

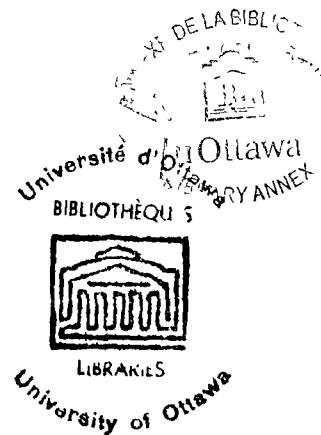
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( PARENTAL PARTICIPATION  
IN A PRIMARY READING PROGRAM )

by Howard S. Van Hoff )

Thesis presented to the Faculty of Arts  
of the University of Ottawa through the  
Institute of Psychology as partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

*Grade conféré  
le 5 juillet 1954  
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Eggertsville, New York, 1954

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### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This thesis was prepared under the guidance of the Director of the Institute of Psychology, Reverend Father Raymond H. Shevenell, O.M.I.

The writer's teacher-colleagues assisted in the design and operation of the program described herein.

Gratitude is here expressed for their interest and cooperation.

## **CURRICULUM STUDIORUM**

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the challenging problems in American education of today is the extent to which parents can cooperate and participate in the reading program of their children. Particularly in the early years of a child's school life is it a problem posed to the primary grade teachers in public, parochial, separate and private schools. The last several years have seen increasing attention being devoted to the issue by professional experts, school administrators and parent groups. There seems to be a growing feeling in educational circles that explanation meetings for parents and parent conferences are productive and valuable methods of enlisting parental support in the reading program. Some suggestions are pointedly directed toward holding these conferences under school auspices and the school aegis.

This attitude is based on the belief that each elementary school has its own community problems and is in the best position to strengthen its hegemony in the field of reading instruction for its pupils by taking the lead in design and operation of any reading program including parents as participants. Enough professional advice was found to seemingly justify the design and

operation of an experimental program for parent inclusion in the primary reading of their children. It is not claimed that the program described herein was the first nor necessarily the best of this type in existence or in operation in any school system. It was assumed however that programs of this type could furnish help to interested parents and result in measurable benefit to some primary pupils attending the school used as the locale of the program.

The detailed evaluation of such a program seems to divide logically into five major categories (a) discussion of the issue (b) designing the experimental program (c) evaluating the data accumulated (d) implications and recommendations from the detailed program analysis and its necessary research (e) summarizing the report and conclusions reached. Each of these sections forms the basis of a separate chapter.

In beginning this report it was first necessary to read widely, then analytically in professional literature to determine past and current attitudes and advice of the primary reading experts. These educational theorists and practitioners expressed thoughts and reported practices which were quite pertinent to the issue. The first portion of this thesis is thus quite properly

a report of the necessary research to present the issue of parental participation in its proper perspective.

The second chapter furnished the scrutiny of a booklet of suggestions available for parents. The principles used in designing the experimental program, a short description of that program and the projected criteria for evaluation are also included.

The third chapter is the body of this thesis on parental participation in a primary reading program. Consideration to educational criteria is given in logical order as the various data are presented and analyzed. The statistical returns are presented in concise tabular form and then subsequently discussed at length.

The implications and recommendations that follow from research of this type follow in Chapter IV. Reference is therein made to those principles deemed pertinent in the field of primary reading.

Lastly, the summary of this thesis and its conclusions are presented so the reader can recall the problem laid out in the introduction.

## CHAPTER I

### PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION TO PRIMARY READING DEVELOPMENT

There is a manifest desire on the part of some parents to teach their children to read as soon as possible. The parental urge to help the primary pupil with his reading is also an increasingly greater concern of both school and home. Some educational authorities, apprehensive of the pressure put upon pupils with resulting tension and conflict, have suggested, and even insisted, that parents leave primary reading entirely to the school. However, this attitude poses a dilemma for both parents and schools. It seemed logical to first examine current reporting and periodical literature of primary reading authorities to find out what was suggested as timely and pertinent advice to parents and teachers about parental aid and participation in primary reading programs.

Parents play a vitally important part in the reading program of any elementary school. They are the ones who have the children and also the responsibility of developing those children. They make the home in which the children live. They encourage or discourage a child's growth and maturity. They are responsible for the child's background and largely for the extent of his vocabulary.

When children first come to school, they bring with them the language background acquired by their experience in their families and in their lives in their neighborhoods and communities. Gates<sup>1</sup> summarizes this importance of the home:

Consider the surge of learning a child shows once he has begun to understand what is said in his hearing. Indeed, once a child has acquired ability to understand words, substantially every moment of experience is accompanied by language.

Reading is, then, the key subject that unlocks the written language and through reading the child gets his experience via the printed or written page. Notable changes have occurred during recent years in the role and relationships of reading in both child and adult life. The relationship of all agents and agencies influencing reading is under careful review by authorities. In this current scrutiny of reading as an activity of broad dimensions, it is only right to consider the role of the first agent of guidance - the parents.

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<sup>1</sup> Gates, Arthur L., Language Activities as Experience, in Teachers College Record; issue of May 1953, Vol.54, No.8, p.423.

The beginning of all instruction, and reading is  
no exception, is to be found in the home as Patri<sup>2</sup> writes:

A great deal of education is gained  
outside the school, mostly in the home.  
There, the children learn their first important  
lessons.

Home may not be as well endowed with  
educational chances as it was in the days of  
our grandparents, but it still offers more  
than is used to best advantage.

Home is a school and mothers and  
fathers are the youngster's first teachers.  
Let's hope they do a good job of it.

Hull<sup>3</sup> also writes in the same vein: "The schools  
are merely the extension of home teaching by parents to  
meet the needs of a more technical social order."

# 1. INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTAL AID

The parent brings his child to school and charges  
the school with certain responsibilities in teaching primary  
reading to the child. It would be well for each -  
parent and school - to review the steps leading to the  
current status of the teaching of primary reading. In this

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<sup>2</sup> Patri, Angelo, Parents are Child's First Teachers; Plenty of Educational Chances at Home, Feature in Buffalo Evening News, issue of Saturday, December 5, 1953, p.16, col.3.

<sup>3</sup> Hull, J.H., The Open Door Policy is not Enough, in School Executive, issue of August 1953, Vol.72, No.12, p.59.

conspectus of review, it is interesting to note what Nila Banton Smith<sup>4</sup> writes as the historical steps or turning points in the teaching of reading. In prefacing her remarks, she comments that the teaching of reading is now about to turn again:

Progress in reading instruction has been marked by a succession of turning points. For a period of years reading methods and materials all over the country are quite similar - so similar, in fact, that an unbiased examiner might arrive at the conclusion that all had been turned out of the same mold, with just a slightly different crimp here and there in the contour of the pan. Then, rather suddenly, a new plan becomes popular, and we teach reading in this manner until another turning point arrives. Thus epoch after epoch of reading instruction passes. Without a doubt, we are on the brink of a turning point at this mid-century mark of the 1900's.

There are many and lasting changes in the American economy that industrial development has brought about. There have been many social changes and educational ideas that have kept pace. The parent of today finds himself with a standard of life formerly undreamed, even so short a time as a generation ago. It is easier to make a living now. There is more leisure time and more of the so-called good things of life. As the machine gradually emancipated man from back-breaking drudgery, he could devote more and

---

<sup>4</sup> Smith, Nila Banton, Historical Turning Points in the Teaching of Reading in NEA Journal, issue of May 1952, Vol.41, No.5, p.280.

more time to his recreation, his culture and to his family.

Smith<sup>5</sup> lists what she terms the "Pageant of American Reading Instruction" :

- Scene One - The Period of Religious Emphasis  
1607-1776
- Scene Two - The Period of Patriotic Emphasis  
1776-1840
- Scene Three- The Period of German Pestalozzian  
Emphasis 1840-1880
- Scene Four - The Period of Cultural Emphasis  
1880-1918
- Scene Five - The Period of Utilitarian Emphasis  
1918-1925
- Scene Six - The Period of Emphasis Upon  
Broadened Objectives 1925-1935
- Scene Seven- The Period of Emphasis Upon  
"Activity" Reading 1935-1942
- Scene Eight- The Period of Re-Emphasis Upon  
Definitely Organized Reading In-  
struction 1942-1946.

The illiterate parent of Pre-Revolutionary Days who wished his child to be able to read, so that the child could more fully realize a religious life, turned the task of teaching the child to read over to someone who could read. The parent had neither the time nor the ability to do this teaching himself. It was a natural enough solution for the times. In the Post-Revolutionary days, the parent was busy carving out a new nation. The task was arduous and still called for all the parents' energy and time.

---

5 Smith, Nila Banton, Op.Cit., p.280-281.

About the time that the Industrial Revolution was definitely changing the destinies of the American Anglo-Saxon nations, the nationalism of Fichte and the methods of Pestalossi reached the zenith of their influence on American education. Since parents had little part in the Prussian state, except to give birth to the children, parents were still outsiders in the American educational ladder at any step.

The period of cultural emphasis that followed found the masses and many parents without the culture that was deemed so desirable by upper strata persons. No educational system thus included them in its planning. Reading was still for the elite but the masses were fast catching up. Compulsory education for all and the mass media of communication like the newspaper, the weekly periodical and even the dime novel, helped swell the number of readers. Parents could now read but the six-day week did not provide much leeway for family reading, attention and help.

After World War I, the parent became interested in industrial and vocational uses of reading; he had more time to be with his family and learned to enjoy his new leisure. All this time he was constantly increasing his standard of living. Both parents had more time to devote

to their children and each generation was increasingly better educated. At first only the lucky ones received an elementary education; then the high school graduate became more and more common. Now there are many college graduates, and even university graduates are to be seen in all walks of life. Industrial wizardry, science, possession of natural resources, democratic governments, free people and geographical position have favored both the United States and Canada so that today, parents and their children in both countries enjoy the highest standard of living in the world today. The foregoing is important to keep in mind when considering the question many parents now ask of schools.

6

Cleland writes in comment about this question:

How can I help Johnnie with his reading?

That's an old question. Teachers have been asking it and trying to answer it for generations. Parents have been asking it too, and in varying degrees they have been trying to answer it. Occasionally these parents have come to school with their question. For a time - and not so long ago - they were told "Keep hands off Johnnie's reading!" The tone of the voice was ominous in many instances with the result that these parents who came to school with the best of intentions left in a state of confusion.

## 2. PROFESSIONAL REASONS FOR CAUTION

In the article previously quoted appear the words not so long ago in reference to parents' assistance in primary reading. The New York Times<sup>7</sup> carries a warning to parents as recently as February, 1952. The article quotes the Official Bulletin of the New York City Schools:

"Parents are asked not to teach their children to read", the guide declares, "because there are many methods of teaching reading. A child is taught by one method in school and his parents, by introducing another method, may only confuse him."

Parents who teach their children to read in the belief they are helping them with their school work may actually be doing more harm than good."

Of interest is the fact that the Parents' Bulletin<sup>8</sup> of the Board of Education of the City of New York published in June 27, 1952 does not include the "warning" quoted by the New York Times. Instead it contains this advice to parents:

Read to him and with him. Help your child by accepting him as he is. His success begins at home.

. . . . .  
You and your child's teacher are partners in the job of helping your child grow up.

---

<sup>7</sup> ,Harm is Foreseen in Home Teaching, in New York Times, issue of February 3, 1952, Vol. 101, No. 34343, p. 64.

<sup>8</sup> Burke, Regina C.M. How and What Your Child Learns at School, Board of Education, New York City, 1952, p. 23.

The separate bulletins of the New York City system do not make any attempt to tell a parent how to read to and with a child and, at the same time not to teach him to read.

<sup>9</sup>  
Moore categorically said: "A parent should never teach his child how to read because the method may conflict with the one used in his school."

Apparently the point to be noted is the fact that the methods may conflict and cause an emotional upset or block in the child. It is entirely reasonable to assume that any conflict in methods should be avoided since the primary pupil is then subjected to confusion and divided loyalty.

<sup>10</sup>  
Grant advises:

The desire of parents and teachers to cooperate is strong. That much is clear. Whatever failures there may have been in their relationship can be attributed not to a lack of desire for cooperation, but to a lack of knowledge about how to achieve it, and a confusion over the nature of the obstacles and how to overcome them. By far the largest obstacles - and the most formidable ones exist in the emotions of parents and teachers. Once these are understood there are countless practical steps that can be taken to link parents and teachers in unbroken cooperation.

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<sup>9</sup> Moore, Lillian, Teaching Reading Not Parents' Job, News Dispatch in Buffalo Evening News, issue of Nov. 19, 1952, p.24, col.3.

<sup>10</sup> Grant, Eva H., Parents and Teachers as Partners, Chicago, Science Research Associates, 1952, p.5.

Representative of the emotion-laden reaction to the Parent-Keep Hands Off Policy is the letter of  
11  
Bodeen, a Colorado teacher:

. . . . . a teacher  
myself, I should hate to think that par-  
ents without adequate educational back-  
ground, were going to decide on the cur-  
riculum or the teaching methods used in  
our schools. Let the parents remain at  
their jobs and the teachers at theirs. .  
. . . . .

The point emphasized about methods being the concern of the teaching staff is very true but the suggestion that parents and teachers go separate ways in remaining at their separate jobs is perhaps too strongly worded. Using language of this type would certainly not lead to awards in diplomacy nor be productive of full cooperation from parents who might wish to be guided in helping their children.

---

11 Bodeen, D.W., Letter to Editor in Saturday Evening Post, issue of August 18, 1951, Vol.224, No. 7, p.4.

12

Almy finds in her study that parental interest in the child is a powerful factor in his success in school and also that most parents do help their children at home:

Although there are obvious difficulties in home teaching when the real interests of the child are disregarded, one important aspect must not be overlooked. It is of necessity individual and personal and must be contrasted with many beginning reading programs in which children are taught only in groups. Some youngsters may never have as much special help in school as they have at home.

. . . . .  
A significant and positive relationship exists between success in beginning reading and the child's responses to opportunities for reading prior to first grade. Most children before they enter first grade have had some variety of reading instruction at home.

13

Gallen writes sensible advice, worthy of note by teachers as well as parents:

Perhaps we distinguish too much between the parent and the teacher. A comparison of their ultimate objectives shows a striking similarity. Both must teach if the word teach means "show how to do" or make understand.

---

12 Almy, Millie Corinne, Children's Experiences Prior to First Grade and Success in Beginning Reading, Teachers College, Columbia University, Contributions to Education, No. 954, 1949, p.61, 111.

13 Gallen, J.J., A Parent Speaks to the Teacher, in National Catholic Education Association Proceedings, 1949, Vol.46, p.451.

## 3. PARENTAL PARTICIPATION IN READING AS AN ISSUE

<sup>14</sup>  
Russell and Wulfinf list the parental contribution to reading development as one of today's controversial issues in the teaching of reading. They put the issue fairly and squarely before parent and teacher.

The teaching of reading, especially in the beginning stages, is a skilled, technical task which most parents are not equipped to do. Accordingly some school systems and teachers formally or informally ask parents not to try to teach their children to read. They point out that when parents make such attempts they usually succeed only in confusing the child, for they use methods of a generation ago which are not employed in the modern classroom. This negative attitude, although based largely on the facts, is beginning to be replaced in most school systems with more positive approaches. School people are realizing that teachers and parents are partners in contributing to wholesome child development and that anything the school can do to work with an organization such as the P.T.A. or an individual parent will pay tremendous dividends. This positive attitude is reflected in the reading program.

The point they emphasize in having parents restrain from participation is the possibility of conflict in the use of methods. Another emphasis of the same point is noted in Moore's article - p.8.

---

<sup>14</sup> Russell, David and Gretchen Wulfinf, Eight Controversial Issues in the Teaching of Reading, Boston, Ginn, 1952, p.7.

15

Fuller comments about the attitudes of some professional educators towards parents:

As a rule, parents wish only the best of school conditions for their children; determination of what is best, however, is not a matter for parents to decide, but is the responsibility of the regularly constituted school authorities. It's all too easy for parents, particularly when organized into an association, to get the idea that schools are conducted for their special benefit. An organization of this type performs a useful service in acquainting parents with the plans, policies and procedures of their schools. If parents do not like a public school, they can remove their children from that school, and place them where conditions are more to their liking.

. . . . . This example of new Hitlerism is a pronouncement of one of the leading Brahmins of American education, an implementator at the University of Chicago.

Fuller does not identify the author of these thoughts - that determination of what is best for children is the responsibility of regularly constituted school authorities. This denial of parents' rights in educating their children is, therefore, not only an unexpressed thought in the mind of some teachers - it is an openly avowed and advocated policy by some who take the negative side of the controversial issue discussed by Russell and

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15 Fuller, Harry J., The Emperor's New Clothes or Prius Dementat, in the Scientific Monthly issue of January 1951, Vol.72, No.1, p.41.

Wulfinf (p.11). The point to note in Fuller's comment is that the issue goes back to the premise that parents do not have the right to decide about participation in primary reading. No one knows to what extent this attitude is still held by teachers but the following pages will show a different or changing attitude on the part of some primary reading authorities.

<sup>16</sup>  
Keller writes in admonition to over-zealous educators and restates the issue:

To assume that control over a child passes from home to state at school age is dangerous, recent experiences in totalitarian countries show us the pitfalls in such an assumption.

While the great majority of teachers welcome interest and cooperation of parents, some do not. This latter group seem to believe that teaching is so highly specialized a field that only professional educators are competent to make judgments.

On the other hand, the school should not assume that parental rights disappear as soon as a child reaches school age. The ideal that both home and school should strive for is a happy medium; a harmonious working relationship between home and school to advance the child.

The words great majority of teachers welcome interest and cooperation of parents indicate that Keller believes in a positive side of the issue. As he shows in

---

<sup>16</sup> Keller, James M.M., All God's Children, Garden City, Hanover House, 1953, p.45.

his book, schools must not assume that the parent surrenders his rights as soon as a child enters the school. The words "In Loco Parentis" appear in many education writings and laws. Webster<sup>17</sup> defines them as "In the place of a parent". A little thought will show that much for teachers can be deduced from those words. Whatever teachers do, they do for the parent who is not there at the time. The parent gives teachers the right to act for him, in his place. The parent authorizes but does not surrender his rights in so doing.

Smith<sup>18</sup> writes in comment about extent of reading research:

Enough research has been done so far to indicate that reading development is related respectively to: physical growth, to mental development, to emotional maturation, to social adjustment, to experiential background, and to growth in the various strands of linguistic ability. Additional relationships will probably be revealed in the near future and teachers will increasingly discover that their job of teaching reading is concerned with many fundamentals other than those involved in the intellectual process of reading, per se.

It is rather difficult to see how anyone can dissociate the parent from any or most of this reading

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<sup>17</sup> Webster-Merriam, New International Dictionary of the English Language, Second Edition, Springfield, Merriam, 1943, p.1281, Col.2.

<sup>18</sup> Smith, Nila Banton, Op. Cit., p.534.

development. After all, a parent is responsible for physical growth, mental development, emotional maturation, social adjustment and certainly gives his child whatever background he has to offer. As more and more is being revealed by research, one assuredly can look for more knowledge and know-how about the contributions of the other basic fundamentals than those purely a contribution of the teacher and school. How the symbols of the alphabet become recognizable as thoughts in the minds of pupils is still a partial mystery. Teachers, with more and more know-how, are becoming, paradoxically, increasingly aware of this. Parents have as a rule been more willing to admit this in the past.

19

Dolch writes about this:

In the old-time teaching of reading, we must admit that the teachers and parents were solely concerned with what they thought the children needed. The teachers said the children needed word attack, and so they drove relentlessly ahead with an elaborate phonetics program. The parents said the children needed moral lessons, and so they encouraged the making of readers with stories about saving distressed animals, helping old ladies, telling the truth and so on.

The modern approach to the work of the school is, properly, that we must consider the child's purposes.

.....  
Good teaching always includes both.

---

19 Dolch, E.W., Teacher Purposes Vs. Pupil Purposes in Reading, in Elementary School Journal, issue of January 1952, Vol.52, No.5, p.282-285.

There is little doubt that moral lessons abounded in the early days of primary reading. Dolch is right about writing that the needs of the child or his purposes must be considered. His point about good teaching always including both - child's purposes and teachers' and parents' purposes - is very significant. For several of the most recent decades the emphasis in professional primary reading literature was on the pupil's purposes alone. There seems to be growing realization that the parent, too, has certain purposes in primary reading and along with those purposes, a part and participation. Some extremists may come around by this route - the child's purposes are served by taking into account his parent's purposes. Dolch's points will, no doubt, be expressed in various other ways by others of the professional esoteric circle of primary reading experts. It is all to the good.

20

Gray and Iverson also write about the issue:

Of great importance, also is the fact that a carefully planned program of improvement in reading would be very welcome in most communities. The parents would hail it with enthusiasm, would participate eagerly whenever they could and would follow its progress with keen interest.

Here is evidence that there is a disturbed feeling on the part of the professional leaders that the reading program as taught by schools is meeting mounting criticisms from the lay public and especially parents. The fact that Gray notes enthusiasm on the part of the parents if they would be invited to help is a point of notable significance. The criticisms of the lay public have, no doubt, made experts re-assess the whole field and become a little restive as they see the error of assuming the teaching of reading is a job that only the schools and teachers can and should do. The conservative statement of carefully planning a program of reading improvement also points to a need in this direction.

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20 Gray, William S., and William J. Iverson, What Should be the Profession's Attitude Toward Lay Criticism of the Schools? With Special Reference to Reading in Elementary School Journal, issue of September 1952, Vol. 52, No.1, p.38.

21

Potter takes a realistic view of the issue:

There is little doubt that as teachers we are still inclined to underestimate the influence exerted by our pupils' home conditions upon all types of school learning, including reading. Although we have moved far from a concept of teaching as ministration to intellectual needs only, and have accepted the principle that physical, emotional and social development must also be a constant consideration, we are prone to believe that in the few short hours of the week when we have John and Jane in our charge most of their growth takes place - a false assumption, on the face of it. We discount sharply many of the other potent forces that affect pupils, and that perhaps make them what they are, almost in spite of us. In short, we overestimate our own role as the teacher, and we undervalue the other "teachers" - the parents, siblings and friends, the playground, streets, and park, the pond, the fields and woods - that play such a vital part (often the leading part) in child learning.

Reading and Reading Readiness are not brought about by school experience alone. As Potter points out, the experiences that a child brings to the school room from his home and parents are sometimes more important than those that he gets in school. Teachers who admit to this are being realistic about the status quo.

---

21 Potter, Willis W., The Role of the Parent in Relation to Pupils' Reading Progress, in California Journal of Elementary Education, issue of February 1950, Vol.18, No.3, p.135.

22

Falk illustrates this point of the other  
teachers:

A child helping her family to pack the car for a trip opened the small first-aid kit and tried to read the direction sheet. Among the headings in heavy print she found the phrase "Foreign Bodies in the Eye". She had met many foreign students as guests in her home. She knew of bodies - her own, her doll's and her dog's. The meanings which she had for foreign and bodies made no sense when placed "in the eye." This illustrates the problem that a child faces when he finds a word used with a new meaning. The one meaning which is familiar to him increases the difficulty of interpretation for him.

Situations like this abound in today's homes.

Few parents, even well-meaning parents who attempt to heed the admonition of the child's school about not teaching reading or the indifferent parents, would not try to do some teaching in answering questions about these situations. The child, from infancy, is faced by the problem of reading on all sides. Games, packaged food and pictures are in every room of the house. Magazines, comic books, newspapers, advertisements, bill boards, theatre marquees and road signs are also a part of family conversation. If there is a question about these, the parent seizes the opportunity at hand and teaches the child. The circumstances

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22 Falk, Ethel Mabie, Methods of Increasing Competence in Understanding the Language and Construing the Meaning of What is Read, Chicago University Press, Supplementary Educational Monographs, No.76, Improving Reading in All Curriculum Areas, 1952, p.84.

and time are right. Any other assumption is neither correct nor realistic, in spite of what schools may request of parents in regard to not teaching any reading.

23

Wiltse reports that parents like to be a part of a reading improvement program:

Parents are supporting the reading improvement program. This is important. Any undertaking that is not understood and approved by the school patrons is not likely to succeed for any great length of time.

. . . . .  
Reading improvement is sure to result when teacher, pupils, and parents recognize the need for it and cooperatively go into action to secure it. Nearly every school will profit from the inauguration of a program of reading improvement.

Some professional educators and teachers take little note of a growing movement that has used parental teaching and participation for years. This is the Cub Scout Movement. The Cub Scouts offer younger boys a great variety of close-to-home activities. Cubs have their own organizations, uniforms and meetings. They have advancement plans based on things that boys like to do in their play hours. Each rank advancement calls for parental approval. Parent is both teacher and examiner.

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23 Wiltse, Earle W., Organizing for a School-Wide Attack on the Problem, Chicago, University Press, Supplementary Educational Monographs, No.76, Improving REading in All Curriculum Areas, 1952, p.15.

Some localities have organized training programs for cub parents. Results are concrete evidence of den activity and are displayed at monthly pack meetings. The success of parent training, interest and organization can be judged from the fact that some localities have membership in cub packs exceeding that of the Boy Scout Organization in Troops and Posts. Illustrative of the parent work is this directive from the handbook <sup>24</sup> :

The Cubmaster meets with the parents to accomplish the following things:

1. Explain the theme for the coming month.
2. Discuss some portion of the Achievement Program, perhaps showing how it could be related to the monthly theme and how parents may help their sons.

The emphasis in the Cubbing Program is on the parent helping and teaching his son. It is a good example of a successful and growing program. More note should be taken of this program by professional educators. The scarcity of its mention and recognition of worth in professional educational circles, conferences and literature does not speak well for a profession supposedly priding itself on an awareness of education in general and in specific branches. It may be that the preponderance of

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<sup>24</sup>  
Notebook 1953-1954, New York, Boy Scouts of America, 1953,  
 p.20. Cub Scout Leaders' Program

females teaching primary and intermediate grades is a contributing factor but certainly good leadership in administration would not so excuse the top echelon of educators interested, so they claim, in all phases of pupils' education. Because most troops and packs are sponsored by churches, church schools are usually not so lacking in information about the cub scout movement as the public schools.

Neterer<sup>25</sup> chides schools for not doing more to help cooperate with parents and to capitalize on parental interest:

In ways too numerous to mention, parents have been showing themselves willing and eager to help; and schools are capitalizing on this willingness to share in the school program. Partnership does not mean assuming responsibilities that rightfully belong to another.

. . . . .  
For a long, long time schools have been groping toward this partnership. There was a patronizing parent-education stage which made parents distrustful of themselves. There was a home-school cooperation stage which placed emphasis on the home cooperating with the school. It said little about the school cooperating with the home. These struggles led to helpful experiences which have been paving the way to partnership.

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25 Neterer, Elizabeth, Parents are Partners in the School Program, in National Elementary School Principal, issue of December 1952, Vol. 32, No. 3, p. 9.

The point about the school taking the lead in bringing about the cooperation is worthy of note. Schools usually have administrative machinery that can be used to set such a program in motion. Parents, as individuals, do not have the necessary organization to do this. As Neterer writes, the experiences of the past have been instructive in showing the way. There have been developmental aspects which bode well for the future cooperation of school and home. If emotion and feeling on both sides are carefully controlled, only good to all will result.

No one would deny that any of this advice is good but the problem is to get it to the people most concerned - the parents. It must be translated into a program of positive action. It must be made available in usable form and used.

26

Monroe reports on this type of inaction or condition of inactivity:

Little research is available on the problems of cooperation.

. . . . .

Most of the studies of cooperation have been of the survey character. There is a strong interest among many parents throughout the country in effective home school cooperation but, on the other hand that there is little research to guide them to effective ways in which this may be brought about. We need to know more about how to do the actual cooperating without undermining the security and respect of each participant.

This respected author knows that the difficulty is to be found in getting the concerned parties together in a meeting of minds so that what is done in the home can help the school in primary reading and what is done in the school can help the parent in the child's reading in the primary grades. One can speculate about the author's opinion of the value of studies of the survey type. It would seem that he does not value them as being very valuable in helping furnish information on how home and school should cooperate. It is a reasonable assumption since opinion enters so largely into parent surveys - perhaps too largely for any real scientific value. Parents are human and it is reasonable to assume, in a survey, the answers to some questions may be phrased in a way they (the parents) think the questions should be answered. Sometimes this may not be in consonance with the facts. For example, most parents will answer survey questions about the breakfasts they give their children in the light of what they think they should feed the children. The breakfasts the children actually eat are sometimes at variance with these reports on surveys.

4. CHALLENGES IN ACCEPTANCE OF PARENTAL PARTICIPATION

27

Bulletin XIII of the New York State Association  
of Elementary School Principals reports:

Responses of principals and other school people who were interviewed, as well as questionnaire replies, indicate an awareness on the part of many school people of the importance of the child's out-of-school living, most especially his home environment and family relationships. These suggest, too, a real interest on the part of principals in finding techniques that will enable home and school to work together more helpfully to supplement, strengthen, and reinforce the educational experiences provided by each other.

. . . . .  
With increasing awareness, however on the part of all people that the child comes to school bringing with him all his past experiences and that these experiences affect very substantially his school learnings (and vice versa!) school people and parents, too, are feeling the need for a cooperative approach to many children's problems that formerly might have been felt to be the sole concern of one or the other.

This encouraging report from workers in the field points to increasing use of practices and methods to bring school and home closer together. The experience that the child brings to the school is recognized as having an important part in his school life. The parents who are responsible for that experience are recognized as partners

and the experience that the child has in school is also recognized as being valuable in the home. A two way flow of experience is suggested by the use of the words vice versa.

28

Edwards writes on the issue in the vein that something other than current methods is needed in the primary reading program:

Of all the areas of learning in the primary school, reading is at once the most troublesome and discussed. Teachers know more about the mechanics of reading than ever before, more about child growth, and a great deal about how learning takes place. In spite of these accomplishments, reading persists in being a less satisfactory growth on the part of many children, than is desired by schools, parents, and even the learners themselves. Everyone who has taught reading will allege that the performance of the lowest 25% of the pupils in a given class leaves much to be desired. Most teachers will agree that (1) reading needs to be improved and (2) that the product is worth the extra effort in terms of better adjusted children. Moreover, the "good" teacher is primarily interested in the child rather than in the mechanics of reading - as important as emphasis on skills may be.

This type of professional analysis is to be found as the subject of workshop, conference, conference-clinic convention, article, theme, etc. of current discussion. It is evidence of a profession that is

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28 Edwards, Phyllis O., Primary Reading Processes in the Child Developmental Program, in American Childhood, issue of September 1953, Vol. 39, No.1, p.19.

considering all aspects of the primary reading program. Worthy of note is the comment that teachers know more about the mechanics of reading than ever before and still are more concerned. Noted, too, is the current dissatisfaction of parents with the primary reading program.

Nila<sup>29</sup> reports on delayed reading instruction for primary pupils:

Some authorities on reading recommend postponing reading until the child is older chronologically and mentally, thus preventing failure in beginning reading. However, our studies as also those of other investigators prove that readiness is not merely a matter of delay in reading instruction but a development of the necessary skills, abilities and attitudes.

. . . . . A well-planned differentiated reading program will not place teacher or pupil under pressure to arrive at a fixed goal; it will prevent frustration and will make both teacher and child experience the thrill of success. Under such a program oriented with respect to characteristics, interests, and needs of the individual, reading will take on a dignity of purpose and vitality of function that will enable it to serve as one of the most valuable means of personality development and of human progress.

The experience background of the child is emphasized by Nila and that is something directly chargeable to home and parents. Parents and experience of child

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29 Nila, Sister Mary, O.S.F., Foundations of a Successful Reading Program, in Education, issue of May 1953, Vol. 73, No. 9, p. 550-554.

prior to entering school are shown to be in right perspective of importance and not chronology (age) or delay in beginning primary reading.

<sup>30</sup>  
Massey writing on Reading Readiness Handicaps defines readiness to read:

Reading readiness may be defined as a state of general fitness or maturity which, when reached, allows a child to learn to read without unusual difficulty. It is the product of mental, physical, emotional and social development.

<sup>31</sup>  
Betts writes on the importance of experience in the development of reading vocabulary:

One - but only one! - of the basic problems in the improvement of reading ability is the development of reading vocabulary. Two major facets of a reading vocabulary are concepts and pronunciation of words. The first facet - concepts - covers the learner's fund of relevant experience which gives meaning to the word form. The second facet - pronunciation - embraces the ability to analyze the word form into pronunciation units.

One may well ask - Who but parents are responsible for the development and relevant experience of a child? Although Massey and Betts use different terms, each is talking about the same contribution that is made only by parents.

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<sup>30</sup> Massey, Roberta O., Reading Readiness Handicaps and Suggested Remedies, in The Grade Teacher, issue of March 1952, Vol.69, No.7, p.29.

<sup>31</sup> Betts, Emmett Albert, Visual Preception in Reading, in Education, issue of May 1953, Vol.73, No.9, p.575.

32

Gates further emphasizes in an analysis of skills this experience prior to entering school:

Reading can no longer be regarded as a number of simple skills which can be taught once and for all purposes in a few formal reading lessons. On the contrary, reading is a complex array of learning procedures which must be developed for and in the process of effective learning in all daily activities in and out of school.

. . . . .  
The way a child learns to listen to the spoken word before he enters school affects his approach to reading.

Parents teach the child to speak and to listen. When Gates comments on the importance to learning of listening properly, he is pointing out that what the parent does is highly important in the subsequent learning - to-read process. The complex processes he refers to are very important in that out-of-school activities are largely controlled by the parents of the primary pupil. It is highly significant and certainly shows a need for parent and teacher to work together so that the complex array of learning procedures can fit together, flow together and work together for the best interests of the child in learning to read in the primary grades.

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32 Gates, Arthur I., What Research Says About Reading, in NEA Journal, issue of October 1953, Vol.42, No.7, p.402.

33

Cleland lists basic principles for understanding on the part of parents and teachers in the reading program:

These are principles that both teachers and parents must understand, for they affect the child's whole language development in school and out.

1. Reading is only a part of the child's total language development.
2. The child who brings rich experiences to the printed page, usually makes a greater progress in reading.
3. Just as a child makes physical growth at his own pace, so will he make language growth at his own pace.
4. A child's growth in reading may be affected by the state of his physical and emotional health.
5. A child is imitative in his reading as he is in other things.
6. A child is more likely to enjoy reading if he has interesting materials to read.

Then both parents and teachers can see their joint role more clearly, each adding their experience and their interpretation to the total picture.

34

Gates proposes a dictum for all teachers that they be teachers of reading. He makes no distinction, including all teachers with a positive and all inclusive statement:

What the pupil does in all areas of learning depends in great measure on how the development of his reading abilities is guided in all his daily activities. Hence the dictum: Every teacher, a teacher of reading.

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33 Cleland, Donald, Op. Cit., p.585.

34 Gates, Arthur I., Op.Cit.,p.402.

<sup>35</sup>  
Nila also heavily underscores this thought that all teachers are teachers of reading: "EVERY TEACHER IN THE SCHOOL IS A TEACHER OF READING."

<sup>36</sup>  
The Road to Better Reading also expresses the belief that all teachers are teachers of reading: We believe that the teaching of reading is a combined responsibility. This belief is sometimes expressed in the term "every teacher is a teacher of reading."

<sup>37</sup>  
Larrick writes advice to parents and teachers, placing both on an equal plane in importance:

It's not easy to find the book which we think will meet the interests of a particular child. In 1952 over 1,000 new trade books were published for children. That's quite a list, but as teachers or parents we had better get acquainted with those books if we are to be on the job. Ideally we should read the books. I find an evening in a good children's library does wonders at bringing me up to date and widening my acquaintance with the new books. But few communities have a good children's library. In that case a good way to see the books is to arrange for a book exhibit for some week during the school year when parents, teachers and children can browse.

Implied in this advice is the thought that parents now have time to browse and also the inclination. Since

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<sup>35</sup> Nila, Sister Mary, O.S.F., Op.Cit., p.554.

<sup>36</sup> Road to Better Reading, Albany, State Education Department, 1953, p.14.

<sup>37</sup> Larrick, Nancy, Making the Most of Children's Interests, in Education, issue of May 1953, Vol.73, No.9, p.530.

the home is where many of the library books will be read, the parent can do much to guide the reading of the primary pupil. Reading the books is suggested as the ultimate in best ways to choose a book for a child. No distinction is made between parent and teacher.

<sup>38</sup>  
Gates reports on home facilities, opportunities and incentives in reading:

The evidence from research is that the best readers tend to be pupils whose homes are well supplied with books, magazines, newspapers, and other reading matter, and homes in which other members of the family habitually read and enjoy it. Contrariwise, poor readers, other things being equal, tend to come from homes in which there is little interest in or opportunity for reading. In many instances, it has been found that one of the best ways to improve reading in school is to encourage it and provide for it in the home.

Parents who choose wisely the books their children read at home are thus commended by Gates. The parents who display no interest in the reading of their children nor give them any encouragement are, by inference, reproved by Gates. The thought that the school take the lead in encouraging reading in the home is so clear that one may well ask the questions that seem to be logical subsequents -

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<sup>38</sup> Gates, Arthur I., Teaching Reading, What Research Says to the Teacher, Washington, Department of Classroom Teachers American Educational Research Association of the NEA, 1953, p.7.

How does the school encourage reading in the home? Who but parents provide for most reading in the home? Are not primary pupils definitely dependent upon their parents for this reading opportunity at home?

The challenge to any school is quite clearly put. If good reading is an aim of the school's program - and what system of education doesn't have that? - then - professional educators must use this evidence of research. As Gates reports, this research shows the best readers are from homes where good reading is habitually encouraged and provision made for it. The school can take little credit if the parents do this independently and good readers are the result. On the other hand to blame parents for having children who are poor readers is not quite fair if no provision is made to help and guide these parents in the reading program their children have in the home. This report of research by Gates definitely points to the need for close cooperation between the school and home in the reading program.

Teachers and administrators are advised in an article appearing in the Times Supplement<sup>39</sup> to be realistic and recognize that parents do help their children:

It was, of course, inevitable, with all this talk about further education, that sooner or later, parents would be going back to school.

. . . . . The suggestion, here, of a palimpsest, the imprint, there of an adult thumb, show only too clearly that John Bull Junior gets father on the job; and if the head must have extra-mural assistants he wants them up-to-date.

The suggestion that the school take the lead in showing the parents the current methods of teaching is a good one. Children do ask their parents to help and the parents do help. The English are practical and realistic people. If the parents are going to help anyway, the school should show them the way the teaching is done, of course claiming it is the best one - the up-to-date one. The article does not elaborate on the method of keeping the extra-mural assistants up-to-date but the point of emphasis on methods being in harmony is again noted and worthy of special comment.

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<sup>39</sup>  
Times Educational Supplement, School for Parents, in  
 issue of May 11, 1951,  
 Vol.1880, No.41st year, p.375.

40

The Franks write on current parental attitudes:

Most parents don't want to be considered "bad" parents and don't try to be "bad" parents. Actually, more parents than ever before are trying harder to be better parents. Almost every popular magazine solicits new readers by adding a parent-and-child column or article.

. . . . . Teachers and parents need friends for reinforcement today, for neither group has found the answer in education or child rearing. But, when both groups are working in the direction of humanity, honesty, well being of children, mistakes made out of generosity, talked over together, will not hurt deeply or for very long.

It is a matter of credit to most parents that they do strive to be good parents. Sometimes schools do not quite credit to the fullest the reservoir of feeling and affection that parents have for children. To channel this effort in the same direction as the school's efforts to help children is a problem of getting parent and school together. It is probable that mistakes in misunderstanding may come about as a result of generosity of feeling on both sides. A frank admission that one needs the other (teacher and parent) to seek the answer in reading is a worthy comment. How to do this is not mentioned but it would seem to

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40 Frank, Mary H., and Lawrence K. Frank, You Can Help Parents to Help Their Children, in NEA Journal, issue of April 1952, Vol.41, No.4, p.203.

be a natural subsequent question.

<sup>41</sup>  
Robison writes advice to parents about being co-workers with teachers:

You and the teacher are partners in the important task of teaching your child to read. An interested, relaxed, helpful parent is a most valuable co-worker. Children learn to read by reading. The more they read the better readers they usually become.

. . . . .

The modern teacher recognizes the parent as her most important co-worker. She believes:

that reading is important  
that learning to read is not easy  
that children learn at different rates  
that children need a variety of skills to learn to read  
that children must be carefully taught and that parents and teachers are partners.

The emphasis of partnership is the exordium and conclusion of this advice to teacher and parent in primary reading. The use of the word relaxed is rather significant. Apparently some sort of challenge is set down for schools to lead in getting this relaxation on the part of parents. Relaxation usually comes about as a result of some outside influences acting upon a person. One might suppose that some sort of program of cooperation between school and home to achieve the co-worker status of parent

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<sup>41</sup> Robison, Eleanor G., A Letter to Parents, Boston, Ginn and Company Contributions in Reading, No.8, 1951, p.3-4.

and teacher is implied by the use of the words relaxed, helpful. The method of doing this is not revealed. Only the end goal, a good one - partners - is mentioned.

<sup>42</sup>  
Antes urges parents to play word games to teach children:

Parents can aid their children in learning to read by playing simple games with them.

. . . . .  
Competitive games such as "hang-  
ing the butcher" and alphabet soup" make  
fun of learning, and if the child should  
lose, teaches him to concede with fairly  
good grace.

The daily newspapers abound in advertisements that mention word games, alphabet games, reading games, etc., for sale in community stores. Parents in most homes get a newspaper of some kind. Rural homes have catalogs of mail order stores. The child and his parents know about the games, have them and play them. The advice to play word games is good because it can be followed. The parent and child usually need little urging. If the school, parent and child can all funnel their efforts in the right direction of choice, these games can do much. The point to note is that the school should let the parent know about what is being done in school reading. Left to

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<sup>42</sup> Antes, Elizabeth, Expert Urges Parents to Play Word Games to Teach Children, News Dispatch in Buffalo Evening News, issue of Wednesday, September 23, 1953, p.12, col.6.

themselves, the parents go ahead and buy games anyway.

It is better, by far, to have a partnership of school and home on game choice since many word games are also good for primary reading in school.

43

Witty writes on the importance of interpreting the reading program to the parents:

It is little comfort to a parent of a retarded reader to learn that the average attainment in our schools has not declined.

. . . . .

To improve our schools attention should be given to the initiation and maintenance of practices based upon our knowledge of the nature and needs of children. These facts should be interpreted clearly to parents. The aim of the school should be to foster the growth and development of each child. It is to be hoped that the coming years will bring a widespread establishment of such developmental programs in our schools. In the field of reading this will require the initiation of remedial reading as a temporary expedient and the widespread adoption of all-school reading instruction. Such programs will not return to former methods of teaching; they will utilize highly efficient practices based on current findings in child psychology.

The emphasis on the clear interpretation to parents of facts about the reading program is noted in regard to expected improvement in the future. When Witty writes that there will be no return to former methods of teaching, he calls attention to the lack of such interpretation to parents in past years. The direction for all

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43 Witty, Paul A., Are Children Learning To Read?, in School and Society, Vol. 75, No. 1951, issue of May 10, 1952, p. 294.

school instruction includes the thought that all teachers teach reading and since parents are teachers too, this must of necessity include them. The methods of interpreting the reading program to parents are not explained by Witty in his article. One may infer that this is the challenge put to the school the pupils attend. He refers to efficient practices based on current findings in child psychology. Child psychology of today certainly emphasizes the home, parent and family as important agencies and agents of guidance to all children. Primary pupils are definitely and pointedly included in this category.

<sup>44</sup>  
Holmes writes in emphasizing the fact that school authorities need to reach parents:

I'm convinced that we must demonstrate, we must be more specific. We must very much point up the information we're trying to give parents and citizens about the public schools. We've got to get down to demonstrations and to take the parent or citizen himself right through a firsthand experience with the methods we use. Only by experiencing firsthand what the public schools are trying to do can the citizen come to know what it's all about. We've got to slough off the glib pronouncement of such phrases as "reading readiness", "maturation" "rate of growth", and so on. We've got to get down to good hard facts, graphically and dramatically demonstrated.

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<sup>44</sup> Holmes, G.H., Dad Learns How Sonny Learns to Read, in Nation's Schools, issue of April 1952, Vol.49, No.4, p.46.

This is more specific advice about the lead schools and teachers must take in working with parents in the reading program. Use of the terms firsthand experience with the methods we use would imply that the author had some sort of plan in mind for the parents to follow along with the school. Graphically and dramatically demonstrated are other problems he points out as being necessary in the parent and citizen information program. His thought about ceasing to talk in professional generalities is very much to the point. Words should serve to clarify the reading program to the parents, not confuse them.

45

Harris writes on parental aid in a remedial reading program:

The central task in remedial reading is to help the learner to change his feelings about reading. A thorough program aimed at this goal has four main aspects. First, the poor reader should be helped to feel that he is liked, appreciated and understood. Secondly, success experiences are needed to supply the basis for overcoming the negative after-effects of frustration and failure. Thirdly, active effort must be stimulated and sustained by use of both intrinsically interesting reading matter and extrinsic or somewhat artificial incentive. Finally, the learner should become involved as fully as possible in the analysis of his reading problem, the planning of his own reading activities, and the evaluation of his results.

.....

It is especially valuable to keep the parents well informed about the child's improvement. For many children the anxiety of parents, shown in nagging, threats, punishment, and ineffectual attempts at tutoring, is one of the major deterrents to progress!

As is pointed out by Harris, the value of keeping the parents informed will result in a changed attitude regarding one of the obstacles - parental anxiety about the reading program. The method of keeping the parents informed is not mentioned but Harris' mention of ineffectual attempts at tutoring leads one to speculate if the parents' attempts could be made effectual by getting information about the school's program and its methods.

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45 Harris, Albert J., Motivating the Poor Reader, in Education, issue of May 1953, Vol.73, No.9, p.567-569.

46

Cleland<sup>46</sup> advises more specifically on parental anxiety:

Because all (parents) of them learned to read, they feel they know something about this area of the school program. Because they know it is an important area, they are anxious to have their children do well in reading. In many cases this anxiety has resulted in pressures and nagging at home. Many of these pressures and much of this anxiety would not exist if parents understood today's reading program and the important role they can play in the teaching of reading.

The thought that is expressed about parents being able to read and feeling they have a part of the school program when their children go to school in the primary grades is a good one. The American Anglo-Saxon nations today have literate parents who want to help their children. There is a vast reservoir of potential help for the child and his teachers in school. Significant, too, is the admission by Cleland that parents have an important role in the teaching of reading. But admission of this is not enough. The method of getting this message across to parents and actually helping them to play this important role is not discussed nor illustrated by specific example. Admission of a truth or statement of a position is no guarantee of performance or translation into positive action for the good of the concerned parties.

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46 Cleland, Donald L., Op. Cit., p. 585.

Sheldon<sup>47</sup> and Carillo report on parents and home factors influencing reading ability in children:

Through the use of data obtained from 521 parent questionnaire blanks, and scores obtained on the Progressive Reading Test by children chosen by their teachers as either good or poor readers in eight school systems, the trends noted below were observed:

1. The following factors seem to be definitely related to the reading ability of the child, showing consistent trends:
  - a) Size of the family. The smaller the family, excepting only children, the greater the percent of good readers.
  - b) Position in the family. Excepting only children, the earlier the ordinal position in the family, the higher the per cent of good readers.
  - c) Number of books in the home. As the home library increases, the per cent of good readers increases.
  - d) Educational level of the parents. Good readers come more often from homes where the parents have reached higher levels of educational attainment.
  - e) Like or dislike of school by the child. Good readers tend to like school; poor readers tend to dislike school.

While one may question the size of family entering the picture of reading ability or position in family influencing good reading, the other factors of number of books in the home and educational level of parents are factors of significance. It is certainly a point for

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<sup>47</sup> Sheldon, W.D. and L. Carillo, Relation of Parents, Home and Certain Developmental Characteristics to Children's Reading Ability, in Elementary School Journal, issue of January 1952, Vol. 52, No. 5, p. 269.

schools to consider when parents are interested in helping their children in primary reading. Little reading can be done at home if no books are to be found there.

48

Witty comments:

Criticisms arise, too, from the fact that modern methods of testing enable us to identify readily our least efficient readers. Since our school population is very much larger than in earlier years, the actual number of such cases is very large. Moreover, a larger proportion of poor readers is found in the secondary schools today because universal education brings increasingly into the high school pupils of a type that formerly withdrew during the elementary-school period. Parents of children having reading difficulty naturally seek reasons for the condition and frequently point to the failure of modern schools to teach children to read effectively.

Finally, another factor should be stressed. Modern methods of teaching reading have improved and materials of instruction are vastly superior. However, these methods and materials are different from those formerly employed. This difference is looked upon as a weakness by many persons who do not understand fully the reasons for the changes.

The importance of interpreting the reading program to the parents is again pointed out. Many children have difficulty with primary reading and unless the parents are a part of the program, they question the methods, program, etc. Not knowing or partly knowing, they are critics

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48 Witty, Paul A., Are Children Learning to Read? in School and Society, issue of May 10, 1952, Vol. 75, No. 1951, p. 289.

of a most unfriendly type. If both parents and teachers have their shoulders to the wheel, the problem assumes a different aspect or is looked upon differently. The maximum effort is put forth when the separate efforts of parents and teachers are channeled in the same direction and at the same time.

<sup>49</sup>  
Gray reports on the lay criticisms of the schools with special reference to reading. Two of them and his comments follow:

What are the criticisms about which lay citizens and educators have become so concerned?

. . . . .  
5. Schools have not been effective in interpreting their programs to the public.

. . . . .  
7. Schools are taking over the functions and responsibilities of the home and other institutions.

. . . . .  
Out of this preliminary survey of lay and professional criticism, certain tentative conclusions emerge. It is clear that neither the public nor the profession is entirely satisfied with the results thus far achieved in teaching reading, as members of the latter group, we should take steps immediately, with co-operation from the public, to clarify the situation.

When a recognized leader in the field of teaching primary reading admits to the soundness of some of the

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<sup>49</sup> Gray, William S. and William J. Iverson, Op. Cit., p.2-15.

criticisms of the program from parents, it is time to take note. His emphasis on the point of interpretation is the most heavily underscored and painfully true for educators. In his article he freely and frankly admits that this is an entirely justifiable criticism. Schools and educators must interpret their reading program to the parents. Again this is set as an aim, a desideratum, but how to do it is not mentioned. There is no discussion of methods anywhere but the point of admission that it needs to be done is certainly made clear.

50

Robison in commenting on changed times writes about current teacher and parent relationship:

Teachers and parents are partners in the work of providing for the most wholesome development of children. Just as a good school requires a good community so the best teaching in any school requires the understanding and help of parents. In former times some teachers regarded parents as unwelcome visitors who often interfered with their work. Today most teachers and other school people realise that parental understanding and co-operation are essential to an adequate educational program.

. . . . .  
If the parent is to assume his share of the joint responsibility, he must understand what the school is trying to do. Accordingly, part of the work of a school staff is to explain their program to the parents of their pupils.

The reference to former years and how teachers regarded parents is rather interesting as is the use of the past tense - (regarded). Robison assumes that the complete reading program is impossible without the help of both partners - teacher and parent and their understanding and co-operation. It is definitely pointed out that part of the duty of the school staff is to interpret the program of primary reading to the parents. The division of staff or assignment of staff in answer to the question "Who is to do this?" is not made clear. However, the

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50 Robison, Eleanor G., Helping Parents Understand the Modern Reading Program, Boston, Ginn and Company, Contributions in Reading, No.3, 1948, p.1.

article leaves no doubt that it should be done and by someone on the teaching staff.

<sup>51</sup>  
Gabbard points up the need for parent participation in primary reading:

For example, the teacher in the second grade explains that children are beginning to feel independent in their reading. Since children's achievement and interest vary greatly in reading, it is not always possible for children to have as much individual attention as they need. She wonders if the parents will help. Each child needs a chance to read to someone every day. It will help the children to gain confidence and prevent them from getting into careless habits if they can read to an adult. The teacher points out that such parent participation will help them to understand their child better; also that it will provide opportunities to become acquainted with their child's friends.

The emphasis on the individual attention that a parent can give to his child is very important and significant. In order to gain the maximum of benefit to the child, the reasons for parent participation and individual attention can be made very clear and meaningful to parent, child and teacher. A child reading to his parent who knows the program of the school is certain to be a better reader. If the channels of communication between parent and teacher

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<sup>51</sup> Gabbard, H.F., Parent Participation in the School Program, in School Life, issue of December 1947, Vol.30, No.3, p.24.

are kept clear in a situation where one knows about the work of the other, much of the former teacher objection to parental participation can either be forestalled completely or mitigated to a much greater degree.

Gray<sup>52</sup> writes about the necessity for carefully planning guidance in reading:

Experiments show conclusively that growth is most rapid when carefully planned guidance is provided. The implications of these findings are clear. They indicate that the road to better reading involves a sequential program which begins in the kindergarten and extends throughout the grades and high school and which is carefully coordinated to insure continuous and steady growth in reading ability throughout these vital years.

There is frank admission from some primary reading authorities, i.e. Gray, that a good reading program involves a planned sequence from kindergarten up and includes parental participation. There is also a growing realization that the problem is not solved by the admission. How to do the communication about primary reading between home and school? That is the question which many parents and teachers can justifiably ask.

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<sup>52</sup> Gray, William S., The Road to Better Reading, in The Road to Better Reading, Albany, State Education Department, 1953, p. 6.

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The Franks point to the communication problem between school and home, illustrating the reference to the question of the best way to get a good sequential reading program:

This job of communication is one of the most important tasks in today's education. Parents and teachers are anxious and afraid of one another only because they do not realize that they play different parts in the child's education and need each other to help in assisting the child to go forward happily.

Some educators are, therefore, admitting in their current educational literature that parents should be a part of the primary reading program of every school. This attitude or position is justified by a belief that the pupil has his initial and deepest experiences in family circumstances and gets his security through the realization, subconsciously or inarticulately anyway, that his parents and other adults are cooperating in their efforts and concern for his welfare. The position of these educators also includes an admission or concession - depending upon the distance of retreat from previous pinnacle positions - that parents have much to give to the teachers and to their own children if they are included

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53 Frank, Mary H., and Lawrence K. Frank, Op.Cit., p.205.

in making and carrying out plans for primary reading programs. These educators claim also, that when teachers and parents are partners, school and home provide learning experiences in primary reading that are unified, continuous and replete with meaningful reading.

However, parents need to become active participants in primary reading school programs if they are to realize the full potentialities of the reading program of their children. It is equally true that teachers cannot instruct their pupils to full efficiency if they do not have a knowledge of the child's home background. There is some reporting of educators that schools which have set up plans to encourage greater parent participation believe that many barriers, obstacles and misunderstandings are overcome when parents and teachers unite in projects which are directed toward a good primary reading program for children. There is little or no reporting on ways to achieve parent-teacher partnership in primary reading programs but the admission that parents and teacher need to do this cooperating is found in much reporting. There is little current thinking that the parent and teacher should not be partners in primary reading. The problem of communication between home and school and the questions - How do schools reach parents? How do parents reach schools?

in primary reading are occurring more frequently and insistently.

In the next chapter a pamphlet written by a noted primary reading authority to help parents, is scrutinized. The design of a parental participation program in primary reading is reported as research uncovered no plan suitable to the needs of the school selected as the locale of the program. It is assumed that there is some benefit to primary pupils when their parents are directly participating in the reading program. After the review of current literature, some primary reading authorities seem to support this assumption. It would also appear to be necessary in this next chapter to report on the isolation of the variable of parental participation and how measurement of this variable was planned.

## CHAPTER II

### DESIGNING A PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

The design, implementation and evaluation of any parental participation program in primary reading is a professional challenge to be met by the professional staff of the individual school. This is necessarily contingent upon the concurrence of the faculty of the school in a belief that parents have a part in the primary reading program of that school. Sound criteria, however, must be used in the analysis of how much benefit there is to pupils. Justification, continuance and expansion of the program rests upon collation, assimilation and interpretation of the data that are collected to test any assumptions made about parental participation. The hypothesis tested in this parental participation aspect of a school's program was: Pupil achievement in primary reading is positively related to the opportunities that parents of these pupils have to participate directly in the school's primary reading program. The number and kinds of primary reading activities in which parents and teachers participate and cooperate under planned school direction influence pupil success in primary reading.

In designing the program described herein, the claim is not advanced that it was the first nor necessarily the best of any of its type in existence or in operation in any school or system. It was claimed, however, that the program could help interested parents and result in measurable benefit to some primary pupils attending the school used as the locale of the program.

There are several ways of planning a program so that parent and teacher can work together in primary reading. The most palpable would be a daily observation, by the parent or parents of the work done in the classroom. The child would be present, the teaching method obvious and the information first hand. While this might be in keeping with the ideal of the shortest communication channel, it is completely impractical. Parents do not have the time, teachers would grow restive and pupils would lose more in other ways than achieve any hypothetical gain in reading success. On the other hand, information of the pamphlet or bulletin type distributed wholesale to parents offered little prospect in the search for objective data of evaluation. One is as problematical of reaching parents as the other is time wasting.

In considering the design of the participation program, a scrutiny of available printed aids to parents

appeared necessary. The paucity of these is as painfully apparent as the worth of those available open to some question. While one may recognize the good intent and worthy purpose for which they were written, the professional staff of the individual school must accept the fact that if a parental participation program in primary reading is to be carried on, the staff must design its own program adapted to local needs and formulated to utilize community resources to the maximum.

#### 1. Scrutiny of Dolch's Booklet

A recently printed pamphlet to help parents in the reading program is the brochure written by Dolch<sup>1</sup> who unfortunately begins it with a negative note:

If your child does not read as well as he should, you naturally are worried. You fear he will be handicapped in school or in his work in the world. Or you fear he will not turn to reading for recreation as he might and thus miss the pleasures of reading in his leisure hours. You wish to help in some way - to do something about it. We who have dealt with many, many children who have had trouble in reading understand your feelings. We sympathize with them, and we would like you to help you to help the child.

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<sup>1</sup> Dolch, Edward W., Helping Your Child With Reading, Garrard Press, Champaign, 1951, p.3.

It is decidedly unwise for any parent or child to feel worried, anxious or insecure. A parental participation program must not make the parents insecure nor assume that they are worried at the beginning of the program. Many parents, as previously reported, want to be better parents and desire help to achieve this aim. However, this does not mean that they start off at low levels of parenthood security. More than a few start off at the level of being good parents and are secure in this knowledge. Any school program must recognize this fact and provide for it. A good school participation program must provide for all levels of parenthood security. Parents of excellent, good and poor readers should find something of benefit and support in the program.

<sup>2</sup>  
Bolch further advises parents:

Parents at times cause very great trouble with a child's reading by comparing him to a brother or sister who has had better success in school.

. . . . .  
So there is a very important caution to all parents: "Do not compare one child with another in his school achievement in reading." It does not help to do so. It is not fair to do so. It may do much harm to do so. Instead, consider each child with his own separate personality and interests and abilities. Try to develop these interests and abilities gradually and healthfully. Do not try to pattern one child after another.

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2 Bolch, Edward W., Op. Cit., p.4.

Two points can be well noted in the above advice by Dolch. It is over the level of interest of the average parent of a primary pupil. Then, there are far too many negatives. Parents should have positive advice and helpful hints expressed in a positive way. It is easily possible that the parent in a participation program may have a child who is a better reader at a comparable age than his older brother or sister. Dolch's advice is partly predicated on the assumption that the older brother or sister is a better reader. His positive advice - Consider each child with his own separate personality and interests and abilities. Try to develop these interests and abilities gradually and healthfully - is apt to be lost as a parent may read Dolch's beginning and assume that it has no application to the parent's problem. A program should be designed with the thought in mind that parents participate because each is interested mainly, even solely, in his own child and thinks in terms of what it does for his individual child.

<sup>3</sup>  
Dolch continues:

We parents must be cautious indeed with our use of pressure. The trouble is that we cannot force a child to want to do anything. We can only force him to act as if he wanted to, but inside the not wanting is still there, and as a result he will not learn. In olden times schools forced children to take books home. In school, they forced the children to sit looking at a book. But the children had the last word. They refused to learn. Now the schools are wiser. They do everything in the world to make reading attractive. Did you ever see books any more attractive than children's reading books? The teachers in good schools make the school a pleasant happy place where children will want to learn. They arouse the interest of children in stories before the reading is taken up. They have activities in which children are interested, and use them to make reading attractive. Children must want to read before they will learn to read. So there is a home application we should never forget. "Make learning to read attractive to a child and never a hard or unpleasant or unhappy task."

Dolch exhorts the parents to make learning to read attractive and fails to recognize the incongruity of having his own pamphlet printed in small unattractive type, having too many lines and too many words to the page. He also ends his advice with the negative aspect - never a hard or unpleasant or unhappy task. The good advice that he gives is also in need of some word of explanation. It is doubtful that much good will be accomplished if the parent is simply handed the pamphlet to read. The inference

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3 Dolch, Edward W., Op. Cit., p.5.

about the use is that it is to be read by the parents - presumably at home. The parent who can adequately interpret the advice of Dolch by reading the pamphlet himself, has enough skill, reading ability and ingenuity to attack the problem without any preliminary reading of the pamphlet. One must not make the mistake of assuming that the printed word alone would suffice. If that were true only textbooks would be needed for adult classes in any subject. The teacher will never be replaced by the textbook. This is not to suggest that pamphlets have no use in a parental participation program. They do have a use but that use is as a part of a plan or program designed by the professional staff of a school.

<sup>4</sup>  
Dolch continues with negative advice: "Never scold a child for not paying attention." One can recognize that thoughts of correction and advice must occasionally use the negative but the use of too many negates the wisdom, advice, counsel, etc. Dolch, as an expert in reading should know that parents, as representative adults, sometimes read only part of a sentence. What they get out of advice is sometimes entirely foreign to the author's thought. Parental participation program should be replete with positive advice to guard against this possibility of confusion,

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4 Dolch, Edward W., Op. Cit., p.6.

if only the first part of a sentence is interpreted or read.

However, Dolch<sup>5</sup> more than redeems himself with one of the simplest and most effective explanations to parents why a conflict in methods of teaching reading must be avoided by school and home. Rightly, he charges the school with responsibility for choice of method and strongly suggests that the parent follow the lead of the school. This is as it should be:

Before we come to the special ways in which father or mother can help the child when he does begin to learn to read, there is another caution to remember. We all know, as parents, that all the grown-ups in the household must agree on how a child is to be treated. They must all approve of the same things and disapprove of the same things. They must agree on the times for meals, for going to bed, and for getting up. They must agree on rules for keeping out of the street, for not teasing pets, and so on. Father and mother and older folks generally must be consistent, as we say. If one grown-up says one thing and another grown-up says the other, what is the child to think? He is all confused. He does not know how to act. He wants to be approved, but one time a thing is approved and at another time he is scolded for it. The result is what is called a feeling of "insecurity", a feeling of fear. This feeling takes away the child's self-confidence and eagerness to do and to learn.

Parent, teacher and administrator can all gain from these thoughts of Dolch. The emphasis of the other

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5 Dolch, Edward W., Op. Cit., p.7.

primary reading authorities on avoidance of conflict in methods is herein well explained on the parental level. Here the advice appears in a brochure planned for parents - not hidden in the esoteric literature of the professional teacher. To be useful in a program the advice must be available to both parent and teacher.

6

Dolch continues:

So it is clear that after the child goes to school, there is only one possible road for parents. They must "back up the school" as much as they can. They must help the teacher in every way. They must keep the child with but one set of rules if possible and not with two sets that disagree. They must do all they can to help the child in the school situation. This does not mean they must agree with everything the teacher does or says. That would be impossible. But they want to help the child, and the only way to do so is to help him to fit in with what the teacher does or says. Sometimes the help can be given by agreeing with the teacher. Sometimes help can best be given by saying nothing about the teacher's plans because we do not understand what is back of them. Sometimes we can help by explaining to the child why the teacher has to make her plans because of the crowd of children in the room. The child is one of the crowd and must help with the work of the whole class. We must help him to fit in and this is usually by supporting the school in its work in every way possible.

The words do not understand what is back of them (teacher's plans) are worthy of special and pertinent

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6 Dolch, Edward W., Op. Cit., p.8.

comment. A program of participation should be designed to give needed explanations of teachers' plans to parents. No school should feel a compulsion to give complete exposition of professional reasons for choice of methods. However, when a sincere desire of parents to participate is discernible, the words of explanation that can accompany the advice of Dolch are doubly useful. Program design must always take into account the caution to parents that Schubert<sup>7</sup> advises about remedial reading teaching. The point about proper methodology is plainly formulated. While most cases of primary reading are not remedial reading problems, his comment about tutoring is quite apt. A program of parental participation should include some attention to the limits of parental aid. The school has a professional staff of experts in primary reading who should judge this question of remedial reading on the basis of what is needed for each individual pupil.

8. Cooperation of the parents is needed for best results. Too often the home negates what the school accomplishes. This is especially true if a parent or sibling interferes with remedial work by tutoring the child. Generally, brothers, sisters, and parents make poor reading teachers. This is because they lose patience easily and know little about proper methodology.

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7 Schubert, Delwyn G., 12 Sensible Steps in Remedial Reading, in Clearing House, issue of October 1953, Vol.28, No.2, p.80-81.

8

Dolch<sup>8</sup> climaxes his advice with suggestions to parents to buy various aids prepared by himself. Along with his explanation of how these aids help in primary reading is a justification of his basic list of words. He begins by reporting on what he has available for reading readiness:

In fact you can get a book which does give this training in readiness according to a scientific and well tried plan. It is the "Readiness for Reading" book listed below in Aids-to-Reading, Set I. This book gives you stories to read to the child, pictures to color, pictures and words to match, and many other exercises, 64 pages in all. Every page has on it full directions so that you know just how to tell the child what to do. This book is being used by teachers in many schools over the country. It is being used in many kindergartens. It has been found to work. If your school does not use it, you can get it and use it yourself. Your child will have a happy time with you. He will improve in his readiness for reading. He will improve in his reading if he has already begun to learn to read. In fact the book contains 52 words, the most common in reading books, and the child may learn these and use them in his school reading. The "Readiness for Reading" workbook is a simple and easy means for helping your child learn to read or to read better.

An examination of this aid shows that it is very useful and that it can do what Dolch claims for it. Open to question, however, is the counsel that Dolch gives to

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<sup>8</sup> Dolch, Edward W., Op. Cit., p.9.

the parent about going ahead on his own to get it if the school does not use it. In a school directed participation program, this useful aid would probably be discussed and available for inspection by parents. However, it might have been wiser counsel if Dolch had suggested to parents, if they are not members of a planned program, that school approval be obtained. Some book stores and department stores in large cities sell Dolch's aids so that this hint is quite to the point since some parents may buy his aids completely independent of school knowledge.

Dolch suggests the purchase of his aids. Since this is a line carried by a commercial printing house, profit to someone is somewhere a motive. However, the reputation of Dolch, the worth of the aids and their modest prices dispel the suspicion of intent to advocate them solely on a profit-making basis. These aids of Dolch can have a place in a school program of parental participation but they in themselves are not a program.

<sup>9</sup>  
Dolch admits this in concluding his pamphlet:

In fact, it is understood that all the help we have advised should be undertaken with the aid and advice of the teacher. Every parent should confer with the teacher and ask for suggestions. We see our children a number of hours each day, and the teacher sees them a number of hours. Both of us are all the time thinking about the child and his problems, and both of us are trying to help him. We should work together. We must agree as much as we can so that the child will not be bewildered or confused but will feel self-confident and secure.

## 2. Principles of Program Design

Schools, like individuals, differ from each other and sometimes pupils and their parents have special needs due to unique or distinguishing characteristics and factors. After a school has determined the existence of a need for parental participation program in primary reading, it can modify its program in suitable fashion to meet such a need. Suitable fashion of modification is dependent upon the approval of the professional staff of the school and recognition that such a program can be provided without discarding the community accepted aspects of elementary education in adjustment for what is purely a local condition.

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<sup>9</sup> Dolch, Edward W., Op. Cit., p. 16.

The development of a program to fit the special or school community need of parental participation (or the wish for it) involves judgments crucial to the success of the undertaking. Careful consideration should be given to the possible effect on the patterns of emphasis put upon certain curriculum aspects by the community. Too pronounced or marked efforts to change cultural patterns may produce feelings of insecurity which may have boomerang or undesirable local effects. The program should be undertaken in such a way that any conflict or tension or straining of family or group values is avoided. Where other agencies have responsibilities or authority in the program area, the school must seek cooperative action and, if necessary, obtain official sanction before proceeding with any plan or design.

It appeared that the school selected and identified herein could work out a program of parental participation which would agree with the preceding stipulations and be in consonance with Frank's<sup>10</sup> four characteristics of a good learning situation for parents, also at the same time offering ways of getting objective data for analysis:

I should like to examine with you what the characteristics of a good learning situation are, and to consider how our present modes of parent education measure up in terms of these characteristics. The properties of a good learning situation may be summed up, in an oversimplified fashion under four headings: involvement, challenge, support and incentive to action.

After careful review of the current periodical literature and suggestions of primary reading authorities, the following principles were formulated to guide the design of a parental participation program and to test the hypothesis. They are presented as part of the quintessence of research reported in the first chapter as well as in this chapter.

1. The aims or goals of the parental participation program should be clearly understood and approved by teachers, parents and pupils.

2. The program should provide something for each parent who wished to have a part in the program.

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<sup>10</sup> Frank, Jerome, How Parents Learn, in Taking Stock in Parent Education, Proceedings of the 1953 Conference of the Child Study Association of America, New York, 1953, p.9.

3. There should be a sufficient variety of activities for each parent to participate in a way that was personally satisfying to him.

4. There should be enough flexibility about the program so that unexpected events, lapses, hiatuses of attendance, and interest would not disrupt the program.

5. Periodic analyses should be included.

6. In setting up a schedule, there should be enough familiar procedure to give the parents a sense of security and support.

7. Economy of time should ever be a desideratum. Time should be used wisely by those responsible for the direction of the program, by the parents and by the pupils.

A Buffalo(New York) school was selected as the locale of the parental participation program designed in accordance with the outlined principles. The program was broken down by months and continued throughout the school year (1952-1953).

|          |   |                                  |
|----------|---|----------------------------------|
| October  | - | Reading by the Whole Word Method |
| November | - | The Local (School) List of Words |
| December | - | Books of the Home and Christmas  |
| January  | - | The Book Company Aids            |
| February | - | The Workbook                     |
| March    | - | How to Recognize Problems        |
| April    | - | Limits of Parental Aid           |
| May      | - | Evaluation of Program            |

Records of meetings, accounts of material used and descriptions of methods employed were noted carefully by the principal of the school. These data were used in the later evaluation of the program.

### 3. Projected Criteria of Evaluation

In determining the criteria to be used in evaluating the parental participation program in primary reading, measurement of what constitutes success for the pupil in primary reading points to serious limitations in today's instruments of measuring success in reading. Evaluation and measurement are necessarily subject to differentiation. Measurement is usually described or thought of as precise quantitative description while evaluation is described or considered in terms of appraisal of some criterion of excellence. Measurement is often a basis or means for evaluation, but evaluation goes further than measurement in employing or encompassing value concepts.

The emphasis in evaluating success in primary reading seems to have changed from measuring accomplishment against fixed standards to measuring growth in broad dimensions - the difference between what a pupil is reading or can read now and what he could read or did read previously. Marks, ratings, scores are possible of use but they have a somewhat different meaning in analysis.

Through all evaluation should run the judgment about the pupil as to whether he is making progress in primary reading in the light of all that can be known about the pupil. This is a wide concept that includes home as well as school.

11

Thorndike stated years ago the aim of good measurement in education. Time has only proved how wise was his advice. It is hoped that measurement of reading success will someday come nearer to being correctly defined in amount than it is at present. Nota Bene: The emphasis Thorndike puts on definition of amount with precision:

Whatever exists at all exists in some amount. To know it thoroughly involves knowing its quantity as well as its quality. Education is concerned with changes in human beings, a change is a difference between two conditions; each of these conditions is known to us only by the products produced by it - things made, words spoken, acts performed and the like. To measure any of these products means to define its amount in some way so that competent persons will know how large it is, better than they would without measurement. To measure a product well means to so define its amount that competent persons will know how large it is, with some precision, and that this knowledge may be conveniently recorded and used.

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11 Thorndike, Edward Lee, The Nature, Purposes and General Methods of Measurements of Educational Products, in the Seventeenth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, 1918, p.16.

In considering measurement as a basis for success in primary reading, it was expected that the results of any data would have value assigned in at least one of three ways: (1) Improvement of instruction, broadly conceived for both parent and teacher (2) Improvement of administration and management of the parent participation plan (3) Improvement of the school's or school system's purposes for and control of education with specific reference to primary reading.

When can it be said that a pupil can read up to first, second and third grade expectation? The teacher in the classroom may answer by pointing to the pupil's accomplishment in being able to read a pre-primer, primer, first, second, and third book of the series of textbooks used as a basal series. This accomplishment is claimed to be out of the period in which memorization can achieve a certain amount of pseudo-reading and into a period in which the pupil can recognize words. Reading is, of course, far more than the mere recognition of words. In the Appendix, p. 187, will be found the accomplishments expected in primary reading by the Mid-Century Committee on Outcomes in Elementary Education. This report was not available at the time the Parent-Participation Plan was begun in September 1952. The pertinent part is

included since it certainly represents the thinking of some educational leaders in the field of elementary education and is useful as representative criteria in judging the effectiveness of the primary reading program of a unit school.

Many of the standardized tests of reading achievement at the primary level were reviewed and analyzed for use in judging the effectiveness of this parental participation plan. The problems of administration and correction of these tests are markedly similar in solution at this age level. The characteristics of this primary age level must be taken into consideration in the construction of tests for it is rather difficult to give a group test in such a way or fashion it so that one can be reasonably certain of the attention and best efforts of all the children. Items and test questions must be found which will adequately test or give some means of indicating that pupils can read without predicating the judgment on ability of a pupil to read directions. Some existing vocabulary tests do not measure scientifically a certain degree of meaning. They attempt to compare, or contrast in a rough manner, a pupil with other pupils of his own age in regard to the general field of vocabulary.

Many ignore, by accident or design, all but the most common meaning of a word. In cases of classification,

very little of that most common meaning is tested. If synonyms are used, a very indefinite amount of knowledge is tested. Words are the symbols with which man communicates with his fellow man and it is important to know what meaning or meanings words have for the different primary pupils. Words, for primary pupils, are the symbols by which they attempt to get the thoughts that writers tried to put into books. Therefore, it is important to use standardized tests which carry out this thought in testing right and adequate meanings of words. A word does not have just one meaning. On the contrary, even for a primary pupil, a word frequently has many meanings and each, with its shadings or nuances, may be known in varying degrees by different pupils or by the same pupil in the various stages of his life of development.

For each pupil, therefore, meanings of words mark growth and it is important for the school to know where any certain child is in that process of growth. This is a necessary postulate for schools in helping pupils efficiently and wisely grow in grasp of word meanings. A test should reveal that a child not merely know something about a certain word, but also how much he knows about it. In that case the school can tell how

much he knows about it. In that case the school can tell how much more he needs to know and possibly point the way to help the pupil develop the added meanings.

The following criteria were the basis for evaluating the choice of the standardized test used in attempting to measure success in primary reading. The point to be stressed again is that there are so many chances and possibilities for error in both the construction, administration and taking of reading achievement tests at the primary level that results obtained from these tests should not be relied upon as the only indication of differences in primary reading ability or varying degrees of success between individual pupils.

1. Test should measure the primary reading in which the staff is interested. There is no point in using any test that cannot be used by the professional staff of the school to improve instruction.

2. Tests should have been standardized on groups comparable to the pupil membership of the school.

3. Norms provided or furnished with the test should be useful for comparison. This means norms should not be representative of nor based on extreme cases.

4. Tests should contain items which seem logically to test the primary reading in its several school aspects.

5. Tests should furnish evidence of rendering reasonably consistent results, this is, be reliable.

6. Test should not be beyond the ability of staff to administer. No point is gained by using a test too awkward to administer.

7. Tests should provide a convenient method of scoring.

8. Tests should cover the primary grades in reading ability or intelligence. Field should not cover too wide a range in grades.

12

The choice of the Gates Primary Reading Test for one measure of reading achievement was made in consideration of above criteria. It is easily available and because of its wide use, both in research and in school systems generally, a good means of comparison with other groups can be had. For the primary grades two tests with three equivalent forms each are available. They are: One test for grade one and first half of grade two and another test for grade two (second half) and grade three. It purports to measure not the same but different phases of primary reading ability - Word Recognition, Sentence Reading, Paragraph Meaning.

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12 Gates, Arthur I., Manual of Directions for the Gates Primary Reading Tests, New York, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1943, 45p.

Its use is subject to the limitation imposed upon it by

<sup>13</sup>  
Gates who constructed it:

All the words in these tests are taken from the Gates Reading Vocabulary for the primary grades. Since these words are those used in speech by young children, are found in primary readers and selected primary literature, are related to interesting and important features of children's lives and satisfy best the other demands of early usage, they are highly suitable for standard test.

Even if the teacher is using materials in which the vocabulary departs considerably from that here offered, she will be interested to know the extent of the mastery of the words basal to children's speech, representative school readers, choice primary literature, etc., her pupils have achieved.

The Gates Primary Test was used to test all primary pupils because it seemed to be the best of the standardized tests currently available. Although it is based on its own word list and its testing of words leaves something to be desired, it is useful as one indication of success in primary reading.

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<sup>13</sup> Gates, Arthur I., Op. Cit., p.4-5.

<sup>14</sup>  
Gray summarizes the need for better tests in reading:

A second illustration relates to the need for better instruments in evaluating the efficiency of instruction in specific areas. The fact was pointed out earlier that most of the records now available concerning the achievement of pupils in reading are wholly inadequate for use in judging the effectiveness of the instruction given. On the one hand, the tests used may provide measures of achievement in only one or two aspects of reading. Indeed, they may not measure adequately the progress of children in those aspects of reading which seem to be of greatest significance in light of the current demands on the reader. This view is expressed with all due respect to the many notable improvements in reading tests during recent years. Furthermore, when the results of teaching reading are evaluated solely in terms of how well pupils read, progress in many other aspects of reading that are of major importance today is not recognized.

Gray's points are well made. Perception of the word with its meaning is capable of limited testing along with the testing of the comprehension of a selection. How does one test personal reaction to what is read or how can one measure the integration of new ideas the pupil gets from reading? These are aspects of great significance in a primary reading program. For these aspects instruments of measuring success are not currently available.

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<sup>14</sup> Gray, William S. and William J. Iverson, What Should be the Profession's Attitude Toward Lay Criticism of the Schools? in Elementary School Journal, issue of September 1952, Vol.52, No.1, p.38.

Another standardized test selected for use was:

15  
Monroe, Gray - Basic Reading Tests. The makers of these tests claim:

The Basic Reading Tests have been designed to measure the extent to which pupils have progressed in the various aspects of reading emphasized by the basic reading program.

There are eight Basic Reading Tests from the pre-reading level of the first grade through the high third grade. One is to be used at or near the time the pupils complete each of the basic reading texts.

. . . . .  
Every Basic Reading Test is divided into seven parts. Each part measures an important skill in reading readiness or reading. Every Basic Reading Test contains (1) a part for measuring understanding of sentences (2) three or more parts for measuring certain comprehension and interpretation skills (3) one or two parts for measuring skill in recognizing word structure. The tests vary in content according to the particular level for which they were designed, and they progress in a natural sequence from the earliest and easiest to the more mature and higher levels of reading.

. . . . .  
The Basic Reading Tests are designed to evaluate a well-balanced reading program for the primary grades which develop in the pupil a broad grasp of reading in all essential aspects.

There were several good reasons for using these standardized tests to furnish other indications of primary reading success. The matching series of books was

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15 Monroe, Marion and William S. Gray, Manual-Basic Reading Tests, New York, Scott, Foresman, 1946, p.1.

used in the school as the basal reading series. These tests were also conveniently administered to all pupils since it is the usual practice in the school at the time primary pupils complete a book in the series. While one may question whether the series or the tests encompass the field of primary reading in all essential aspects, the tests do serve a purpose in the improvement of instruction in the school and their results would appear to have a place in the evaluation of the plan.

The matched pair plan of comparison seemed to offer the best way of measuring the variable and testing the hypothesis. In so far as possible each primary pupil with at least one parent participating in the primary reading program was equated with another pupil on all practical bases except the fact that his parents were participating directly in the school sponsored parental primary reading program.

One of the first steps in the equating of the pairs was the selection of an intelligence test so that the pupils could be first matched on this basis. After consideration of group and individual intelligence tests, Form L of the Revised Stanford Binet Scale was selected. Establishing rapport and holding the attention of the pupils so that one can be rather positive of optimum performance

are so desirable that individual rather than group testing was selected. In addition, the extra information that is so personal and diagnostic in nature made the individual test also useful. Most educators will recognize the validity and reliability of the Revised Stanford Binet Scale - Form L and M. It gives careful instructions in administering and scoring the various tests to insure objectivity and comparable results. The vocabulary scoring standards take twenty-one pages in the manual for the discussion of what is plus or minus for each of forty-five words. This age-grade scale was thus highly useful in obtaining data in the equating stage and in the evaluation. Its drawback of time consumed in administering was a serious problem that required careful administrative scheduling for all concerned. Time before and after school hours was used so that the necessary testing could be done as soon as possible.

In so far as possible, the tester was the same person for all pupils tested by Form L. Thus uniform conditions were established in this respect. Where scores were available from a previous testing by the same test, the test was not repeated but the score accepted if the same person had done the testing in a previous year.

The factors of grade, age, sex, room teacher and intelligence were considered first in matching pairs. It

was hoped to match two pupils so that both would be the same chronological age, same sex, in the same room taught by the same teacher, have the same I.Q. and come from the same type of home but with the only difference being the variable of direct participation by parents.

In attempting to match pairs on the basis of type of home, information on the original invitation was used as a basis to equate parental interest in primary reading. Many of the blanks were returned by parents with an expression of regret at not being able to come to school and giving a reason showing interest similar and comparable to that of parents who could attend. Where matching pairs could not be found by this examination of written returns, a call on the telephone or at the home was made to match the pair by obtaining pertinent information. These interviews and conversations with the parents were productive of much information that provided interesting comparisons. While the interview reports could in no sense of the word be considered as case histories, since no effort was made to trace any of the children's behavior to beginnings beyond the years prior to kindergarten, some of the information obtained was very useful in helping make more meaningful the problem of parental help in primary reading. It was hoped that several of these reports of

how pairs were matched would be of some use in evaluating the parent participation plan. These selected reports will be given in a later chapter.

Teachers' marks were another measure of success that was used to evaluate the plan. For some, (particularly the parents) the marks that teachers give the pupils are an important means of how well the pupil is doing. The mark each pupil got in reading at the end of each term was compared with the mark his matching pupil partner got. It was hoped that, with both pupils in the same room getting the same teaching by the same teacher but differing in the help the pupil was getting at home by having his parents get school direction in assistance, the school marks might be of value and be another indication of pupil achievement.

Each primary room in the school used in the study has its own graded library. Records are kept of what pupils read each book. As one of the basic reasons for teaching primary reading is to enable the pupil to read independently those books in the domain of children's literature, the amount of outside-the-classroom reading a pupil does is of some significance.

There is justifiable concern on the part of many citizens that primary reading lead to an ability in the pupil to meet the greater demands of the present era.

When compared to a generation ago, reading today varies as much in increased amount, greater variety and wider offerings as it does in depth of interpretation, breadth of meaning and emphasis on choice of materials read. If primary pupils are to be successful in their reading, profit from personal reading must be a concern of anyone who attempts to evaluate their success. Certainly no one looking for measures of competent reading or reading success can neglect this important aspect of the reading program.

No test - teacher made or standardized - is available to measure the success of a reading program which aims to help a pupil discover the pleasure of reading so that he not only can read but read voluntarily with the enthusiasm and interest which will transfer into life after school days are over. However, a study of library circulation divided into kinds of books read and an analysis of the individual pupils' cumulative records to note quantity and quality of reading selection is of some import in pointing up relative success of pupils in primary reading.

While the number of books a pupil reads may not stand exact comparison, or contrast, with the number another pupil in the same room reads, there is information

of value to be gleaned from using such a measure. Books may differ in size, number of pages, number of words to the page, pictures, etc. A graded library may, and should, extend over several grades to fill individual needs. The pupil who reads more of these books from the same library than another pupil in the same room has achieved a higher goal in reading than his matching partner. The important significance is on the voluntary nature of this reading since library books are for the most part read at home - outside the classroom.

Reports from the pupils of other books read at home were also kept and this data presented in the study. Every effort was made to insure accuracy and guard against duplication of reports. So far as possible, specific instructions to pupils, teachers and parents were given to establish these hoped-for uniform conditions of reporting and listing of books actually read. Unsupported claims were not reported in any data. The seeking of information in books and independent reading for meaning are an important aspect of reading success at any grade level.

It also appeared that it would be possible to evaluate the success of the program in other aspects by getting the reactions of parents, teachers and some pupils by the use of separate questionnaires. The success of such

a method would be largely contingent upon the establishment of good rapport on the part of teachers, parents and pupils toward this part of the program. Although there are, quite obviously, other constraints and inadequacies in this method of appraisal, it was felt that questionnaires offered enough value to include them in data testing the hypothesis.

Designed by the professional staff of the selected school, the parent participation plan was begun in September 1952 and ended in May 1953. Assumption was made that pupils would benefit in some measurable way and evaluation would support the program in comparison with current aims of primary reading.

Principles used in designing the program were those which seemed to follow logically from research in the field of primary reading. Data were collected throughout the program period. Some eighty pupils enrolled in the primary grades were the subjects of the study. Forty of these had parents who were directly participating. Forty other pupils (matched in pairs with the first forty) had parents who by some indication showed they were interested in home assistance but could not participate directly. Criteria for determining success in primary reading were based partly on the reading scores determined by standardized tests in reading, teachers' marks and on analysis of books read

personally outside of the basal school series. Questionnaires of the survey type were also used to get reactions from teachers, parents and some pupils. In the next chapter how these data were treated and analyzed will be reported.

## CHAPTER III

### TREATMENT AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

The basic reason for giving tests and collecting data was to test the hypothesis that a positive relationship existed between pupils' achievement in primary reading and the opportunities their parents had for direct participation in the school's primary reading program. A program of direct parental participation had been in effect for the school described herein throughout the school year (1952-1953). The professional staff, some parents, and some primary pupils were part of the designed program. Statistical analysis of the benefit to the pupils concerned is presented in this chapter.

The criteria for school success in primary reading were based on a series of scores made on standardized tests, teacher-made tests and teacher reports. An analysis of library books and other books read by the pupils was also made. Parent reaction and pupil reaction were also included in the appraisal of worth by means of retrospective reports and questionnaires. These reports were accepted as written and any assumptions made were based on this accepted reliability at face value. Practical considerations necessitated this conclusion. If one

is to try to find out what experiences parent or pupil has had in any program as it operated in the home, conditions and questions must be made as favorable and objective as possible for correct reporting. The probability is then that these reports will approach the truth which the researcher seeks. Recently reported and currently accepted objectives of primary reading as part of elementary education were the basis for the professional judgment in evaluation. Kearney's list was used, Appendix 1, p.187.

The matched pair plan was employed: data were kept on forty sheets representing the scores of eighty pupils, two to a sheet. The left side carried the scores of the pupil whose parents were participating; the right side, the scores of the matching pupil whose parents were not participating. No attempt was made to select pupils in advance. If at least one parent came at the first opportunity to participate in the school directed plan, the pupil was included and a matching control pupil found. On the following page is a copy of the score sheet used with some types of data to be presented in this chapter.

## MATCHED PAIR SCORE SHEET

|                                                                                                                    |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Grade _____                                                                                                        | Room No. _____ |
| Names of Pupils _____                                                                                              | _____          |
| I.Q. Binet<br>Form L _____                                                                                         | _____          |
| Basic Reading<br>Test Score (Monroe)<br>1 2 1<br>1 , 1 , 2 ,<br>2 1 2<br>2 , 3 , 3<br>Circle Proper<br>items _____ | _____          |
| School Tests                                                                                                       |                |
| January _____                                                                                                      | _____          |
| June _____                                                                                                         | _____          |
| Gates Primary<br>Reading _____                                                                                     | _____          |
| Books Read<br>(School<br>Library) _____                                                                            | _____          |
| Books Read<br>(Reported<br>by Home) _____                                                                          | _____          |

Fig. 1. Score Sheet Used in Matching the Pairs of Pupils

There were forty participating pupils - fifteen in the first grade, fifteen in the second grade and ten in the third grade. Thirty-seven parents (mothers) reported for the first meeting in October. Three of these parents had two pupils apiece in the primary grades.

Apparently there is more interest in a program of this type for parents of first and second grade pupils than there is for parents of higher grades. Although no attempt was made by the school to formulate a plan of participation for grades higher than the third, the decrease in number of parents interested from second to third grade would lead one to note the possibility that the same interest on the part of parents might not be present in grades higher than what is commonly termed primary grades.

As the meetings were held during the day, fathers working during the day could not be present. Therefore it was not surprising to see only mothers present at monthly meetings as reported in Table I on P.92. The extent to which fathers participated in the program is reported later in the chapter along with other types of parent reaction.

Table I. - Parent Attendance at Monthly Meetings.

| Month    | Parents (a) | Others (b) |
|----------|-------------|------------|
| October  | 37          |            |
| November | 30          | 6          |
| December | 33          | 15         |
| January  | 29          | 4          |
| February | 28          | 3          |
| March    | 31          | 4          |
| April    | 32          | 5          |
| May      | 34          | 3          |

(a) Mothers only.

(b) Mothers of Kindergarten Pupils,  
Visitors from other School Districts.

The attendance for the December meeting drew quite a number of visitors for an understandable reason. The topic for discussion was Books for Christmas. Time of year was apparently appropriate for a meeting centering on what books to buy for Christmas, how to choose them and use them, etc. Some parents of kindergarten pupils came to the meetings as did some parents from other school districts. No attempt was made to ascertain reasons or include data obtained from questionnaires furnished these parents. As they were not directly part of the parental participation program in the school's primary grades, it was felt justifiable to rule them as extraneous.

As can be noted in Table I, attendance at meetings held up very well. Enough parents indicated an interest at the opening meeting so that accumulation of data and the prompt establishing of scientific control seemed wise in order to make a later evaluation. Without the parents to participate and keep up their interest in attending participation discussions, there would be little point in setting up a program anywhere. Such interest, attention and attendance are fundamental in any program. A diminishing parental attendance might be interpreted as a parental need filled, or a loss of interest, or a sense of inadequacy, or other reasons. However, it

was felt that this aspect of attendance did not affect the controls used. Other times, other basal series, other locations, different parents and different faculties may have found different or poorer attendance calling for different treatments. Attendance was, therefore, judged adequate enough for conclusions reached and reported later.

#### 1. Equating Participation and Control Groups

Participating pupils were given the Stanford-Binet, Form L as the first step in matching pairs. It was decided to use their mental ages and chronological ages expressed as I.Q.'s. The limited number of pupils available - approximately thirty-five for each of seven primary classrooms - dictated this choice. There was less range, also, in chronological age in the primary grades than in higher grades. Promotion from kindergarten to first grade on the basis of chronological age is an important contributing factor in this close age grouping of primary pupils. The I.Q. was, therefore, used to match pairs on the basis of ability.

On the following page is a table giving the ranges and distribution of the I.Q's of the matched pairs.

Table II. - I.Q.'s<sup>(a)</sup> of Forty  
Matched Pairs of Primary Pupils in 1952.

| I.Q.      | Participating<br>Group <sup>(b)</sup> | Control<br>Group <sup>(c)</sup> |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 96 - 100  | 3                                     |                                 |
| 101 - 105 | 5                                     | 5                               |
| 106 - 110 | 12                                    | 15                              |
| 111 - 115 | 9                                     | 7                               |
| 116 - 120 | 9                                     | 8                               |
| 121 - 125 | 2                                     | 5                               |
| 146 - 150 | 1 <sup>(d)</sup>                      |                                 |

(a) Stanford-Binet, Form L.

(b) Range of I.Q. 96 - 121; Med. 110

(c) Range of I.Q. 101-124; Med. 111

(d) One participating pupil in  
this range. No matching control could be  
found. His data were therefore excluded.

The range of I.Q.'s (96-121) shows that none of the pupils whose parents were participating in the program could be classed as below normal in I.Q. Since Terman uses a range of 90 to 110 for normal I.Q., twenty of the participating pupils could be classed as normal. Those eighteen in the 111-120 range could be classed as above average on the Terman scale. The two who were above 120 were so little above this score that they, too, could be classed in the above average group. The median I.Q. for the participating group was normal on the high side - 110.

Control pupils were selected to match the participating pupils in pairs. The range of their I.Q.'s is slightly higher at both ends. However, the classifications are in accordance with the previous Terman scale used - average and above average. The median of the control group is also near the high point of the normal scale - 111. Modes of both groups are in the 106-110 range - twelve participating pupils and fifteen control pupils at this level. The I.Q. difference in any of the pairs was next analyzed. These are reported in Table III.

Table III. - Range of I.Q. (a)  
Differences in the Forty Matched Pairs  
of Primary Pupils.

| Difference<br>in I.Q. | Number of Pairs            |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
|                       | Participating<br>Group (b) | Control<br>Group (c) |
| 1                     | 2                          | 1                    |
| 2                     | 6                          | 3                    |
| 3                     | 4                          | 13                   |
| 4                     | 1                          | 4                    |
| 5                     |                            | 4                    |
| 6                     |                            | 1                    |
| 7                     |                            | 1                    |

(a) Stanford-Binet, Form L.

(b) I.Q. greater than Match-  
ing Control Pupil.

(c) I.Q. greater than Par-  
ticipating Pupil.

It was concluded that the difference of I.Q. in any matched pair was not significant. This is shown by Table III. Terman allows a twenty point spread in normal I.Q. - 90 to 110. The greatest difference is shown to be only seven and this occurs in only one case. Thirteen participating pupils had I.Q.'s greater than their matching partners but the greatest difference was only four. Twenty-seven control pupils had I.Q.'s greater than the I.Q.'s of their partners. Modes were close - six participating pupils at difference two and thirteen control pupils at difference three.

The case of the boy with the I.Q. of 150 was considered carefully from all angles of finding a pupil partner to match him in I.Q. None could be found and the decision to exclude him from data (reported in Table II and III) was done so with reluctance. It was, however, felt that the parents' responses could be included in data on parental questionnaires. This was done later.

The decision to establish control by the matched pair plan was apparently supported by data reported in Tables II and III. As noted, the median of the participating pupils was at the high limit of the normal I.Q. range. This naturally presented a problem in selecting the best way of equating the groups. Controls of other

types (than the matched pair plan) were studied to see how they would present the nearest approach to the ideal control. One of the factors most important to control was that of the initial ability of the pupils to profit by instruction. The participation pupils apparently had this ability if the I.Q. were accepted as the basis of judgment. Since their median I.Q. was at the high limit of normal intelligence, they might be expected to do better than average on any standardized reading test. If their scores at the end of the experiment were compared with the test mean or median, it would not be known whether the seemingly better score was due to the operation of the parent participation plan or to innate ability. The matched pair plan thus offered the best prospect of obtaining two equivalent groups in initial ability to profit by instruction.

Matched groups were considered but the plan discarded. Using different classes in the same school would have introduced an unnecessary and unwanted variable - the difference in professional teaching that is found among the several teachers in any school. Control established upon matched groups in classes of different schools would have added the further complicating variable, also undesirable, of different administration. A

matched groups plan using different classes in the selected school would also have excluded some data since all primary rooms in the school had some parents in attendance at the first meeting.

Most investigators prefer the equivalent group to the matched group when evaluating the effect of one or more experimentally varied conditions (experimental factors) as compared with the absence of these factors (control conditions). It seemed feasible to set up equivalent groups by pairing subjects, pupil for pupil after the initial consideration and attention to the I.Q.'s involved.

Sex, room, grade and teacher presented no thought provoking problem in matching pairs. It is felt that how these factors were equated need not be reported since the administrative problem is so simple in solution. All factors except parental interest were now seemingly subject to control. How to equate on the basis of parental interest with the variable of direct parental participation was the next analysis reported. The question of equality of parental interest is, of course, impossible to answer with the relative certainty of measurement in the physical sciences. There is available no measuring instrument nor test nor scale in this area. On the other

hand it seemed possible to approach the solution from an examination of the reasons some parents gave for not participating. These are presented in summary form in Table IV.

Table IV. - Reasons Given by Parents of Forty Control Pupils for Inability to Participate Directly in Primary Reading Program.

| Reasons                                   | Parents<br>Reporting<br>N: 40 |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Younger Children at Home                  | 21                            |
| Both Parents Working                      | 5                             |
| Aged Grandparents                         | 3                             |
| Husband's Hours of Employment             | 3                             |
| Widow - Working                           | 2                             |
| Personal Ill Health                       | 2                             |
| Conflict of Time with<br>Other Activities | 2                             |
| Distance to Come                          | 1                             |
| Dislike of Formal Program                 | 1                             |

It was assumed that these parents of control pupils had an equal and similar interest in the primary reading program but because of their listed reasons did not come to the school for direct participation. Interesting to note is the comparatively large number of control parents in Table IV with younger children at home. While this made available a basis of control for the evaluation of the program, the inability of these parents to participate also presents a challenge to the school to see if some means cannot be worked out in the future so that these parents can attend if they wish to do so.

The number of cases (five) where both parents were working and the number of widows(two) called for a careful (double) check to make sure the parental interest in the pupil's reading at home was high enough to equate with the participating group. These seven instances were cases of only children and it was felt that they could be part of the control plan as siblings were obviously not a drain on the time and interest of the parents.

The two cases of reported personal ill health were not serious enough in nature to prevent the parent from having an interest in the home reading program of the pupil. Conflict of time with other activities and husband's

hours of employment were verified easily. There are many organizations with published times of meetings and area plants have shifts around the clock. These shifts are common knowledge in an industrial area.

The parent who reported the factor of distance to come did live a considerable distance from the school and outside the school district proper. The one parent who expressed an interest but dislike of a formal program explained by mentioning a desire to have the program part of the regular monthly P.T. A. meeting. Only the final inclusion of parents and/of pupils was reported in any data. As any student of research will know, there were pupils who were tested but not selected for control and parents whose interest could not be reported nor determined readily. It is, of course, impossible to estimate ahead of time who would or would not match on the various levels or in the several abilities needed for matching pairs. If one could do this there would be no need for testing, nor survey nor investigation. It was felt there would be little point in reporting on these cases of exclusion from data. Suffice it to only note that much time was spent in testing some one hundred pupils.

It seemed to be necessary to investigate further this purported equating of parental interest. In reporting

on the results of interviews with parents, Almy<sup>1</sup> commented on her questionnaire and also pointed to the need for the kind of research with which this study is concerned:

The high incidence of home teaching which is revealed in all the reports poses several questions. A number of parents indicated that they were afraid to teach the children because they might "conflict with the teacher's methods." Whether children will be confused by teaching at home may depend on the kind of teaching it is. If, as many parents indicate, it is a simple telling of what is asked, then it may not be harmful; on the other hand, too much emphasis on letters may in the early stages make it difficult for the child. How the school can communicate to the parents some understanding of what they can do which will be helpful, and at the same time avoid encouraging them to push the children too fast or too much, needs to be determined.

Almy used eight interviewers in addition to herself in getting the parents of 106 first grade pupils to respond to the items on her questionnaire. Some of her questions seemed to have use in this study for further exploration of parental interest in the primary reading program at home. Neither Almy nor any of her eight interviewers was known to the pupils nor to the parents of the Elmont Schools. How reliable a report parents gave

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<sup>1</sup> Almy, Millie Corinne, Children's Experiences Prior to First Grade and Success in Beginning Reading, Teachers College, Columbia University, Contributions to Education No. 954, 1949, p.87.

to these unknown persons is a matter of professional opinion; perhaps conjecture is the better term. Almy bases her conclusions on the acceptance of these reports at face value. Her report is a published Contributions to Education, No. 954, Columbia University. Her study seemed to add a little to the fringes of knowledge about the primary reading program and indicate where a gap in knowledge lay. It was decided to use some of Almy's questions and augment them with ones of indicated usefulness. The ones used in the final form are in Appendix 2. It should be noted that they are in more objective form than Almy's since their formulation and answers were not the purpose of this study as was the case when Almy made her study. Their sole use in this study was to serve as a means of checking each matched pair to see if there was equal parental interest in the primary reading program in the home.

Some interesting facts can be noted from an analysis of the parental responses to the parental interest questionnaire. These responses are reported in Table V.

Table V. - Reading Experiences of the Forty Matched Pairs Prior to Entering First Grade as Reported by Their Parents.<sup>(a)</sup>

| Experience of Pupil                                                              | Number Reporting "Yes"             |                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
|                                                                                  | Participation Group <sup>(b)</sup> | Control Group <sup>(c)</sup> |
| Child Interested in Words, Letters, Numbers on Home and Community Items          | 36                                 | 40                           |
| Parent <sup>(d)</sup> Attempted to Teach Recognition of Home and Community Items | 31                                 | 32                           |
| Child Asked to be Read to.                                                       | 37                                 | 40                           |
| Person Reading to Child                                                          |                                    |                              |
| Mother Only                                                                      | 20                                 | 18                           |
| Father Only                                                                      | 1                                  | 14                           |
| Both                                                                             | 16                                 | 8                            |
| Other                                                                            | 2                                  | 3                            |
| Child Pretended to Read                                                          | 32                                 | 29                           |
| Parent <sup>(d)</sup> Attempted to Teach Reading                                 | 27                                 | 33                           |
| Parent <sup>(d)</sup> Attempted to Teach Writing                                 | 29                                 | 37                           |
| Child Could Recognize His Name                                                   | 32                                 | 38                           |
| Child Could Recognize Letters of the Alphabet                                    | 34                                 | 35                           |

(a) Thirty-seven Participating Parents; Forty Control Parents.

(b) Questionnaire Distributed in October, 1952.

(c) Questionnaire Distributed in November, 1952.

(d) Includes One or Both Parents.

Pertinent to this study is the statistical support given in Table V to the assumption of group equality of parental interest in the primary reading program in the home. As can be seen by the consistency of positive responses, these parents in both participating and control groups attempted to do on-the-spot teaching as the child noticed the world around him - at an early age - prior to entering school.

Almy's study was centered on replies and responses of 106 parents. Her conclusions, previously reported on p.11 were based on a smaller percentage of positive responses to the items in Table V. To her findings can be added the data of Table V which increases the total data by seventy-seven parental responses. It may be useful for a student of research to know that this additional data is available and was used for a different purpose - to approach as nearly as possible the equality of parental interest in a primary reading program in the home. However, it is felt that this difference of purpose is not a major deterrent to any use of this data.

It is also appropriate to note that eighteen mothers and fourteen fathers in the control group reported they were the only parent to read to the child.

Only eight cases were reported where both parents of the control group read to the pupil. This contrasted with sixteen cases reported where both parents of the participating group read to the pupil and only one father reported as the sole parent to read to the pupil. The paradox was investigated further. Inquiry revealed that the reason was associated with the numbers of young children in the homes of control pupils - in other words the high birth rate of recent years. Mothers did not have the time and assigned the reading to the fathers. Thus it was felt that, without intent to do so, confirming support was found for the data presented in Table IV.

The matched pairs, forty in number, had been equated as nearly as possible in ability, parental interest and other factors. The only exception to equating was the variable of direct parental participation in the primary reading program of the school. The pertinent data of school success, tabulated and arranged into concise tables, are presented in the following subdivision, along with the concurrent comment of analysis.

## 2. Measurement of Success in the School Primary Reading Program

The point emphasized in this part of the report is that primary reading is a field of broad dimensions and that school success in primary reading is only one aspect. Inadequacies of all the types of tests are recognized as also prevalent in today's instruments that purport to measure primary reading ability. No judgment of an individual pupil nor matched pair was based solely on the results of any one test - standardized, diagnostic or teacher made. Range of each group and median of the group were computed to show group trends. Table VI shows how the groups compared in scores made on the Gates Primary Reading Test.

The pupils' scores on the Gates Primary Reading Test were left in raw form so that ranges could be listed in the table as well as means. The raw scores were easily converted into grade scores by using the norms given in the manual. The grade scores are not so evenly divided as are the corresponding test scores. For example, a test score of 29 on the Word Recognition Test gives a grade score of 2.47, a test score of 30 gives a grade score of 2.50 and a test score of 31 gives a grade score of 2.55. It was felt that leaving the scores in raw form gave another way of comparing the groups in a table.

Table VI. - Scores of the Forty Matched Pairs on the Gates Primary Reading Test in May 1953.

|                                 | Participating Group |             | Control Group |             |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
|                                 | Raw Score           | Grade Score | Raw Score     | Grade Score |
| <b>Grade One (a)</b>            |                     |             |               |             |
| Word Recognition                |                     |             |               |             |
| Range                           | 16-27               | 1.95-2.40   | 15-27         | 1.90-2.40   |
| Mean                            | 21                  | 2.20        | 19.5          | 2.15        |
| CR: 1.86                        |                     |             |               |             |
| Sentence Reading                |                     |             |               |             |
| Range                           | 21-28               | 1.90-2.30   | 20-30         | 1.80-2.40   |
| Mean                            | 25.3                | 2.15        | 23.3          | 2.00        |
| CR: 3.92                        |                     |             |               |             |
| Paragraph Reading               |                     |             |               |             |
| Range                           | 14-23               | 2.10-3.22   | 14-20         | 2.10-2.75   |
| Mean                            | 19                  | 2.60        | 16.8          | 2.40        |
| CR: 3.79                        |                     |             |               |             |
| <b>Grades Two and Three (b)</b> |                     |             |               |             |
| Word Recognition                |                     |             |               |             |
| Range                           | 20-42               | 2.90-5.30   | 20-41         | 2.90-5.00   |
| Mean                            | 29.5                | 3.50        | 26.5          | 3.30        |
| CR: 2.39                        |                     |             |               |             |
| Paragraph Reading               |                     |             |               |             |
| Range                           | 17-28               | 3.20-6.40   | 15-28         | 3.00-6.40   |
| Mean                            | 21.5                | 3.90        | 18.9          | 3.50        |
| CR: 4.10                        |                     |             |               |             |

(a) Test for Grade 1 and First Half of Grade 2 given only to fifteen First Grade Pupils in each group.

(b) Test for Grade 2 (Second Half) and Grade 3 given only to twenty-five Second and Third grade pupils in each group.

As the Gates Primary Reading Tests were administered in May 1953, the scores showed that in only the sentence reading test of grade one was any pupil in either group below the grade level in primary reading. There was indication in every test given that the participation group did better than the control group if the mean score - grade or raw - is the basis of comparison. The participation group also did better in range of score. The lowest score of the participation pupils was higher than the lowest score of the control pupils in three of the five tests given and the same in the other two tests. The highest scores also favored the participation group in two tests and were the same in two other tests of the five tests.

The participation pupils did better on the Gates Primary Reading Tests than the control pupils. The differences were small but consistent in their positive direction for every test. It should also be pointed out that the median I.Q. of the control group was slightly higher than the median I.Q. of the participating group. Interesting to note was the trend for participating pupils to do better in the second and third grades as the mean scores - raw and grade - were correspondingly higher in these grades than in the first grade.

The CR's for the three tests of Grade One were 1.86, 3.92 and 3.79 respectively. With fourteen degrees of freedom, 1.86 was significant at the .10 level (1.76) and approached the .05 level (2.14). The test with CR: 3.92 was significant at the .01 level (2.92) as was the test yielding 3.79 for a critical ratio.

The CR's for the two tests of Grades Two and Three were 2.39 and 4.1 respectively. With twenty-four degrees of freedom, 2.39 was significant at the .05 level (2.06), and approached the .02 level (2.53). CR: 4.1 was significant at the .01 level (2.80).

Table VII reports the scores made on the Monroe Basic Reading Tests.

Table VII. - Scores of the Forty Matched Pairs on Monroe Basic Reading Tests. <sup>(a)</sup>

| Book Completed                            | Participating Group    | Control Group |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------|
| <hr/>                                     |                        |               |
| Fun with Dick and Jane <sup>(b)</sup>     |                        |               |
| Range                                     | 38- 50                 | 39- 49        |
| Mean                                      | 46 (43) <sup>(e)</sup> | 44.3(43)      |
| CR: 2.07                                  |                        |               |
| Our New Friends <sup>(b)</sup>            |                        |               |
| Range                                     | 43- 53                 | 39- 52        |
| Mean                                      | 49.3(46)               | 46.2(46)      |
| CR: 4.60                                  |                        |               |
| Friends and Neighbors <sup>(c)</sup>      |                        |               |
| Range                                     | 76- 97                 | 78- 93        |
| Mean                                      | 86.9(80)               | 83.7(80)      |
| CR: 2.17                                  |                        |               |
| More Friends and Neighbors <sup>(c)</sup> |                        |               |
| Range                                     | 85-104                 | 82- 96        |
| Mean                                      | 93.7(86)               | 88.8(86)      |
| CR: 3.74                                  |                        |               |
| Streets and Roads <sup>(d)</sup>          |                        |               |
| Range                                     | 70-109                 | 74-106        |
| Mean                                      | 93.2(91)               | 87.5(91)      |
| CR: 1.38                                  |                        |               |
| More Streets and Roads <sup>(d)</sup>     |                        |               |
| Range                                     | 81-109                 | 76-106        |
| Mean                                      | 98.2(95)               | 90.7(95)      |
| CR: 2:47                                  |                        |               |
| <hr/>                                     |                        |               |

(a) Administered at Completion of Corresponding Book during (1952-1953).

(b) Taken only by first grade pupils.

(c) Taken only by second grade pupils.

(d) Taken only by third grade pupils.

(e) Test medians shown by numbers in parentheses.

The Monroe Basic Reading Tests are essentially diagnostic in nature although the manual gives medians for the groups used in standardization. One of their uses in the school's primary reading program was measurement of pupil growth in the various aspects emphasized in the basic reading book series used in the school's primary reading program. It must be emphasized that no primary reading program should confine itself solely to the basic reading series nor consider success in that series the only criterion of success in primary reading.

As Table VII shows, the participation pupils did better than the control pupils if group means of the Monroe Tests are the basis of comparison. The mean of the participation group was also higher than that of the test median in every test given. Means of control groups were higher than test medians in only four cases - the first and second grade tests.

There was again a tendency for participating pupils to do increasingly better in second and third grades than the control pupils if means are compared. Although the differences are still small, the direction is also positive in showing that participating pupils did better on the Monroe Tests as the school year progressed. The first mentioned tests of the primary grades -

Fun With Dick and Jane, Friends and Neighbors, Streets and Roads were given near the middle of the school year. The others - Our New Friends, More Friends and Neighbors and More Streets and Roads were given at the end of the school year. Each book represents roughly a half year or one term for each grade. Mean scores of participating pupils increased more in each new test given. For first grade, mean score increased from forty-six to forty-nine for participating pupils, for second grade - eighty-six to ninety-three, for third grade, ninety-three to ninety-eight. The control pupils' mean scores showed less gain in every case - for first grade, forty-four to forty-six, for second grade, eighty-three to eighty-eight, for third grade, eighty-seven to ninety. This seemed to point to more gain for participating pupils as the participation program progressed during the school year.

The CR's seemed to confirm this trend. Mid-year (approximately) tests yielded CR's of 2.07, 2.17 and 1.38 respectively. CR:2.07 (fourteen degrees of freedom) was almost significant at the .05 level (2.14). CR:2.17 (fourteen degrees of freedom) was significant at the .05 level (2.14). CR:1.38 (nine degrees of freedom) only approached the .10 level of significance.

However, the tests administered near the end of the school year after the program had been operating, yielded CR's significant at least at the .05 level. CR:4.6 and CR:3.76 (fourteen degrees of freedom each) were significant at the .01 level. CR:2.47 (nine degrees of freedom) was significant at the .05 level (2.26).

Even though it may be trite to point out, parents and pupils are very interested in the marks pupils get. The changes the program made in pupils' marks are reported in Table VIII on the following page.

(a) Table VIII. - Changes in Teachers' Marks Given to the Forty Matched Pairs in 1953.

| Difference          | Number of Pupils       |                  |
|---------------------|------------------------|------------------|
|                     | Participating<br>N: 40 | Control<br>N: 40 |
| No Change           | 24                     | 23               |
| One Grade<br>Higher | 11                     |                  |
| One Grade<br>Lower  | 5                      | 17               |

(a) From January to June, 1953.

(b) Scale Used - A Superior;

B - Above Average; C - Average; D - Below Average; F - Failure to Reach Grade Standards.

Teachers' marks have been the subject of much attention, research, discussion, acrimonious comment and spirited debate on the part of educational experts, laymen and, of course, parents. It is not the purpose of this research report to justify nor analyze marks in a scientific way. The same teacher gave marks at the same time for the same period to the two pupils in each pair. All the pairs were not all in the same room nor grade but the two pupils in each pair were in the same room. Inaccuracy in marking or unscientific marks had, theoretically then, the same possibility of impact on each pair. Teachers' marks, reflect in part, how the two pupils in each pair compared on the same teacher-made tests.

It can be noted from Table VIII that slightly more than half the pupils in each group received the same mark in June as in January. However, seventeen control pupils received a lower mark by one grade in June, 1953. No control pupil bettered his grade. Eleven participating pupils bettered their school mark by one grade. Five of these participating pupils received a lower grade in June than in January. No June mark in either group differed from the January mark by more than one grade, either higher or lower.

The five point marking system used was supplemented by periodic personal conferences with parents. There would be little point in reporting in a thesis on this phase of school success if the marking system used were not accepted by experts as good current practice in the field of education. Courter<sup>2</sup> summarizes present practice in reporting to parents pointing to the need for cooperation between home and school:

Most school systems keep detailed and systematic records of achievement, and periodically report the progress of pupils to parents. The type and frequency of reports vary throughout the country; and within a single school system the method of reporting to parents is not usually the same on all grade levels. For example, primary teachers are usually closer in touch with the parents of their pupils than are high school teachers, and reports to parents of primary pupils are usually somewhat less formal than reports to parents of high school pupils.

There is a tendency to use a five point marking system in high schools and a somewhat narrower range of marks in elementary schools, particularly in the primary grades. Reports to parents usually indicate the interest and application of pupils, as well as their achievement. But report cards alone are not sufficient to keep the home and school adequately in touch with each other, and such reports are supplemented by appropriate personal conferences. The closest possible co-operation between home and school, with fullest mutual understanding, is necessary.

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<sup>2</sup> Courter, Claude V., An Educational Platform for the Public Schools, Developed and Indorsed by School Superintendents of Cities in the United States and Canada with population over 200,000, Chicago, Inland Press, 1952, p.11.

Few measuring instruments in teaching or education are completely valid and reliable. Teacher marks may have low validity and reliability. It should not be assumed that any claim was made for true validity or absolute reliability of any of the teacher-made tests of judgments that enter into marks given either participation or control groups. Yet, low validity or reliability do not necessarily negate the value of the information shown which is - on the basis of teacher marks, about twenty-five per cent of the participation pupils (eleven out of forty) improved their school marks from January to June. Low validity and/or partial reliability suggest caution in interpreting and evaluating a particular aspect of program. Therefore, the data and interpretation are circumscribed by the constraints expressed above and any claim for benefit to pupils, by reason of the parental participation program, duly limited to what the facts seem to support.

The school primary reading program has different aspects. The tests available in this area are not directly and objectively comparable with each other. It was felt necessary to present another type of gain made or loss the pupils suffered by a special study of the word analysis skills possessed by each pupil in the

matched pairs. The format of the diagnostic sheet is on the following page. Information about what the pairs did on this aspect is presented in Table IX which follows on the next succeeding page.

Name of Pupil \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

WORD ANALYSIS SKILLS\*ALPHABET

a b c d e f g h i j  
 k l m n o p q r s t  
 u v w x y z

INITIAL CONSONANTS

f b s g h t m w  
 c (k) n d j p r v z y

BLENDS

br cr dr fr gr pr tr  
 bl cl fl gl pl sl sk sc  
 su sm sp st sw tw dw qu  
 str scr spr spl thr

DIAGRAPHS

sh ch th wh ph kn wr gn

PHONOGRAMS

ay ai oy oi ow ou  
 ar ea oa er ir ur  
 aw au ee ew oo

VOWELS

Short a e i o u y  
 Long a e i o u y  
 Applies rules \_\_\_\_\_  
 Does not apply rules \_\_\_\_\_  
 More drill needed \_\_\_\_\_

PREFIXES

com de dis en ex in  
 pre pro re sub un

SUFFIXES

y ly er est ness ful ty  
 less ment ish tion ent  
 ance ous able

SYLLABICATION

Applies rules \_\_\_\_\_  
 Does not apply rules \_\_\_\_\_  
 More drill needed \_\_\_\_\_

\*Parts known are encircled

Comments on Basic Word List Mastery:

Fig. 2 Format of Diagnostic Sheet Used.

Table IX. - Word Analysis Skills of the Forty Matched Pairs as Reported by Their Teachers in June 1953.

| Reading Skill<br>Mastered          | Number of Pupils       |                  |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|
|                                    | Participating<br>Group | Control<br>Group |
| Graded Basic Word List             | 39                     | 28               |
| Alphabet Mastery <sup>(a)</sup>    | 39                     | 30               |
| Initial Consonants <sup>(a)</sup>  | 39                     | 27               |
| Blends <sup>(b)</sup>              | 37                     | 29               |
| Diagraphs <sup>(c)</sup>           | 22                     | 17               |
| Phonograms <sup>(c)</sup>          | 18                     | 14               |
| Vowels <sup>(d)</sup>              |                        |                  |
| Short                              | 10                     | 7                |
| Long                               | 10                     | 7                |
| Rules                              | 9                      | 7                |
| Prefixes <sup>(d)</sup>            | 9                      | 6                |
| Suffixes <sup>(d)</sup>            | 8                      | 6                |
| Syllabication Rules <sup>(d)</sup> | 7                      | 5                |

(a) Reported for first, second, third grades.

(b) Not all blends taught in first grade.

(c) Second and third grades only.

(d) Third grade only.

Success in reading is dependent upon the mastery of a variety of techniques for handling the different types of reading material. The number, although large, is not limitless in cases of skill aspects. Some of the techniques can be analyzed and broken down into foundation skills. Gates comments on this:

Pupils need a variety of good technics in working out the recognition, pronunciation, and meaning of words, and adaptability in using them. Good technics here would involve skill in observing the word as a whole; then, if necessary, quickly searching for major parts, such as component words; then, if necessary, isolating and pronouncing syllables; then, if necessary, isolating easily sounded letters and familiar phonograms, such as th, ain, etc., combined with ability to "blend" either the visual elements or their sound equivalent; and finally a shrewd knack of shifting from one approach to another, for example, from short sounds to long sounds of vowels.<sup>3</sup>

It is interesting to note the support given by Gates to the skills analysis aspect of the school's primary reading program. The report by Gates was not printed until June 1953. Many of the thoughts he expresses as desirable goals in word recognition skill in reading were already part of the school's reading program even before his report was published. It was felt

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3 Gates, Arthur I., Teaching Reading. What Research Says to the Teacher, Washington, Department of Classroom Teachers American Educational Research Association of the NEA, 1953, p.21.

this evaluation of word analysis skills tended to be more objective when pupil achievement was rated by the professional staff using the separation list shown on page 120.

As Table IX shows, more pupils of the participation group mastered the graded basic word list. The list included many words Dolch has in his Basic Sight Cards, Popper Words and Group Word Teaching Games. Participation parents used these and other school made aids for the Basic Word List. The third grade pupils had school instruction in all items in Table IX. Second Grade pupils were taught only the first section of the Basic Word List, Alphabet Mastery, Initial Consonants and only part of Blends. This accounts for the decreasing numbers in each group's column as the skills become more complicated.

Participation pupils did better on all items in Table IX where the basis for the comparison was the teacher's report on the pupils' mastery of items on the separation list of word analysis skills. The difference is small but again positive in directional favor for the participation group.

Relative success in the school primary reading program was, therefore, judged by scores the participation

pupils and the control pupils made in the various school reading aspects tested. Word Recognition, Sentence Reading and Paragraph Reading were compared by the Gates Primary Reading Tests. Understanding Sentences, Making Inferences, Visual-Auditory Perception of Consonants, Recognizing Word Forms, Making Judgments, Recognizing Cause-Effect Relationships, Understanding Implied Meanings, Identifying Similar Meanings, Comprehending Thought Units, Locating Information, Classifying and Generalizing Meanings, Visualizing from Descriptive Details, Using Content to Check Appropriations of Defined Meanings, Generalizing Word Meanings were items scored on the Monroe Basic Reading Tests. Pupils by pairs were compared in both groups. Ability in Following Directions was scored on teacher-made tests. Mastery of the Basic Word List and Word Analysis Skills - Alphabet, Initial Consonants, Blends, Digraphs, Phonograms, Vowels, Prefixes, Suffixes and Syllabication - was compared by a specially developed separation list scored by the several teachers of the various groups. In all these various aspects of the school primary reading program participation pupils tended to perform at least as well as control pupils and in most aspects better performance as a group was noted.

The difference between the groups was the variable of direct parental participation in the school's primary reading program. Comparison of the scores made by both groups showed a positive direction in indicating that participation pupils had better success than the control group in the school's primary reading program.

Reading has aspects that are outside the formal school program. The comparative success of both groups in reading outside the school program is next reported.

### 3. Measurement of Success Outside the School Program.

One of the objectives of primary reading is the development and constant encouragement of those abilities needed in later life to read intelligently and efficiently a great variety of materials - not only the fiction found in magazines and books but also newspapers, catalogs, encyclopedias, advertisements, various handbooks, manuals of directions, etc. It is not enough that the program of primary reading teach pupils just effective reading techniques. The tool must be used in developing an interest in, a taste for and appreciation of the highest types of content. The most obvious illustration is the fostering of a taste for good types of literature.

Parents play their part in this as Witty<sup>4</sup> reports in commenting on his TV survey:

Both parents and teachers are interested in having more appropriate television programs for children, and especially want dramatizations of colorful books that will encourage outside reading.

. . . . . To parents, . . . . I make the following suggestions:

Help children enjoy reading.  
Lead children to evaluate the worth of various programs(TV) and books.

The parental participation program had, of course, the proximate aim of providing suggestions to parents so that they could understand the work of the professional staff in trying to help pupils to become independent, successful readers. Through understanding the school's reading program, they(the parents) could help develop in their children interests and tastes for reading a wide variety of material. It was recognized that those reading interests the pupils had were to be developed and encouragement given them to develop new interests. This aspect of the program was closely allied with the many interesting and attractive books in the graded room libraries. How the participation and control groups compared in using the room libraries is shown in Table X.

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<sup>4</sup> Witty, Paul, TV and Children, in NEA Journal, issue of February 1954, Vol.43, No.2, p.92.

(a) Table X. - School Library  
Books Read by the Forty Matched  
Pairs.

| Number of<br>Books | Participating<br>N: 40 | Control<br>N: 40 |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 11 - 20            |                        | 13               |
| 21 - 30            | 6                      | 14               |
| 31 - 40            | 23                     | 9                |
| 41 - 50            | 4                      | 4                |
| 51 - 60            | 3                      |                  |
| 61 - 70            | 4                      |                  |
|                    | Mean: 36               | 26               |

(a) September 1952 to  
June 1953.

During the primary grades pupils are concerned chiefly with the activities and things found in their own environment. Accordingly, the reading materials provided hope to satisfy such interests and help answer questions that are of vital concern to them. Among the problems that merit emphasis for teachers and parents are the arousal of interest in reading, the development of a thoughtful reading attitude and the stimulation of interest in reading to one's self. To assist systematic and rapid progress, encouragement is given to wide use of the abundance of carefully graded room libraries that relate to primary pupils' problems at this age and activities that are highly charged with interest for these primary pupils.

The analysis of how the groups compared in the reading of room library books was rather arbitrarily reported as being outside the formal school program. These books are, for the most part, read by the pupils at home so that was the basis for the decision. As Table X shows, the participating group read more library books at home than did the control group. The mean number of books read for the participating group was thirty-six, ten more books than the twenty-six books, the mean number for the control group. Although quantity may not

necessarily indicate quality nor scope of comprehension, the careful grading of the room libraries would tend to indicate books of somewhere near the same level of reading gradation.

The other books participation pupils read are reported in Table XI.

Table XI. - Books<sup>(a)</sup> Read at Home  
by Participating Pupils.<sup>(b)</sup>

| Number<br>of<br>Books Read <sup>(c)</sup> | Number<br>of<br>Pupils |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 11 - 20                                   | 4                      |
| 21 - 30                                   | 6                      |
| 31 - 40                                   | 6                      |
| 41 - 50                                   | 7                      |
| 51 - 60                                   | 4                      |
| 61 - 70                                   | 4                      |
| 71 - 80                                   | 3                      |
| 81 - 90                                   | 5                      |
| 91 - 100                                  | 1                      |
| Total                                     | 40                     |

(a) Not included in report given in Table X. Read in period December 1952 - June 1953.

(b) Reported by parents, teachers and pupils. No unsupported nor unverified claim included.

(c) Mean number of books read:46.

As Table XI shows, the participation pupils read a rather satisfactory number of books outside the regular school series and room library books. The high level of interest the participating parents had in the program aided the correct reporting of these books. However, the attempt to keep similar records for the control pupils ended in discarding the data for these pupils as unreliable. The hope of comparing the groups on this basis was, thus, not realized. Control parents were simply unable to give complete enough data on books read in the home. The chief reason was inability of the control parents to recall the titles of books read in the home so that differentiation could be made between school library books and other books read in the home. The immaturity of the primary pupils militated against complete reliance on any reporting they might do. This aspect of the program could, therefore, be reported only in terms of what the participation group did. How to measure accurately the extent, content and comprehension of all the reading done by large numbers of primary pupils in their homes needs to be determined.

The thirty-seven participating parents, as previously indicated, were quite interested in the program. Their reaction to the program was noted in the opinion

questionnaire which is found in Appendix 3. Table XII summarizes the results. Some of the original questions have been condensed and simplified for reporting purposes.

Table XII. - Parental Opinion of Program. (a)

| Question or Item Reported                 | Number Reporting "Yes" (b) |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Both Parents Participating                | 26                         |
| Regular Time Set Aside                    | 34                         |
| Games Played                              | 37                         |
| Basic Word Cards Used or Made             | 32                         |
| Visual Aids Used at Home                  | 33                         |
| Improvement in Pupil's School Marks Noted | 21                         |
| Value for Parent                          | 35                         |
| Use of School Bulletins                   | 35                         |
| Value for Pupil                           | 34                         |
| Increased Reading at Home                 | 35                         |
| Value for Summer Recess                   | 33                         |
| Continuance of Program                    | 35                         |
| Every Year                                | 8                          |
| Every Two Years                           | 25                         |
| Other                                     | 2                          |

(a) Reported in May 1953 by mothers.

(b) Thirty-five parents reporting at final sessions. Some questions include responses of mother with boy of 150 I.Q. His data previously excluded.

Table XII epitomizes the responses of the parents in answering the opinion questionnaire about the program. Attitudes, interests and reactions as reported by parents were generally quite favorable to the participation program.

The twenty-six cases of both parents participating showed that the interest of the attending mothers apparently tended to generate and encourage interest of the fathers in the program. Table V shows sixteen cases of both parents reading to the child prior to first grade and the genesis of the program. There was, then, quite an appreciable gain in the number of cases where both parents became interested in the program.

Nearly all the participating parents, thirty-four out of thirty-seven in the group, set aside a regular time for hearing the child read, word drill, games, discussion of stories, etc. This point was discussed in the regular monthly meeting and the group agreed on this procedure. Pupil reaction in individual discussion tended to confirm this as a practice. Primary pupils are quite frank - this age group has no experience in simulation nor intent to dissemble. Most pupils also volunteered the information that they enjoyed the regularity of this time with their parents.

All participation pupils had an opportunity to play some type of word games with at least one parent. Dolch's games were available on loan from the school. Some parents bought their own. Comments from parents and pupils buttressed Dolch's claims. Although couched in simpler language, they were if anything, more enthusiastic than Dolch<sup>5</sup> who writes:

Experience with thousands of children has shown that games are very useful in the teaching of reading. First, games give motivation to learn. Children like to play games, and no pressure is needed. This motivation is most important with children who have been discouraged with reading and do not go eagerly to books.

. . . . . Second, games give repetition . . . . .

. . . . . Many classroom games are just practice games and not learning games. The children must know the words or the answers before they can play. We need learning games, that is, games which can be successfully played by the child who does not know, but who needs to learn. Learning games are the big need for the children who have been slow to read.

. . . . . With the Dolch games parents and children have fun together. The children learn without scolding or impatience. The games enable parents to help without creating conflicts between the school and home.

This game aspect of the participation program was surprisingly successful. Mechanics of game loan or

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<sup>5</sup> Dolch, Edward W., Dolch Materials, Champaign, Garrard Press, 1953, p.2.

sharing games were simple of solution. There is much that the school and the home can do about the word game aspect of the primary reading program. There is, in prospect, much enthusiasm on the part of parents and pupils, as well as looked for benefit to pupils without an embarrassing number of complicating factors. Additional research is needed to show the best ways of using the game aspect of the reading program.

Most parents also liked the cards of the graded Basic Word Series. Some made their own and others used the cards made available by the school. This concrete way of helping their children learn the basic words appealed to parents. That they made good use of it is shown by the pupils' mastery of this list as shown in Table IX. Practically all pupils in the participation group mastered the basic word list used in the school.

Nearly all the parents used at home and reported they liked the visual aids that the school made available to them. Not all parents used every type which included commercial single frame filmstrips, school-made charts, 2" x 2" transparencies and black and white slides. Selection was on the basis of grade and room reading program. This was a very popular feature as more than a few parents had their own projection equipment.

Twenty-one of the thirty-seven participation parents noted an improvement in their children's marks from the beginning of the program. This was on the basis of period marks and daily work. Teachers' marks in June (Table VIII), showed that eleven of these pupils bettered their marks over the January marks. As the program began in October, the reason for the seeming inconsistency in the two responses became evident. Question or data were not for the same bases nor for the same periods. This points to the need for unvarying limits or careful definitions in all cases of obtaining data on the various aspects.

All parents reported that the program was of definite value to them. Most responses indicated an appreciation of having definite, concrete and approved help. Apparently parents have more time to help pupils than is generally realized or more willingly take time when they feel they have a part in the primary reading program. Indications were that school bulletins on this aspect were more meaningful if they were distributed as part of a meeting where questions could be asked and discussion allowed.

The responses of parents and pupils to the queries about value to the pupils indicated that one of the best

values of the program was the heightened interest aspect. Pupils tended rather generally to do more outside reading because of the interest their parents had in what they were doing. There were other reasons, of course, but all parents reported the interest factor as an important one in improvement in home reading quantity and quality. The fact that this aspect of the reading program was noted so significantly by parents and pupils is an indication of the relative success in this aspect. As reported previously, the manifest unreliability of the data, the scattered returns and sporadic reporting on the outside reading of the control pupils made comparisons in this aspect impossible.

It was quite interesting to study the benefit the parents claimed to have received from the program about suggestions regarding the summer recess. Parents were nearly unanimous in their interest in this phase and saw values in the participation program that the professional writers glossed over or failed to mention. A review of how the present school calendar came into being explains the parents' perspective on this aspect.

The historical background upon which the calendar of the present school program is built is rather difficult to trace. This phase of educational history has been quite

neglected by authors down through the years.

It is known, however, that the length of the school year in the United States and Canada has been largely an outgrowth of the conditions in rural areas. Long school vacations are inherited from the past when children were needed to increase the economic stability of the family by helping with home industries. Lack of labor for carrying on the work of the farms, especially during the late spring, summer, and early fall seasons, made it expedient for the early Americans to have the children stay at home.

A form of an all-year program is found in early American history. Schools were frequently maintained in the summer for younger children and during the winter for older children. This procedure was settled upon to free the older, stronger lads to work during the sowing, cultivating, and harvesting times. In the winter, too, the poor conditions of the roads made it difficult for the smaller children to navigate their way to school. As roads improved, and the industrial revolution introduced labor-saving devices, the two terms were consolidated into one long school term with a single vacation period in the summer.

These summer vacations were arranged at the convenience of the local communities. The salary of the

schoolmaster determined the length of the school year, as did religious and national holidays, work periods, climatic conditions and conditions of the roads. It is important and interesting to note that sound educational theory up to this point in educational history played practically no part whatsoever in determining the length of the school year and the periods for vacations. The present system of a long summer vacation for school children is based upon a tradition as old as the schools.

Meanwhile, parents as reported previously, have had an increasingly higher standard of life as economic conditions improved. They have more time to devote to their children and the summer recess is no exception. Their acceptance of the implications for guidance in the long summer vacation period was rather consistent with the general economic gain for all.

All the parents indicated that the program should be continued as a school policy. About two-thirds of them felt that every two years would be most economical in use of professional staff time. However, all felt that, if possible, program should be given every year.

One could hardly fail to note in the responses of the parents a high degree of interest and appreciation of the participation program in general. The words of

Gates quoted on page eighteen of this report certainly epitomize the abstract. He put his thoughts in the conditional form. There was nothing conditional nor ambiguous to report about the attitude of the participation parents. They set high standards for themselves and maintained them in a dignified manner.

#### 5. Comparison With Educational Criteria.

Many programs of elementary education are no longer static but seem subject to continuous change, because of the influence of two forces. First, there is the constant augmentation to the knowledge of how children grow and learn. Second, there is a continuous change in American society itself - on the local, national and international level. Under the impact of these two forces, elementary education has been tremendously broadened in scope with new emphases. In addition to subject matter mastery, many curricula are now planned to develop in children emotional adjustment, social maturity, desirable personal characteristics, optimum health and physical growth, creativeness and appreciation. Church Schools, naturally, still teach the religion which founded and maintains them.

Increased attention to individual differences in pupils is reflected in curriculum changes in organization

and changes in methods of teaching. Most schools try to place each pupil in the learning situation which is best for him. The development of an educational program built around the needs of the community and the pupils must be a joint affair. Many individuals have a stake in the program and the policies of the elementary school; the professional staff which puts the program into effect, the pupils who experience success or are frustrated in varying degrees as they live and grow under the nurture of the school and its program; the parents who are intimately concerned with the success of their children; and the local community in general, which looks to the school or its school system for the continuation of and the strengthening of American Anglo-Saxon democracy through the development of the social, economic and spiritual competency of its future citizens. The success of the elementary educational enterprise depends upon their understanding and support of its aims and procedures.

One might assume that experts in primary reading would know worthwhile aims and purposes of elementary education. Research had justified, apparently, the postulation of the hypothesis with which this report is concerned. On the other hand further research was needed to report current literature in regard to desirable purposes

of education. Another consideration was the preceding interpretation of what was deemed fundamental to elementary education and pertinent purposes to this study.

6  
Woolatt lists five purposes of elementary education:

1. To aid children to develop their powers and potentialities.
2. To aid children in ways of working satisfactorily as members of groups.
3. To aid children to acquire attitudes, understandings, knowledges and skills needed to work according to the democratic processes which are the foundation of American culture.
4. To aid each child to develop understandings of spiritual values which the child can develop.
5. To aid each child to acquire the basic skills needed to help himself achieve the four major purposes stated above.

The good school:

(1.) Considers basic skills as a means of helping the child to help himself. As an example, he learns to read well and widely to find his answers to questions, to assemble data, to expand his horizons, to increase his appreciation and just for fun.

(2.) Teaches skills systematically and teaches the child to use those skills, not as ends in themselves, but as a means by which to achieve ever-increasing growth, in habits, attitudes, knowledges, and still further skills, all of which contribute to the ever maturing personality.

These seemed to be useful purposes of elementary education in evaluating the parent participation program.

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6 Woolatt, Lorne, The Emerging Design of Education, With Special Reference to Elementary Schools, New York Metropolitan School Study Council, Experimental Edition, 1951, p. 4-6.

The word aid is quite appropriate as Woolatt uses it in each purpose. Implied is the cooperation of the pupil in helping himself. Implied also is the thought that home, school, church and other community agencies share responsibility. Since parents are primary and fundamental agents in the home, they have a part in aiding their children in the elementary aspect of education. It appeared relevant to record and comment on these changing concepts that are characteristic of dynamic purposes.

Emphasis upon the need for and desirability for parental participation in primary reading, however, in no way reduces the importance of the role played by experts within the profession - teachers, staff members, administrators and research workers. The opposite is the case for it is only with the cooperation of informed parents that reading policies can be developed which will allow expertness to function in an efficient manner. Educative specialists and teachers in primary reading are needed for two broad purposes and must serve in two broad areas.

In the first place, the body of information regarding elementary school learning has become so considerable in magnitude that ability and training of a high order are required to make use of it. Each learning

situation of each pupil is different from all others. Discretion, consideration and judgment of a high standard are needed to apply this available knowledge to real situations involving pupils. Much of teaching, therefore, has become somewhat like diagnosing the ailments and maladies of individual patients with the necessary prescribing following the diagnosis. These highly technical judgments are usually rendered by the light of a great store of information.

In the second place, educational know-how has progressed to the point where problems previously not recognized have now become obvious. The problem of the intelligent pupil who cannot read is an example. In short, there has been opened up for the entire teaching profession a multiplicity of problems, solutions to which will strengthen teachers in reaching degrees of humane efficiency not commonly found today. These problems will be solved in part by research technicians and research students in the laboratories and laboratory schools. However, there seems to be a growing conviction among educators that action - research in the classroom has a definite place and contribution to make to research. Experimentation of the joint activity type between the teacher - researcher and the specialist can serve a very useful purpose in adding to

information or finding better ways of using information in the classroom.

<sup>7</sup>  
Kearney summarizes the objectives of research of the type with which this report is concerned:

Competent educators must make sure that educational experimentation is carefully done and that procedures are thoroughly assessed and reassessed before broad action is taken. The important thing for both educators and parents to remember with respect to experimentation in the schools is that carefully planned experiments with children in actual schoolroom situations can lead to improvement of the methods and materials of instruction. Anything less runs the danger of being theoretical and unreal. So educators do have a responsibility to plan instructional experimentation carefully, with full cognizance of the effects it may have on the children involved, and to work with parents and citizens on the purposes, methods, and hoped-for outcomes of the experiments. Furthermore, the interested lay public, with full information about the experimental work and approval of its purposes, has a responsibility to assist school people in every practicable way. The experimental approach, well planned by educators and supported with understanding by the "constituents" of the school, is the path to better and better education for our boys and girls.

The parental participation program was of the action-research type. Involved and intimately concerned were seven classrooms of a unit school. Not only were parents informed of what the school was doing but they

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<sup>7</sup> Kearney, Nolan, Elementary School Objectives, New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 1953, p.24-25.

were actively a part of the experiment. Purposes of experimentation were carefully explained in the hope of using better methods (at home) and worthwhile materials (books, games, visual aids, basic word cards). The parents had a real aim and knew what outcomes were hoped-for. They accepted their responsibility and discharged it with commendable zest. The professional staff of the school, after research, planned the instructional phase of the program and assumed the professional leadership so necessary in guidance. It was felt that the program met Kearney's objectives and goals, at the same time keeping to high ideals of research by reference to the basic and fundamental principles involved in teaching primary reading. The principles were those set forth by some of the most widely known authorities in the field of primary reading. Gray, Gates, Witty, Durrell, Dolch, Smith, Nila, Betts, Monroe are some of those whose latest thoughts were reported in this research. While some may demur at the arbitrary order of name placement, few will deny that any list of important primary reading authorities would have these names.

In this chapter data were presented that were used in testing the hypothesis that primary pupils show improvement in reading ability when their parents are

directly participating in the school's primary reading program. There was evidence that these pupils did better in a standardized reading test of the survey type, better in a standardized test of the diagnostic type, tended to improve their school marks, mastered the word analysis skills better, read more library books and were encouraged to do more outside reading. Critical ratios of eight divisions of the Gates and Monroe Standardized Tests gave a confidence level of at least 3 or more in five tests and were significant at the .05 level in two tests. Only one test of the eight given in May or June had a confidence level lower than the .05 level. Evaluation of the program by the parents involved was also reported. It appeared that the specificity of suggestions for parents was very helpful to all those participating. Critical reference to worthwhile educational criteria is necessary in a report of this type. Evaluation of the program in terms of current purposes of elementary education and objectives of educational experimentation showed that it (the program) was in accordance with some of these value judgments.

Experimental evidence had indicated the worth of programs of this type. It seemed logical to assess the gains in terms of goals suitable for primary pupils, to

analyze the factors necessary for continued benefit to pupils and to present recommendations for improvement and future study. These are presented in the next and last chapter.

## CHAPTER IV

### IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study an attempt has been made to explore the possible relationship between pupil success in primary reading and the opportunities their parents had for direct participation in a school's primary reading program. Setting up the methods of testing the hypothesis involved the making of judgments on how to measure success in primary reading in the school program and outside the school program as well. Primary reading was regarded throughout the experiment as an activity of broad dimensions for the pupils. Rich reading experiences of this type called for careful evaluation of available instruments of measure and any tests or opinionative survey constructed as a result of research. These decisions were based on what seemed to be acceptable practical considerations but each method of measurement carried with it certain constraints and errors of which account had to be taken. In continuing the report it seemed logical to note implications, conditions for future benefit and recommendations for further research.

One of the gains mentioned by parents but not measurable in the experiment was the gain to the parents

themselves. It was so strongly implied in the questionnaire returns and attitudes that some claim for gain in stature as parents is made a result of the program. However, as the hypothesis called for measurement of pupil benefit, the extent of this gain to parents must be reported as one of the imponderables. How to measure objectively the gain in stature as parents is certainly an implication of this research.

There was, of course, much gain to the professional staff in handling the mechanics of the monthly participation program, in considering its purposes and the goals of the primary reading program. Bulletins, visual aids, games, cards, charts, questions by parents and answers to them, were types of gain that are concrete, remain in the school and are available for possible revision or use as constructed. Stimulation and a feeling of accomplishment were also noted by the professional staff as a result of the operation of the program in the primary grades.

The morale of teachers is a very tenuous thing and is easily threatened when they are asked to teach for the attainment of certain goals and objectives if techniques for the measuring of the achievement of those goals are not available. This is particularly true when teachers

are told that certain other goals are no longer of primary importance, yet conventional testing procedures are continued in use to measure or check on how well these former goals are being achieved. The parental participation program involved definite goals of primary reading with some conventional testing procedures. It had violated, apparently, none of the preceding stipulations nor elements in the perspective noted before. The hypothesis had been formulated around limits and concurrent concerns of pupil success in primary reading. The findings of this research had pointed to a new dimension in parent participation. Yet, there were other gains from the program - the gain from the retrospective review for possibilities of future use and the analysis of the factors necessary for continued benefit.

#### 1. Factors Essential For Continued Benefit.

Areas of disagreement among the experts about the elementary school program may have a philosophical or psychological basis. Some of the controversy may be highly charged emotionally. On the other hand the discussion may center on variations and differences in hypotheses or theories in comparatively unemotional areas of thinking. In the latter category, parental participation programs in primary reading can apparently be operated, no matter

which alternative is the dominant one in the school or school system. Illustrative are the following diametric theories of curriculum - the child-centered curriculum with creative activity versus the curriculum as authority, a developmental task curriculum versus the age-grade curriculum, the psychologically organized curriculum versus the logically organized curriculum, the general education curriculum versus the specific subject curriculum, the individualized curriculum versus the standardized curriculum, the experimental curriculum versus the prescribed curriculum. The discussions now going on are largely taking place in the realm of public education in the United States. One senses in these growing arguments over education that much of the future of American culture will be determined by what finally emerges. Some other questions of controversy are whether schooling should be mainly work or fun, whether schooling should train the mind or simply follow interests, whether it should stress fundamental knowledge or social adjustment. One can also note, no matter which emphasis on education wins, the fact that no system of education will long survive if successive generations are increasingly poorer in reading ability. No book burning program would destroy the books containing the heritage of Western culture half

so well as the failure to read them because of the mounting indifference of the general populace or its growing inability to read as the years pass.

The attitude of the school's professional staff toward broad and general reading is a determining factor in the important aspect of staff readiness toward the part parents can play. Reading from books provides a lasting and easily accessible record of human experience and thinking that does not exist in any other form. Its permanence and readiness of access become more and more obvious to the thinking mind as the individual pupil matures into an adult and lasts as a challenge to the very end of life itself. The developments of the mass communication agencies multiply before the eyes and keep Americans in ever closer touch with national and international events. As these developments occurred, some claimed and still do that reading would become relatively less important in the future than in the past. Nothing, however, can supplant reading in the ability it gives to reflect and study the serious social, personal and religious problems of the past, present and future. The reader can adjust his pace to the needs of critical interpretation, reading and re-reading from time to time in order to arrive at mature and justifiable conclusions.

The art of reading consists of getting from the printed words a feeling, sensation or experience as nearly as possible equivalent to the real thing.

In the final analysis, how the professional staff teaches reading is determined by how it views, in the light of what was just expressed about reading, the significant reading needs of pupils and the consideration it gives to their individual differences. The degree of readiness for inclusion of parents in the primary reading program also includes an attitude that goes beyond the walls of the schoolroom. Those who teach reading must make no apology for nor surrender any of reading's historic aspects as a skill and end in itself. True - reading has a changed role but the real change is in the direction of needing greater recognition of its increasing importance. It is a thinking, learning and experience process. Without interpretation, it becomes propaganda. Interpretation is the reader's reaction to what the author says. Without judgment the reader is at the mercy of the author. The author becomes an absolute authority. This is what happens whenever what is in print is accepted as the truth merely because it is in print. One fundamental goal, therefore, becomes the development of readers who are able to react critically in a personal way to what they read, who are able to recognize and challenge

limitations, bias and distortion whenever they are found in the different types of reading. While this report is concerned with primary pupils, the goal of good interpretation and critical judgment is still worthwhile for those grades. Though on simpler basis, it is not one bit less necessary than for any other grade level. The base for reading is built in the primary grades and, before that, in the home.

Fundamental to the accomplishment of this goal is an extensive background of information with which to compare what is read coupled with a questioning attitude that leads the reader beyond a mere literal understanding of the words he reads. As he goes on to react to what he reads he will need some basis for judgment. He finds this in his fundamental values and beliefs. These he gets from home, school and church. Interpretation from reading is of necessity personal and where basic values and beliefs differ widely, interpretations will also differ. It is essential for the professional staff to recognize this.

It is felt that a parental participation program can be operated in spite of divergent viewpoints previously noted. The professional staff should give due consideration to the issues by a realization that if one cannot resolve the difficulties arising in the debate or points at issue, the arguments for both positions, at least,

should be known.

However, the professional staff, as a primary requirement in any parental participation program, must have a readiness to take part. Necessary, too, are a familiarity, on the part of this staff, with the teaching of reading in its broad aspects, skill in the minutiae of expert methodology in the teaching of reading at the primary level, command of methods and aids in interpreting reading programs to parents and mastery of techniques for incorporating parents in the same reading program of their children.

One finds pupil readiness discussed in many books on reading. Teacher and administrator readiness for a parent participation program in primary reading is fully as important. No substantial and completely functional program can be built without it. Administrators must also be prepared, as an outcome of research, to understand why teacher readiness may not exist and also how it may be encouraged if the need for a parental participation program becomes important. Continuing research and critical interpretation of periodical literature are anticipatory stipulations in considering any program involving parents. The issue is, as noted, controversial in professional circles and it is expected to continue so.

In order to increase the possibility of success with a new program in new areas or improve the procedure used in the past, the following are, in a nut-shell, the requirements considered essential for initial and continued benefit to pupils, staff and parents. They are in logical order.

1. The first step is a careful definition of the need for the parental participation program before initiating action. This encompasses attitudes and readiness of staff, parents and pupils. It includes a survey of the professional staff's ability and training. Resources such as the school building and its equipment present important contributions. Community attitudes, as well as agencies having authority, are also momentous.

2. There must be thoughtful planning before setting any procedure into operation. This involves research and use of the expertness of the school's professional staff. They have the methods and the know-how.

3. The program and procedure must be implemented before evaluation. The pacing and timing of the program require changes that are kept in step with the readiness and level of understanding shown by the parents involved. Evaluation should not be begun before the program has had a chance to succeed or to fail. It pays to be conservative in premature praise or condemnation. Parents and staff

must understand that any participation program develops as it goes along. Results are judged correctly only at the conclusion. To doom the participation program to failure by anterior bias is as bad as to hail its inauguration as the long sought panacea for curing poor primary reading of all types. Limits of what it can and cannot do should be made clear to parents and by the administration to the staff if this appears necessary. Such a program can illustrate the dependence of learning upon motivation - on both conscious and unconscious motives. However, it can do little to illustrate the effect of social class, general health, physical maturity on learning. It may, on the other hand, illustrate very well the effect of security upon learning. If the program planning is carefully done, it will also include criteria for evaluating but these will be used only after the program has come to an end.

4. Evaluation necessarily precedes future use or further modification. Methods of program appraisal must be consistent with this thought. No good teacher would recommend that lessons be taught the same way to successive classes. Lesson plans are modified as a result of experience and evaluation. This same type of planning gives a dynamic purpose to any future program. Different pupils, different parents, the benefit of past experience, current reporting and research - all are challenges but also

essential factors for the consideration of how parental participation may benefit the pupils for whom schools are established.

The program described herein seemed to benefit the concerned pupils, their parents and the professional staff. However, certain observations and recommendations seem to follow logically from the experience of research, program design, program implementation and program evaluation. Certain limitations in program, criteria and evaluation are treated in these recommendations which follow.

## 2. Recommendations For Improvement And Future Study.

Before beginning this study, the writer had certain convictions about the primary reading program and the part parents play in it. The American culture is filled, even satiated in some aspects, with reading material of all types. It appears reasonable to assume that this plethora will continue, if not actually increase. It also seems reasonable to assume that in some school districts most children have had a number of reading experiences before they entered first grade. Their parents almost certainly spent a good deal of time with these children telling them "what to say". Michael, say "Mama", Mary say, "Ball" and countless other variants of this familiar parental speech pattern can be found throughout the

United States and Canada in any competently run household where there is a young child who is in the early stages of language development and word grasp. It seemed probable that similar explanation and repetitious emphasis might occur when the parents made a point of teaching or telling what are certain printed or written symbols - words meaningful to adults but mysteries to the young child.

Print and ink surround the small child in the American home. Pictures abound in the world around him as well. Many words he reads refer to something he has touched, tried to swallow, has seen or heard. Rousseau said that a child ought not to read until the age of ten or eleven after he has had an experience of things. In Rousseau's day, verbal education was at a low level of efficiency and object lessons were not existent. Revolutions in teaching theory and practice followed his work and that of others in pointing out errors in extant methods and the remedies for correction. Rousseau's principle remains sound. Some judge him formally wrong about age but intrinsically right about method. It seems correct to assume that at every stage of reading the reader uses the printed matter to reinforce his experience of life, to organize it and to extend it. The three-year old crawling around on the floor with a copy of Life or Look points to the airplane and wants to know what it says. Grown up, he

will have to understand the sign which reads "Danger: Live Wire". Increasing pressure of the world around the young child is reflected in the natural response of the parents to do on-the-spot teaching of the reading symbols. This happens whether the child is in kindergarten or in the primary grades or in higher grades.

The competitive urge and the comparative spirit are powerful influences in the American way of life. Parents like to comment on how young the child was when he walked, how he could talk clearly at fourteen months, how he knew the ABC's before he entered first grade, how he could write his name in kindergarten, etc. It seemed that these literate parents taught as much as they could with the ability they possessed, using such reading methods they remembered from their schooling and the materials at hand. Such zeal and interest appear worthy of better direction and help from the school their children attend. In addition, it did not seem reasonable that this home teaching or interest in the children's reading would cease no matter what exhortation or appeal or request was made by any school to leave the teaching of reading to that school.

Research justified the postulation of the hypothesis which was a compendium of the writer's convictions buttressed by research. The study also substantiated the fact that there is a positive relationship between pupils'

achievement in primary reading and the opportunities their parents have for direct participation in the school's primary reading program. The circumstances under which the relationship had been established and the subsequent retrospective analysis are the basis for the following recommendations.

1. One of the major concerns in the study was the problem of how to measure reading success in the school's program. While some of the goals of primary reading are rather specific and can be measured with relative precision, others require social and personal evaluations that are broad and rather incapable of being defined with the precise amount Thorndike reported as so desirable some thirty-six years ago. How to measure accurately the extent, content and comprehension of all the reading done by large numbers of primary pupils in their homes needs to be determined. Existing tests in primary reading give promise of meeting many of the needs for the measurement of specific outcomes but their procedures for establishing norms would seem to require revision for use in testing the broader aspects of reading. Reading is much more than a test of factual memory or mechanical skill. The difficulty of telling whether a reading test item measures factual memory or something else is a point of concern in test evaluation. One cannot always have confidence that a

primary reading test measures accurately the items it purports to measure unless he knows something about the teaching and learning experiences to which those tested were exposed. Reading success outside the school program calls for use of instruments that are broadly descriptive in character yet with tangible descriptions, unvaryingly accurate and universally acceptable in the measurement of equivalent items by the different students of education.

If better means of measuring reading success had been available, there would have been a closer approach in this report to the ideal of scientific and objective data, the orderly accumulation of which every researcher would like for his subsequent analysis and evaluation.

2. The dearth of practical and readily available aids for parents interested in helping their children in primary reading was noted in the body of the research. It is a point of strong recommendation that these be increased in number, quality and pertinence. It is felt some schools could profit from having more of a choice for adaptation to local needs.

3. Improvement of aids and suggestions for parental participation program betterment can come readily from careful review of this report, reuse of original program, aids, bulletins or any local adaptation of them. Such augmentation to knowledge and data about the program will

be welcomed.

4. Teachers have long observed the value of pupil prepared materials in learning to read. The pupil relates an incident which is recorded on blackboard, chart or experience paper. Some parents have important and ingenious contributions to make to the program. Local use of these parental resources can follow the plan suggested with profit to all.

5. Some schools are emphasizing public relations. Programs have been instituted to sell to the community the work the school is doing. A program of parental participation can very easily be a part of the public relations program of the school. It has much to offer in a positive way.

There is, of course, the consideration of which member of the school's professional staff should have charge of the program. It is recommended that the principal of the school assume charge of the organization and direction of any parental participation program in primary reading. Teachers may occasionally use techniques or language that antagonizes parents. On the other hand the parent may need help in the best way to use a conference opportunity. If there is an expressed or implied criticism by either side, the other may be immediately on the defensive and much of the program will then be vitiated.

Admittedly, parental counseling is an art that many teachers possess but a dynamic home school relationship in the primary grades implies more than being able to communicate satisfactorily with parents in a conference. The principal of the school is in the best position to see, understand, interpret and use the community influences to best advantage in working with the professional staff. Questions about reading goals, reading tests and overview in elementary education can be answered by the principal without undue pessimism or unjustified optimism.

Not many schools of today can isolate themselves from community influences. Sometimes facts are requested or indicated by conditions. Good public relations are also factual in essence. Great care is needed in assessing values in the public relations aspect of the parental participation program since the question posed by the experts may also arise: Is this the school's appropriate function? The principal is a community leader and as such interprets the school program to the community, also answering questions that may be raised.

A school program is no better (and no worse) than the shared understanding of all who work in it or are influenced by it. Quality of leadership is an important factor in effective group discussion of this program. Procedures and techniques must be appropriate to the

circumstances and the personnel. Continuity and depth of experience are important since much of the design and evaluation of the program is in the subjective domain, particularly in these early stages of parent participation. The degree of support parents give to school programs bears some sort of relationship to the amount of knowledge they have about school programs. This is a subjective metric but research will probably disclose quantity, quality, degree and also any predictive value about this aspect. Parental opinionative surveys of the type used in this report can be used by the principal to help add to the cumulating knowledge in this field.

6. Additional research is needed to show the best ways of using the game aspect of the primary reading program. One cannot fail to note the interesting possibilities for additional game design and use in a parental participation program.

7. The stimulation and direction of further research were important motives for the compilation of data and preparation of this report. Further types of relevant study centering on the hypothesis seem necessary. There remains the problem of validating conclusions by experiment in other schools, other cities, other pupils and other parents. This report rests its case for validity upon expert opinion and its own data. True, the experts

themselves have done research and are familiar with the research of others but this is deemed inadequate. In addition to studies of similar type, validation or rejection might center around two types of investigation. Objectives (goals) have been included which were predicated on value judgments. These objectives have validity only if they are in harmony with the broader purposes, goals and aims of the agency which gives its charter to the schools or establishes them. Further research might be needed here. In fact one might propose continuing research, in view of constantly changing goals.

Secondly, elementary school goals must always be considered in terms of the ability of the pupil to reach them. This includes a need for schools, as expeditiously as possible, to interpret to the citizens of the community the meaning of research used in the purposes, practices and methods of the school. The greatest possible intelligent comprehension of educational problems will then be a part of any decisions regarding schools. It is hoped that programs of the parent participation type reported herein will help achieve this worthwhile purpose through their own specific design and as concomitants in a broad elementary school program of shared understanding on the part of pupils, staff and parents.

In this chapter a few of the salient implications for gains to parents and professional staff have been noted. Also analyzed were some conditions necessary for benefit if similar programs should be operated elsewhere. Certain recommendations for further research seem to flow from retrospective review. All possible elements were not listed but it is hoped some essentials were covered in the suggested recommendations.

How can parents help their children in primary reading? The conclusions drawn from research centering on this question are quite properly presented in the next and last part of this report.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

How can parents help their children in primary reading? This question is one posed to schools with increasing frequency. Some experts counter with the query - Is helping parents understand the primary reading program of their children one of the school's appropriate functions? The degree of relationship between the answers to these two questions is the concern of this research report.

Exploring the possible relationship between success in primary reading and the opportunities parents have to participate directly in the school's primary reading program pointed to the need for extensive research as the first step. Emotion, bias, prejudice, custom and habit challenged the researcher as the pertinent writing and reporting in current literature were scrutinized to see what had been done and what limits reached. Some of the authorities in the field of primary reading indicated in their latest articles in professional periodicals that they felt that parents could have a part in the primary reading program of their children. However, there seemed to be only expert advice of a general nature and expert opinion. This was judged too vague, incomplete and unscientific for designing and using a specific program. The hypothesis of positive relationship was formulated since it seemed to

follow from the research. Hypothesis it remained as further research uncovered no published data of measurable benefit to primary pupils from a parent participation program in primary reading.

The designing of the experimental program used in its final form also called for research to see what aid for parents in primary reading was currently available and in print. Reporting this included a scrutiny of Dolch's booklet for parents. Principles of program design were formulated as the essence of this phase of the research project. It was hoped that these principles of design for parent participation programs had value in the design, implementation and evaluation of the program described herein, were useful in evaluating the report and might assist in designing and implementing any future programs of this type.

The postulation of the hypothesis assuming there is benefit to primary pupils from a designed parent participation program in primary reading seemed timely and pertinent to the needs of the day. Data were therefore collected from an experimental program of 1952-1953 to test the hypothesis. As the design of the program had called for inclusion of newer aspects in the field of primary reading, new instruments of measurement had to be devised in order to evaluate these aspects of primary reading.

Research helped uncover some useful guiding principles in constructing them. These new measures were used with widely known standardized tests in the group equating stage and in the subsequent testing. The foundation of the program evaluation was thus initially built with the help of such universally recognized tests as the Stanford-Binet, Form L; Gates Primary Reading, Monroe Basic Reading.

Testing and measuring in education are always subject to the possibility of becoming desultory if not undertaken with a particular purpose in mind. Tests used in this report were selected only after a specific purpose was evident and to see how well certain objectives or goals were being mastered. Equating experimental and control groups by matched pairs called for an individual intelligence test suitable to this primary age group. Thus, the Stanford-Binet, Form L was used. Equating the groups in parental interest necessitated a type of parent interest measure. One was devised with the help of research.

Each dimension or goal in primary reading seemed to demand a different type of test. Separating the aspects of primary reading so that program design could be facilitated and various tests administered mandated research to see what goals of primary reading are currently reported by authorities. Kearney's Goals of Primary Reading were used

after a survey of this field.

Forty participation pupils (median I.Q. - 110) were matched in pairs with forty control pupils (median I.Q. - 111). Comparing scores these primary pupils made on the Gates and Monroe Reading Tests showed a positive direction of higher scores for the participation pupils. Mean scores - both raw and grade - were higher in each aspect tested. Critical ratios supported the positive direction of higher scores for the participation pupils. Eleven out of the forty in the experimental group bettered their school grades at the end of the program while the best the control pupils could do was maintain their grades. Participation pupils also mastered the word analysis skills better, read more room library books and increased their reading of other books in the home. Parent reaction, obtained by questionnaire, was generally favorable in indicating pupil benefit. Gain for these pupils was evident in the various aspects of the primary reading program, both in the school program and outside the school program, for which tests could be used or records kept.

The findings of this research helped point to a new dimension in parent participation in primary reading. These questions logically follow: What insights, what understandings, what depth of feeling, what school organization are necessary for parents and professional staff in

order to understand and use this new dimension. The capacities of the parents and teachers to generalize, to apply principles, to infer and to understand each other are thus important considerations. But basically, each parent participation program will be an individual school problem and challenge. The latter part of this study has called attention to this important aspect in the practical affairs of each school. The oriented parent in any school-sponsored program is in a favorable situation to help his child in primary reading. How to do it best and how extensively it will be done in American schools are challenges for the future.

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## APPENDIX 1

### Recommended Goals in Primary Reading<sup>1</sup>

#### A. Knowledge and Understanding

**Primary Period.** The child should be able to recognize at once the words that are part of his basic reading sight-vocabulary, and to define many common words that he uses orally, including common abstract terms. He knows how to read the period at the end of sentences (and some children will read quotation marks around direct quotations, question marks, and exclamation marks). He should be building a proper acquaintance with children's literature. He should understand that many words "pair off" as opposites. He should be able to distinguish between the names of persons and things and the action words. Basic to his understanding of communication is his growing recognition that words and sentences are useful only as they have meaning for him.

He should be able to name and recognize all the letters of the alphabet in random order and to repeat the alphabet. He should be able to spell from dictation 7 out of 10 unfamiliar one-syllable words if they are completely phonetic. He should be able to spell from 500 to 700 of the most commonly used words. Children should know the common sounds (in words) that go with the letters that represent them. They should recognize simple phonetic clues in spelling and use simple word-analysis techniques as an aid in spelling. They should know the standards for letter formation, spacing and alignment, in manuscript or cursive form.

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<sup>1</sup> Kearney, Nolan C., Elementary School Objectives, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1953, p.102-111.

## B. Skill and Competence

**Primary Period(Reading).** The child does assigned reading by himself. He reads, first to get the whole story, anticipates the story from its title, picks out the chief sentences, and is able to tell what each says. He reads to find answers - what, where, when, why. He can recall the sequence of a story or the facts read in a story. He can read a simple narrative of ten pages with comprehension and pleasure, if there are but few unfamiliar words. He can indicate the interesting features of a book by describing or dramatizing them. He can distinguish the chief elements of a story and repeat them. He can repeat the narrative of a story for children in the language of the author. He reads simple informational material with comprehension. He handles second-grade material in silent or oral reading easily, reading or pronouncing most of the words accurately. In third-grade material, he reads with a comprehension score of 80 per cent. He can read 7 out of 10 paragraphs of third-grade material and recognize many of the main ideas. Silent-reading rate should be between 95 and 120 words a minute; not over 30 regressions per 100 words of easy material; not over 140 fixations per 100 words of easy reading material. He makes but few reversals on letter forms, as "b" for "d" and rarely does he reverse letter sequence, writing "not" for "ton." He has a recognition span of at least four-letter words, such as "come" or "hand". He reads with rhythmic eye movement and without lip movements or whispering.

**Word Study.** He recognizes and produces the individual letter signs for the common blends. He can fuse two - or three-letter sounds into a single word and can recognize letters by their sound. He can recite the alphabet. He can sound out 6 out of 10 completely phonetic unfamiliar words. He grows in skill in attacking unfamiliar words; picks out new words in a story, notes how they differ from similar

words, and notes context in an effort to find meanings.

**Book and Library Skills.** He handles books properly, begins to use the index and table of contents in his search for information, and uses a children's dictionary or a picture dictionary to locate words or to find their spelling and meaning.

### C. Attitude and Interest

**Primary Period.** The child likes to write short friendly notes, to read for recreation or information, to talk and listen to others respectfully and thoughtfully, to recite poems, and to retell favorite stories. He is interested in the sounds of words in word-families, in rhymes, in secret languages and codes. He characterizes his efforts in absolute terms of good and bad. He begins to develop attitudes toward radio and television programs.

### D. Action Pattern

**Primary Period.** The child habitually listens to others while they talk or give reports and he waits until they have finished or for an appropriate opportunity to speak. He finds good reading materials and shares them with others, both through reading aloud and through recommending poems, stories, plays, and news items. He habitually reads to others to inform, to help solve a group problem, and to entertain. He reads more rapidly silently than orally. He looks for information in books and reads for meaning. He voluntarily reads magazines and newspapers and books designed for children, and reads poetry and stories for personal pleasure.

He uses the picture dictionary in the library, and habitually studies new words and words he is uncertain about spelling. He writes occasional brief stories for fun. He contributes to class discussions at least briefly each day, and asks questions about topics that interest him. He tries to establish habits of correct usage in oral communication.

APPENDIX 2

Parent Questionnaire

Prior To Entering First Grade

1. Did your child ever ask any questions about letters, words, numbers, numerals and signs that he saw in the home or community? If Yes check applicable items below:

|                          |       |
|--------------------------|-------|
| TV                       | _____ |
| Letters Received in Mail | _____ |
| Books                    | _____ |
| Magazines                | _____ |
| Signs                    | _____ |
| Games                    | _____ |
| Telephone                | _____ |
| Cans of Food             | _____ |
| Candy Bars               | _____ |
| Playing Cards            | _____ |
| Pets' Names              | _____ |

2. Did you try to teach your child to recognize any of the words on these items mentioned above? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Did your child often ask to have someone read to him? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Who read to your child? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Who selected what was read? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Check applicable item or items if story was read to pupil.
- Did the person just read to him? \_\_\_\_\_
- Did the person give explanations while reading? \_\_\_\_\_
- Did the person point out words he thought the child might remember? \_\_\_\_\_
- Did the child usually just listen? \_\_\_\_\_

- Did the child help turn the pages? \_\_\_\_\_
- Did the child ask questions about the story? \_\_\_\_\_
- about pictures? \_\_\_\_\_
- about words? \_\_\_\_\_
- about letters? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Did the child ever pretend he was reading? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What did he like to "read"?  
Check any correct items  
Newspapers \_\_\_\_\_
- Magazines \_\_\_\_\_
- Comic Books \_\_\_\_\_
- Adult Books \_\_\_\_\_
- Children's Books \_\_\_\_\_
- Others \_\_\_\_\_
9. Before your child entered first grade did anyone try to teach him to read?  
Who? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Before your child entered first grade did anyone try to teach him to write?  
Who? \_\_\_\_\_
11. When your child entered first grade, was he able to recognize his own name? \_\_\_\_\_
12. When your child entered first grade, could he recognize any letters of the alphabet? \_\_\_\_\_

### APPENDIX 3

#### Survey of Parental Opinion

1. Did it help you to know about the primary reading program of your child?\_\_\_\_\_
2. Did you play any of Dolch's Word Games with your child? \_\_\_\_\_  
Are they useful? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Did you play any other word games with your child? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Did you make any cards for the school list of basic words? \_\_\_\_\_  
Did you borrow and use the word cards for the basic series used in the school?\_\_\_\_\_
5. Did both parents participate in the program? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Did you set aside a regular time to read with your child or discuss his reading with him? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Did you borrow and use any of the available visual aids? \_\_\_\_\_  
Did you have your own equipment?\_\_\_\_\_
8. Did these visual aids help you in knowing about the school's reading program?\_\_\_\_\_
9. Did your child show any improvement in his reading marks? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Did the program have any value in your plans for the summer recess? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Do you think the program has value for parents? \_\_\_\_\_  
For pupils? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Should the program be continued as a school policy? \_\_\_\_\_

13. Should it be given every year? \_\_\_\_\_  
If not, how often? \_\_\_\_\_
14. Did your child seem to enjoy having you  
interested in the program? \_\_\_\_\_
15. Do you believe the program has helped  
the child use his time at home more  
wisely? \_\_\_\_\_
16. Does your child have an interest in read-  
ing outside of school requirements? \_\_\_\_\_

## ABSTRACT OF THESIS

One of the challenging problems in American education of today is the extent to which parents can cooperate and participate in the reading program of their children. Particularly in the early years of a child's school life is it a question posed to the primary grade teachers in all schools. Some experts counter with the query - Is helping parents understand the primary reading program of their children one of the school's appropriate functions? The degree of relationship between the answers to the problems is the concern of this research report.

Exploring the possible relationship between success in primary reading and the opportunities parents have to participate directly in the school's primary reading program pointed to the need for extensive research as the first step. Some of the authorities in the field of primary reading indicated in their writings that they felt that parents could have a part in the primary reading program of their children. The postulation of a hypothesis assuming there is benefit to primary pupils from a designed parent participation program seemed timely and pertinent to the needs of the day. Both sides of the issue were carefully reported and discussed in the first section of the thesis.

It was decided to test the hypothesis by means of evaluating an experimental program operated in a Buffalo (New York) school. The designing of the experimental program used in its final form also called for research to see what aid for parents in primary reading was currently available and in print. Reporting this included a scrutiny of Tolch's booklet for parents. Principles of program design were formulated as the essence of this section of the thesis. It was hoped that these principles of design for parent participation programs had value in the design, implementation and evaluation of the program described in the thesis proper, were useful in evaluating the report and had assistance value in designing and implementing any future program of this type.

Data were collected from the experimental program of (1952 - 1953) to test the hypothesis formulated after the initial research. The design of the program had called for inclusion of newer aspects in the field of primary reading so new instruments of measurement had to be devised in order to evaluate these aspects of primary reading. Research helped uncover some useful guiding principles in constructing them. These new measures were used with widely known standardized tests in the group equating stage and in the subsequent testing. The foundation of the program

evaluation was thus initially built with the help of such universally recognized tests as the Stanford-Binet, Gates Primary Reading, Monroe Basic Reading.

Equating experimental and control groups by matched pairs called for an individual intelligence test suitable to primary pupils. Thus the Stanford-binet was used. Equating the groups in parental interest necessitated a type of parent interest measure. The one used was adapted from a report by Almy. Each dimension or goal in primary reading seemed to call for a differing analysis. Separating the aspects of primary reading was facilitated by using Kearney's Goals of Primary Reading.

Forty participation pupils (median I.Q.-110) were matched in pairs with forty control pupils (median I.Q.-111). Comparing scores these primary pupils made on the Gates and Monroe Reading Tests showed a positive direction of higher scores for the experimental group. Mean scores - both raw and grade - were higher in each aspect tested. Critical ratios supported the positive direction of higher scores for the experimental group. Eleven out of the forty in the experimental group bettered their school grades at the end of the program while the best the control group could do was maintain grades. Participation pupils also mastered the word analysis skills better, read more room library books and increased their reading of other books

in the home. Parent reaction, obtained by questionnaire, was generally favorable in indicating pupil benefit. Gain for these pupils was evident in the various aspects of the primary reading program for which tests could be used or records kept.

The findings of this research helped point to the use of a new dimension in parent participation in primary reading. The impact and perspective of the following were discussed at length: Insights, understandings, and depth of feeling of teaching staff and parents. Capacities of parents and teachers to generalize, to apply principles and to understand attitudes are important considerations in any program involving parents. Basically, each parent participation program is an individual school problem and challenge for organization. The latter part of the report was centered on this important aspect in the practical affairs of each school. Research and experiment directed the writer to the observation that the oriented parent in any school sponsored program in primary reading is in a favorable situation to help his child in primary reading. Degree and extent of use are implications for future concern and research.