in reading is primarily responsible. The chief aim of the guidance provided is to promote the orderly development of the basic attitudes and habits on which increased power and efficiency in both silent and oral reading depend. The training provided should promote greater ease and understanding in all the reading activities in which pupils engage both in and out of school . . . .

4. **To increase competence in study activities.**—Not infrequently the guidance provided during the reading period anticipates needs that will arise in various subjects, as, for example, ability to organize what is read. In such cases, training is given in the habits and skills required through the use of selections that lend themselves readily to the purpose. On other occasions, the reading period may be used for supplementing the guidance provided in the various subjects. As a rule, the reading materials used should be similar to, or selected from the fields in which the problem arose. The procedure insures practice in situations in which the habits should function. The guidance provided should, of course, be given under the stimulus of motives that are real and compelling to the children . . . .

5. **To determine the needs of pupils and to provide needed corrective and remedial instruction.**—One of the important aims of guidance during the fourth stage of development is to promote a relatively high level of reading efficiency. If this end is to be achieved, teachers should study the progress and deficiencies of their pupils regularly and adapt instruction to their varying needs. . . .

The refinement of reading attitudes, habits, and tastes are the points to be considered in stage five which includes the junior high school grades.

Studies made in junior high schools point out the

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fact that a majority of the pupils who enter the junior high school are prepared for a broad range of reading activities. But there remains in the minority of cases an unfortunately large percentage of pupils who are surprisingly deficient in ability to read. An analysis of their needs by Gray shows that at least three different types of training in reading are essential. They are as follows:

1. The first is developmental in character and aims to promote increased efficiency in reading and study activities on the part of all pupils, with especial reference to the reflective and interpretative processes involved.

2. The second type includes systematic training to improve the reading and study habits of those who can read the assigned materials, but with far less ease and comprehension than the superior readers.

3. The third type includes corrective and remedial instruction for those who rank below the sixth grade norm. It is obvious that the training provided for this group must be adapted to the needs of individuals.

Gray concludes that the training provided for this group must be adapted to the needs of these individuals. He feels that group instruction may be given to pupils whose needs are similar, but this training should be supplemented at times by individual help and guidance.

\[1\] Ibid., pp. 120-22.

\[2\] Ibid., p. 122.
The specific aims and methods for the fifth stage of development are:

1. To extend further the experience of pupils through reading and to increase greatly their intellectual apprehension. To these ends each subject of the curriculum should provide stimuli and opportunity for wide reading of books, selections, newspapers, and periodicals that broaden the pupils' vision and increase his understanding of the problems studied.

2. To extend and refine reading interests and tastes that will direct and inspire the present and future life of the reader and provide for the wholesome use of leisure time. Special attention should now be given to the development of permanent interest in current events and of the habit of reading periodicals and books with reasonable speed and good judgment.

3. To promote vigorously the further development of the habits involved in gaining an intelligent grasp of the author's meaning, in reading for different purposes, and in making keen critical interpretations of what is read. Reading at this level is largely a reflective and interpretative process and every effort should be made to stimulate and develop appropriate habits.

4. To develop a high degree of skill and efficiency in study activities, including the use of books, libraries, and other sources of information, and to extend and refine habits involved in locating, collecting, and summarizing printed materials.

5. To improve and refine habits involved in good oral interpretation, particularly of informational, literary, and dramatic selections, and in connection with public and class activities that require reading to others.

6. To provide corrective and remedial instruction in the fundamental habits involved in oral and silent reading whenever the need for it exists.¹

¹Ibid., pp. 122-123.
In order to accomplish these aims, Gray lists the following types of reading activities that should be provided and carefully directed.

1. Intensive reading and study in practically all curricular fields.

2. Extensive reading of assigned or suggested references to supplement the information gained from intensive study and class discussion.

3. Group recreational reading and enjoyment of various types of good literature, including that found in recent books and periodicals.

4. Free reading in school, in the public library, or at home of current events, periodicals, and books for recreation, to satisfy an interest or curiosity, or to aid in solving a problem.\(^1\)

In addition to the types of reading activities mentioned above, Gray feels that special periods should be reserved in which attention may be devoted specifically to the following:

1. Developmental instruction in reading for all pupils.

2. Systematic guidance in reading for those who can read the materials regularly assigned but who encounter difficulty in doing so.

3. Corrective and remedial training for those who are seriously retarded in reading.\(^2\)

In investigating the methods used in the teaching of reading in the Forty-eighth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, the attempt to

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 123. \(^2\)Ibid.
relate the reading program to child development data must be considered as a new and distinctive approach to the study of the reading problems. The following paragraphs describe those sections of child development which correspond roughly to the groupings of school grades.

**Possible implications for reading readiness program.**—Reading readiness is dependent upon a number of abilities developing continuously, but perhaps unevenly, from infancy. Children's school day should give many opportunities for large muscle activities. Attention to picture chart or book should not be required for more than a few minutes. Emphasis is upon getting children to join partner or group activities for short times during the day. Necessity or providing many opportunities for oral expression. First reading activities based upon well-known concepts in the home. Free use of pictures, large charts, and labels rather than close attention to printed materials suitable for older children. Emphasis upon feelings of security in new social situation rather than upon correct English or same responses for whole class.

**Possible implications for the primary reading program.**—Opportunities in school day for physical activity and for rest. Alternation of quiet periods, such as chart reading, with more active periods. Lessons requiring concentration, such as word analysis activities, still in short periods. Finer coordinations, such as in reading, developed gradually by teacher with reference to wide variations among pupils in such abilities.

Reading materials related to objects or events of immediate environment. Reading related to other activities in charts, bulletin boards, daily or weekly class newspaper. By third grade, teacher and children use reading selection, teacher notes difficult concepts and develops them by picture, conversation, children's related experiences, and similar devices. Discussions of specific things in home, farm, community rather than generalizations about society. Children enjoy animal-talking, imaginative and realistic stories of boys and girls for individual reading.

Oral reading periods emphasize social situation and communication of ideas. Teacher stresses audience
situation and practice in listening; wider experiences and reading combined to give more accurate concepts. After initial reading skills and transitional abilities are mastered, children may identify themselves with a character in a story. By the end of the third grade there may be some beginning in divergence of reading interests of boys and girls. Foundation is laid for all the child's reading skills, habits, and attitudes.

Implications for the reading program in the intermediate grades.—The development of finer muscular controls, general health, and resistance to fatigue mean that pupils are capable of longer work-type reading periods than in the primary grades. Although active physically, the comparative lack of responsibility usually means much free time for reading. If materials are accessible, amount of reading done reaches its peak at about twelve years of age.

In general, children have mastered initial reading skills so that teacher emphasizes increased efficiency in reading and its functional values. Place is given to work-type skills, using books and libraries to get information on hobbies, school tasks, and other projects. The teacher guides vocabulary and concept development by providing a rich program of concrete experiences and many opportunities to use language in reading and wiring situations. With distinct sex differences in reading, the classroom and school library must provide some separate books for boys and girls, such as science and biography versus stories of home and school life. Creative work is relatively uninhibited and teachers may use reading as a foundation for writing, music, drama, and rhythms.

Some children may read certain books or comics just because it is being done. The teacher works to improve the use of reading in democratic group situations. Reading is more useful in committee work in social studies. The teacher plans to establish group standards in reading. The group is useful, as a basis for cooperative activities involving reading, such as dramatization, radio skits, and team games involving verbal abilities. The teacher helps the child avoid reading failure in front of the group.

Possible implications for the reading program.—The child eleven or twelve is typically a healthy, active child who does more reading than he ever has before or will again. Boys of twelve and thirteen are usually prepubescent and retain interests in physical activities, the gang, and collecting such items as comic books. They continue to read adventure and mystery stories,
women's magazines, and the so-called adult magazine. The teacher helps the children in a wide variety of reading situations by developing differential reading abilities and tastes.

Growth in mental abilities means that teachers can place more reliance on reading as a learning situation. With guidance, pupils become capable of organizing what they read. They increase their abilities to generalize and may show beginnings of broad social insights from reading relating to ideas of justice, international affairs, or problems created by scientific advances. Identification with reading situations and emotional stimulation through reading is common.

The wide variety in social interests and abilities reflects itself in reading interests. As never before, the teacher must guide the growth of individual interests and abilities. The younger boys of the group may use reading with great efficiency in pursuing specific interests. Increased intellectual abilities and emotional sensitivities make possible a variety of aesthetic experiences in literature impossible with younger children. Reading activities may be less but may increase their contributions to personality development.

David H. Russell feels that "The modern reading program may be planned in content, organization, and methods so that it contributes to children's social develop-
ment." The author points out that the child by sharing experience as a member of a group learns to give and take in the reading group, and accepts individual differences in reading interests and achievement. All these contribute to the child's wholesome social adjustments.

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1 Ibid., pp. 12-15.
2 Ibid., p. 29.
In investigating the concepts of testing, the Twenty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I, has classified reading tests under two heads: standardized and informal. It is felt that both types of tests are valuable, and each type has its own characteristics and its specific function. Also, both types of tests disclose individual differences and show the necessity for provisions which take such differences into account.  

In the opinion of the Committee, the improvement of instruction in reading depends in a great measure on the systematic measurement of attainment with reference to numerous specific objectives. It continues by saying:

The true function of informal tests is best served when the tests are made to suit the material and the situation in which they are to be used. Setting up objectives or purposes and testing for the outcome of instruction will encourage a critical and professional attitude toward the whole reading problem and give a basis for the analyses of learning and teaching upon which the improvement of educational procedures depend.

The Committee does not feel that standardized reading tests should reach down into the prereading stage. The following suggestions are offered to teachers who wish to plan their initial instruction with reference to the readiness of pupils.

1Report of the National Committee on Reading, p. 233.
2Ibid.
1. Observe and record pupils' reactions toward stories and picture books.

2. Ascertain to what extent pupils are beginning to associate specific rhymes of sentences as wholes with appropriate illustrations.

3. Give some informal tests of the richness or extent of oral vocabulary.

4. Ascertain whether pupils are beginning to observe gross differences and similarities. See whether the children can differentiate between two rhymes of varying length, between long and short sentences which begin alike, between words which are very dissimilar. Observations of this sort should be made individually or incidentally.  

Following is a list of informal tests for the initial period of reading instruction.

1. Inventory test and interview.

2. Ascertain whether pupils are overdependent on positional clues.

3. Ascertain to what extent pupils realize the meaning of phrases out of familiar context, without saying the words of each phrase.

4. Ascertain whether the children can recognize phrase meaning when phrases from stories are introduced in questions.

5. Ascertain whether children can comprehend questions in which familiar statements are paraphrased.

6. Ascertain whether the children can silently read and grasp the organization or sequence or relation of ideas in a selection when the exact wording is changed.

7. Ascertain whether the children can complete sentences and organize them into a story from incomplete visual clues.

Ibid., pp. 233-234.
8. Ascertain whether the children can select related meanings and put them together.

9. Test factual comprehension.

10. Test to see whether children can select true from false statements.

11. Test ability to grasp related meanings and to express and interpret ideas by means of simple drawings.

12. Test to see whether children can keep the place.

13. Test each pupil's ability to recognize words in isolation in a way which requires attention to meaning rather than mere word calling.

14. Test comprehension of total meaning of selections longer than one sentence.¹

The above lists may in many cases be adapted to the second grade. The committee suggests also that written tests are likely to interfere with the satisfaction to be derived from reading. The following informal tests for the period of rapid growth in fundamental reading attitudes, habits, and skills are suggested:

1. Test comprehension and ability to select pertinent or relevant ideas.

2. Test ability to follow directions, get the thread of the story and express meanings in simple drawing.

3. Test thoroughness or completeness of comprehension.

4. Test pupil's grasp of relationships or of the modification of meaning which depend on prepositions and other modifying words.

5. Test accuracy of perception.

¹Ibid., pp. 233-234.
6. Observe and record the cases of finger pointing, vocalization, or lip movement.

7. Test the span of recognition and discover which pupils need extra practice in phrase flashing to increase the span or number of words taken in at glance.

8. Use silent reading tests in connection with much of the silent reading in which pupil groups or whole classes engage.

The Committee has this to say regarding informal reading tests for the intermediate grades.

During this period, informal tests should frequently require the grasp of longer units of meaning than the sentence or paragraph. Pupils should be asked to give brief oral or written reports or summaries of books which they read independently. On books of general interest, informal class tests may be planned to cover each chapter, a number of chapters, or the whole book. Rate test may be combined with the reading of such books. Children who do poorly on these should be tested in such fundamental aspects of reading ability as perception span, rate of oral reading, breath of vocabulary, ability to recognize and differentiate words, rate of silent reading, phrasing, ability to follow directions, to reproduce content, and to answer questions upon material read. Both informal and standardized tests may be used for this purpose. Remedial work may be necessary for pupils who give evidence of deficiency in informal and standardized tests.

The Committee suggests that informal tests should be used to locate causes of reading difficulties. Also, checks on the quality of silent reading with the elimination of oral recitation at this point should be made with oral reading used sparingly and only when there is a real motive and a genuine audience situation.

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1Ibid., pp. 243-252.  
2Ibid., pp. 243-252.  
3Ibid., pp. 252-253.
Following are seven types of informal tests pertinent to this point.

1. Test the ability to anticipate meaning . . .
2. Test the ability to locate information . . .
3. Test the ability to select the central thought or main idea in each of series of paragraphs . . .
4. Test ability to organize a paragraph by supplying a topical heading and outlining the supporting details . . .
5. Test the ability to recognize equivalent ideas when expressed in altered form or changed working, or to detect different ideas with like wording . . .
6. Test the richness of a pupil's vocabulary of meanings and his ability to distinguish shades of meaning . . .
7. Discover the level of attention at which pupils are working and raise the level of attention . . .

The Committee also suggests that informal reading tests may be used to develop effective study technique and procedures with the informational material of other subjects. The following may be used:

1. Test ability to read arithmetic problem material and give significant words due consideration.
2. Check comprehension of maps and related reading matter.
3. Detect careless readers and show them the need for careful reading of informational material.\(^1\)

The Committee lists a few of the advantages to be derived from the frequent use of informal or unstandardized

\(^1\)Ibid., pp. 252-256. \(^2\)Ibid., pp. 256-259.
tests. These advantages are as follows:

1. Informal comprehension tests are useful as an index and a guarantee of mental activity on the part of all pupils during silent work-type reading.

2. By study of the results of such tests teacher and pupil become aware of the nature of specific difficulties.

3. By the use of informal tests it is possible to hold all pupils accountable for the comprehension of assigned reading.

4. If each informal test is framed in the light of the objectives or purposes which determined the reading, teachers may ascertain to what extent the objectives of assigned study were attained.\(^1\)

The following criteria are those informal tests should satisfy.

1. It is absolutely essential that informal tests be more than silent reading devices.

2. Informal tests should, whenever possible, be based on significant, worth-while reading matter.

3. The technique of informal tests should be simple and easily explained to pupils.

4. Whenever possible, the test itself should be a learning experience in which every pupil is thrown on his own responsibility.

5. The scoring should be so objective that the pupil realizes the fairness of the test and can almost always score his own work or that of other pupils by reference to a key.

6. The pupil should be made aware of the purpose of each test, of the significance of his success or failure, and in the latter case, of some means of improving his powers.

\(^{1}\text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 261-262.}\)
7. Success in tests should give pupils satisfaction and be rewarded by other reading privileges and responsibilities.

8. Tests should be framed and conducted to avoid temptations to copy, to guess, or to resort to other irrelevant cues.

9. The nature of each test should be adapted to the reading matter on which it is based.¹

The value of standardized reading tests, according to the Committee, is that they provide a means by which the reading abilities of pupils in particular situations can be compared with those of unselected groups. Standard tests are exceedingly valuable when properly used, interpreted, and supplemented with other information.²

The following factors should be considered in the selection of standardized reading tests.

1. The test should be a valid measure of some significant type or aspect of reading ability.

2. If a test measures only one aspect or type of reading ability, it should be supplemented with another reading test which measures another aspect.

3. The test should be available in at least two so-called equivalent forms in order that re-tests may be given at appropriate intervals without reducing their significance by practice effect.

4. The reliability of the test and the derivation of norms should be considered. These are usually reported in the manual of directions.

¹Ibid., pp. 262-263.

²Ibid., pp. 264-265.
5. The norms should be sufficiently precise to be of value in interpreting individual scores and should be stated in a form which permits comparison with other reading tests, subjects tests, and measurements of pupil capacities.

6. The standardized directions for giving and scoring the test should be definite, easy to follow, and economical of time and effort.1

For the Committee of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I of the Thirty-sixth Yearbook, Arthur I. Gates summarizes the concepts of testing. He first points out that the use of standardized and informal tests and examinations is now regarded as a vital phase of classroom work.2 Indicating some of the principles and purposes of the diagnostic tests, Gates says that:

The most effective way to appraise a pupil's reading ability thoroughly is to employ the outline and the materials and methods necessary for conducting a diagnostic inventory examination. The diagnostic inventory embodies a systematic program for investigating all the phases of reading ability considered by its author to have diagnostic and remedial significance.3

Following is an outline of items considered in an appraisal of reading ability:

1. Background skills . . .
2. Word-mastery skills . . .
3. Silent reading . . .
4. Oral reading . . .

1Ibid., pp. 265-266.
2The Teaching of Reading: A Second Report, p. 133.
3Ibid., p. 362.
5. Advanced reading and study skills . . .

6. General reading habits . . . \(^1\)

According to Gates, the diagnostic inventory is not to be thought of as merely providing for a special, extensive diagnosis on rare occasions or for especially troublesome cases, but primarily as a systematic and effective program for studying any reading ability or difficulty at any time.\(^2\)

The typical diagnostic inventory includes materials and directions for employing some of the following types of tests, observations, error analyses, and other devices.

1. **Standardized tests.**—The objective, standardized tests should, in general, give more uniform, more valid, more meaningful, and more objective results than unstandardized tests.

2. **Informal tests.**—Informal tests may take a great variety of forms and purposes, many of which are similar to those employed in standardized tests. Also, informal tests may be more nicely adjusted to specific needs of an individual pupil or class.

3. **Appraisals by observational methods.**—Some of the most important features of reading ability consist in the activities engaged in by the pupil than can be appraised by observation.

4. **Analysis of errors.**—The nature of the techniques employed by a child may often be discerned by a study of errors made during an exercise.

5. **Questionnaires and self-inventories.**—Questionnaires and self-inventories have been developed to provide information concerning many phases of reading interest, attitudes, achievements, and previous experiences.

\(^1\)Ibid., pp. 362-366.  
\(^2\)Ibid., p. 367.
6. Ratings.--Certain aspects of a pupil's reading ability depend primarily upon the impression the pupil makes upon other people.

7. Records of activities.--It is frequently said that some of the most important phases of a pupil's ability and interest cannot be measured. Information concerning books drawn from libraries, the kind and parts of newspapers and magazines read, the proportion of the pupil's general intellectual interests.

8. Workbooks, preparatory books, practice books, and other printed booklets of teach-and-test materials.--Within recent years various types of organizations of materials similar to published standardized and teacher-made informal tests have appeared.1

For the Committee of the Forty-eighth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, David D. Russell summarizes the concepts of testing for the modern school. He says:

In former times the decisions were usually made by teachers on the basis of their own judgments, teacher-made tests, and occasional standardized tests. Today, as the various aims of the educational program have been expanded and clarified, evaluation activities have become broader and more clear-cut. Evaluation is now concerned with all the goals of a school program, the degree of success in reaching the goals, and suggestions for changes in the program so that the goals may be achieved more completely.2

Russell presents four reasons why a planned program of evaluation in reading and in other curriculum areas must be used by teachers and other school personnel.

1Ibid., pp. 368-375.
2Reading in the Elementary School, p. 284.
1. School practices differ greatly and there is no one best system of teaching. — No one who has visited a number of classrooms, even in the same school, can help but be impressed by the great differences in the activities of teacher and pupils in the classes.

2. Crystallization of teaching procedures is common. — Most teachers, like any other group of people tend to repeat the practices they have found reasonably successful.

3. Evaluation procedures are an intrinsic part of the instructional program. — One of the principles of an evaluation program is that the program must be based on the clearly defined objectives of the curriculum.

4. Optimum growth of children depends upon adequate evaluation. — Teachers who would meet the needs of individuals must know those needs.¹

Russell says that evaluation in education is the means which educators use to estimate the worth-whileness of the educational program and plan the next steps in it.²

The following points are the usual steps taken in an evaluation program:

1. Formulating and accepting major objectives, stated in terms of pupil behaviors.

2. Identifying a wide range of situations in which children may be expected to exhibit these types of behavior.

3. Selecting and trying out instruments or methods for the appraisal of each objective.

4. Using the most promising methods to collect evidence about desirable behaviors.

5. Deciding the degree of present success of the program.

6. Drawing inferences from the results for possible changes in practice in terms of work with individual children.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 286-287.}

Russell lists the following ten guides for evaluating pupil growth in reading.

1. Evaluation of reading development operated both continuously and at fixed intervals.

2. Evaluation procedures are related to important objectives of the reading program.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 288-292.}

3. Evaluation programs in reading provide for clarification and change in objectives.

4. Evaluation of growth in and through reading emphasizes self-appraisal, both group and individual.

5. The evaluation program is stated in terms of the child's reading and related behaviors.

6. Reading tests are considered to be one phase of the evaluation program.

7. Evaluation instruments and reading records should always be available to the teacher and others concerned.

8. An evaluation program experiments with the construction and use of new methods of evaluation in reading.

9. Changes in periodic evaluation procedures should be introduced slowly.

10. Evaluation of growth in reading involves the use of many varied techniques.

In evaluating pupil growth in reading abilities, Russell states that the modern trend is to make the standardized test more comprehensive and supplement it with
additional evaluative measures.¹

Evaluation of growth in reading abilities is accomplished through the use of many different devices which stress what is done with, rather than to, a child and which change the purpose of evaluation from authoritative judgment or deriving a grade to that of improving learning in reading.

¹Ibid., p. 295.
CHAPTER III

SUMMARY

For the purpose of comparing the changing concepts in the teaching of reading, the three publications of the National Society for the Study of Education were selected as a basis for this study. These three Yearbooks, the Twenty-fourth, published in 1925, the Thirty-sixth, published in 1937, and the Forty-eighth, published in 1949, staffed by the outstanding professional scholars in the field, ably express the accepted concepts of their times. The pertinent fields about which they report, philosophy, psychology, curriculum, methods, and testing, are the bases for this comparison.

Gates' statement in the Forty-eighth Yearbook points to the significant change that has taken place in reading instruction as recommended in the Twenty-fourth and Thirty-sixth Yearbooks. The change is that reading is now recognized as conspicuously a problem in child development and reading which was formerly taught merely as an organization of intellectual skills without full regard for the child's development falls short of the ideal program.
With this thought in mind, an investigation into the objective data as reported in Chapter II of this study, reveal the changing concepts in reading education. The subdivisions of Chapter II are not used in developing generalizations. These subdivisions served the purpose of gathering related materials. The following generalizations, due to the nature of generalizations, need be concerned with scopes beyond such limited subdivisions.

The basic generalizations show:

1. A change from a reading program determined by tradition, by philosophies of education by social demands on the school, and by textbooks to a program giving emphasis to the relationships between child development and the activities of the reading program.

2. A change from strict adherence to rigid pre-conceived plans to flexible plans which provide for continuous change as needed.

3. A change from little or no attention being given to reading difficulties that arose in the content fields to providing systematic guidance in reading in all curriculum fields.

4. A change from thinking learning to be a formal process of acquiring and memorizing facts to thinking of learning as a process by which children satisfy needs, solve problems, or adjust to new situations.

5. A change from considering reading an individual pursuit to considering it a program of sharing experience as a member of a group, learning to give and take in the reading group, and accepting individual differences in reading interests and achievement which will all contribute to the child's wholesome social adjustment.
6. A change from phonics, or an outright spelling method, used as the sole approach to reading, to dropping phonics, to regarding phonics as one means of word recognition which should not be used alone but in conjunction with context and visual clues.

7. A change from great concern regarding grade placement for content materials to a greater concern for an understanding of readiness so as to teach effectively whenever the child is ready.

8. A change from teacher-made tests and occasional standardized tests, to a planned evaluation program which takes into consideration all the goals of a school program, the degree of success in reaching the goals, and suggestions for changes in the program so that the goals may be achieved more completely.

9. A change from impressing the test primarily as a measuring device to its greater value as a teaching technique thoroughly understood by the children.

10. The change from the view of the reading program consisting largely of instruction during a reading period to the conception that guidance in reading should permeate all aspects of the curriculum.

11. A change from concern only about answers to greater consideration of details of the related process.

12. A change from emphasizing the skill phase in reading tests to making the standardized test more comprehensive and to supplement it with additional evaluative measures.

13. A change from the major aim of mastery of accuracy and facility for mastery's sake to mastery for the purpose of meeting social needs through understanding.
In this study an attempt has been made to bring out the changing concepts in the teaching of reading. It is hoped that this material will be of assistance to teachers of elementary reading.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
Books


