

**A COMPARISON OF TWO METHODS IMPLEMENTING
CHILDREN'S BOOKS AND TEXTBOOKS ON
SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE
ACQUISITION AND ATTITUDES
TOWARD SOCIAL STUDIES**

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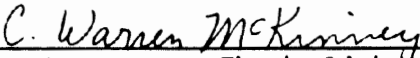
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Children have difficulty understanding history. They tend to live in the present, and many experiences happen to them each day or each hour. They are not free to allow the future to stretch for more than a day ahead. As for the past, everything that has taken place before their birthdays is not considered important (Cianciolo, 1981).

Textbooks are not believed to be effective in stimulating children's interests. The usual social studies textbook is often a cataloging of facts. The material is highly compressed, and there is usually little space for developing concepts or offering interpretations (Wheeler, 1971). Research has shown that social studies textbooks are of poor instructional quality because they are absorbed with superficial yet broad content coverage, lack of care in content choice and presentations, "point of view" is nonexistent, and the use of readability formulas cause the content to be presented in short sentences keeping vocabulary simple, and excluding references that could help make the text easier for children to comprehend (e.g., Larkins, Hawkins, & Gilmore, 1987).

Textbooks were originally designed in the 1900's to provide free and uniform textbooks to a poor and mobile population. This

was the beginning of the statewide adoption concept. Along with this concept came laws and regulations solving the problems of a free-wheeling society and controlling the excesses of a textbook industry (Tyson-Bernstein & Woodward, 1986). Problems, however, soon developed. Readability formulas, avoidance of controversial issues, demand for higher test scores, fair portrayal of minorities, and defined goals and objectives to meet the needs of each school district forced textbook publishers to attempt to satisfy so many differing requirements, thus, resulting in the watering down of textbook content.

Children's literature has been suggested as one way of correcting the textbook problem (e.g., Anderson, Hiebart, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1986; Bennett, 1986; Cullinan, 1987; Finn & Ravitch, 1988; James & Zarrillo, 1989). In fact, it has been suggested that children's books can be used to teach history (Ahern & Moir, 1986; Common, 1986), to correct the inadequate treatment of minorities and women (Anderson, 1987; Garcia, Hadaway, & Beal, 1988; Kazemek, 1990; Styler, 1984; Zarnowski, 1988), as well as to facilitate critical thinking (e.g., Holmes & Ammon, 1985; Brown, 1986; Lehman & Hayes, 1985; Mosher, 1986).

Perhaps textbooks published several decades ago were better than contemporary textbooks. For instance, the textbook, Builders of the Old World (Hartman, Saunders, & Nevins, 1946), devotes over 20 pages to the topic of Christopher Columbus. The current Macmillan textbook appropriate for the same grade level devotes only one paragraph to Columbus. It is difficult to believe that one

paragraph affords enough space to adequately discuss Columbus or his contribution to history.

Statement of the Problem

The use of children's literature has become an increasingly important innovation in the school curriculum (Wheeler, 1971). There has been little research regarding the impact of children's literature in the social studies curriculum (McGowan & Sutton, 1988; McKinney & Jones, in press).

The specific research questions to be addressed in this study were:

1. Will sixth grade students who are taught social studies with children's books assigned according to the students' reading levels demonstrate a higher score on a teacher made achievement test than sixth grade students taught social studies by using a single children's book, an old social studies text book published in 1946, or their regular textbook?
2. Will students who are taught social studies with a children's book demonstrate a higher score on a teacher made achievement test than students taught social studies with an old textbook published in 1946 or with their regular textbook?
3. Will students who are taught with social studies with an old textbook published in 1946 demonstrate a higher score on a teacher made achievement test than students taught with their regular textbook?

4. Will sixth grade students who are taught social studies with children's books assigned according to the students' reading levels demonstrate more positive attitudes toward social studies and their reading material than students who are taught with a single children's book, an old textbook published in 1946, or their regular textbook?

5. Will students taught with a children's book demonstrate more positive attitudes toward social studies and their reading material than students who are taught with an old textbook published in 1946 or their regular textbook?

6. Will students taught with an old textbook published in 1946 demonstrate more positive attitudes toward social studies and their reading material than students who are taught with their regular textbook?

Hypotheses

There was very little research to suggest that incorporating children's literature in the social studies curriculum would influence attitudes and achievement. However, opinion publications led the researcher to test the following hypotheses:

H1: Sixth grade students who are taught a unit on Christopher Columbus using children's books assigned according to students' reading levels will score significantly higher on a test of content prepared by the teacher than students who are taught from a single children's book, an old textbook published in 1946, or a traditional textbook.

H2: Students taught with a single children's book will score significantly higher on a test of content prepared by the teacher than students taught from an old textbook published in 1946 or a traditional textbook.

H3: Students taught with an old textbook published in 1946 will score significantly higher on a test of content prepared by the teacher than students who are taught with a traditional textbook.

H4: Sixth grade students taught with children's books assigned on the basis of students' reading levels or students taught with a single children's book will prefer reading the children's books to reading their regular social studies textbook.

H5: Sixth grade students taught with a single children's book or with multiple children's books assigned on the basis of reading ability or a textbook published in 1946 will like reading the assigned book on Columbus more often than students who were assigned to read their regular social studies textbook.

H6: Sixth grade students taught with children's books assigned according to their reading levels or with a single children's book will rate social studies class as being more enjoyable than students taught with their regular textbook.

H7: Sixth grade students taught with a single children's book or with multiple children's books assigned on the basis of reading ability will rate social studies as being their "most favorite subject" more often than students taught with their regular textbook or with a textbook published in 1946.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions were used:

1. Children's Literature refers to fiction and nonfiction books written for children.
2. Trade books refer to books that are written and published for children and are available through libraries and book stores. They may be fiction or nonfiction.
3. Textbooks are books developed by an author or a group of authors to teach a skill or a series of skills in a particular field of knowledge.
4. Reading level refers to the subjective judgment of individual teachers based on their observations and scores from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. High reading level or ability refers to those students who are estimated to read above the sixth grade level. Average reading level or ability refers to those students who are estimated to read on or near the sixth grade level. Low reading level or ability refers to those students who are estimated to read below the sixth grade level.
5. Regular textbook refers to the traditional social studies textbook entitled Eastern Hemisphere: The World Around Us, published by Macmillan (Beyer, Craven, McFarland, & Parker, 1990). An old textbook refers specifically to Builders of the Old World published by Heath (Hartman, Saunders, & Nevins, 1946).

Delimitations

1. The study was delimited to sixth grade students in a middle school located in a community in a southwestern state.
2. The sample was delimited to those students who had parental permission to participate.

Assumptions

The subjects who participated in the study were a representative sample of the population of the selected school.

Overview of the Study

The statement of the problem, hypotheses, and definitions were discussed in Chapter I. A review of relevant literature will be discussed in Chapter II. The methodology used will be discussed in Chapter III. Findings will be discussed in Chapter IV. Conclusions and recommendations will be discussed in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Textbooks are conformed to presenting a restricted set of facts in the most economical style. They are unlikely to interest the reader, build pride in the character and acts of people, give insight, or develop ideals (Dawson, 1965). Since they focus on dry accounts of dates and facts, they lack any sense of drama and excitement (Brown & Abel, 1982).

Trade books, on the other hand, are becoming an increasingly important innovation in the curriculum. In fact, educators who have been using trade books for supplementary material are now beginning to view them as possible foundations for the entire curriculum. The shift in emphasis is mainly due to the increasing awareness of modern trade books, the role of a teacher and the needs of children (Wheeler, 1971).

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader with the following:

1. A review of opinion literature concerning the use of textbooks in the teaching of social studies to middle school children.
2. A selected review of representative opinion literature related to the use of trade books in the teaching of social studies.

3. A review of research findings related to the use of the children's books to teach social studies.

4. A review of research findings related to children's literature and attitude development.

Opinion Literature

Textbooks

Since the publication of "A Nation at Risk" by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983), texts have been spotlighted in the debate over the causes and cures of the perceived decline in the quality of education (Woodward, Elliott, & Nagel, 1986). However, according to the research by Educational Products Information Exchange (EPIE, 1976), McCutcheon (1982), Shannon (1982), and others have shown that 90 percent of classroom instruction time is centered on textbooks. Therefore, since textbooks play an important role, there should be concern for the educational quality that is being given to the students.

Although research shows textbooks are not enough, it is believed they are used because teachers lack adequate preparation time to gather supplementary materials, emphasis by districts is on basic skills in mathematics and reading, and the demands of curriculum teaching. Therefore, textbooks provide simple lesson plans for the teacher which cover a basic resource to ensure that students are exposed to reasonably good quality and skills instruction that meet the curriculum objectives of the district (Woodward, Elliott, & Nagel, 1986).

Textbooks continue to receive much criticism. In an analysis of social studies textbooks, Kantor, Anderson and Armbruster (1983) found the use of topics to be superficial and disconnected to such a degree that students felt confused and uninformed. Furthermore, they offered no point of view and omitted important information that would enable students to understand the passages (Woodward, Elliott, & Nagel, 1986).

Larkins, Hawkins, and Gilmore (1987) concluded that they would choose not to teach social studies if their only alternative is to use current textbooks. Therefore, with the many problems textbooks possess, it is difficult to effectively employ the task educators have been assigned.

Trade Books

Methods of teaching are forever changing, but a basic problem in social studies is that teaching is broken down into only presenting facts. Although it is helpful to know the facts, children should understand the issues behind the facts. Therefore, educators are becoming more aware of the value of trade books in extending the curriculum in the elementary grades (Chambers & O'Brien, 1969).

Few students will voluntarily select a social studies textbook for relaxed reading. They will, however, pick up novels which contain characters with whom they can identify. Children often can place themselves in the action of a trade book, and this identification with the content allows them to understand facts

presented. Frequently, trade books will provide insight about food, clothes, housing, habits, values, and attitudes of those who lived during a particular period. Trade books encourage children to arrive at their own conclusion, as well as, familiarize them with a variety of writing styles and points of view that allow them to apply critical reading skills (Wheeler, 1971). Furthermore, trade books can individualize instruction by offering a variety of books on all reading levels allowing greater flexibility in meeting the needs of each child.

Numerous articles advocate the use of children's literature to replace or supplement the traditional textbook. For instance, children's books have been suggested as alternatives in the teaching of history (e.g., Ahern & Moir, 1986; Common, 1986; Danielson, 1989; Freeman & Levstik, 1988; James & Zarrillo, 1989; Levstik, 1990; Odland, 1980; and Wright & Allen, 1976). Others have suggested that children's books may be a way to correct the inadequate treatment of minorities and women (e.g., Anderson, 1987; Garcia, Hadaway, & Beal, 1988; Kazemek, 1990; Styer, 1984; Tauran, 1967; Zarnowski, 1988). Trade books have also been suggested as a means to the development of critical thinking (e.g., Holmes & Ammon, 1985; Brown, 1986; Lehman & Hayes, 1985; Mosher, 1986; Rieken & Miller, 1990).

In summary, trade books, as an important part of the curriculum, have become an increasingly vital innovation. This is due to the increasing awareness of the nature of modern trade books, the role of the teacher, the needs of the children, and the

importance of individualizing instructional practices (Wheeler, 1971).

Research Related to Achievement

Kingdon (1957) conducted one of the first studies which examined the role of literature on achievement in social studies. The researcher used selections in story form and factual form to teach groups of fourth grade students. Kingdon's study showed that there were no differences between the factual recall means for story and factual forms of the selections read by fourth grade pupils. Therefore, he concluded that neither form of material possessed any consistent advantages to pupils in the learning of facts.

Kovalcik (1979) conducted a study of fifth grade students who were taught a unit about the American Revolution. The control group teacher used only her textbook and initiated the instruction. The experiment group teacher taught in a similar way, but supplemented her instruction with a select collection of collateral readings. The students were also provided time in class to share their reading. Kovalcik's study showed that the 14 trade books that were incorporated into this particular unit of study did not influence students' information gain.

Talley (1988) added to the knowledge of how children learn by researching the effect of picture presentation in illustrated text and nonillustrated text. She concluded that pictures and the use of well structured text can assist in story recall and comprehension.

McKinney and Jones (in press) reported findings from a study of the American Revolution by fifth graders. They concluded that the two groups taught with a children's book differed significantly from the group taught with a traditional textbook on a 15-item teacher-made test that covered content included in only the children's book. The study showed that children taught with a children's book did not learn content that was common to both books any better if they were taught with the children's book. However, McKinney and Jones concluded that children who are taught with a children's book may learn more because more content can be included in a children's book than can be included in a textbook.

Howe (1990) conducted a study with fifth grade students. One group of students were read selections in historical fiction to supplement the textbook while the other group was in a control group and were not given access to the reading selections. The researcher found a small, but positive correlation between students' achievement and students' attitudes. Her results also indicated that reading ability was a strong predictor of the students' achievement in social studies. Furthermore, these findings indicated that the use of children's books can provide a welcome change to the traditional textbook.

Research Related to Attitudes

Students usually rank social studies as one of their least favorite subjects (Naylor, & Diem, 1987; Schug, Todd, & Beery, 1984). Students usually view social studies as dull because of the

content and methods used. Furthermore, students thought that it had little meaning for them in their future lives.

Research studies have been equally divided over the possibility that it is possible to change students' attitudes toward social studies using children's literature. Talley (1988) performed research which used a sample of fifth grade students to determine if they would reflect a positive attitude toward social studies if a collection of 14 trade books were provided for them to supplement their unit on the American Revolution. As a result, the instruction did not influence students' attitudes towards social studies.

McKinney and Jones (in press) reported that children who were taught with a regular textbook showed more positive attitudes than students taught with a children's book or with the regular textbook and a children's book. They claimed that this difference was more likely caused by the activities rather than the books themselves.

Kimmel (1973) wanted to find out if the issue of reading books alone, without the adult-led discussion or other intervention, could change children's attitudes toward specific objects. He sought to determine if extensive exposure to books, pictures, and cassette tapes regarding different countries could improve the attitudes of 22 fifth grade children. At the conclusion of his study, he found that there were minor changes that might imply some individual changes in attitude, but no significant differences in attitude appeared that could be attributed to the books and related materials.

Tauran (1967) wanted to find out whether children's attitudes could be influenced in a positive or negative direction depending upon the kind of reading material presented to them. He exposed third grade children to stories and articles about Eskimos. The results showed that it is possible to strengthen an initial positive attitude in children in a way that they will be able to resist unfavorable information because their developmental awareness of racial ideas are less rigid and more easily changed than the racial ideas of adults.

In summary, though much has been written regarding the role of books in building positive attitudes toward a group, research has been inconclusive about the way an attitude is formed or changed. There is still a need for experimentation to determine if exposure to books can change attitudes.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The specific purpose of this research was to compare achievement and attitude scores of sixth grade students who were taught social studies using children's books assigned according to the student's reading ability, or were taught social studies with a single children's book, or an old textbook published in 1946, or a traditional textbook.

Methodology

In this chapter, description of the sample, treatments, and teachers are described. The experimental design, instrumentation, and analysis of the data are also discussed.

Subjects

The sample consisted of sixth grade students who returned parental permission forms (see Appendix A) allowing them to participate in the study. It was drawn from a middle school in a small southwestern city of 35,000. The school serves predominantly children of well-educated professionals employed by a Fortune 500 company. The student body was comprised of six percent native American students, two percent black students, two percent Asian

students, and 90 percent caucasian students. The total student body population was 752. The school served students from the sixth grade to the eighth grade.

Prior to the study the students were administered a 25 item multiple choice test. Results of analysis of variance indicated that the groups did not differ significantly. The means for the groups were 13.15 (regular textbook), 15.38 (old textbook), 13.18 (single trade book), and 14.77 (multiple trade books).

Teachers

Three experienced classroom teachers participated in the study. One teacher had a Bachelors degree and three years teaching experience. The second teacher had a Masters degree and 18 years teaching experience. The third teacher had a Masters degree and 13 years teaching experience. Two were white females. One was a white male. The teachers were asked to monitor the students' reading and the students' completion of daily work sheets (see Appendix B). The teachers did not provide instruction or instructional activities other than the appropriate books and daily work sheets. By restricting the teachers' interaction, the researcher hoped to control for teacher effect and for quality of instruction.

Treatment

Treatment 1

The class assigned to Treatment 1 used multiple children's

books. Books were assigned to students based on the students' ability to read as measured by the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Students who scored below the fifth grade level on reading on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) were assigned to read Meet Christopher Columbus by James T. de Kay. This book was written at approximately the third grade level as measured by the Frye Readability Formula and as estimated by the author and a university professor. Students who scored at the fifth or sixth grade level on the ITBS were assigned to read The Story of Christopher Columbus: Admiral of the Ocean Sea written by Mary Pope Osborne. This book was estimated to be written on the fifth grade level. Students who scored above the sixth grade level on the ITBS were assigned to read Christopher Columbus: Admiral of the Ocean Sea written by Jim Haskins. This book was estimated to be written at the seventh grade level.

Each day of the five day study students were asked to read from the assigned book for approximately 35 minutes. Following the reading assignment students were asked to answer three to four questions pertaining to the assignment. These questions were used to determine whether the students read the assignment (see Appendix B).

Treatment 2

Students assigned to Treatment 2 read The Story of Christopher Columbus: Admiral of the Ocean Sea written by Mary Pope Osborne. This book was estimated to be written on approximately the fifth

grade level by the Frye Readability Formula and by the author and a university professor. Students read from this book for approximately 35 minutes each day. Following the reading students were asked to answer three to five questions concerning the reading assignment. The purpose of these questions was to determine if the students had read the assigned material.

Treatment 3

Students assigned to Treatment 3 read from Builders of the Old World by Gertrude Hartman. This book was published in 1946 by D. C. Heath. Approximately 17 pages were devoted to Christopher Columbus. By comparison, the current sixth grade textbook, published by Macmillan, devotes one paragraph to the topic. Students who were assigned to read these pages read approximately eight pages each day and answered three or four questions concerning the passage. Because of the shorter length of this assignment, students completed the reading assignment after two days.

Treatment 4

Students assigned to Treatment 4 read their regular textbook, Eastern Hemisphere: The World Around Us (Beyer, Craven, McFarland, & Parker, 1990). The textbook treatment of Christopher Columbus was one paragraph. After reading this paragraph, the students were asked to answer three questions about what they had read. Because of the shorter length of this assignment the students completed this assignment after one day.

Instrumentation

Achievement. A 25 item pretest and posttest was developed (see Appendix C). The pretest was administered two days prior to the start of the study. The posttest was administered two days after the completion of each book. The reliability of the posttest, as estimated by Cronbach's alpha, was .48.

Attitude. A three item attitude survey was administered with the achievement pretest two days prior to the start of the study (see Appendix D). This survey attempted to measure students' attitudes toward their regular social studies book, toward social studies class, and toward social studies in relation to their other classes.

The first survey statement required the students to respond to the following statement: "I like reading my regular social studies book." Students could circle "all of the time", "some of the time", "once in awhile", or "almost never". The second survey required the students to respond to the statement: "Social studies class is usually".

Students respond by circling "exciting", "interesting", or "boring". The third survey item asked the students to rank social studies with their subjects. Students could rank social studies as being their "most favorite subject", "least favorite subject", or "in-between favorite subject."

A similar attitude survey was administered with the achievement posttest. In addition to the three items discussed above, a fourth

item was added. Students were asked to respond to the following:
"I prefer reading: My regular textbook, the paperback books, Both
books are about the same".

Design and Data Analysis

A pretest-posttest research design was used. A 25 item pretest was administered three days prior to the start of the study. The same test was administered the day following the completion of the reading assignment.

Analysis of variance was used to analyze the pretest and the posttest data. Student Newman Keuls tests were used to find which means differed significantly. Originally, chi square analysis was planned to analyze the attitude data. However, because many cells had small numbers, chi square analysis was abandoned. These data are presented as frequencies.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to compare the effects of a regular textbook, a children's book, multiple children's books assigned according to reading ability, and an old textbook published in 1946 on social studies content acquisition and attitude toward social studies. The class assigned to Treatment 1 (n=22) independently read from their assigned books based upon reading ability for approximately 35 minutes each day for five days. Following the reading assignment students answered three-to-four questions covering the appropriate content. The students took their test on the fifth day. The class assigned to Treatment 2 (n=17) independently read a single children's book for approximately 35 minutes each day for five days. Following the reading selection, each student answered three-to-four questions regarding the reading content. The students took their test on the fifth day. The class assigned to Treatment 3 (n=21) read from a textbook published in 1946. The students completed their independent reading assignment and the three-to-four questions concerning the passage in two days. They took their test on the second day. Students assigned to Treatment 4 (n=20) read from their regular textbook. The textbook treatment of Christopher Columbus was one paragraph. Therefore, because of the shorter length of this assignment, students

independently read the passage, answered three questions regarding the content, and took the test on the same day.

Results

Achievement

Hypothesis 1. The first hypothesis stated that students who were taught using children's books assigned according to students' reading ability would score significantly higher on a test of content prepared by the teacher than students who read a single children's book, an old textbook published in 1946, or a traditional textbook. Results of analysis of variance and Student Newman Keuls tests indicated that the data only partially supported this hypothesis, $F(3, 76) = 12.19, p = .001$ (see Tables 1 & 2). The mean for the group taught with children's books assigned on the basis of reading ability differed significantly from the group that read the regular textbook. The remaining differences were not statistically significant. The mean for the group taught with the children's book based upon students' reading ability was 20.32 (s.d.=3.11), while the mean for the group taught with the single children's book was 19.65 (s.d.=4.01). The mean for the class taught with a textbook published in 1946 was 18.57 (s.d.=2.89), while the mean for the class taught with the regular textbook was 14.60 (s.d.=2.84).

Hypothesis 2. The second hypothesis stated that the group taught with a single children's book would score significantly higher on a test of content about Christopher Columbus than students who read an old textbook published in 1946 or a traditional textbook. Results of analysis of variance and Student Newman Keuls tests indicated that the data partially supported this hypothesis.

The groups taught with the children's book and the old textbook scored significantly higher on the test than did the group taught with the regular textbook, $F(3, 76) = 12.18, p = .001$ (see Tables I & II). The means for the groups taught with the children's book and the old textbook were 19.65 (s.d. = 4.14) and 18.57 (s.d. = 2.96), while the mean for the group taught with the regular textbook was 14.60 (s.d. = 2.91).

Hypothesis 3. The third hypothesis stated that the group taught with an old textbook published in 1946 would score significantly higher on a test of content about Christopher Columbus than students who read a traditional textbook. Results of analysis of variance support this hypothesis, $F(3, 76) = 12.19, p = .001$ (see Tables I & II). Results of Student Newman Keuls indicated that the two groups differed significantly. The means for the two groups were 18.57 (s.d. = 2.96) and 14.60 (s.d. = 2.91) respectively.

TABLE I
RESULTS OF ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

Source	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob.
Between	3	395.930	131.930	12.189	.001
Within	76	822.598	10.824		
Total	79	1218.386			

TABLE II
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR GROUPS

Source	n	Mean	Standard Deviation
Regular Textbook	20	14.600	2.909
Old Textbook	21	18.571	2.959
Single Children's Book	17	19.647	4.137
Multiple Children's Books	22	20.318	3.183
Total	80	18.286	3.927

Attitudes

Hypothesis 4. The fourth hypothesis stated that sixth grade students taught with children's books assigned on the basis of students' reading levels or students taught with a single children's book would prefer reading the children's books to reading the regular social studies textbook. This item appeared only on the posttest. Although all four groups were asked the question, the researcher was only interested in the responses of the two groups who were taught with children's literature because they could compare the children's books to their regular textbook. Results presented in Table III show that the data supported this hypothesis. Eleven students taught with the single children's book and 14 taught with multiple children's books stated that they preferred reading the children's book(s). Only three students, one taught with the single children's book and two taught with multiple children's books, stated that they preferred reading their regular textbook. Five students taught with the single children's book and six taught with multiple children's books stated that both books were about the same.

Hypothesis 5. Hypothesis 5 stated that the students taught with a single children's book or with multiple children's books assigned on the basis of reading ability or the old textbook published in 1946 will like reading the assigned book(s) on Columbus more often

TABLE III

I PREFER READING

Response	Regular Textbook	<u>Posttest Only</u>		
		Old Textbook	Single Tradebook	Multiple Tradebook
My Regular Textbook	6	2	1	2
The Paperback Book	3	12	11	14
Both Are About Same	11	7	5	6

than students assigned to read the regular textbook or the old Table 3 textbook published in 1946. The data partially supported this hypothesis (see Table IV). All groups were similar on their ratings on the pretest. Dramatic shifts were found on the posttest. Students taught with the multiple children's books shifted from five students on the pretest who stated that they enjoyed reading their social studies book to 17 on the posttest. Similar results were found for the groups taught with the single children's book and with the old textbook. Five students taught with the single children's stated on the pretest that they liked reading their regular textbook; this number increased to 12 on the posttest. Four students taught with the old textbook stated that they liked reading their textbook on the pretest; this number increased to 11 on the posttest. On the other hand, the students taught with the regular textbook responded similarly on both the pretest and the posttest. Three students on both tests responded that they liked reading their textbook. Fourteen responded on the pretest that they sometimes like reading their textbook. This number changed to 16 on the posttest. Three students on the pretest and one student on the posttest stated that they did not like reading their textbook.

Hypothesis 6. Hypothesis 6 stated that sixth grade students taught with children's books assigned according to students' reading levels or with a single textbook will rate Table IV.

TABLE IV
I ENJOY READING MY SOCIAL STUDIES BOOK

Response	Regular Textbook	Old Text	Single Children's Book	Multiple Children's Book
<u>Pretest</u>				
Yes	3	4	5	5
No	3	1	3	2
Sometimes	14	16	9	15
<u>Posttest</u>				
Yes	3	11	12	17
No	1	1	1	0
Sometimes	16	9	4	5

social studies class as being more enjoyable than students taught with their regular textbook or with the old textbook published in 1946. Students were asked to describe social studies classes as being "exciting", "interesting", or "boring". The data tended to not support this hypothesis. There was little change in attitudes from the pretest to the posttest (see Table V). No students who were taught with multiple children's books rated social studies as being "exciting" on the pretest. Two students in this group rated it as being "exciting" on the posttest. Seven students rated it as being "boring" on the pretest, while only one student in this group rated it as being "boring" on the posttest. Fifteen students on the pretest and 19 student on the posttest rated social studies as being "interesting".

Six students taught with the single trade book rate social studies on the pretest as being "exciting". This number decreased to four on the posttest. Nine students rated it as being "interesting". This number increased to 12 on the posttest. Two students and one student rated it as being "boring" on the pretest and posttest respectively.

The numbers were nearly identical on both pretest and posttest for the group taught with the old textbook. Five students rated social studies as being "exciting" on the pretest. This number decreased to three on the posttest. Fourteen students rated it as being "interesting" on the pretest, while 16 rated it as being

TABLE V
SOCIAL STUDIES CLASS IS USUALLY

Response	Regular Textbook	Old Textbook	Single Tradebook	Multiple Books
<u>Pretest</u>				
Exciting	1	5	6	0
Interesting	15	14	9	15
Boring	4	2	2	7
<u>Posttest</u>				
Exciting	5	3	4	2
Interesting	11	16	12	19
Boring	4	2	1	1

"interesting" on the posttest. Two students on both the pretest and posttest stated that social studies was "boring".

One student taught with the regular textbook stated on the pretest that social studies class was usually "exciting". This number increased to five students on the posttest. Fifteen students on the pretest stated that social studies is usually "interesting"; this number decrease to 11 students on the posttest. Four students on both pretest and posttest stated that social studies class is usually "boring".

Hypothesis 7. Sixth grade students taught with a single children's book or with multiple children's books assigned on the basis on reading ability will rate social studies as being their "most favorite subject" more often than students taught with the regular textbook or with the textbook published in 1946. The data tended to not support this hypothesis. Most students tended to respond on both the pretest and posttest by stating that social studies was their "in-between favorite" on both the pretest and posttest. Only one student taught with the regular textbook, three students taught with the 1946 textbook, two students taught with the single children's book, four students taught with multiple children's books stated on the pretest that social studies was their most favorite subject. The numbers were one, one, three, and three respectively on the posttest. Thirteen students on the pretest and 17 students on the posttest who were taught with the regular textbook stated that social studies was their "in-between favorite" subject. The numbers for the students taught with the old textbook

were 15 and 19 respectively. Fourteen and 13 students taught with the single children's book rated it as their "in-between favorite" subject. Thirteen students taught with multiple children's books rated it as being their "in-between favorite" subject on the posttest, while 18 students rated it as being their "in-between favorite" on the posttest (see Table VI).

Summary

Findings related to achievement partially supported the hypotheses. All groups performed significantly better on the achievement test than the group taught with the regular textbook. No other differences were found.

Findings related to attitude also partially supported the hypotheses. In general, groups taught with the children book(s) or the old textbook preferred reading their book(s) more often than the students taught with the regular textbook. The four groups did not differ in attitudes toward social studies or toward social studies as a school subject.

TABLE VI
SOCIAL STUDIES IS MY

Response	Regular Textbook	Old Textbook	Single Tradebook	Multiple Books
<u>Pretest</u>				
Most Favorite	1	3	2	4
Least Favorite	6	3	1	5
In-Between Favorite	13	15	14	13
<u>Posttest</u>				
Most Favorite	1	1	3	2
Least Favorite	2	1	1	2
In-Between Favorite	17	19	13	18

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Study

The purpose of this study was to compare the effects of children's literature and textbooks on sixth grade students' achievement and attitude in social studies. The following hypotheses were tested.

Hypothesis 1: Sixth grade students who are taught a unit on Christopher Columbus using children's books assigned according to students' reading levels will score significantly higher on a test of content prepared by the teacher than students who are taught from a single children's book, an old textbook published in 1946, or a traditional textbook. The data partially supported this hypothesis. Students taught with children's books assigned according to the students' reading ability differed significantly from the group taught with the regular textbook, however, this group did not differ from the other groups.

Hypothesis 2: Students taught with a single children's book will score significantly higher on a test of content prepared by the teacher than students taught from an old textbook published in 1946, or a traditional textbook. the data partially supported this hypothesis. The group taught with the children's book scored significantly higher on the achievement test than did the group

taught with the regular textbook, however, the group taught with children's book did not differ from the group taught with the old textbook.

Hypothesis 3: Students taught with an old textbook published in 1946 will score significantly higher on a test of content prepared by the teacher than students who are taught with a traditional textbook. The data supported this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 4: Sixth grade students taught with children's books assigned on the basis of students' reading levels or students taught with a single children's book will prefer reading the children's book(s) to reading their regular social studies textbook. The data supported this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 5: Sixth grade students taught with a single children's or multiple children's books assigned on the basis of level ability or the textbook published in 1946 will enjoy reading the assigned book on Columbus more often than students who read their regular social studies textbook. The data supported this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 6: Sixth grade students taught with children's books assigned according to their reading levels or with a single children's book or with the textbook published in 1946 will rate social studies class as being more enjoyable than students taught with their regular textbook or with the textbook published in 1946. The data did not support this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 7: Sixth grade students taught with a single children's book or with multiple children's books assigned on the

basis on reading ability or with the textbook published in 1946 will rate social studies as being their "most favorite subject" more often than students taught with the regular textbook. The data did not support this hypothesis.

Discussion

Achievement

Findings from this study show that sixth grade students can learn social studies from children's books. Furthermore, learning is not hindered when students are assigned books based on the students' reading levels. Findings also indicate that it did matter whether children's books were assigned according to reading levels or whether a single children's book is used. Both of these approaches were superior to the regular textbook. The reason for this difference was probably due more to the lack of content in the regular textbook than the superiority of the children's books. This claim is supported by the fact that the students taught with the old textbook performed as well on the achievement test as did the groups taught with the children's book.

The achievement test may be another possible explanation of these findings. First, its reliability was low. Second, items were selected on the basis of whether the content was included in all of the children's books and the old textbook. This limited the content of the test. Therefore, some of the children who were taught with the children's books were not tested on content which they had read.

Attitude

Findings from this study indicate that the students preferred reading the children's book whether assigned on the basis of reading ability or not to the regular textbook. The children's books did not change the students' attitudes toward the subject of social studies. This may be due to short duration of the study.

Recommendations

Future studies may choose to examine other types of children's literature, such as historical fiction. Several studies in the opinion literature have made claims that historical fiction can be used effectively in the social studies.

Other studies may choose to compare various teaching activities and methods rather than simply have the students read the books or passages as in the present study.

Finally, other studies may choose to use higher level test items rather than simple recall questions. The use of children's literature may facilitate higher level thinking.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

PARENTAL PERMISSION LETTER

September 21, 1992

Dear Parents:

I am conducting a research study which examines the use of children's books, an old textbook published in 1946, and our current social studies textbook. I want to find out if one of these approaches to teaching social studies is better than another. Also, I want to find out if the students prefer one of the ways over their regular textbook. Your son or daughter will read the appropriate material each day and answer three or four questions about the reading assignment. They will be pretested to see how much of the content that they know prior to start of the lessons and posttested after the completion of the unit to see what they will have learned. Depending on which class your son or daughter happens to be enrolled, the research will last for one day for one class, two days for another, and five days for two classes. I believe that the students will enjoy participating in this research. I need your permission to allow them to participate. This will be a part of my Masters Degree thesis.

Will you please read the attached form, sign it, and return it to me? This form is required by the Institutional Review Board of Oklahoma State University. Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

Deborah R. Gates
Madison Middle School
500 Madison Blvd.
Bartlesville, OK 74006
School Phone 333-3176
Home Phone 335-0859

Parental Consent Form

I, (parent's name), hereby authorize or direct Mrs. Deborah Gates, or associates or assistants of his or her choosing, to perform the following treatment or procedure:

Depending on the class in which your son or daughter is enrolled, they will read a children's book, a text book published in 1946, or their regular textbook. Those who read the two textbooks will participate in the study for one or two days. Those who are assigned the children's books will participate for four days. Students will be pretested before and after they do the assigned readings. They will be tested on their knowledge of Christopher Columbus and their attitudes toward social studies and their social studies books. There are no psychological, emotional, physical, or social risks involved. The results of this research may lead to the improvement of social studies textbooks and/or how to use children's books more effectively to teach social studies.

This is done as part of the investigation entitled "A Comparison of Two Methods of Implementing Children's Books and Two Textbooks on Sixth Grade Students' Knowledge Acquisition and Attitude toward Social Studies".

I understand that participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I may withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time without penalty after notifying Mrs. Gates.

I may contact Mrs. Deborah Gates at telephone number 333-3176 should I wish further information about the research. I may also contact Terry Maciula, University Research Services, 001 Life Sciences East, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078; telephone number: (405) 744-5700.

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily.

Date: _____ Time: _____

Signed _____ (Parent or Guardian)

Son or Daughter's name _____

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONS FROM CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Day 1

1. What occupation was Christopher Columbus interested in pursuing?
2. Why was Christopher wanting to find a new route to the Indies?
3. How do you know Christopher knew he could sail across the ocean to the Indies?

Day 2

1. Who gave Christopher the items he need to make the voyage?
2. How many ships did he receive?
3. What kinds of things did the sailors worry about as they journeyed across the ocean?

Day 3

1. What kind of sign did the men have that told them they were close to land?
2. What month did they discover land?
3. Describe the people they met on San Salvador.
4. The people they met on Hispaniola used tobacco leaves for what purpose?
5. Which ship had a wreck and could not be saved?

Day 4

1. Why didn't the king and queen want to talk to Pinzon when he returned from the voyage?
2. How did Pinzon feel about this?
3. How was Christopher treated when he returned to Spain after his first voyage?
4. What caused Christopher's death?

Questions from Textbook Readings

Day 1

1. What occupation was Christopher Columbus interested in pursuing?
2. How do you know Christopher knew he could sail across the ocean to the Indies?
3. Who gave Christopher Columbus the money and items he requested?
4. How many ships did he receive?
5. What kinds of things did the sailors worry about as they journeyed across the ocean?

Day 2

1. What caused Christopher's death?
2. How was Da Gama's success in finding India better than Christopher's success?
3. Christopher had only been home a short time when his friend of many years died. Who was this friend?

APPENDIX C

TEST

Christopher Columbus

Directions: Choose the right answer from either A, B, C, or D.

Draw a circle around the correct letter.

1. Christopher Columbus was born in
 - A. Genoa, Italy
 - B. Sacramento, California
 - C. Paris, France
 - D. Sydney, Australia

2. Christopher Columbus wanted to be a
 - A. clothmaker
 - B. blacksmith
 - C. sailor
 - D. banker

3. The first sea Christopher Columbus sailed was the
 - A. Red Sea
 - B. Caspian Sea
 - C. Black Sea
 - D. Mediterranean Sea

4. Christopher Columbus had a son named
 - A. David
 - B. Don
 - C. Diego
 - D. Daniel

5. Christopher Columbus thought he could get to India after studying books about
- A. Marco Polo
 - B. Queen Isabella
 - C. Pinzon
 - D. Eric
6. Christopher Columbus knew the world was
- A. round
 - B. square
 - C. triangle
 - D. rectangle
7. What did Christopher want to bring back from the Indies?
- A. weapons
 - B. spices and gold
 - C. cloth and tools
 - D. animal furs
8. The first person Christopher asked for support was from
- A. king of Portugal
 - B. King Ferdinand
 - C. Prince Norman
 - D. his parents

9. The king of Portugal told Christopher he could not have ships to sail to India because
- A. it would take too long to cross the ocean
 - B. he was not interested in Christopher's ideas
 - C. both a and b
 - D. none of the above
10. How long did it take Queen Isabella to agree to help Christopher Columbus with his journey?
- A. days
 - B. weeks
 - C. months
 - D. years
11. It took the king and queen a long time to decide if they would help Christopher Columbus because
- A. they weren't sure if they could trust him.
 - B. they were very busy at the time of his request.
 - C. they enjoyed making him wait.
 - D. they did not have any money to give to him.
12. How many ships did Christopher take on his first voyage?
- A. 2
 - B. 3
 - C. 4
 - D. 5

13. The of the three ships Christopher used for his voyage were the
- A. Titanic, Palos, and Pinta.
 - B. Nina, Pinta, and Santa Marie
 - C. Santa Fe, Pinta, and Admiral
 - D. Pinta, Mina, and Sante Fe
14. Everyone was glad to see more and more birds from the ship because
- A. they could shoot them for dinner.
 - B. they enjoyed the company.
 - C. they would eat their scraps of food.
 - D. it meant land was near.
15. One of the men thought he had seen land, but actually it was a
- A. cloud
 - B. flock of birds
 - C. ship
 - D. whale
16. The sailors really saw land on
- A. October 12, 1492.
 - B. November 12, 1492.
 - C. October 3, 1492.
 - D. November 3, 1492.

17. Christopher Columbus called the people on San Salvador
- A. Arabs.
 - B. Indians.
 - C. sailors.
 - D. merchants.
18. Christopher and the people on San Salvador communicated by using
- A. paper and pencil.
 - B. interpreters.
 - C. sign language.
 - D. telegrams.
19. What did Christopher Columbus take with him on his visit to see the king and queen?
- A. parrots, Indians, and spices
 - B. clothing, food, and water
 - C. sailors, donkeys, and books
 - D. pictures of his trip
20. The king and queen honored Christopher Columbus after his first voyage by
- A. giving him a special card.
 - B. inviting Christopher to sit with them.
 - C. giving him some of the king's clothes.
 - D. naming all their ships after him.

21. Besides a hero, Christopher Columbus was known as
- A. Admiral of the Ocean Sea.
 - B. Colonel Christopher.
 - C. Christopher the Great.
 - D. Major Christopher.
22. After the completion of his first voyage, Christopher decided to
- A. retire.
 - B. become a blacksmith.
 - C. make more voyages.
 - D. repair ships for other sailors.
23. Christopher's friend died. This friend was
- A. Queen Isabella
 - B. King Ferdinand
 - C. David
 - D. Prince Albert
24. Christopher Columbus died from
- A. a shipwreck
 - B. a gun wound
 - C. an illness
 - D. a bee sting

25. Christopher Columbus died believing he
- A. had found a new way to the Indies.
 - B. had no children.
 - C. was the king of Spain.
 - D. could sail on the ocean by himself.

APPENDIX D

PRETEST-POSTTEST

Pretest**Attitude Scale**

I like reading my social studies book in class

- A. Yes**
- B. No**
- C. Sometimes**

Social studies is

- A. usually exciting**
- B. usually interesting**
- C. usually boring**

Social studies is

- A. my most favorite subject**
- B. my least favorite subject**
- C. in-between favorite subject**

Post-Test

Attitude Scale

I liked my social studies book about Christopher Columbus.

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Somewhat

During this week, social studies was

- A. exciting
- B. interesting
- C. boring

Social studies is my

- A. most favorite subject
- B. in-between favorite subject
- C. least favorite subject

I prefer reading

- A. my regular textbook
- B. paperback book
- C. both are about the same

VITA

Deborah Gates

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: A COMPARISON OF TWO METHODS IMPLEMENTING CHILDREN'S BOOKS AND TEXTBOOKS ON SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION AND ATTITUDES TOWARD SOCIAL STUDIES

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