A COMPARISON OF TWO METHODS OF TEACHING
READING IN SIXTH GRADE

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by
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Jacobs clearly defined the place of reading in the American school when he said that learning to read is a virtual necessity for the American child. The school accepts the responsibility of teaching the child to read while the community presumes that children will read efficiently and effectually if the school is doing its job well. In the interest of the child and his culture, educators are continuously seeking improved ways to develop in children a multifaceted literacy through the application of pertinent knowledge from the fields of psychology, child study, sociology, philosophy, and linguistics. This knowledge must be translated into educational theory and practice. New methods of teaching reading must have sound experimentation.¹

In keeping with the above philosophy, the writer has undertaken the following study.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study to compare the individualized program with the basic text program of reading in terms of reading interest, ability in reading, and amount of material read at the sixth grade

level in the Park Avenue Elementary School, Des Moines, Iowa.

Importance of the study. One controversy in education involves the most effective method of teaching reading. Most educators agree with Hester who stated that the emphasis today is placed upon reading instruction as a means to develop the child and that the goal of each teacher is to develop each child to the limits of his capacity. To develop each child to the limits of his capacity offers a challenge to the skill of the teacher in presenting reading material. The question confronting the teacher at this point is what method should be used. Educators' goals may be the same, yet there is deep and profound controversy about the ways in which they may be reached.

Two methods of teaching reading that are widely advocated are the individualized method and the basal reader method. The reasons its proponents have advanced for individualized reading were summarized by Gray:

The arguments advanced by its proponents run about as follows: Children differ so widely in interests, capacity to learn, and motives that it is impossible to provide adequate stimulation and guidance through the use of the same materials and group instruction. If the child is to develop individuality, creativity, and ability to think clearly and to interpret deeply, he must not be hampered by group regimentation. Instead, he should learn to read in an environment which stimulates motives for reading, which permits free choice of materials to be read at his own rate, and receive help as needed or at scheduled times.  

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2 William S. Gray, "Role of Group and Individualized Teaching in a Sound Reading Program," *The Reading Teacher*, XI (December, 1957), 99-104.
Witty defended the basal reader program as follows:

A defensible reading program accordingly recognizes the value of systematic instruction, utilization of interests, fulfillment of developmental needs, and the articulation of reading experiences with other types of worthwhile objectives. By this fourfold approach, steady growth in reading skill is made possible and the attainment of emotional satisfaction may be assured.

A primary objective of a developmental reading program should be recognized clearly. We should seek to help students to become skillful, self-reliant, and independent in using the library and other sources for satisfying interests and needs of various kinds. This objective will be achieved only if students are able to enjoy the act of reading and the results. They will enjoy the act of reading if they acquire adequate command of silent and oral reading skills. This aim will be achieved through an efficient systematic program of reading instruction which includes both individual and group guidance instruction. The second will be realized by the association of reading with interests and needs. Accordingly children and youth may become skillful, independent readers and may continue to enrich their understandings and satisfactions throughout their lives.¹

In view of the controversy concerning the individualized method versus the basal reader method, the present study was undertaken to provide data necessary for a more complete knowledge of the growth patterns of children in an individualized program and to compare the results with the results obtained from a control group instructed in a basal reader program. Particular attention was devoted to reading achievement, reading interest, and quantity of reading material read.

Previous research has provided much information in several fields of individualized reading. However, it was the conclusion of the writer that the present study might offer

¹Paul Witty, "Individualized Reading--A Summary and Evaluation," Elementary English, XXXVI (October, 1959), 450.
some additional knowledge of the individualized method of teaching reading and the possible effects of such a program in addition to providing a basis for the evaluation in three areas of the two methods at the sixth grade level, Park Avenue Elementary School. Evaluation of the two methods should help the investigator determine the best method to follow in teaching reading.

Limitations of the problem. This study was exploratory only, and tended to locate possibilities for further study. It did not include all factors which influence a child's reading ability or disability. It did not consider teacher competence, enthusiasm, or interest, and it should be noted that the same teacher did not teach both classes involved. It was limited to twenty matched pairs of sixth graders who were equated as nearly as possible as to age, sex, intelligence quotient, and socio-economic background; it was therefore not sufficient in scope for broad generalizations except as the generalizations apply to this group, the twenty pairs, sixth grade, Park Avenue Elementary School, Des Moines, Iowa.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Individualized reading method. Individualized reading method will be defined as a way of organizing and conducting a reading period so that each pupil chooses his own material for his own reading instruction, reads at his own rate regardless of the progress of the rest of the class, participates in
groups organized on other bases than ability, is taught by using a wide variety of books instead of only basal readers, and is taught the skills he needs at the time he needs them.

**Basal reader method.** Basal reader method will be defined as a way of organizing a reading period whereby children are grouped according to ability, and instructed on a group basis with the teacher selecting and motivating the materials to be read. Seatwork is determined by the teacher.

**Self-selection.** Self-selection will be defined as the selection by a child of a book on his own level of ability and interest.

**Trade books.** Trade books will be defined as books designed for the general bookstore and library market rather than for text use.

**Reading ability.** Reading ability will be defined as the average of word meaning and paragraph meaning as measured by the Stanford Achievement Test Forms 1 and 2 for grade level six.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Much has been written in regard to the teaching of reading, reading methods, and individualized reading in particular; but only a brief summary of the work done on problems closely related to the one at hand will be given here. Smith stated:

The last half-century stands out as a truly golden period in the progress of reading instruction. More innovations have been effected in reading during the last fifty years than during the entire three hundred years antedating this period of American history.¹

I. READING PROGRESS IN THE PAST FIFTY YEARS

Smith gave a good review of the progress made in reading in her article entitled "What We Have Accomplished in Reading?" --A Review of the Past Fifty Years." Smith stated that:

Progress in reading instruction has been marked by a succession of turning points. For a period of years reading methods and materials all over the country are quite similar—so similar, in fact, that an unbiased examiner might arrive at the conclusion that all had been turned out of the same mold, with just a slightly different crimp here and there in the contour of the plan. Then, rather suddenly, a new plan becomes popular, and we teach reading in this manner until another turning point arrives. Thus, epoch after epoch of reading instruction passes.²

¹Mila B. Smith, "What Have We Accomplished in Reading?--A Review of the Past Fifty Years," Elementary English, XXXVIII (March, 1961), 141.
²Ibid.
According to Smith the dramatic decade beginning with 1910 ushered in the first breakthrough in reading progress. This was the birth of the scientific movement in education. The publication of the Thorndike scale in 1910 was the beginning of the contemporary movement for measuring educational products scientifically. As a result of the strong, new surge of interest in placing education on a scientific basis together with its correlative motives for developing instruments of measurement, the study of reading problems took a vigorous spurt. Methods were revolutionized. Oral reading had maintained a supreme and undisputed claim on teaching methods for hundreds of years, but now the startling new idea of silent reading was launched.

Smith attributed the changes in reading practices of the period extending from 1920 to 1930 to the scientific movement which had shaped up during the preceding period. The number of new studies increased tremendously; they covered a wider scope of problems and were conducted in classrooms by teachers and other personnel. Three problem areas were highly significant because they resulted in sweeping changes in practice. These areas were: (1) silent reading, (2) individual differences, and (3) remedial reading. An exaggerated emphasis was placed on silent reading due to the development of tests which revealed that silent reading was superior to oral reading in speed and comprehension, and to the publication of the yearbooks of the National Society for the Study of Education,
a publication which influenced textbook writers to produce readers based on silent reading procedures. By 1925 this extreme emphasis on silent reading was balanced by other factors. Investigations revealed some unique uses of oral reading and school people discovered that there were some special needs for oral reading in the school program. So there was a progression from extreme oral reading to extreme silent reading to a broader program which recognized both.

Smith said that with the administration of the newly developed tests, a very great fundamental truth became apparent with a violent impact—the realization that there were wide individual differences in the reading achievement of children, in the same grade and in the same classroom. This discovery spurred school people to experiment with a variety of adjustments in classroom organization and instruction such as ability grouping, flexible promotions, and differentiated assignments. Attention to individual differences in reading received its first great impetus during this decade of progress.\(^1\)

Smith associated this period with the launching of the concepts of remedial reading, reading readiness, and experience charts. Remedial reading was spurred on by the use of standardized tests with the chief interest at this time being in diagnosing individual cases. Reading readiness was in the formative stage, and little was done about it until the following period. Experience charts in beginning reading were based

\(^1\)Ibid., pp. 143-144.
on children's experiences, and the practice of introducing children to beginning reading through the use of such materials was advocated though not widely accepted.

Smith summarized the period characterized by extension and application from 1930 to 1940 as follows:

In summary, we may say that progress in this decade was characterized by continuing investigations, greater in number, higher in quality than in the preceding decade; intensive application of the readiness concept; transfer of remedial activities from laboratory to classroom; beginning attention to reading at higher levels; and widespread interest in teaching reading as an integral part of the Activity Program.¹

With the birth of the atomic age from 1940 to 1950, Smith stated that reading and the atomic age became interactive. The discovery was made that young men in military service could not read well enough to follow printed instructions and that reading could be taught to young men in army camps in an amazingly short time. Concurrently several new investigations disclosed reading deficiencies in large numbers of high school and college students. These several influences combined to produce a spurt in attention to reading at these higher levels. A great deal of professional literature on reading emerged. Reading in the content subjects became a matter of wide discussion and the subject of a few investigations. Recognition was given to the interrelationships among the language arts. Reading came to be recognized not as an isolated skill independent of other skills used in the

¹Ibid., p. 146.
interchange of ideas, but as one aspect of the total language arts constellation mutually dependent upon and interactive with all other skills in the communication dimension. A strong new concern sprang up in regard to the effect of three of the newer media for mass communication: comics, movies and radio. School people and parents feared that interest in listening to radio, looking at comics, and viewing movies would reduce interest in reading and thus decrease the amount of reading done. Initial steps were taken in obtaining information to combat what was thought to be the first threat to reading. And at the same time the number of studies devoted to personal factors as related to reading increased: personal interests and attitudes, personal status in social, emotional, and experiential maturity. To sum up:

... the chief points of progress during this decade were: increased attention to teaching reading at the higher levels; growing attention to reading in the content subjects; concerns about mass communications; attempts to find relationships between reading and handwriting spelling, vocabulary and composition; and perhaps, most important of all, a growing consciousness of the profound truth that reading doesn't develop in a vacuum by itself, but that it is part and parcel of general child development and is affected by all other aspects of child growth.1

Smith believed reading instruction to be almost universal during the period from 1950 to 1960. She said:

... Now teachers of all subjects and at all levels want to know more about reading. Parents are asking questions, pursuing books and articles on reading. Students at high-school and college levels and adults beyond college are flocking to reading centers. Slick magazines and laymen are discussing reading freely. A great

1Ibid., p. 147.
conflagration of interest has been ignited amongst teachers and students, and more especially amongst the lay public. And this is good.

During this period, however, for the first time in history, reading instruction in American schools underwent harsh and severe criticism by laymen. School people maintained that the criticisms were unfair and rose to the defense of their methods through articles, speeches, discussions, and investigations. Several comparative studies of "Then and Now" were made. These studies, on the whole, showed that we were teaching reading as well as or better than in preceding years.

Insofar as progress is concerned the criticism by laymen probably had three good effects: it caused school people to examine their present methods more carefully; it stimulated the interest of parents and other laymen in reading instruction; it offered motives and opportunities to school people to explain the research, psychology, and philosophy on which present methods are based. So in this situation, as is often the case in other situations, even criticism caused reading to move forward.

Perhaps as an off-shoot of interest and criticism, coupled with a growing awareness of the complexity of the reading process, there has been a spurt of activity in the re-instatement and increase of reading courses in the curriculums of teacher-training institutions. Concurrently with this interest in adding more courses, standards are being raised in regard to the qualifications of teachers of reading and of reading specialists. This movement toward better-trained teachers in reading is a big step forward.

Studies in reading during this time reached incredible
proportions. Gray reported:

...The number of studies are increasing so rapidly that it is no longer possible to report all of them in this annual summary. Those referred to this year represent either a new or distinctive approach to a problem or suggest significant issues in need of further study.1

1Ibid., pp. 147-148.

Smith believed that the most gratifying trend revealed is that one is at present delving more deeply into the reading process and more broadly into the factors that affect it. She stated:

...The former popular topic of phonics now seems to have been replaced with studies of perception. Comprehension is no longer treated as a lump sum; the emphasis at present is upon the higher thinking processes of interpretation and critical reading. The old readiness studies are replaced with investigations of prediction and expectancy. Remedial reading is not so much concerned now with studies of gadgets and specific teaching remedies as it is with organic and personality factors. Parental personality, attitudes, and interactions with the child as related to reading entered the research scene for the first time during this period, and many reading investigations concerned with parents and their children are now being reported. Studies are made in regard to the climate of the classroom and its effect on reading. This mere glimpse at some of the subjects of the most recent studies is indicative of a trend toward probing to greater depths and in wider breadths than was evident in most of the studies preceding this period.¹

In the last decade individualized reading has loomed large on the horizon. Smith described it as follows:

The innovation in reading method which has loomed large on the horizon of late is the plan known as individualized instruction. The amount of attention given to this plan in this decade is comparable to that given to individual instruction in the nineteen-twenties. It probably is the most popular topic of discussion at present in educational magazines and often at teacher gatherings.

This individualized plan of the present is different from individual instruction which was popular in the twenties. The earlier plan was subject-matter oriented. Each child was given subject matter assignments divided into small increments of difficulty and he was permitted to progress as fast as he, personally, could complete each successive increment. The present plan is child-psychology oriented utilizing particularly Dr. Willard Olsen's theory of seeking, self-selection, and pacing in

¹Ibid., p. 148.
that the child seeks that which stimulates him, selects the book he desires to read, and proceeds at his own rate.

This plan has been used too recently for research reports to have crept into published summaries of investigations. Most of the research on this topic at present falls into the unpublished category of theses, dissertations, or mimeographed reports of experiments carried on in certain school systems. An examination of the most recent sources listing dissertations completed or under way indicates that a quantity of research is now taking place in regard to this topic. Much of it will undoubtedly find its way into print in the near future.1

Smith felt that one should look forward to still greater accomplishments in reading. Brilliant new insights would be revealed and ingenious new techniques of experimentation would be evolved. Possibilities for such developments portend opportunities for unlimited achievement in the future.2

II. WHAT IS INDIVIDUALIZED READING?

There are various definitions and different practices followed in individualized reading. Lazer's definition is perhaps representative.

Individualized Reading is a way of thinking about reading—an attitude toward the place of reading in the total curriculum, toward the materials and methods used, and toward the child's developmental needs. It is not a single method or technique but a broader way of thinking about reading which involves newer concepts concerned with class organization, materials and the approach to the individual child. The term Individualized Reading is by no means fully descriptive but for want of a better term most proponents of this approach continue to use it. . . .

The term Individualized Reading is not synonymous with Individualized Instruction. Many programs involve Individualized Instruction which in no way resembles the kind of classroom approaches inherent in the broad concept of Individualized Reading. . . .

1Ibid., p. 149. 2Ibid., p. 150.
Individualized Reading must also not be confused with Extensive Reading or Recreational Reading, although they have some features in common. Practically all schools have some kind of extensive or recreational reading program, but these generally are adjuncts to the "basic reading" program. Individualized Reading is the basic program because it not only includes the development of skills but provides directly for the enjoyment of reading as well. Instruction in reading and reading itself are constantly interwoven and are developed simultaneously.¹

Lazar cited a number of criteria for an effective reading program:

- Provides for individual differences.
- Recognizes interest and purpose as important factors in learning.
- Allows a child to learn and develop at his own pace. Does not demand that he fit into a predetermined "grade level."
- Includes reading activities which develop the reading skills in functional ways.
- Recognizes the opportunities for the development of skills in the content areas.
- Emphasizes the interrelation of all the language arts which are based on wide and interesting experiences that provide excellent content for reading, discussion, dramatization, and other activities.²

A philosophy and psychology on which individualized reading may be built was pointed out by Olson. In his studies of the nature of growth, behavior, and achievement, he contributed the important concepts of seeking, self-selection, and pacing. Olson pointed out that the healthy child is continually exploring his environment and seeking experiences which fit in with his growth and needs. These seeking tendencies and self-selection of stimulating materials are basic for learning.

¹May Lazar, "Individualized Reading: A Dynamic Approach," *The Reading Teacher*, XI (December, 1957), 76-77.

²Ibid.
Pacing is the teacher's responsibility. She must provide each child with materials and experiences at a rate that insures success at the child's maturity level. 

Lazar believed that individualized reading would fulfill the requirements of a sound educational approach and would meet the criteria for an effective reading program. She stated that

Individualized Reading is the type of program which best fits these concepts. It provides the child with an environment which stimulates exploration, with opportunities for choosing materials which appeal to him, and with guidance which permits him to develop at his own rate. 

Bohnhorst and Sellars defined individualized reading in this way:

In general, it may be said that a program of "individualized reading instruction" is to be distinguished from a "basal" program in that no reliance is placed on a single or common set of systematically prepared graded readers for all to use. Instead, reliance is placed on providing the child with as broad and rich a variety of reading resources as it is possible to obtain, and on guiding the child in selecting those materials and experiences most individually suited to his needs, interests, purposes, and abilities. The program for each child is more nearly individually tailored to meet his situation. Hence, the term "individualized reading instruction." 

According to Johnson, individualized reading is a new organization of the reading program. Rather than reading in

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2 Lazar, op. cit.

organized groups from a basal text, the children read independently with books chosen through interest and with each child reading in a book of his own selection. Individualized reading meets the maturity level of diverse needs, interests, and abilities. Each child progresses at his own rate of speed. No child must wait for others to catch up and no child need be frustrated by reading tasks beyond his ability.¹

Crosby said supporters of the individualized reading program are concerned with the recognition of several important factors:

The teacher must have the skill and know-how to enable her to draw upon many methods and resources to meet the reading needs of individual children.

The children must be supported and encouraged to learn to read in terms of their own individuality and their own unique pattern and pace of growth.

Motivation, the drive of the learner to achieve in reading, must be recognized by helping him seek for himself and choose those books for himself which will be satisfying to him. Expert guidance of teacher and librarian are essential.

A climate must be created in which reading becomes not only a necessity but irresistible. Rich collections of books in rooms and central libraries are essential.²

Crosby made the picture clearer by listing what individualized reading is not:

Teaching each child in exactly the same way
Using the same material with each child
Having each child read aloud to the teacher for a few minutes each day


²Murial Crosby, "Organizing for Reading Instruction," Elementary English, XXXVII (March, 1960), 170.
Letting children choose at random anything they want to read
Having a small group of children, each with a different book, or the same book, join the teacher while she listens to each read aloud
Putting emphasis on quantity of books read rather than upon quality.

Veatch stated:

1 Individualizing a reading program means that pupils personally choose the books and materials by which teachers instruct each one in reading. These books must number roughly triple the class size in different titles. They must include more than the varied and changing interests of every pupil. There must be enough titles at all achievement levels to guarantee a valid, honest selection by each child. The teacher selects the book supply, but the child chooses his own book—perhaps with help and guidance—but with honest respect for his preferences.

2 Individualizing a reading program includes group organization on other bases than general achievement or ability. As each teacher confers with each pupil on his self-selected material, the diagnosis of the specific difficulty is more easily discernible than under any other condition. When two or more children have a common difficulty—or interest or purpose—the teacher groups them and provides immediate help on that specific item. The teacher dissolves the group when she sees no necessity of working further. It is then replaced by a new one with other pupils having other problems in common. There is no permanent group of any kind for any child.

As the days roll by, the reading period is divided roughly in half, the first portion devoted to individual conferences, the latter to group meetings. The teacher plans the group meetings from the private individual records of the preceding day where notations are kept of difficulties, problems, and challenges.

3 Individualizing a reading program means a personal teaching period for each child of at least five minutes about every three days. The interrogation and observational skills of the teacher, as always, determine the value of that conference. There is no manual to tell her what questions to ask, but there are sources which tell a teacher what kind of

1Ibid.
questions to ask. But we know that the intensity of learning resulting from the intimacy of this personal contact is a powerful motivation for children to read independently. Even if the amount of time spent in oral reading were the same in both approaches, the high level of pupil-teacher interaction, facilitated by the structure of the one-to-one relationship, greatly increases the will to learn as compared to that found in the low-level interaction of a ten-to-one situation. When a child has his teacher all to himself, the feeling that "somebody cares" easily develops.

III. INDIVIDUALIZED AND GROUP TYPE READING

Anyone interested in individualized reading should understand how it compares, in detail, with the method of group reading. Stauffer gave the following as "boundaries" of a group-type directed reading activity as well as the individualized-type directed reading activity. The group type directed reading activities' "boundaries" are:

1. Pupils are grouped for instruction on the basis of reading appraisals that have placed them at about the same instructional level.
2. All pupils in a group read the same basic reader story at the same time under teacher direction.
3. Purposes for reading are declared by the pupils. At times all may read to accomplish the same purpose. At times each may have individual purposes. At times two or three in the group may have the same purposes. In the group rests the authority to discipline each pupil's conjectures by reference to the facts at hand in the story. Each pupil is encouraged to have the strength of his convictions until proven right or wrong.
4. The purposes declared reflect the pupil's ability to use information provided by the total story context to conjecture, to reason, and to evaluate. The purposes also reflect each pupil's ability to make discriminate use of his experiences, interests, and language abilities.

5. Answers found are reported to and discussed with the group. Again, with the group rests the authority to accept or reject. Lines in the story may be read orally to the group to prove points.

6. The teacher directs the reading-thinking process by use of provocative queries such as "Why do you think so?" "What do you think will happen next?" She stands by during the silent reading to give help as requested with word-attack needs and in clarifying meanings. She does not teach so-called new words or concepts in isolation before a story is read. Since she is using material that is structured according to controls of vocabulary, new concepts, and interests, she allows her pupils to put to work the word-attack skills and the comprehension skills that they know. One of the chief reasons why basic readers are carefully structured is to permit pupils to use skills learned in a situation where the demands of the material will not frustrate them.

7. Fundamental skill training in word attack and in comprehension is provided as prepared in a systematized studybook program. Some pupils do all of the activities; some do most of them; some do only a few.

8. Additional skill activities are suggested in an accompanying manual. In addition, the manual defines a variety of methods for directing the reading-thinking process for each story.

9. Recommendations are given in the manual for related follow-up activities subsequent to the reading of the story.

10. Other stories are recommended to be read either in school or at home.  

The "boundaries" of the individualized approach are:

1. Primarily, pupils are not placed in traditional groups. Each pupil is free to work without interruption in order to pursue an interest. Two, three, or more may work together to pursue the same interest.

2. The materials read are in a large measure self-selected. Included for selection are textbooks in other curriculum areas which give sufficient facts and skills, trade books, basic readers, newspapers, and magazines at different degrees of complexity.

3. Purposes for reading are largely self-declared and reflect each pupil's interests, abilities, and needs. Purposes may vary from vague, undefined desires for reading fiction, to specifically declared goals requiring versatility.

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1Russell C. Stauffer, "Individualized and Group Type Directed Reading Instruction," Elementary English, XXXVII (October, 1960), 378.
in rate adjustment such as when reading to skim, to
scan, or to study.

4. In dealing with answers self-responsibility and
reliance are essential as they were in declaring pur-
poses. However, a completely self-reliant pupil would
certainly be a rare person. Individuals are social
minded. They want to discuss what they read and to
profit by the discussion; they want to share with
others. So the group or class may often serve as
judge or critic while the reader defends and supports
his answers. Lines may be read orally to prove points.
Papers and talks may be prepared to substantiate claims.

5. The teacher is constantly available to give help as
requested in attacking words not recognized at sight,
and in clearing comprehension needs.

6. Skill training is provided as needed by using either
teacher prepared materials, studybooks designed to
accompany basic readers, and other skill books. Pupils
with similar needs may be grouped for instruction. They
may meet as a group for two or three periods or for
three or four weeks.

7. Pupil as well as teacher records are kept of reading
done, purposes accomplished, and needs declared and
resolved. Pupil schedules are maintained.

8. Teacher pacing is done to direct each child to locate
materials in keeping with his interests and skills, to
develop purposes that are clearly defined, to organize
knowledge gained, to appraise understandings gained, to
adequately share with others, to provide needed skill
training, to foster new interests in wide reading. All
this must be done at a tempo that will assure a maximum
amount of success and a minimum amount of frustration.¹

Veatch gave the following chart for comparison.²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDIVIDUALIZED READING</th>
<th>ABILITY-GROUPED READING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I  Reading Material</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Large number and variety of instruction</td>
<td>A. Single basic or supplemental readers used in instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II  Classroom Organization and Procedure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Children choose what they read</td>
<td>A. Teacher chooses what children read</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Ibid., pp. 379-380.

²Jeanette Veatch, Individualizing Your Reading Program
II. Classroom Organization and Procedure

(continued)

E. Motivation arises from child's interests

F. Instruction on individual one-to-one basis

D. Grouping is short term and for specific, immediate purpose

G. Reading lesson prepared independently and seatwork has element of self-determination

H. Remedial work integrated with other activities

I. Planned sharing period

J. Individual peak reading level checked and evaluated

III. Effects on the Child and on His Reading

A. Gifted child progresses at his own pace

B. Slow reader not publicly stigmatized

C. Close personal interaction with teacher serves child's psychological needs

D. Reading at one's interest and ability level fosters development of skills

E. Acquiring skills only as needed assures their normal development

F. Motivation comes from teacher using the manual

G. Instruction on group basis

H. Grouping is semi-permanent and for indeterminate purpose

I. Reading lesson prepared in a group and seatwork determined by teacher

J. Remedial work entails separate operation

K. No special sharing period

L. Various and indeterminate reading levels checked and evaluated

M. Gifted child must gear progress to group's

N. Slow reader publicly stigmatized by group and book assignment

O. Child loses advantage of close personal interaction with teacher

P. Working at group interest and ability level may hinder development of skills

Q. Acquiring skills when not needed may hinder reading competence
III. Effects on the Child and on His Reading (continued)

F. Oral reading promoted by genuine audience situation
G. Reading becomes its own reward

F. Oral reading suffers through absence of genuine audience situation
G. Extrinsic rewards may debase intrinsic value of reading

IV. ORGANIZING AN INDIVIDUALIZED READING PROGRAM

Bonney and Hanigan believed that children have special needs and a wide range of interests that could best be met by Individualized Reading. They stated:

The individualized teaching of reading with emphasis upon the children's individual interests and levels of development, is designed to meet these needs. It is a developmental program with specific aims and definite procedures. Reading is taught fundamentally as well as incidentally.1

Hoggard gave a basic philosophy as developed for the El Dorado, Arkansas Schools, including the following principles:

1. Reading should be considered as a process rather than as a subject.
2. A wide range of reading ability exists at any one "grade" level, therefore, differentiated instruction is necessary on all grade levels.
3. Education increases individual differences.
4. Every child should be taught to read at his fullest capacity.
5. Reading should be taught on all grade levels, in all subject matter areas and by all teachers.
6. Each child should be given an informal reading inventory in order to find out his specific reading needs.
7. Four reading levels should be determined for the children in each classroom as follows:
   a. Independent Level - The highest level at which the child can read with full understanding.

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1Jill Bonney and Levin B. Hanigan, "Individualized Teaching of Reading," The National Elementary Principal, XXXV (September, 1955), 76, 82.
b. Instructional Level - The level at which systematic instruction can be initiated.

c. Frustration Level - The level at which the individual is thwarted and reading success is impossible.

d. Capacity Level - Hearing level. 1

Check list for teachers preparing to individualize reading. Venatch prepared the following check list for teachers who are preparing to develop an individualized reading program.

1. Is my own mind made up?
2. Do I know the reading level of my pupils?
3. Have I decided who will participate?
4. Do I have enough books?
   a. Are there three to five per child?
   b. Are there no more than three or four of the same title?
   c. Is there a wide enough range of difficulty for all needs at all times?
   d. Are there enough subjects to interest everyone?
5. Is my room ready?
   a. Are books easily available?
   b. Do I have a place for individual conferences?
   c. Can pupils sit beside me?
   d. Is there a place for small groups to meet?
   e. Can traffic move reasonably freely?
6. Have I planned enough for readers and nonreaders to do while I work with individuals and groups?
7. Have I established adequate routines?
   a. Do I have a plan for getting and returning books?
   b. Do I have a plan for keeping records?
   c. Have I planned a way to help with unknown words?
   d. Have I planned other routines for my room?
8. Have I consulted my school authorities and parents? 2

The Minsdale Public Schools, Minsdale, Illinois, conducted a workshop for twenty-eight teachers. These teachers considered and listed the following areas in organizing and implementing Individualized Reading in the classroom.

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1C. A. Stubblefield and J. Kendall Hoggard, "Reading in the Fl Dorado, Arkansas Schools" (El Dorado, Arkansas: El Dorado Schools, 1956), pp. 2-3. (Mimeographed.)
1. Check the reading ability level of the children.
2. Go on a treasure hunt for books.
3. Set aside large blocks of time for reading.
   a. Independent work activities.
   b. Interest centers.
4. Observe and diagnose.
5. Develop and maintain skills.
   a. Skill of reading for comprehension.
   b. Skill of holding an audience while reading.
   c. Skill of skimming or scanning.
   d. Skill of independent, rapid reading.
   e. Skill of recognizing words.
6. Provide a variety of reading experiences.
7. Provide conference time.
8. Keep records and evaluate.
9. Invite parent participation.

Groff said that large numbers of books and other reading materials on various topics and widely divergent reading levels are an absolute necessity for an individualized program of reading. The following is a short summary of Groff's list and bibliography.

1. Available children's books listed in the Children's Catalog.
2. Lists of books graded as to difficulty such as the one published by the Wisconsin Reading Circle.
3. Methods of recording books read such as "My Reading Design."
4. Reference books on word analysis and other reading skills.
5. Source materials for developing reading games and devices.
7. Available materials from publishers.
8. The SRA Reading Laboratory.
9. Reader's Digest Reading Skill Builders.
10. Textbooks in Print.
11. Audio-Visual Catalog.


The staff of the New York City Board of Education's Bureau of Research compiled a basic list of children's books suggested for use in their individualized reading program. This list was divided into three parts:

1. Books for Children Just Beginning to Read
2. Books for Children Who Are Beginning to Gain Independence in Reading
3. Books for Children in the Fourth Grade or Higher.

The list has been revised several times. It represents a good reading balance between old and new; fact and fiction; easy and more challenging; fantasy and practical; prose and verse. This basic list was merely suggestive and was not to be considered as prescriptive in any form or manner. Rather, it should be used in conjunction with more comprehensive lists of library books and other materials listed for literature.

Sharpe did a study of what had been done for follow-up activities in the individualized reading program to maintain and strengthen skills in reading without the use of workbook type activities. The following is a brief summary of Sharpe's findings and recommendations.

I. Fictional Stories

1. Recording

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II. Vocational Interests

1. Recording
2. Research
3. Committee work
4. Oral reporting—making preparations for presentations
5. Written activities.

III. Study Skills

1. Games
2. Committee work, or study teams
3. Oral—with teacher
4. Written activities.

Sherpa gave the following recommendations:

1. The types of activities suggested in the outline should be adjusted to the level of the ability of the child pursuing them. Thus, these types of activities can be used with primary as well as with upper grade children; or with pupils of lower or average ability as well as superior ability.

2. Mimeographed material, if used at all, should specifically meet the need of the child using it, and should be checked with the teacher in order to best help the child understand his needs.

3. There is a need for "action research" in the classroom to determine:
   a. Ways of organizing large classes for a maximum of individual help with the optimum use of teacher time in preparation.
   b. Ways individual teachers can best use follow-up activities in making use of individualized reading.
Sharpe concluded:

Our responsibility as teachers is not only to teach children to read for the many purposes they need, but also to teach children so they will read.¹

The Hinsdale Public Schools felt that record keeping and evaluation could not be accomplished by a single achievement test. This source stated that:

The teacher needs to know...whether a child finds satisfaction in reading, whether he reads widely, whether he is developing discrimination in reading.

The answers to such questions can be found in records kept in the intimate teaching situation made possible by the individualized reading method. A large notebook or bank ledger held in the lap, with separate pages of books that are read, performance in “briefing” a plot, attitude towards material, phonetic helps needed, skills that need polishing not only provide evaluative data, but can be the basis for a teacher’s future action with her children and in reporting to parents.

Such teacher records, plus children’s records, can provide the other-than-test-score data that so many of us feel is vital.²

Bonney and Hanigan spoke of evaluation in this manner:

The most commonly used types of evaluation are teacher and parent observation of children (particularly in regard to the kind of material selected, the amount of material, the difficulty of the material, the amount and kind of help needed to read successfully, and the reaction of children toward the material read), oral reading, creative writing, discussion of materials read, standardized tests, informal inventory using basal readers, and the observed desire of children to want to read. The reactions of children themselves are necessary to complete an evaluation.³


³Bonney and Hanigan, op. cit., p. 82.
Groff placed the teacher as the key person in the success or failure of an individualized program. The teacher's attitude is of the utmost importance. He must realize that an individualized method may be more complicated and difficult than the basal reader method of grouping.

The same standards of instruction that characterized the basal program must be maintained, also. Instruction in all skills must be given and instruction in the basic skills must be emphasized. Especially, practice materials for the various skills must be on hand and the child referred to these when necessary. The teacher more than ever before becomes a guidance and resource person. His rapport with his students has never before been so important to his success as a teacher...

The teacher should evaluate his own personality with the understanding that his intelligence, emotional stability, experience with children, knowledge of teaching, and inner motivations have a great influence over what he will be able to do successfully. For the emotionally mature, optimistic, enthusiastic, and capable teacher who believes reading to be an individual process regardless of its social aims or ends, who can accept the idea that a child will select rightly what he can and needs to read, and who puts forth faith in interest as the prime motivator, individualized reading can be much more satisfying than teaching in groups.1

Chapter II has been devoted to a review of reading progress and to the concept of individualized reading in particular. This chapter gave the history of reading during the past fifty years and showed how theory, practice, method, and developing sciences led to the concept of individualized reading. Individualized reading was defined and compared, for the purpose of clarity and understanding, with ability grouped reading, and the essential elements of an organized individualized program were outlined.

CHAPTER III

DESCRIPTION OF THE INDIVIDUALIZED READING PROGRAM
AT PARK AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

This study was begun in October, 1960, and was concluded in May, 1961. The writer attempted to equate two sixth grade groups in order to compare the effectiveness of the Individualized Method of teaching reading with the Basic Reader Method.

The Individualized Reading Group was taught by the writer using trade books. The Basic Reader Group was taught by a different teacher using the Scott, Foresman New Basic Readers. 1

The Individualized Reading Group consisted of twenty children within a group of thirty-nine. All thirty-nine children were taught by the same individualized method but only twenty were equated with twenty children from the Basic Reader Group whose class size numbered thirty-four.

The twenty pairs were equated late in the year, thus eliminating the factors of transfer and illness and in addition allowing no special recognition to the twenty pairs involved in this study.

I. EQUATING THE GROUPS

From the two sixth grade classes involved in this study were selected two parallel, equated groups. The following criteria were used to equate the groups:

1. Intelligence Quotient
2. Age
3. Sex.

The age and sex of each child were taken from his record card. The mental ability of each was determined by the administration of the 1954 edition of the Otis Quick Scoring Mental Ability Test; new edition, Beta Test, Form FM.1

Table I shows the chronological age and intelligence quotient scores for the boys in the Individualized Reading Group and in the Basic Reader Group. In equating the boys, pairs A, F, J, and L vary as much as six months in chronological age, while pair C varies five months. Pairs F, G, H, I, and K vary two months and pair D is the same age. The mean age for the two groups shows the Individualized Reading Group to be two months older.

In regard to the intelligence quotient, pairs B and E vary six and seven points, respectively, while D varies four points, C three points, H two points, G and I one point, and K is exactly equated. The range for the boys in the Basic Reader Group is from 80 to 116 with a mean of 99 as compared

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1 Otis Quick Scoring Mental Ability Test, Beta Test, Form FM (New edition; Chicago: World Book Company, 1954).
to the Individualized Reading Group whose range is from 84 to 117 with a mean of 100.3.

Table II shows the chronological age and intelligence quotient for the girls in the Individualized Reading Group and the Basic Reader Group. In the equated pairs of girls, pairs S and T vary as much as six months in chronological age, while pairs M, P, and R vary three months. Pairs N and Q vary two months and pair Q varies only one month. The mean age for the Basic Reader Group is 12-1 while the mean age for the Individualized Reading Group is 12-3. The intelligence quotient of pair N varies eight points, with pairs R and T varying five points. Pairs N and Q vary two points and pairs O and P have only one point difference. The mean score for the Basic Reader Group is 105.7 while the mean score for the Individualized Reading Group is 103.

In chronological age the mean age for both boys and girls is 12-1 for the Basic Reader Group, and 12-2 for the Individualized Reading Group. The mean intelligence quotient for boys and girls in the Basic Reader Group was 101.7, and 101.4 for the boys and girls in the Individualized Reading Group. The test for the significance of difference between means, with paired groups of subjects as presented by Jackson and Ferguson, showed the value of "t" to be .043. The apparent difference in intelligence quotient is not significant.

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The intelligence quotient of the boys ranged from 80 to 116. The intelligence quotient of the girls ranged from 87 to 122. From this data and the fact that the "academically talented" had been removed from the group, the writer deduced that these children were average and below average students.

A knowledge of the community and a study of the cumulative records of the homes, occupations, and family situations placed these children in the lower-middle and upper-lower socio-economic and cultural levels.

II. INDIVIDUALIZED READING PROGRAM FOR PARK AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, SIXTH GRADE, ROOM 204, 1960-1961

In this section the investigator will give a description of the Individualized Reading Program conducted at Park Avenue Elementary School, Des Moines, Iowa, 1960-1961.

The first five weeks of the school year 1960-1961 were devoted to testing, observation, diagnosis and study of the children in Room 204 to better understand each child as to needs, interests, attitudes, ability and potential. The Stanford Achievement Test, Intermediate Battery, Form J\(^1\) was administered in October, 1960 and an Interest and Activities Inventory was also given at this time.\(^2\) At the beginning of the year, the children in Room 204 were divided into groups,

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\(^1\) *Stanford Achievement Test, Intermediate Battery, Form J* (New York and Chicago: World Book Company, 1953).

\(^2\) See Appendix B.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pairs</th>
<th>Basic Reader Group</th>
<th>Individualized Reading Group</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chronological Age</td>
<td>Intelligence Quotient</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>12-6</td>
<td>101</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>11-8</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>11-8</td>
<td>104</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>11-7</td>
<td>101</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>13-1</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>95</td>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>11-10</td>
<td>116</td>
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<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>12-6</td>
<td>102</td>
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<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>12-3</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>12-0</td>
<td>83</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Mean (Boys) | 12-0 | 93.6 | 12-2 | 100.3 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pairs</th>
<th>Basic Reader Group</th>
<th>Individualized Reading Group</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Chronological Age</td>
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<tr>
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<td>12-0</td>
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<td>N</td>
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<td>O</td>
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<td>P</td>
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<td>96</td>
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<td>Q</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>11-9</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>11-7</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>11-11</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean (Girls) 12-1 105.7 12-3 103.0

Mean (Total) 12-1 101.7 12-2 101.4

"t" = .043 (Not Significant)
reading from the basic text with the exception of one group. The last-named group of ten began by reading trade books. The interest and enthusiasm of this trade book group was instrumental in setting up the individualized program in the room. The basic reader group began asking if they could not read "library" books. The opportunity was there and the time right to begin the individualized program.

As the students were not cognizant of the fact that a new program of reading was being initiated, two purposes were accomplished. First, the children were not stimulated from the fact that they were embarking upon a new program of reading, which might have had some bearing on the final results of the study; and, second, parental attitude was not a contributing factor either for or against the program. The teacher and principal had previously decided that the parents would not be fully informed of the experiment since there were already two full-scale experiments implemented in the building during the year 1960-1961. To inform the parents of the participation of their children in a third experiment was almost certain to bring adverse criticism from them and influence the effectiveness of the individualized method of teaching reading.

A block of time was set aside for reading and language. The basic reading text was used as a supplement to the language program. In the language unit on story-telling the class used the reading unit of "Fun and Fantasy" as a basis for understanding how to write a story. Similarly, the reading unit on
"Biographies" was used as background material for writing autobiographical sketches. Other reading units were used in like fashion in correlation with language. Thus, every child felt that he had "completed" the basic text and the material required for reading in the Sixth Grade.

**Initiating the program.** The first consideration was to obtain a vast number of books that would meet the interests and needs of the children. This problem was solved by a regular trip every six weeks to the Lincoln Heights Library where each child checked out a minimum of three or a maximum of six books. In addition, every child had access to the Park Avenue Elementary School Library where books could be checked before and after school and during a forty minute library period once a week.

The teacher provided guidance by supplying and suggesting many different kinds of books she knew the child would be capable of reading. But the child himself made the final decision. The only restraint on self-selection was a final check with the teacher, especially at the beginning of the year.

Planning with the class included how to record books read; how to get help with vocabulary, and what to do when working with the teacher. The teacher explained that each day there would be a conference time for each child arranged according to a preposted list; that groupings would be organized according to interests, abilities, and needs; and
that flexible organization was for the purpose of helping individual children over weak spots, for word study, for sharing stories of similar interest appeal, and for pure enjoyment.

Daily reading period. A block of time (about eighty minutes) was set aside for the combined reading and language period. The daily schedule varied according to needs that arose but usually consisted of a group planning time, short conferences with each individual child as often as time permitted, small groups assembled for instruction in a specific skill, a twenty minute period with the whole class on a language skill, and a sharing time.

During planning time, the group, with the teacher, decided the activities for the reading and language period. The child who had finished his book selected a new one, problems arising from presentations of material read were discussed and time was allowed to help individuals or groups, and arrangements were made for sharing activities.

Individual conferences ranged from three to ten minutes. During these conferences the child's individual needs in reading skill were met. He read orally parts of the story or discussed the story with the teacher. The child was assigned skill exercises to meet his own needs or discussed and followed through on some phase of the individual assignment for each study.¹ The teacher kept a record book of each child's

¹Appendix C.
difficulty and record of progress.\textsuperscript{1} The teacher used this material as a basis for individual help and organization of small groups for skill development.\textsuperscript{2}

Small groups were brought together for group instruction on the basis of common need. Small group instruction centered around skill development and presentation of material.

Whole class instruction included such skills as fact-finding, research, skimming, outlining, storytelling and writing, reports, discussions, and other oral and written presentations. One such group assembly discussed books in general. Each child was expected to notice everything about a particular book—the dust jacket and the author's life, dedication of book, author and illustrator, rights reserve, copyright, date of publication, and association of the author with books by the same.

Sharing time was a period which stimulated interest in books and reading. At this time children reported on their books in a variety of ways—by telling about the book, reading a passage, showing a picture or diorama, dramatizing, exhibits or movies. Often a child would reserve a book for himself after the book was discussed in sharing time.

Children at their seats were engaged in reading their books, completing their practice exercises or assignment for each story, or preparing for sharing of the book they had just completed.

\textsuperscript{1}Appendix D. \textsuperscript{2}Appendix E.
All children were allowed to take their books from the room to be read in spare moments or at home. Each child was encouraged to read but there was no homework assignment in reading given by the teacher.

**Records.** Due to the tremendous number of books that was constantly moving in and out of the classroom, it was not feasible to keep a record of books kept in the room for the children to read. However, each book was checked by the teacher to determine the acceptability of the book for the reading program. Each child had a record sheet, and kept a record of the books that he had read. The teacher kept a record on each child. On this record was recorded the books read to the teacher in individual conferences, and to the group. Also, notes were made in regard to the reading that would help the teacher to instruct the child in specific areas.

**III. BASIC READING PROGRAM AT PARK AVENUE**
**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, SIXTH GRADE**

The Basic Reader Group of sixth graders read from the Scott, Foresman and Company Basic Readers. They were divided into three groups according to reading ability. Each

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group met with the teacher for a period of twenty minutes. This twenty minute period was used to listen to the children read, to discuss the story or to teach a particular skill. Workbook assignments by the teacher were used to reinforce the skill taught. Skills were taught as outlined by the Basic text, in conjunction with the Think and Do Book. Each group progressed systematically through the two basic texts.

Seatwork assignments consisted of workbook drills, suggested outside reading for extra credit, or activities such as preparation of a story or bulletin board presentation for the class.

A twenty minute library period once a week was used to check books from the Park Avenue Elementary School Library or for other library activities.

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CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

In this chapter, the investigator will present information on the effectiveness of the Individualized Reading Program.

Two parallel, equated groups of twenty-sixth grade children each were used for the study. The Basic Reader Group was taught by one classroom teacher and the Individualized Reading Group was taught by the writer for the period extending from October, 1960 to May, 1961.

Three types of data were collected for evaluation: (1) the results of the Stanford Achievement Test, Intermediate Battery, Form J\(^1\), which was administered to both the Basic Reader Group and the Individualized Reading Group in October, 1960; and Form E\(^2\) which was administered in May, 1961; (2) individualized records of personal reading kept by each child on a special form\(^3\); and (3) results of an interest and activities inventory given to both reading groups in October, 1960 and May, 1961, respectively.


\(^3\)See Appendix A.

\(^4\)See Appendix B.
On October 10, 1960 the Stanford Achievement Test, Intermediate Edition, Form J was given to the Individualized Reading Group and the Basic Reader Group to establish grade placement and diagnose reading difficulties. On May 28, 1961 Form F of the same test was given to ascertain the new grade placement and provide a basis for measuring the growth of each individual within the two groups. Table III shows the results of these tests and indicates the reading gain from October, 1960 to May, 1961 in years and months.

In October the boys in the Basic Reader Group had a range in grade placement from 3.8 to 7.0 with a mean of 5.57. In May, 1961 the range was from 4.3 to 8.6 with a mean of 6.16, making the mean gain .59. The boys in the Individualized Reading Group ranged from 3.6 to 7.0 with a mean of 5.39 in October, 1960. In May, 1961 the range was from 3.9 to 9.8, with a mean of 6.86. This was a mean gain of 1.47, or a mean gain of .88 greater than that of the boys in the Basic Reader Group.

The girls in the Basic Reader Group on the October, 1960 test ranged from 5.4 to 7.3 with a mean of 6.34. On the May, 1961 test, the range was from 5.8 to 9.4 with a mean score of 7.65. These figures showed a mean gain of 1.31. In October, 1960 the Individualized Reading Group of girls ranged from 3.9 to 9.0 with a mean of 6.08. The May, 1961 test figures showed a range from 6.0 to 10.5 with a mean of 7.75. This was a mean gain of 1.67. When compared with the
Basic Reader Group, the gain was .36 greater for the Individualized Reading Group.

The test for the significance of difference between means, with paired groups of subjects as presented by Jackson and Ferguson\(^1\) showed the "t" level for mean difference in reading gains in favor of the Individualized Reading Group for the total group (boys and girls) to be 3.252, as shown in Table V. The value of "t" is significant beyond the .01 level, making the difference significant.

It should be noted that fourteen children of the Basic Reader Group (boys and girls) made less than one year of growth while only six children in the Individualized Reading Group made less than one year of growth. Conversely, six children in the Basic Reader Group made over one year of growth while fourteen children in the Individualized Reading Group gained over one year. One child in the Basic Reader Group made a reading gain of two years, and three children in the Individualized Reading Group made two years gain. No child in the Basic Reader Group made more than 2.1 reading gain, while two children in the Individualized Reading Group made gains of 3.2 and 3.6, respectively.

The interest and activity inventory was given in October, 1960 and repeated in May, 1961. It was given to find the

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Basic Reader Group</th>
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<th>Individualized Reading Group</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade Placement</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>May 1961</td>
<td>Gain</td>
<td>Grade Placement</td>
<td>October</td>
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<td></td>
<td>9.0</td>
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<td>.88</td>
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<td>5.66</td>
<td>7.22</td>
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number of minutes spent in reading outside of school by each child in both the Individualized Reading Group and the Basic Reader Group, and to find the kind of material read. This would indicate a change in reading interest and attitudes and a change in types or kinds of material read.

Table IV gives the time spent in reading outside of school by the Basic Reader Group and the Individualized Reading Group, and the number of books read by each child during the period from October, 1960 to May, 1961.

The total reading time in October for the boys of the Basic Reader Group was 435 minutes with a mean of 36.3 minutes. The total reading time in May was 465 minutes. The May mean was 38.7 minutes. This made a mean gain of 2.5 minutes. The boys in the Individualized Reading Group had a total reading time in October of 450 minutes with a mean of 37.5. In May this group had a total reading time of 710 minutes with a mean of 59.2 minutes. These figures showed a mean gain of 21.7 minutes. In comparing the mean score of the Individualized Reading Group of boys with the mean score of the Basic Reader Group, the figures showed the Individualized Reading Group to have superiority in mean gain of 19.2 minutes. The total reading time for the girls in the Basic Reader Group in October was 545 minutes with a mean of 68.1 minutes; in May the total reading time was 485 minutes with a mean of 60.6 minutes. A mean change of -7.5 minutes was shown. For the Individualized Reading Group of girls the October total reading time was
680 minutes with a mean of 85 minutes. The total reading time for May was 540 minutes with a mean of 105. The mean gain was 36 minutes. When the mean score of the Basic Reader Group of girls was compared with the mean score of the Individualised Reading Group of girls, the figures showed the Individualised Group to have a superiority in mean gain of 27 minutes.

The test for the significance of differences between means, with paired groups of subjects as presented by Jackson and Ferguson, showed the "t" level for mean difference in gain in outside reading time as given in Table V. The "t" is a composite for both girls and boys. The value of "t" (1.771) does not reach the .05 level, making the difference of no significance.

A comparison of individuals within the two groups showed that eight individuals in the Basic Reader Group spent from 15 to 60 minutes less time in outside reading during the school year, whereas three individuals in the Individualised Reading Group spent from 10 to 50 minutes less time in outside reading.

The number of books read was taken from each child's individual record and was used to indicate interest in reading and the child's use of time. Table IV gives the number of books read by the Basic Reader Group and the Individualised

---

1 Jackson and Ferguson, op. cit.
Reading Group for the period beginning October, 1960 and ending May, 1961.

The boys in the Basic Reader Group read a total of 174 books with a mean of 14.5. The boys in the Individualized Reading Group read a total of 467 books with a mean of 38.9, which was 24.4 higher than the mean for boys in the Basic Reader Group.

The girls in the Basic Reader Group read 196 books with a mean of 19.5. The girls in the Individualized Reading Group read 358 books with a mean of 44.7. This was a mean of 25.2 books more than the Basic Reader Group.

Tests for the significance of differences between means with paired groups of subjects as presented by Jackson and Ferguson,\(^1\) placed the numerical value of "t" for the mean number of books read by the boys and girls of the Basic Reader Group compared with the boys and girls of the Individualized Reading Group as shown in Table V at 5.36. This value is beyond the .001 level, making the difference highly significant.

Table V gives a composite summary of reading gains, number of books read, and additional time spent in reading outside of school hours for both the Individualized Reading Group and the Basic Reader Group.

Areas of interest in reading were taken from the interest and activities inventory. Table VI gives the number of

\(^1\)This.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Reader Group</th>
<th>Minutes Per Day Spent in Reading</th>
<th>Number of Books Read</th>
<th>Individualized Reading Group</th>
<th>Minutes Per Day Spent in Reading</th>
<th>Number of Books Read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>37</td>
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</tr>
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<td>-30</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>37.5</td>
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<td><strong>Girls</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>180</td>
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<tr>
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<td>120</td>
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<td>-60</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<td>45</td>
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<td>-30</td>
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<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>-30</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>485</td>
<td>-60</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>660</td>
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<td><strong>Mean (Girls)</strong></td>
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<td>60.6</td>
<td>-7.5</td>
<td>19.5</td>
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<td>47.5</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>56.5</td>
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areas in which individuals preferred to read. In October the Basic Reader Group of boys had a range from 1 to 9 areas with a mean of 2.6. In May the boys' range was from 1 to 7 with a mean of 4.1. This was a mean gain of 1.5. The Individual- 
ized Reading Group of boys had a range in October, from 1 to 7 with a mean of 2.7. The May range for these boys was from 1 to 7 with a mean of 3.9. This made a mean gain of 1.3. The Basic Reader Group of boys had a mean gain of 0.2 greater than that of the Individualized Reading Group of boys.

The girls in the Basic Reader Group had a range in October from 1 to 4 with a mean of 2.9. In May the same group had a range from 1 to 7 with a mean of 3.0. The group made a mean gain of 0.1. The girls in the Individualized Reading Group had a range from 1 to 8 in October with a mean of 5.9. The range in May was from 1 to 10 with a mean of 5.3. The Basic Reader Group had a mean gain 0.7 greater than the Individualized Reading Group of girls.

Four individuals in the Basic Reader Group read in fewer areas in May than in October. Five individuals in the Individualized Reading Group read in fewer areas in May than in October.

**Summary.** Chapter IV was devoted to a comparison of data obtained from evaluative materials given to both the Basic Reader Group and the Individualized Reading Group of sixth graders at Park Avenue Elementary School. A comparison
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<td><strong>Mean (Total)</strong></td>
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"t" (Reading Gain) = 3.252 (Significance beyond .01 level)
"t" (Number of Books Read) = 5.36 (Significance beyond .001 level)
"t" (Outside Reading Time) = 1.771 (Not significant)
### Table VI

**Interest Areas in Reading Selected by Sixth Grade Children, Park Avenue Elementary School, Des Moines, Iowa**

<table>
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<th>Individualized Reading Group</th>
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<td>May</td>
<td>Gain</td>
<td>October</td>
</tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>K</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean (Boys)</td>
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<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
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</table>

| Girls  |         |     |      |
|--------|------------------|------------------|
|        | October | May | Gain |
| E      | 6       | 3   | 3    |
| N      | 6       | 3   | 3    |
| O      | 6       | 3   | 3    |
| P      | 6       | 3   | 3    |
| Q      | 6       | 3   | 3    |
| R      | 6       | 3   | 3    |
| S      | 6       | 3   | 3    |
| T      | 6       | 3   | 3    |
| Mean (Girls) | 3.9 | 1.0 | 0.1 |

*Includes interest areas in history, travel, plays, adventure, science, poetry, music, detective, fairy tales, and biography.*
was made of the following: (1) reading gains, using the results of the Stanford Achievement Test, Intermediate Battery, Forms J and F; (2) number of books read and time spent in reading, and (3) interest areas selected by both the Individualized Reading Group and Basic Reader Group.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The present study was undertaken to determine how twenty sixth grade children taught by the Individualized Reading method under the direction of the writer would compare with an equated twenty children taught by the Basic Reader method under the direction of another teacher.

To equate the twenty pairs on intelligence quotient, age, and sex, the Otis Quick Scoring Mental Ability Test, Beta Test, Form EM and the cumulative record folders were used.

The Individualized Reading Program was begun in October, 1960 and continued through May, 1961. The program was organized without the full knowledge of parents or children. About eighty minutes was set aside for reading and language. Trade books secured from the Lincoln Heights Library and the Park Avenue Elementary School Library were used for the reading program, and the "basic text" recommended for sixth grade was used only in correlation with the language program.

The Individualized Reading Program was flexible and varied according to needs. Group planning with the teacher decided the daily and weekly schedule within limits. Individual reading conferences were held to diagnose difficulties and teach needed skills. Individual records kept by the
teacher provided data for small group instruction on the basis of common need. Total group instruction was given when the total group had a need for a common skill. Seatwork was planned with the teacher to meet the needs of the individual child. Sharing time took a variety of forms, and stimulated interest. Every child was encouraged to read and was allowed to carry his book with him outside the classroom.

The data secured for the evaluation of the Basic Reader Group and the Individualized Reading Group consisted of the following: (1) The Stanford Achievement Test, Intermediate Battery, Form J, given in October, 1960 and Form E, given in May, 1961 used to measure reading gains; (2) the individualized reading records of personal reading kept by each child on a special form to compare the number of books read; and (3) the results of an interest and activities inventory given in October, 1960 and repeated in May, 1961 to determine gains in reading time outside of school, and to determine change in interest areas.

The study was limited and not sufficient in scope for broad generalizations. It did not include all factors which influenced a child's reading ability. The Individualized Reading Group and Basic Reader Group attended the same school, and the experiment involved only a small group of twenty matched pairs. The teacher factor was not held constant as the Individualized Reading Group and the Basic Reader Group were each taught by a different teacher.
Conclusions must therefore apply only to the twenty matched pairs, sixth grade, Park Avenue Elementary School, Des Moines, Iowa.

In comparing the Individualized Reading Group under one teacher with the Basic Reader Group under another, the following conclusions were reached:

1. The Individualized Reading Group made significantly greater reading achievement gains than did the Basic Reader Group.

2. The Individualized Reading Group read a significantly greater number of books than did the Basic Reader Group.

3. The Individualized Reading Group made apparently greater gains in outside reading time as compared with the Basic Reader Group, but the difference did not meet the chosen criterion of significance.

4. Interest areas of the Individualized Reading Group, as reported on an Interest Inventory, made no appreciable change.

5. The Individualized Reading Program apparently challenged and was successful for the average and below average children who participated in the study.

6. The Individualized Reading Program apparently improved habits in use of reading time, as indicated by the number of books read and suggested by time spent in reading.
As a result of the experiences of this study the writer makes the following recommendations:

1. The writer recommends the use of the Individualized Program to some extent, as apparent gains made by the Individualized Reading Group in two areas were significantly greater than the gain made by the Basic Reader Group.

2. Teachers need to do action research in their own classrooms on Individualized Reading, to decide for themselves the effectiveness of the Individualized Program.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. BOOKS


B. PAMPHLETS, BULLETINS AND MITEMOGRAPHED MATERIALS


C. TESTS

D. PERIODICALS


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Smith, Nila B. "What Have We Accomplished in Reading?--A Review of the Past Fifty Years," Elementary English, XXXVIII (March, 1961), 141-150.


Stauffer, Russell C. "Individualized and Group Type Directed Reading Instruction," Elementary English, XXXVII (October, 1960), 375-382.

# APPENDIX A

## Reading Form for Books

**Name**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Book Completed</th>
<th>Name of Book</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

APPENDIX E

Interest and Activities Inventory

Name ___________ Date of birth ___________ Age ___________

Grade ___________ School ___________ Teacher ___________ Date ______

1. When you have an hour or two to do as you please, what do you like best to do? ________________________________

2. What do you usually do:
   a. Directly after school? __________________________________
   b. In the evening? ________________________________________
   c. On Saturdays? _________________________________________
   d. On Sundays? __________________________________________

3. What are your favorite TV programs? ________________________________

4. How much time do you watch TV each day? ________________________

5. Do you enjoy reading? _________________________________________

6. Do you like for someone to read to you? _____ Who? ______

7. Aside from lessons, about how much time each day do you spend reading? ________________________________

8. Do your parents encourage you to read? _________________________

9. What is the best book you have ever read? ________________________

10. Do you get books from the public library? ________________________

11. How often do you get books from the library? ____________________

12. How many books do you own? ________________________________

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Adapted from Paul Witty and David Kopel, Reading and the Educative Process (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1939), pp. 316-320.
13. What books would you like to own? ____________________________
14. Underline the books you most enjoy: history, travel, plays, adventure, science, poetry novels, detective, fairy tales, music.
15. What magazines are received in your home? ________________
16. Which ones do you read? __________________________________
17. What is your favorite magazine? ____________________________
18. Where do you prefer to read? ________________________________
19. What is your favorite time for reading? ______________________
20. What is your favorite leisure time activity? _________________
APPENDIX C

Individual Assignment for Each Story

1. Write the name of the story.
2. Write the name of the characters in the story.
3. Write my opinion of the story
   a. Why I like or do not like it.
   b. The part I like best.
   c. Why the title is good.
4. Choose one of these to write
   a. Five questions and answers.
   b. The plot of the story.
   c. What I learned from the story.
5. Write a new vocabulary in the back of my book.
6. Prepare to share my work. Use my own words.
   a. Dramatization
   b. Puppet show
   c. Painting
   d. Drawing
   e. Collection
   f. Exhibit
   g. Dressed dolls
   h. Diorama
   i. Movie

---

7. Check up. Did I remember?

a. To write in good sentences?
b. To use correct punctuation marks?
c. To use capital letters in titles and at beginning of sentences?
d. To spell carefully?
e. To have good handwriting?
f. To skip lines between topics?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Oral Reading</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
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<th>Special Difficulty</th>
<th>Special Ability</th>
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<tr>
<th>Written Work</th>
<th>Sharing</th>
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</thead>
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APPENDIX B

Index of Skills

*Promoting Growth in Interpretative Skills*

Interpreting the main idea
Recognizing emotional reactions, motives, and inner drives of story characters
Interpreting ideas implied but not directly stated
Recognizing story problem or plot structure
Comprehending phrase and sentence meaning
Recognizing connotations or denotations of words
Interpreting figurative, idiomatic, and picturesque language
Identifying author’s (artist’s or composer’s) purpose or viewpoint
Evaluating and reacting to ideas in light of author’s (artist’s or composer’s) purpose
Identifying elements of style
Feeling and reacting to sensory images
Anticipating outcomes
Identifying and evaluating character traits
Making judgments and drawing conclusions
Generalizing
Perceiving relationships
Comparing and contrasting
Identifying and reacting to the mood or tone of a passage, story, poem, picture, or musical composition
Understanding the function of phrasing, cadence, and stress in oral interpretation
Projecting idea, mood, or tone in oral interpretation
Strengthening memory
Summarizing and organizing ideas for the purpose of remembering

Promoting Growth in Word-Perception Skills

Developing understanding of language growth and change
Strengthening memory of word forms
Using context clues
Developing and applying phonetic skills and understandings
Developing and applying structural skills and understandings
Combining structural and phonetic analysis
Developing and applying dictionary skills and understandings