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# THE AVAILABILITY OF READING MATERIALS FOR TEACHERS AND PUPILS AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL 

A DISSERTATION<br>SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY<br>in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of<br>DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
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Norman, Oklahoma

# THE AVAIIABILITY OF READING MATERIALS FOR TEACHERS AND PUPILS AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL 



## DEDICATION

This research study on the availability of materials in primary reading is dedicated to my wife, Nancy, in appreciation of her help and patience during the completion of this task.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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# THE AVAILABILITY OF READING MATERIALS FOR TEACHERS AND PUPILS AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL 

CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

## Statement of Purposes

The study chiefly deals with two educational issues relating to the teaching of reading: first, the degree to which teachers have available professional literature in the field of the teaching of reading, and second, the amount of supplementary reading material that is available to children in learning to read in the primary grades. Incidentally information was gained by dealing with the use of basal readers by teachers and with the recency of college preparation and/ or in-service education of the teachers.

## Justification for the Study

Effective teaching of reading rests on a great number of factors such as understanding child growth, understanding the many complex skills required for reading, and familiarizing oneself with techniques for teaching those skills in a psychologically sound sequence. Primary teachers should be
conversant with both research and writing if they are to keep abreast of changing methods, techniques, and new insights in the teaching of reading. Ragan has emphasized these points by stating, "Learning to read is a complicated process, and the teaching of reading requires a thorough understanding of modern methods of teaching, familiarity with a wide range of teaching materials, and the ability to understand children. ${ }^{1}$

To remain well-informed about the teaching of reading, teachers need periodically to attend either workshops or college courses or to read professional literature on the teaching of reading. If teachers are to remain professionally competent, there must be a zest among them for new, improved ways of fulfilling their roles.

An examination of the literature on the teaching of reading reveals concern on the part of educators as to whether teachers do keep informed of and practice new ideas in their reading programs. Gray states:

Rather we shall be concerned chiefly with methods of implementing what is already known about reading in an effort to achieve needed improvement as soon as possible. This emphasis seems highly desirable since current practice lags far behind the forward-looking proposals which were made during the last three conferences. . . 2
${ }^{1}$ William B. Ragan, Modern Elementary Curriculum. Revised Edition (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960), p. 196.
${ }^{2}$ William S. Gray, "Purposes of the Conference, "Cooperative Effort in Schools to Improve Reading, ed. William S. Gray (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942), IV, 3.

Teachers need ready access to books and periodicals on reading in order to understand better what is known presently and to discover new possible solutions to problems in teaching reading. Most teachers probably can understand and appreciate more fully the literature on reading if they have had the benefit of at least some recent experiences with either college courses or workshops related to reading. Smith stressed that it is important for the zeading teacher to keep informed by asserting:

We are on the brink of a new epoch in reading instruction. Our imperatives are outlined. We have but to observe the onrush of social forces about us, to feel the impact of the new psychologies and philosophies, to examine recent research in order to know that reading instruction must change in many ways. 3

Heilman expressed concern about the amount of professional reading which teachers do when he stated:

However if teaching as a profession were judged by this one criterion--amount of professional reading they do in their field-it is probable that teachers as a group would not distinguish themselves in comparison with other groups.

Citing an experience in a reading workshop involving over twenty teachers, Heilman relates, "Subsequently it was found that not one teacher owned a single professional book or subscribed to a journal other than the magazine issued by their State Educational Association. ${ }^{4}$

[^0]In advocating the need for improvement of reading programs in elementary schools, Newton pointed out, "Information concerning better-than.average reading programs, obtained through professional reading and by visitation, is translated into a dynamic program which can be shared with others in turn." Later, he added, "The nucleus of some twenty books suggested . . . will serve as a guide to the setting up of a professional library in the area of reading instruction. ${ }^{5}$

One of the recommendations found in the recent Harvard study of programs which prepare teachers of reading was, "That all prospective teachers become acquainted with techniques, interpretation, and evaluation of current and past research, and that all prospective teachers be introduced to professional reading journals. ${ }^{6}$ In light of the emphasis in the literature on professional reading by teachers, the extent of this reading among teachers seems to be an important question-one which this research purports to answer.

There appears to be a consensus among educators concerning the necessity for an extensive variety of materials for use by children in learning to read effectively. In view of the extent of individual differences among children, the teacher of reading who desires to maintain a modern reading program

[^1]would think in terms of ordering several different texts of the basal type rather than ordering thirty identical basal readers. Also, she would provide for many other kinds and difficulty levels of printed materials. Both Whipple and Ragan supported this emphasis on variety of materials in reading programs by stzさing respectively:

Supplementary reaxing materials are indispensable in providing enrichment of core materials, additional practice on basic skills, new ideas for the child to share with his classmates, and material to meet his special needs. ${ }^{7}$

The single text has been supplanted in modern elementary schools by multiple texts, library books, magazines, newspapers, mimeographed materials, workbooks, children's encyclopegdias, and many other types of instructional material.

The multiple textbooks as referred to by Ragan in the above paragraph should be multiple not only in subjects or titles, but also in levels of difficulty. With what is known today about the extent of individual differences among children in learning to read, it would seem unthinkable for a teacher not to make basal textbooks of considerable variety available to children in her classroom. In making this point, McKim asserted, "Basal readers need to be chosen to cover the three- to four-year range in ability that will be typical of
${ }^{7}$ Gertrude Whipple, "Desirable Materials, Facilities, and Resources for Reading," Reading in the Elementary School, Forty-eighth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), p. 153.

$$
8_{\text {Ragan, op. cit., p. } 195 . ~}^{\text {op }}
$$

most classes." ${ }^{9}$ Larrick made the same point by stating, "In any class, you will need books on many grade levels to serve both slow and advanced learners. ${ }^{10}$ Also, one finds in the literature the recommendation that workbooks covering a minimum of two or three levels be available in each classroom. ${ }^{11}$

A multiplicity of materials is important in helping children to develop and to refine literary tastes and in teaching them to like to read. Smith made this point by stating, "No rich program in literature and personal reading can grow out of basal reading texts alone."12 It is quite feasible that a child might learn to read functionally--that is, when he has to read-without the benefit of a great variety of materials. But if one of the purposes of the reading program is to produce not only those who can read but also those who do read, the need for a wider selection of materials will become apparent to teachers. Genuine interest and depth in reading is much more likely to result if the reading program is viewed by teachers as a literature program.

[^2]It is important that the child who is learning to read be exposed early to many types of materials on sundry subjects. This would appear to be the only really effective way to give him a start toward developing into an enthusiastic reader. He needs to learn to enjoy this type of personal reading at school in order to be motivated toward wide reading when not directly under school influence. Although it was commonly thought until recently that real variety in reading materials was needed only in either the intermediate or upper grades, this viewpoint is no longer commonly accepted. In discussing materials for the first grade McKee states, "To provide easy silent reading by individual pupils at odd times during the day, single copies of many different books should be available on reading tables and low shelves. ${ }^{13}$

One of the conclusions of the 1942 Conference on Materials for Reading held at the University of Chicago was, "At every level and in all areas, a wide variety of supplementary materials at differing readability levels is essential."14 This would certainly apply to the primary grades.

There is somewhat of a problem in selecting reading materials for first-grade children in that it is a difficult task to write imaginative stories on a level of readability that all

[^3]or even most first graders can read. Jacobs recognized that the first grade teacher would need to be selective in choosing books since "in the rush to meet the market, publishers . . . are putting into print too much that is banal and unimaginative. . ." ${ }^{15}$ Jacobs did point out that there were some books for beginning readers which were genuinely worthwhile.

There has been recently a growing interest in individualized reading as a means of meeting individual differences in learning to read. Advocates of this method see individualized reading as the next step forward from the use of subgrouping in the classroom with dependence on basal reading series to form the instructional program. The latter type of program is now out of date in light of what is known about variations in learning abilities of pupils according to individualized reading advocates.

Some proponents of individualized reading have pointed out that one hundred different titles is approximately the minimum number which should be found in an elementary classroom if one is to meet the individual needs and interests of all pupils. ${ }^{16}$ veatch maintained that the number of different titles of books should roughly triple the number of children in the classroom and that "there must be enough titles at all

[^4]achievement levels to guarantee a valid, honest selection by each child." 17 Vite stated further that "there should be a supply of books reaching at least to the third grade reading level in the first grade, and to the fourth or fifth in the second grade. . ." 18

The importance of a diversity in materials to individualized reading was noted by Bond and Wagner, who pointed out, ${ }^{2}$ Experiments are underway to try out the efficacy of completely individualizing basic reading instruction. Fundamental to such a setup is a great variety of reading material." 19

Whether individualized reading is utilized as a method is, of course, irrelevant to the necessity of individualizing reading instruction. Thus, the suggested minimums for materials for setting up individualized reading programs would seem equally appropriate for setting up a program using basal readers.

Even with this broad recognition of the value in having a varied assortment of materials for use in the teaching of reading, some educators exhibit concern regarding the degree to which this recognition has been implemented in actual classroon practice. One of the main sources of criticism has been
${ }^{17}$ Jeannette Veatch, "In Defense of Individualized Reading," Elementary Enqlish, XXXVII (April, 1960), 227.
${ }^{18}$ Irene Vite, "A Primary Teacher's Experience," Individualizing Reading Practices, ed. Alice Miel (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1958), p. 22.
${ }^{19}$ Guy L. Bond and Eva Bond Wagner, Teaching the Child to Read (3rd ed.: New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960), p. 373 .
the practice of regarding the program of reading instruction as involving only functional and mechanical skills in reading and neglecting appreciation and enjoyment. In stressing this neglect, Betzner stated:

In spite of the great expansion of materials and agencies in the field, thexe has been a general neglect of literature in all too many elementary schools. Reading, meaning the process of reading, and literature have been treated as though they were synonymous. 20

Concern is also found in the literature about the small amount of reading done in this country. This is generally conceded to have some relationship to school reading programs. Huck blamed largely classroom practice for causing the small amount of reading done in the $U$. S. when he maintained, ". . . one major factor may well be the overemphasis of the instructional or basic reading program to the neglect of the literature program in the elementary school."21

It would appear that the consensus of educators and reading specialists is that an adequate supply of materials is requisite for an efficient program, but it is not known to what degree supplementary books are available in the primary grades; nor is there an accepted standard as to what is an optimum per pupil outlay of funds for this purpose. What is an adequate supply of supplementary books? To what extent do
${ }^{20}$ Jean Betzner, Exploring Literature with Children (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, l956), p. 10.
${ }^{21}$ Charlotte $S$. Huck, "Planning the Literature Program for the Elementary School," Elementary English, XXXIX (April, 1962), 307.
schools now have variety in their reading materials? How much effort financially is being put forth by schools for the purchase of supplementary materials?

One of the most frequently cited sets of standards for school libraries is that proffered by the American Association of School Librarians. In 1960, the Association recommended a minimum list of between six and ten thousand books for libraries in schools enrolling from 200 to 299 children. ${ }^{22}$ For schools with 250 or more pupils a $\$ 4$ to $\$ 6$ per pupil annual expenditure for library materials was recommended. At least $\$ 1,000$ to $\$ 1,500$ was stipulated for schools having 200 to 249 pupils. ${ }^{23}$ It was pointed out that the minimal $\$ 4$ per pupil means that approximately only one book per child can be added to the school library each year. At least three to six newspapers and twenty-five titles in the magazine collection were the amounts recommended for $\mathrm{K}-6$ schools. ${ }^{24}$

Thus, it is apparent from the investigation of literature related to this study that many educators are concerned about the amount of reading which both teachers and pupils do. They also feel that improvement is needed toward implementing in classrooms the recommendations of specialists in the teaching of reading. There is agreement that an extensive variety
${ }^{22}$ The American Association of School Librarians, Standards for School Library Programe, A Report Prepared by the School Library Standards Committee (Chicago: American Library Association, 1960), p. 25.

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{ }^{23} \text { Ibid., 83. } \quad{ }^{24} \text { Ibid., } 25 .
$$

of materials used wisely in classrooms is important in teaching reading, but doubt is expressed as to whether this condition exists. Do primary classrooms contain supplies of basal materials and trade books which are adequate for meeting the varied needs of primary pupils in learning to read?

## Related Research

The need for a great variety of materials in the teaching of reading is continually voiced in the literature. How well this suggestion is implemented in primary classrooms receives considerably less attention. There have been numerous studies pertaining to materials in the teaching of reading, but these have been concerned mostly with such things as the content of school readers, children's preferences in reading topics, character traits emphasized in reading materials for children, and vocabulary control in readers. All of these have been concerned with the nature of the reading materials used but have not provided information on the extent to which reading materials are available in the classroom. In the following paragraphs, some summaries of studies on materials in teaching reading are provided.

Hockett and Forry checked the responses (in 1940) of 811 children to a carefully constructed list of topics in order to discover the reading interests of these children. They found stronger and more varied reading interests among girls than boys. Stories of animals appealed strongly to third grade pupils. Mythical and fanciful tales had the strongest appeal
for girls although there was some decrease of this interest from grade three to grade seven. Boys showed preference for stories concerning such things as games, sports, and hobbies, while girls preferred stories of jumping rope, playing house, collecting dolls, and like subjects. Younger pupils expressed strong interests in a greater variety of topics, while the older children became more discriminating in choosing topics of particular interest. ${ }^{25}$ The results of this study seem to provide support for greater variety in the early grades.

Dolch compared the difficulty of the McGuffey readers with that of two sets of readers published in 1939 and 1940. A vocabulary comparison was made with the use of the Thorndike List of 20,000 Commonest Words. While acknowledging that this was not a complete comparison, Dolch noted a remarkable resemblance among the readers in progression of vocabulary. He found the McGuffey primer very similar to the modern first reader and so on up the grade ladder. ${ }^{26}$

In 1951, Russell and Merrill compiled a list of sixth grade books, each of which occurred on at least three of six book lists recommended for children. Librarians were asked to state the one best grade level for which each book would

[^5]be appropriate, or if some books were equally good for more than one grade, these grades were to be listed. More objective grade placements were determined by the application of six different readability formulas. Although the ratings assigned by the librarians did not agree closely, the average of all their ratings approximated closely the ratings derived from the use of the readability formulas. There was some tendency for the librarians to assign lower readability ratings than the readability formulas indicated. ${ }^{27}$

Edgerton attempted to determine the reading difficulty of the 1953 editions of three popular children's encyclopedias --World Book, Britannica Junior, and Compton's. This was a follow-up on a previous study he had undertaken involving the 1943 editions. In the earlier study, Edgerton had concluded that the encyclopedias were too difficult for elementary children since he found difficulty medians of grades nine, ten, and eleven, respectively, for Britannica Junior, Compton's, and World Book. In the 1953 investigation, he found the mean grade placements to be grade six for World Book, grade seven for Britannica Junior, and grade eight for Compton's. Since many articles were below these means, Edgerton concluded that most of them would be within the reading ability of elementary school children. He also commented that great strides had been made regarding readability in the encyclopedias during the ten year
${ }^{27}$ David H. Russell and Anne F. Merrill, "Children's Librarians Rate the Difficulty of Well-Known Juvenile Books," Elementary English, XXVIII (May, 1951), pp. 263-268.
lapse between the investigations. ${ }^{28}$
From the conclusions of this study one might doubt the usefulness of these encyciopedias for primary grades except for the more proficient readers.

Anderson compared, in 1956, the moral values stressed in two modern readers with those stressed in the equivalent McGuffey reader (fith grade). He concluded that opportunities for the modern elementary pupil to learn moral values from the readers examined is at least equal to those of pupils who studied the McGuffey reader. 29

In 1961, after analyzing a sample of ten popular trade books, Russell found that the books examined "corresponded in difficulty to first readers and second readers (level one) of two well-known basal series."30 He pointed out that this investigation, though very limited, corroborated the opinions expressed by Arbuthnot, Condit, and Jacobs that, "trade books labelled 'easy-to-read' vary considerably in difficulty and in quality. ${ }^{31}$ This study seems to support the idea that first grade teachers need to be very careful in their selection of
${ }^{28}$ Ronald B. Edgerton, "How Difficult are Children's Encyclopedias?" Elementary School Journal, LV (December, 1954), pp. 219-225.
${ }^{29}$ Paul S. Anderson, ${ }^{\text {MMcGuffey vs. the Moderns in Char- }}$ acter Training," Phi Delta Kappan, XXXVIII (November, 1956), pp. 53-58.
${ }^{30}$ David H. Russell, ${ }^{\text {n }}$ An Evaluation of Some Easy-to-Read Trade Books for Children," Elementary English XXXVIII (November, 1961), p. 481.
${ }^{31}$ Ibid. 482.
supplementary books to ensure the provision of enough easy reading material for all of the children in their classrooms.

Smith, in 1962, investigated the choices of library books made by 113 first grade children on 14 visits to the library. She found the children most interested in humor and fantasy, yet of 859 stories analyzed from 49 primers and preprimers, only $7.45 \%$ were found capable of being classified in this interest area. ${ }^{32}$ This study might provide some direction for the first grade teacher in selecting books.

Docter carried out a research project in the Los Angeles City Schools in 1962 comparing the use of reading workbooks with the use of teacher-made follow-up activities. For purposes of comparison, achievement in comprehension and vocabulary was measured with the Stanford Achievement Test. He found that in the first grade significant achievement in comprehension and vocabulary was made by the pupils in the non-workbook group, while the reverse of this occurred in grades two and three. The workbook group excelled in comprehension only in grade four, and no significant differences were revealed between the groups in grades five and six. ${ }^{33}$

The writer recognizes that the foregoing studies have only indirect relationships to this study. No studies were

[^6]found with direct bearing on the problem of this investigation, and through correspondence with the Research Division of the National Education Association, it was discovered that they had no information available concerning studies dealing with the use and availability of reading materials. ${ }^{34}$

## Conclusions

From the foregoing summaries of literature and research related to materials in the teaching of reading, the following points appear to be salient:

1. There is some concern among educators as to whether teachers do keep abreast of changing concepts in the teaching of reading.
2. Many educators feel that some professional reading is-necessary in order for teachers to stay informed on the teaching of reading.
3. A wide variety of supplementary books and materials is recognized by authorities as essential to the development of a modern program of reading.
4. Many authorities feel that our practice in the provision of supplementary reading materials in the classroom lags far behind the recommendations of specialists in the teaching of reading.
${ }^{34}$ Letter from Sam M. Lambert, Director, Research Division, National Education Association, Washington 6, D. C., May 14, 1962.
5. Studies in the area of reading have dealt with the nature of the materials used in the teaching of reading but not with the extent of their availability and use.

## CHAPTER II

## INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURES

It was stated in the foregoing chapter that this study was concerned mainly with two educational issues relating to the teaching of reading: first, the degree to which teachers avail themselves of professional literature in the field of teaching reading, and second, the amount of supplementary reading material that is made available to children learning to read in the primary grades.

In this chapter, the procedures used for acquiring the above information will be outlined. Included will be explanations of procedures used in obtaining information from elementary school principals, from primary teachers, and through classroom inventories.

## Selection of Subjects

The thirty schools selected for this study were located approximately within a fifty-mile radius of two teacher education institutions--Fort Hays Kansas State College, Hays, Kansas, and Northeastern State College, Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Fourteen of the schools were located in Kansas, while sixteen schools made up the Oklahoma sampling. The schools ranged in population
from 92 to 943 children. There were three schools with populations ranging between 90 and 199, eleven schools between 200 and 299, seven schools from 300 to 399 , five schools from 400 to 599, and four schools ranged from 600 to 1,000 in population. These classifications were arbitrary. There were no schools selected where there was not at least one teacher per grade. and only teachers of the first three grades and their classrooms were investigated. Concerning the type of organization, four of the schools were K-8 schools, five were K-6, three were K-5, one was a K-4 school, one was a l-8 school, fifteen were 1-6 schools and one was a 1-5 school. The number of teachers involved in the study was 182 with 92 from Kansas and 90 from Oklahoma.

## Plan of the Study

A letter was sent to each superintendent of the schools involved explaining the study briefly and asking for permission to contact the principals of the elementary schools. It was explained in the letter that the investigator would need to talk with each of the primary teachers and elementary principals for approximately fifteen minutes and that an inventory of materials in each classroom would be necessary. It was stressed that the study was not designed to be evaluative of particular schools as such but that it was an attempt to determine present conditions regarding materials in the teaching of primary reading. The superintendents were assured that there would be absolutely no preparation necessary on the parts of either teachers or principals.

After permission was received from the superintendent, and unless the superintendent had provided for the necessary permissions with the principals, the principal was informed of the plan. The study was explained to the principal before he was interviewed. After the interview with the principal, plans were made for contacting the teachers. In some schools, it was possible to proceed with teacher interviews by means of someone accompanying the researcher to take charge of the class during the interview. In other schools, the teachers were contacted at recess, before school, or during a break. Even with permission to enter the classrooms the investigator asked the teacher if another time would be preferable for the interview since some teachers were occupied with some activity which they could not turn over easily to someone else.

In most schools it was possible to inventory the classroom while class was in session. Where this was not permissible, the inventories were completed before school, at noon, during recess, or after school.

For each school there was a separate folder. The completed interview questionnaires from the principals and teachers of a particular school were kept in the school's folder. The inventories of materials in the classrooms were recorded on the interview questionnaires of the teachers whose rooms were being inventoried.

## Interviews with Principals

In securing information from principals, Checklist 1 was used. The complete checklist is presented in the Appendix.

The following paragraphs contain some examples of the procedure used by the examiner in getting the information for this checklist.

In discovering the availability of filmstrips in a school the examiner would say something like the following: "There has been a great deal of debate about the value of using filmstrips in the teaching of reading in the primary grades. We are interested in finding out to what extent they are available and the extent to which they are used. Does your school provide filmstrips for teaching reading?"

When finding whether a school had a central library, the examiner said, "Many schools keep their supplementary books in a central library while many others prefer the room library arrangement. What do you practice in your school?"

To find the number of professional periodicals made available by the school, the examiner took with him three of the periodicals found on Checklist 5 in the Appendix. The examiner said, "There are a number of professional journals such as these which contain materials on the teaching of reading. However, there is some question as to whether teachers really have time to read them, and, therefore, whether it would be worthwhile for the school to provide them. Do you have any of these available?* The examiner showed Checklist 5 (Appendix) to the principal. "Do you have any journals other than these available for your teachers?" (The experimenter wrote these down, but only those which had relation to reading instruction were included in the data).

Regarding textbooks on the teaching of reading the examiner said, "There have been a number of books published on reading in the last ten years. Does your school make a practice of supplying teachers with a professional library? Do you happen to provide any of these books for your teachers?" The examiner had Checklist 4 (Appendix) with him.

## Interviews with Teachers

Checklists 2 and 3 in the Appendix were used for acquiring information from teachers. The following examples illustrate the approach used by the examiner.

For ascertaining what journals and periodicals teachers owned and used, the examiner carried with him Checklist 5 (Appendix) and three periodicals which were on the checklist. The examiner would say, "There are a number of professional journals which contain materials on teaching reading. However, there is some question as to whether teachers have time to read these or have ready access to them. For instance, I have here a list of ten periodicals which we have found in the past to be used by very few teachers. Do you happen to subscribe to any of these? Are there any other professional journals which I do not have listed to which you subscribe?" (The examiner wrote down these journals, but only those related to reading instruction were included in the data).

In discovering the number of filmstrips used by the teacher in the past school year, the examiner stated, "In recent years, there has been some research and a considerable
amount of writing about the value of using filmstrips in primary grade reading. We are interested in finding out how much they are used. Did you use any last year?"

To get information concerning workshops attended and courses taken by teachers on the teaching of reading, the experimenter said, "In education, there is always the problem of a teacher keeping up in his particular field. There are a number of ways for a teacher to do this--for example, in-service courses in the community or workshops on college campuses. We are not comparing, but we would like norms on this. Have you attended any workshops in reading in the last six years? Have you completed any courses directly relating to reading in the last six years?" The examiner wrote down the year in which each workshop or course was taken.

In finding what books on the teaching of reading a teacher owned, the examiner said, "A recent innovation of one major publisher has been a book-of-the-month club, the selection of books offered being limited to professional books in education. It is reasonable to expect that only a relatively small number of teachers have betin contacted. Have you by any chance purchased one of the books on this list in recent years?" The examiner had a list of books on the teaching of reading published mostly within the last ten years. (See Checklist 4, Appendix.) The examiner then asked the teacher if she owned any other professional materials such as brochures or monographs.

In getting information concerning the use of basal readers by the teacher, the examiner would say, "There is
disagreement among teachers as to how basal readers can be used most efficiently in the classrocm. We would like to obtain some averages concerning what practices most teachers use with basal materials. In your reading program do all of the pupils read from the same text at the same time? This refers to your basal or instructional program only--not to any free reading. Will every child complete all of the books for your grade in the adopted series? Is the rate of completing adjusted to make allowance for slower pupils?" (The answer to this question was already clear from what the teacher had already told the examiner in many cases. The same applies to the following question.) "Are different grade levels of basal readers used in your regular instructional program at the same time? How many different series do you use during the year as a part of your regular instructional program in reading? This does not have to include all of the books in that series. There is plenty of disagreement about grouping in the classroom. Do you work with the class as a whole or do you subgroup? How many groups do you use? Is there a record kept of basal books read by each child? Is this record passed on to the next teacher? ${ }^{*}$

## Classroom Inventories

In conducting the classroom inventories, the Checklist for Recreational Reading Materials (a section of Checklist 2, Appendix) and the parts of Checklist 3 (Appendix) entitled Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, and Basal Series were used.

For determining the number of trade books (recreational reaüing materials) the examiner counted the books in the classroom. A check was made with the teacher to find the number of trade books the children had at home or in their desks. In making this inventory, supplementary basal textbooks were omitted whetier these were science, social studies, or reading textbooks. The purpose of this omission was to determine only the number of recreational or library type materials.

A check was made on the copyright date of each trade book on a smaller sample of the total number of classrooms involved in the study in order to derive the percentage of these books that was published in the last ten years. Twentyfive classrooms were chosen from each of the areas in Kansas and Oklahoma in the following manner: From a master list of all schools with the numbers of teachers in each grade involved in the study in one state a slip of paper was made for each teacher. All of the slips of paper were spread on a table by towns. Every fifth teacher was selected until a total of twenty-five was chosen.

Encyclopedias and dictionaries in each classroom were listed with the copyright dates. (Frequently, the researcher had checked earlier with the teacher as to whether she had these in the room.) The total number of volumes was recorded on Checklist 3.

In checking basal materials, the examiner obtained information from the teacher regarding the basal books which were
then being used by the children. Basal materials were inventoried by series with the number, grade level, and copyright date being recorded for each group of the same text. A check (レ) was made if the teacher possessed the guidebook accompanying that particular book. Titles totalling fewer than ten were omitted. (The very few of these which were found usually consisted of one or two books.) Grade levels such as $2^{1}$ or $2^{2}$ were simply recorded as grade two.

## CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION OF DATA

This chapter contains the presentation of the data collected in this study involving thirty schools and 182 teachers. The data are presented in eight tables, and explanations are included. Each table is set up to show averages and percentages for schools of various population sizes in reference to each item reported. The number of schools in each population range is included also.

## Professional Sources on Teaching Reading

Information regarding teachers and the amount of professional reading, workshops attended, and course work taken which was related to the teaching of reading is incluaed in Table 1. Concerning the average number of books per school in the professional library on teaching reading, it was found that the three smallest schools were far above the average while the remaining schools were below the average number of books for all of the schools combined. The two groups of larger schools were quite below the average, and the two groups just larger than the smallest schools were only a small amount below the average.

TABLE 1

## SOURCES OF PROFESSIONAL MATERIAL ON THE TEACHING OF READING (AVAIIABLE AND USED BY TEACHERS IN THIRTY SELECTED SCHOOLS IN KANSAS AND OKLAHOMA DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 1961-1962)

| Number Schools | 3 | 11 | 7 | 5 | 4 | Average for all schools |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| School Populatitons | 90-199 | 200-299 | 300-399 | 400-599 | 600-1000 |  |
| Average number books per school in professional library. | 7.33 | 1.64 | 1.57 | . 28 | . 25 | 2.20 |
| Percentage teachers owning at least 1 book on teaching reading | . 22.20 | 46.00 | 43.58 | 36.36 | 37.50 | 45.60 |
| Books per teacher among those owning books | $2.00$ | 2.17 | 1.71 | 3.40 | 2.73 | 2.44 |
| Periodicals per school in professional library | 1.33 | . 36 | . 71 | 1.20 | . 25 | . 67 |
| Percentage teachers subscribing to 1 or more periodicals | 0.00 | 14.00 | 10.25 | 25.00 | 12.50 | 14.89 |
| Average number periodicals among teachers subscribing | . 0.00 | 2.00 | 2.25 | 1.45 | 2.00 | 1.81 |
| Percentage teachers taking reading courses in past six years. | . 33.33 | 62.00 | 66.66 | 54.50 | 32.50 | 53.30 |
| Average number courses taken among teachers taking them . | . 1.33 | 1.29 | 1.31 | 1.58 | 1.23 | 1.36 |
| Percentage teachers attending reading workshops in past six years. | . 44.44 | 44.00 | 51.29 | 40.91 | 22.50 | 40.10 |
| Average number workshops taken among teachers taking them . . . | . 1.75 | 1.32 | 1.80 | 1.77 | 1.56 | 1.56 |

In contrast, there was a smaller percentage of teachers who personally owned books on the teaching of reading in the smallest schools than in any of the others. Nearly half of the teachers involved in the study owned at least one book, and most of the schools, except the smallest, had a similar percentage of teachers who owned books.

Among the teachers owning books on the teaching of reading, those in the schools ranging from 400 to 599 owned the highest number of books per teacher. Those teachers in the schools from 300 to 399 in population owned the smallest number of books per teacher.

The largest schools were far below the average of all of the schools in supplying periodicals on reading in their professional libraries. It is obvious that some schools had no periodicals pertaining to reading since some of the averages were less than one.

While the smallest schools had more than the average number of periodicals on reading in their professional libraries, it was discovered that none of the teachers in these schools had personal subscriptions to any journals related to reading. Schools ranging from 400 to 599 in population were high above the average in numbers of teachers who subscribed to at least one periodical. Less than 15 per cent of all of the teachers interviewed subscribed to any periodicals related to reading. Teachers who had personal subscriptions to periodicals in the seven schools ranging from 300 to 399 in population had the highest average number of subscriptions.

More than half of the teachers interviewed had taken college courses in the teaching of reading in the last six years. Somewhat above the average in numbers of teachers taking courses were the schools with population ranges of 200 to 299 and 300 to 399, while the smallest and the largest schools were markedly below the average for all schools. There were hardly any differences among the schools in the average numbers of courses taken by teachers who had taken any courses at all.

The schools ranging from 300 to 399 in population were above the average in the percentage of teachers who had taken workshops related to reading in the past six years. The largest schools were found to be well below the average of all of the schools in this category. There were no great differences in the number of workshops attended among those teachers who had participated in at least one.

## Supplementary Reading Materials

Data relating to trade books, weekly newspapers for children, and central libraries are presented in Table 2. The four schools with central libraries for the primary grades were not included in computing numbers of trade books per classroom and per child because of the impracticality of determining which books were for primary children especially. Although there were only four of the thirty schools which had central libraries for use by primary children, some of the schools had central libraries for the fourth grade and higher only.

TABLE 2
AVAILABILITY OF SUPPLEMENTARY READING MATERIALS IN THIRTY SELECTED SCHOOLS IN KANSAS AND OKLAHOMA DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 1961-1962


The schools which had the higher average numbers of trade books per classroom also had the higher average numbers of books per pupil. The smallest schools were well above the average, the schools ranging from 400 to 599 were only slightly above the average, and the other schools were a little below the average of all of the schoois. It was found from the sample of fifty rooms from all of the schools that more than half of the trade books examined had been published in the last ten years.

There were only two schools in which the teachers did not choose the trade books themselves. In one of these schools, a committee of four made up of the principal and teachers chose the books. In the other school, books were purchased at a more inexpensive rate by buying in quantities of one hundred and permitting the publisher to make the selections.

It was discovered that most of the teachers used weekly newspapers with each student receiving his own copy. All of the schools providing weekly newspapers used the one entitled My Weekly Reader except two, which used religious weekly newspapers. Nearly all of the schools required the pupils to pay for these subscriptions. All of the teachers in the smallest group of schools used My Weekly Reader. A smaller percentage of teachers in the schools from 300 to 399 in population provided weekly newspapers than in any of the other groups of schools with almost 30 per cent of them not providing material of this sort.

A biggex percentage of teachers in the schools from 400 to 599 in population used filmstrips than in any of the other schools. These teachers used over 80 per cent of the number of filmstrips available which would mean possibly that all of the filmstrips were used at least by some of the teachers. In the largest schools, it would appear that about one-fourth of the teachers made use of most or all of the filmstrips available. Almost no filmstrips were used by the teachers in the smallest schools, although filmstrips were available. Only five out of the thirty schools had no filmstrips pertaining to teaching reading. All of the schools in the 400 to 599 population range had filmstrips available as well as almost twice as many filmstrips per school as the average of all of the schools. The largest schools had the fewest filmstrips available on the average.

Shown in the last column of Table 2, the over-all mean of $\$ 2.32$ per pupil spent for supplementary materials is probably somewhat high since, in many schools, a certain amount of money was presented to the teacher with the understanding that she could purchase anything she wished. It appeared that most teachers selected books. The largest schools were substantially higher than the average in the reported amounts allocated for supplementary materials, while the smallest schools and the schools ranging from 400 to 599 were much lower in per pupil outlay than the average of all of the schools.

## Use of Library Books

In Table 3, findings are reported concerning the various practices of the teachers interviewed in the use of library books. It was discovered that over 63 per cent of the total group of teachers did not provide specific recognition such as stars, prizes, or certificates for so many books read. However, two-thirds of the teachers in the smallest schools did use this method for motivating reading. This practice was used least among teachers in the schools from 200 to 299 in population. Approximately one-fifth of all the teachers had conferences with children on books read, and the frequency of this practice varied little among the schools examined.

More than one-third of the teachers made no specific provisions for reporting by pupils on books read. Very few of the teachers had the children make written reports only, since most of them who required written reports also required some oral presentation of the reports. Most of the teachers who provided for children's reporting on books used only oral reporting.

Roughly one-fourth of all of the teachers provided specifically scheduled time for free-choice reading by pupils, while almost all of them allowed the children to read when they completed assigned seatwork. About one-fourth of the teachers utilized a library table for reading by pupils.

Almost three-fourths of the teachers allowed children to take library books home. This practice was most common among the teachers in the largest schools and least common among the teachers in the schools from 300 to 399 in population.

## TABLE 3

USE OF LIBRARY BOOKS IN PRIMARY CLASSROOMS IN THIRTY SELECTED SCHOOLS IN KANSAS AND OKLAHOMA DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 1961-1962
(INFORMATION IN PERCENTAGES)

| PRACTICE USED | Number Schools | 3 | 11 | 7 | 5 | 4 | Average for |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| BY TEACHER | School Populations | 90-199 | 200-299 | 300-399 | 400-599 | 600-1000 | all schools |
| Giving specific recognition (star |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Having confere | nces on books read. | 22.20 | 20.00 | 23.07 | 20.45 | 17.50 | 20.32 |
| Having childre | report on books | 66.66 | 72.00 | 69.20 | 56.36 | 55.00 | 63.70 |
| Oral | only. | 22.20 | 44.00 | 41.02 | 27.27 | 20.00 | 32.96 |
| Writt | en only | 22.20 | 6.00 | 15.38 | 6.80 | 0.00 | 7.69 |
| Both | written and oral. | 22.20 | 22.00 | 12.80 | 22.72 | 37.50 | 23.10 |
| Providing specific free reading |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Children read completed. | after seatwork | 100.00 | 96.00 | 100.00 | 90.90 | 100.00 | 96.70 |
| Using library | table . . . . . . | 0.00 | 34.00 | 17.90 | 29.50 | 25.00 | 25.80 |
| Allowing children to take |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Library books in specific unit <br> work . . . . . . . . . . . . . . $77.70 \quad 80.00 \quad 64.10 \quad 170.45 \quad 55.00 \quad 68.68$ |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Child records | books read. | 55.50 | 22.00 | - 28.20 | 29.50 | 25.00 | 27.47 |
| Teacher record | s books read. | 33.33 | 30.00 | 41.00 | 31.80 | 32.50 | 33.50 |
| Record passed teacher. . . | on to next | 0.00 | 8.00 | 5.10 | 22.70 | 0.00 | 3.80 |

Nearly 70 per cent of the teachers interviewed utilized library books in specific unit work in science, social studies, language arts, or other areas. Teachers in the largest schools used library books in this manner less than the teachers in the other schools.

The practice of teachers keeping records of books read was slightly more prevalent than that of having children keep records. However, this was not true in the smallest schools where the practice of children keeping records of books read was more common than that of teachers maintaining records. In most of the schools, no records of library books read were kept. It was quite uncommon for records of library books read to be passed on to the next teacher although more than 20 per cent of the teachers in the schools with 400 to 599 in population did this.

## Basal Readers Available

Data regarding the extent and variety of basal readers available in the classrooms involved in this investigation are placed in Table 4. It was found that each classroom had, on the average, more than nine sets of readers of ten or more copies and that almost half of these had been published in the last ten years. All of the classrooms had at least one set of readers which had been published in the last ten years. Teachers' guidebooks were found accompanying more than half of the sets of readers, and nearly all of the teachers had the guidebooks which accompanied the adopted basal series.

TABLE 4
bASAL READERS AVAILABLE IN PRIMARY CLASSROOMS IN THIRTY SELECTED SCHOOLS IN KANSAS AND OKLAHOMA DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 1961-1962

$a_{\text {Excludes }} 4$ rooms with mixed grades.
$\mathrm{b}_{\text {Excludes }}$ first grade rooms.

In computing the range of grade levels in basal readers per classroom, the levels of materials were broken down no further than the grade level itself. For example, readiness materials, preprimers, primers, and first grade levels of difficulty were considered all as first grade level. In the small: est schools, the first and second grade teachers had basal materials only at the level of difficulty of the chronological grade as did the first grade teachers in the largest schools. All of the other teachers, as a group, had materials of a difficulty other than the grade level of the classroom. The second grade teachers provided slightly more variety in difficulty of materials than the third grade teachers, while the first grade teachers, as a whole, provided the least diversity in range of difficulty. Many of the individual teachers at each grade level provided materials only at their particular grade levels. Classrooms in the largest schools contained the greatest range in grade levels of difficulty at third grade level, but teachers in the schools ranging from 300 to 399 pupils provided the highest range at second grade level.

Very few teachers were found to have basal readers of a difficulty higher than the grade level taught. No teachers in the smallest schools had any readers higher than their grade levels. It is noteworthy that over 15 per cent of the teachers in the schools ranging from 300 to 399 pupils did have sets of basal readers above the grade level of the class. In determining the percentage of teachers whose classrooms contained
basal readers below chronological grade level, first grade classrooms were omitted since it is apparent that their materials would run no lower than the readiness level. Approximately one-third of all the second and third grade teachers had basal readers below grade level in their rooms, but only 11 per cent of the second and third grade teachers in the smallest schools made this provision.

## Use of Basal Readers

Table 5 contains the information related to how the teachers used basal readers and how they organized their classes for that purpose. About one-fifth of all of the teachers had all of the pupils read from the same book at the same time. In addition to that, more than half of them expected all of the pupils to complete all of the books in the grade level of the adopted series with the slower pupils being allowed more time for completing the books. In one school, the teachers adjusted the rate of completion during the first semester, but the pupils were pulled together to read from the same book at the same time during the second semester. It is noteworthy that nearly 40 per cent of the teachers in the largest schools practiced having all of the pupils read from the same book at the same time.

More than 60 per cent of all of the teachers reported that they had some pupils, at least part of the time, reading on grade levels other than the chronological grade. Some of these teachers also used the previously mentioned practices.

TABLE 5

## USE OF BASAL READERS IN PRIMARY CLASSROOMS IN THIRTY SELECTED SCHOOLS IN KANSAS AND OKLAHOMA DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 1961-1962 <br> (INFORMATION IN PERCENTAGES)

| PRACTICE USED <br> BY TEACHERS | Number Schools | 3 | 11 | 7 | 5 | 4 | Average for all schools |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | School Populations | 90-199 | 200-299 | 300-399 | 400-599 | 600-1000 |  |
| Pupils read same book simultaneously <br> Each pupil completes all books in adopted series-rate of completing adjusted |  | 11.11 | 20.00 | 20.50 | 11.36 | 37.50 | 21.42 |
|  |  | 55.55 | 58.00 | 48.70 | 43.18 | 65.90 | 55.49 |
| Different grade levels used at same time. |  | 55.55 | 62.00 | 69.20 | 86.36 | 27.50 | 61.53 |
| Using only 1 series in instruction. |  | 55.55 | 14.00 | 0.08 | 15.91 | 40.00 | 21.97 |
|  |  | 100.00 | 86.00 | 92.31 | 86.36 | 60.00 | 81.86 |
| 2 or | more. | 100.00 | 86.00 | 94.87 | 86.36 | 60.00 | 81.41 |
| 3 or | more. | 33.33 | 64.00 | 74.36 | 52.27 | 32.50 | 54.94 |
| Using grouping |  | 66.66 | 86.00 | 87.17 | 86.36 | 82.50 | 84.61 |
| Using two grou | ps. | 22.22 | 20.00 | 15.38 | 13.63 | 15.00 | 16.48 |
| Using three gr | oups. . | 44.44 | 58.00 | 64.10 | 65.90 | 60.00 | 60.98 |
| Using more tha | three groups. | 0.00 | 8.00 | 7.60 | 6.81 | 7.50 | 7.14 |
| Working with c | lass as a whole | 44.44 | 14.00 | 10.25 | 13.63 | 17.50 | 14.83 |
| Keeping record books read. | of basal | 66.66 | 90.00 | 74.35 | 97.72 | 65.00 | 81.86 |
| Record passed | on to next teacher. | 22.22 | 74.00 | 48.70 | 97.72 | 55.00 | 67.58 |

More than half of the teachers in the smallest schools used only one series in their formal instructional program while almost all of the teachers in the schools of 300 to 399 children used more than one series. Forty per cent of the teachers in the largest schools used only one series. More than 80 per cent of the teachers used two or more series, and more than half of them used three or more series in their instructional programs.

Practically 85 per cent of the teachers used grouping of some kind within the classroom, but only two-thirds of the teachers in the smallest schools used grouping. More of the teachers who did group used three groups, more than 16 per cent used two groups, and very few used more than three groups. Almost half of the teachers in the smallest schools worked with the class as a whole, while a few more than 14 per cent of all of the teachers practiced this type of organization. This practice was least common among the teachers in the schools with 300 to 399 children.

Nearly all of the teachers in the schools of 400 to 599 pupils kept records of the basal books read and passed these records on to the next teachers. While over 80 per cent of the teachers, as a group, kept records of basal books read by children, only about two-thirds of them presented the records to the next teacher. In most cases where the records were passed on, the records were kept in cumulative folders which were passed on to the following teacher. This was usually
in keeping with school policy in these cases. More rarely, there were some teachers who personally saw to it that the next teacher had records of basal books read.

## Workbooks

The findings regarding workbooks are located in Table 6. It was discovered that all of the teachers in the smallest schools used basal workbooks with each child and that quite a majority of all of the teachers practiced this use of workbooks. Fewer teachers used basal workbooks with each child in the schools with 300 to 399 pupils than in any of the others, with slightly more than 80 per cent engaging in this practice.

TABLE 6
AVAILABILITY OF WORKBOOKS IN PRIMARY CLASSROOMS IN THIRTY SELECTED SCHOOLS IN KANSAS AND OKLAHOMA DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 1961-1962
$\left.\begin{array}{ccccc}\hline \hline & & \begin{array}{c}\text { Percentage } \\ \text { Teachers } \\ \text { Number } \\ \text { Schools }\end{array} & \begin{array}{c}\text { School } \\ \text { Population } \\ \text { Workbooks } \\ \text { With Each } \\ \text { Child }\end{array} & \begin{array}{c}\text { Percentage } \\ \text { Teachers } \\ \text { Using Phonic } \\ \text { Workbooks }\end{array}\end{array} \begin{array}{c}\text { Percentage } \\ \text { Teachers } \\ \text { Using No } \\ \text { Workbooks }\end{array}\right]$

Two-thirds of the teachers in the smallest schools used special phonics workbooks, while more than 70 per cent of the teachers in the schools ranging from 300 to 399 in population made use of this type of material. Nearly half of all of the teachers used special phonics materials. (Commercial ditto sheets of lessons on phonics were regarded as phonics workbooks.) It was found that nearly all teachers used workbooks of some kind. In some schools, several of the teachers required their children to complete seven different reading workbooks, and others required five.

## Dictionaries

As indicated in Table 7, it was discovered that more than a third of the classrooms inventoried for this study contained no dictionaries. Many contained only two, three, or four small picture dictionaries. Nearly half of the classrooms in the largest schools had none; yet of the dictionaries found in the rooms of the largest schools, nearly 85 per cent had been published within the last ten years. The schools of 300 to 399 pupils contained the fewest dictionaries with fewer than three per classroom on the average.

While the classrooms in the smallest schools contained the highest number of dictionaries per classroom, a smaller percentage of their dictionaries had been published within the last ten years. Some teachers in the schools investigated pointed out to the examiner that they carried out projects in which the pupils constructed their own dictionaries.

TABLE 7

## AVAILABILITY OF DICTIONARIES IN PRIMARY CLASSROOMS IN THIRTY SELECTED SCHOOLS IN KANSAS AND OKLAHOMA DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR 1961-1962

| Number <br> Schools | School <br> Population | Number Per <br> Classroom | Percentage <br> Published <br> Last 10 Years <br> $(1951-1961)$ | Percentage <br> Classrooms <br> With None |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 3 | $90-199$ | 4.56 | 24.39 | 33.33 |
| 11 | $200-299$ | 4.42 | - | 48.86 |
| 7 | $300-399$ | 2.72 | 35.80 | 30.00 |
| 5 | $400-599$ | 3.58 | 37.97 | 25.64 |
| 4 | $600-1000$ | 3.43 | 84.67 | 38.63 |
| Average all schools | 4.19 | 45.55 | 45.00 |  |

## Encyclopedias

In gathering information related to the availability of encyclopedias (Table 8), only encyclopedias in the classrooms were counted. There were some schools that had one or two sets of encyclopedias for the whole school, but these were omitted for the purpose of this study. It was found that almost two-thirds of all of the classrooms inventoried contained no encyclopedias. Many of the classrooms which did have encyclopedias had one or more fifteen- or sixteen-volume sets. The schools as a whole averaged more than five volumes per classroom. Nearly 70 per cent of these had been published within the last ten years.

The largest schools had the most encyclopedias per classroom, a high percentage of encyclopedias published in the last
ten years, and the lowest percentage of classrooms with no encyclopedias. The schools with 300 to 399 children had the lowest per classroom average in numbers of encyclopedias.
table 8
AVAILABILITY OF ENCYCLOPEDIAS IN PRIMARY CLASSROOMS IN THIRTY SELECTED SCHOOLS IN KANSAS AND OKILAHOMA DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

1961-1962

| Number <br> Schools | School <br> Population | Volumes Per <br> Classroom | Percentage <br> Published <br> Last lo Years <br> $(1951-1961)$ | Percentage <br> Classrooms <br> With None |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 3 | $90-199$ | 5 | 71.11 | 66.67 |
| 11 | $200-299$ | 6.22 | 81.87 | 66.00 |
| 7 | $300-399$ | 4.28 | 42.51 | 69.23 |
| 5 | $400-599$ | 4.75 | 60.76 | 68.18 |
| 4 | $600-1000$ | 6.28 | 79.28 | 57.50 |
| Average all schools | 5.40 | 69.58 | 65.38 |  |

## CHAPTER IV

## SUMMARY, LIMITATIONS, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The two main purposes of this study were (1) to determine the degree to which teachers have available professional literature in the area of teaching reading, and (2) to discover the amount of supplementary reading material that is available to children in learning to read in the primary grades. Information was also sought relating to how teachers use basal readers and recreational materials and relating to the recency of primary teachers' experiences with college courses and/or workshops in the teaching of reading.

## Summary

In gathering the data for this study, a total of 182 teachers in thirty schools was interviewed by the investigator, and each classroom was inventoried. To ensure consistency in the information obtained, checklists were used by the examiner in both the interviews and the inventories. Information was gathered concerning such things as the extent of textbooks and periodicals on reading which were available to teachers, courses and workshops on reading which had been taken recently
by teachers, books and filmstrips available for helping children learn to read, and how teachers used materials in helping children learn to read.

The data were collated and placed into eight tables to show comparisons among schools of various population ranges. Some of the more outstanding characteristics found in each of the five population groups of schools are presented in the following paragraphs. Where comparative terms (such as highest or lowest) are used, it should be understood that this means in comparison with the total group of schools investigated in this research.

In the smallest schools (90 to 199 pupils) the highest averages were found on the following items: books on teaching reading in professional libraries, number of trade books per pupil and per classroom, provision of weekly papers for each pupil, use of specific recognition such as a star or certificate for so many library books read, keeping records of library books read, number of different sets of basal readers available per classroom, percentage of guidebooks accompanying these sets, practice of using only one basal reader series in instructional programs, use of basal workbooks with each child, and number of dictionaries per classroom.

The smallest schools had the lowest averages on the following items: percentage of teachers owning books and personal subscriptions to periodicals on teaching reading, money per pupil spent for supplementary books, passing on to the
next teacher records of basal and library books read by pupils, average range of grade levels per classroom in basal readers, percentages of classrooms with any basal readers either above or below the chronological grade level of pupils, having pupils in a classroom read from the same book at the same time, and using grouping within the classroom.

The schools ranging from 200 to 299 in population were discovered to have the highest averages in the percentage of teachers owning books related to the teaching of reading, having pupils report on library books read, and utilizing library books in special units of work in areas other than reading. These schools had the lowest averages in giving specific recognition such as stars or certificates for so many library books read and in keeping records of these books read by pupils.

The schools with 300 to 399 pupils had the highest percentages of teachers who had taken recent courses and workshops in the teaching of reading, and the highest percentage of teachers who used individual conferences with pupils on books read. These schools had the highest percentage of teachers who provided specifically scheduled time for free reading by children, the highest percentage of classrooms contained basal readers on a higher level than for the particular grade, and the highest percentage of teachers used grouping within the classroom. The highest percentage of these teachers also used special phonics workbooks with children. These schools had the lowest percentage of teachers who provided week $l_{Y}$ newspapers
for children, allowed children to take books home, used only one basal series for instruction in reading, and used basal workbooks for children. The number of both dictionaries and encyclopedias per classroom was lowest in these schools.

The schools with 400 to 599 children had the highest averages on the following items: number of periodicals in professional libraries, percentage of teachers with subscriptions to periodicals related to teaching reading, percentage of teachers using filmstrips, number of filmstrips per school, percentage of availcible filmstrips used, passing records of both basal and library books read on to the next teacher, keeping of records of basal books read, percentage of basal readers published within the last ten years, and having pupils in the same room read from different grade levels of basal readers at the same time. The average of these schools was the lowest in the practice of requiring pupils in a given classroom to complete all of the books in the adopted basal series.

It was found that the largest schools ( 600 to 1000 pupils) had the highest averages in money per pupil allocated for library books, allowing pupils to take library books home, range of grade levels of basal readers per room, percentage of rooms containing basal readers below the grade level of the chronological grade, having pupils read from the same book at the same time in a particular class, requiring pupils in a class to complete all of the books in the adopted basal series, and number of encyclopedias per classroom.

The largest schools had the lowest averages in both books and periodicals on reading in professional libraries, percentage of teachers taking either courses or workshops related to teaching reading, number of filmstrips per school, using individual conferences with children on books read, having children report on books, providing specifically scheduled time for free reading by pupils, utilizing library books in instructional units, passing on of records to the next teacher of library books read by pupils, keeping records of basal books read by children, number of different sets of basal readers per classroom, percentage of basal readers published within the last ten years, percentage of guidebooks accompanying sets of basal readers, number of different grade levels of basal readers per classroom, and use of special phonics workbooks. It seemed somewhat paradoxical that although the largest schools reported the highest per pupil outlay of money for trade books, they also had the lowest number of trade books per classroom.

## Limitations

The schools investigated in this study were in close proximity to two teacher-preparation institutions located in two states--Kansas and Oklahoma. Although the findings of this study may be somewhat representative of other areas, to assume this would be mere conjecture. Small, rural schools with fewer than one teacher per grade level were excluded and no large metropolitan areas were included.

There was some attempt to assess the quality of library books available through checking the percentage of the books which had been published within the last ten years and the amount of money per pupil spent on these books. It is recognized that some of the books published earlier are very worthwhile and that some of the recently published books are not necessarily valuable. Because of time, each classroom library was not examined in light of variety of types of literature, condition of books (those without bindings were excluded), and appropriateness off the books for a particular grade level. However, it is felt that the information gathered is pertinent to understanding something of the extent, variety, and use of materials in reading in the primary grades.

## Findings

In this section the findings are presented which appeared to be most outstanding regarding all of the schools involved in this investigation.

1. Judging from the schools examined in this study, many elementary schools have no books or periodicals on reading in their professional libraries and most of those that do have them have very few. More than half of the teachers in the schools did not own one book on the teaching of reading and more than 85 per cent of them did not have subscriptions to periodicals related to reading. Almost half of the teachers had not taken courses on the teaching of reading in the last six years, while almost 60 per cent of them had participated in no workshops in reading.
2. The number of trade books per classroom found in the schools appeared to meet or exceed minimum figures found in the literature on teaching reading.
3. It was found that most of the teachers interviewed provided for weekly newspapers for each pupil.
4. Nearly all of the schools provided at least some filmstrips for use in teaching reading, but less than half of the teachers used these at all, and only slightly more than half of the number of available filmstrips were used.
5. The average amount per pupil spent on supplementary reading materials was \$2.32.
6. Slightly more than one-fourth of the teachers interviewed provided a definitely scheduled period for freechoice reading by pupils, but nearly all of the teachers permitted pupils to read after completion of assigned seatwork. Nearly 30 per cent of them did not allow children to take library books home. Not many teachers (about one-third) kept records of library books read by the children. More than 30 per cent of the teachers did not utilize library books in special unit work.
7. The average range of grade levels in basal readers per classroom was found to be 1.06 in the first grade classrooms, 1.70 in the second grade classrooms, and 1.61 in the third grade classrooms. Nearly two-thirds of the rooms had no basal readers below the chronological grade level, and nearly 82 per cent of the rooms had no basal readers above
chronological grade level. More than half of the teachers expected each pupil to complete all of the books of the adopted series in his particular grade l.evel. It was found that most of the teachers used grouping within the classroom in their basal reader instruction.
8. Although nearly all of the teachers used workbooks, it was found that even where other allowances were made for individual differences, all of the pupils were required to complete the same workbooks.
9. More than 34 per cent of the classrooms inventoried had no dictionaries while over 65 per cent of the classrooms had no volumes of encyclopedias.

## Conclusions

Within the limitations mentioned previously, the following conclusions appear to be evident as a result of this investigation. Each conclusion corresponds in number to the finding from which it was drawn.

1. It appears that teachers as a whole in the schools investigated do not come into a great deal of contact with new ideas nor do they avail themselves of many opportunities to refurbish old ideas.
2. On the average, the schools in this study appeared to meet or exceed minimum figures for the number of trade books per classroom which are found in the literature. ${ }^{1}$ It should be recognized that this refers only to the number of books.
${ }^{1}$ veatch, loc. cit.
3. It seems that most of the teachers interviewed regard learning to read about national and international events as an important segment of a reading program in view of the fact that most of the teachers made provision for each child to have a copy of a weekly newspaper for children.
4. In light of the findings regarding filmstrips, it would appear that more than half of the teachers investigated either do not regard filmstrips as important aids in teaching reading or the filmstrips which are available in the schools are not stored in a manner which would make them readily accessible to the teachers.
5. The amount of money per pupil spent in the past year in the schools investigated, $\$ 2.32$, was considerably less than the $\$ 4$ to $\$ 6$ per pupil annual expenditure recommended by the American Association of School Librarians for schools with 250 or more pupils. ${ }^{2}$ Also, $\$ 2.32$ is probably high since it was discovered that, in many cases, the money reported for supplementary reading materials could be used by the teacher for anything she wished.
6. The findings related to the use of library books by the teachers in the schools investigated would cause one to wonder if many of the teachers are not viewing the reading program in a much too narrow sense and neglecting the encouragement of learning to see reading as both a versatile tool and a source of enjoyment.

[^7]7. From what was found concerning basal readers, it would appear that the teachers have variety as far as different sets of basal readers are concerned, but the ranges of difficulty of these materials seemed much too narrow to accommodate the range of reading levels we would expect to find in a typical classroom. It would seem that the more able pupils are neglected most in provision of materials at their reading levels. The discovery that many of the teachers used grouping within the classroom but required all of the pupils to complete the basal readers at the chronological grade level would cause one to wonder about the purpose of the grouping practices.
8. The findings pertaining to workbooks would lead one to conclude that much valuable time might be wasted on the parts of many pupils since it would seem unlikely that all of the pupils would have identical needs in skills and practice provided for in workbooks.
9. It would appear that little real stress is placed in the schools examined on the development of skills in using dictionaries and encyclopedias.

## Recommendations

In view of the findings of this investigation, the following recommendations seem appropriate.

1. Teachers and principals in elementary schools need to examine the adequacy of their professional libraries. Current information on the teaching of reading should be constantly available.
2. Teachers who have not taken courses or attended workshops concerned with the teaching of reading in recent years should be encouraged to do so. Pernaps more in-service institutes could be sponsored by individual schools or districts.
3. It is recommended that schools assess their own reading programs constantly to see if they are utilizing as fully as possible the knowledge available concerning the teaching of reading.
4. Primary teachers and administrators should reevaluate their policies of ordering basal books of the same grade level for a particular grade for each pupil. If this is part of a state free-textbook program, the state should be encouraged to allow for flexibility in ordering these materials so that schools may order more nearly what their pupils need.
5. In-service courses, workshops, and college courses in the teaching of reading should aid teachers and prospective teachers in gaining a more complete understanding of the extent of individual differences and of some specific ways of dealing with these differences in teaching reading. This would include various uses of basal readers, workbooks, and library books.
6. Primary teachers should view the teaching of reading in a broader perspective by allowing time and planning activities for helping pupils learn to enjoy reading and develop habits of reading more regularly. This broader perspective should also encompass the utilization of books as tools for
finding answers by more use of various books in unit work. This would include planned use of dictionaries and encyclopedias. More financial outlay for supplementary reading materials probably would aid teachers in carrying out this recommendation.
7. If such things as filmstrips for the teaching of reading are to be purchased, more should be done in encouraging teachers in the use of these materials, or perhaps the materials need to be stored and arranged so that they are more readily accessible to teachers.

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## APPENDIX

CHECKLISTS FOR SECURING DATA

CHECKLIST 1
FOR SECURING DATA FROM PRINCIPALS


## CHECKLIST 2

FOR USE WITH TEACHERS AND DATA ON LIBRARY BOOKS

|  |  |  | $\begin{aligned} & \text { on } \\ & \text { 2 } \\ & 0 \\ & 0 \\ & 0 \end{aligned}$ | NO. LIBRARY BKS. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Teacher passes on record |  | 1951 |
|  |  | Teacher keeps record |  | 1952 |
|  |  | Child keeps record | $\stackrel{\square}{2}$ | 1953 |
| Any other Periodicals <br> (copy for each child) |  | Specific Unit Work-Teach. or child. choose related books | $\begin{aligned} & \text { r्ये } \\ & \text { N } \\ & \text { N } \end{aligned}$ | 1954 |
| Weekly Readers (copy for each child) |  | Take books home |  | 1955 |
| Courses enrolled in past six years | $\begin{gathered} \text { Co } \\ \text { N } \\ \text { R } \end{gathered}$ | Library table | $\begin{gathered} 0 \\ \underset{\sim}{0} \\ \underset{\sim}{1} \end{gathered}$ | 1956 |
| Workshops attended in past six years | $\stackrel{4}{\circ}$ | After seatwork assignment | $$ | 1957 |
| Teacher's possession of textbooks on reading |  | Specific free reading period | $\begin{aligned} & \text { OH } \\ & \underset{\sim}{0} \end{aligned}$ | 1958 |
| Filmstrips used past year |  | Report on favorite books | $\begin{aligned} & \text { H } \\ & \text { H } \end{aligned}$ | 1959 |
| Journals and Period. subscr. to by teacher |  | Conf. on books read | $\xrightarrow{+}$ | 1960 |
| No. Children |  | Specific Recognition given | $\begin{aligned} & \text { U } \\ & \text { む́ } \end{aligned}$ | 1961 |

## CHECKLIST 3

FOR SECURING DATA REGARDING BASAL MATERIALS, DICTIONARIES, AND ENCYCLOPEDIAS


CHECKLIST 4

## BOOKS ON TEACHING READING

1. Anderson \& Dearborn, PSY. OF TEACHING READING
2. Artley, YOUR CHILD LEARNS TO READ
3. Betts, FOUND. OF READ. INST.
4. Blair, DIAGNOSTIC \& REMEDIAL TEACH.
5. Bond \& Bond, TEACH. THE CHILD TO READ
6. Bond \& Tinker, READ. DIFFICULT: DIAGNOSIS AND CORRECTION
7. Bond \& Wagner, TEACH. THE CHILD TO READ
8. Brogan-Fox, HELP. CHILD. READ
9. Broom, Duncan, \& Stueber, EFFECT. READING INSTRUCTION
10. Causey, READING TEACHER'S READER
11. Crow, Crow, \& Murray, TEACH. IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
12. Dawson \& Bamman, FUND. OF BASIC READING INSTRUCTION
13. Dolch, PSY. \& TEACH. OF READING
14. Dolch, TEACH. PRIM. READ.
15. Dolch, MANUAL FOR REMED. READ.
16. Durrell, IMP. REATD. INSTRUCT.
17. Gans, GUID. CHILDREN'S READ. THROUGH EXPERIENCES
18. Gates, READ. VOCAB. FOR PRIM. GRADES
19. Gates, IMP. OF READING
20. Gray \& Reese, TEACH. CHILD. TO READ
21. Gray, ON THEIR OWN IN READ.
22. Gray, IMP. READ. IN AIL CURRIC. AREAS
23. Harris, HOW TO INCREASE READ. ABILITY
24. Harrison, READING READINESS
25. Heilman, TEACHING READING
26. Hester, TEACH. EVERY CHILD TO READ
27. Hildreth, READINESS FOR SCH. BEGINNERS
28. Hildreth, TEACH. READ.
29. Kirk, TEACH. READ. TO SLOWLEARNING CHILD
30. Kottmeyer, TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR REMEDIAL READ.
31. HARRICK, TEACHER'S GUIDE TO CHILDREN'S BOOKS
32. Lamoreauz \& Lee, LEARN. TO READ THROUGH EXPERIENCES
33. McKee, TEACH. OF READ. IN THE ELLEM. SCHOOL
34. McKim, GUID. GROWTH IN READ.: IN THE MODERN ELEM, SCHOOL
35. Monroe, GROWING IN READ.
36. Monroe, CHILDREN WHO CANNOT READ
37. NSSE, READ. IN THE ELEM. SCH., 48th Yearbook
38. Newton, READ. IN YOUR SCH.
39. Ressell, CHILD. LEARN TO READ
40. Smith \& Dechant, PSY. IN TEACH. READING
41. Staff, University of Chicago, CLINICAL STUDIES IN READING
42. Strang \& Backen, MAKING BETTER READERS
43. Tinker, TEACH. ELEM. READ.
44. Woolf \& Woolf, REMED. READ.
45. Yoakum, BASAL READ. INSTRUCT.

## CHECKLIST 5

JOURNALS AND PERIODICALS (WHICH CONTAIN A VERY LARGE PERCENTAGE OF ARTICLES AND RESEARCH IN THE AREA OF READING)

1. Journal of Educational Research
2. Elementary English
3. Elementary School Journal
4. Education
5. The Reading Teacher
6. Journal of Education
7. Journal of Experimental Education
8. Journal of Educational Psychology
9. Childhood Education
10. Supplementary Educational Monographs (University of Chicago)

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    ${ }^{33}$ Robert L. Docter, "Reading Workbooks: Boon or Busy Work?" Elementary English, XXXIX (March, 1962), pp. 224-228.

[^7]:    $\mathbf{2}_{\text {The }}$ American Association of School Librarians, loc. cit., p. 83.

