A Study of the Ability of Fifth and Sixth Grade Pupils to Comprehend Social Studies Material

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A STUDY OF THE ABILITY OF FIFTH AND SIXTH GRADE PUPILS
TO COMPREHEND SOCIAL STUDIES MATERIAL

by

Sister Margaret Mary

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Education, in the Graduate School of the
Central Washington College of Education

August, 1949
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Grateful acknowledgment is made to Assistant Professor Lillian H. Bloomer, who directed this study, for her assistance and encouragement.

Special acknowledgments are made for the courtesies and the assistance given by Professor Charles W. Saale and Professor Emil E. Samuelson.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

When secondary school teachers were asked recently, "What is your greatest problem in reading?" the answer was almost unanimously, "To find ways and means of giving boys and girls a vocabulary sufficient for their needs."¹ This statement implies the fact that with the lack of adequate vocabulary the students are handicapped in their comprehension of the reading material in content subjects. If this deficiency exists and is markedly manifest in the secondary school where there are students of greater maturity, and where the skills in the mechanics of reading are supposedly already mastered, it is still more evident in vocabulary problems of the elementary school.

In a survey of the reading abilities of thirty-one pupils the writer found that according to the results of the Gates Basic Reading Test, the reading tests on the Metropolitan Achievement Test, and the Progressive Achievement Test, the class in reading was at the level where it should have been for the given grade and month. The averages on the Metropolitan and the Progressive Tests were in general somewhat

¹Leary, Bernice E., "Meeting Specific Reading Problems in the Content Fields." Reading In the High School and College. Forty-seventh Yearbook, Part II. National Society for the Study of Education. pp. 171-72
higher than those achieved on the Gates Test. There were a few instances where pupils attained a higher score on the Gates Test than on either the Metropolitan or the Progressive Tests.* There was a wide range of reading ability found and this is corroborated by the research findings of Murra, Wesley, and Zink. They found that: "In any one school grade the difference in reading ability between the best and poorest pupil is typically greater than the difference between the average reading ability of pupils in grades from four to eight years apart."²

In general, however, judging from the results of the tests, the pupils were well enough equipped in reading skills and were apparently ready to master the reading of social studies material. In practice, however, this did not follow. They were not able to comprehend the material in the social studies text, as the test results in this study proved. This would lead one to assume that a pupil's high or average score on a standardized reading test is no guarantee that he will understand the reading material in the social studies and other content subjects.

In this study the writer was concerned with the failure of the fifth and sixth grade pupils to comprehend reading material in their

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* The scores on these tests will be found on Table 1, page 7

² Murra, Wilber F., Wesley, Edgar B., and Zink, Norah E., "Social Studies" Encyclopedia of Educational Research, 1941 p. 1140
history text. The text in question was *The Old World and America* by Furlong. This text gives a history of the world from prehistoric times down to the colonization of America. A review of such scope in one volume would necessarily have its limitations. There are bound to be generalizations and an inadequate treatment of the subject. Ayer states that, "The tendency to cover in the history textbooks written for the intermediate grades the entire history of the United States necessitates a condensed treatment of topics, a skeleton of information."\(^3\) In this connection the same author reports that, "...Figures of speech are frequent. Literary or advanced historical references are occasionally found which have no basis for comprehension in children's experience. Idiomatic language, abstract words other than technical vocabulary, long involved sentences, and geographical facts which belong to advanced grades are common difficulties which block comprehension."\(^4\)

General vocabulary lists such as those by Thorndike and Buckingham have been compiled. In addition to other uses, such a list is of value to teachers in enabling them to judge the usefulness of the words which are to be selected for intensive study. One of these lists gives the frequency with which words occur in a variety of commonly read materials. The phrase "commonly read materials" has an implication

\(^{3}\)Ayer, Adelaide H. *Some Difficulties in Elementary School History.* p. 1

\(^{4}\)Ibid. p. 3
which might well exclude the social studies texts. From an examination of eleven history texts the vocabulary contained therein appears to amount to what might be called a technical vocabulary. The word-study suggested by word lists might possibly be inadequate in the light of the specialized vocabulary of modern social-studies texts at elementary school level. Only one text examined makes any mention of checking with a word list and even this offers no guarantee of better comprehension for as Clark observes, "Checking with a word list is not the same thing as simplification."\(^5\)

McKee says, "Textbooks present too many strange concepts within a given amount of space... The language of the textbook is often so vague, condensed and abstract that it is often impossible for pupils to get meaning from the material read. The textbook is usually designed to fit courses of study that are entirely too encyclopedic and too difficult. Many textbooks contain summary statements or generalizations and the reader does not possess the details which would give these statements and generalizations meaning."\(^6\)

Stolte says, "Many of the erroneous and unclear constructs formed in reading are caused by inadequate explanations given in the textbook,

\(^5\)Clark, Lois C. *The Effects on Comprehension of Simplification of Social Science Material in a Second Grade*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Iowa City: University of Iowa, 1933. Quoted by Amelia Rhynsburger (in her *A Study of Comprehension in Silent Reading*).

since the short selection tested covered many important geographical concepts. A generalization in the textbook does not warrant understanding.\(^7\) McKee in speaking of comprehension in reading says that because pupils' vocabulary lacks sufficient exactness and their concepts are so vague they do not have the basis for building new meanings and new concepts or to see the relationships which are presented to them by textbooks. This is particularly true in the case of the abstract matter presented in the social studies.\(^8\)

What has been proved to be true about the social studies in regard to comprehension might well be applied to other content subjects where the medium is reading. In regard to this Farquhar says that especially the supplementary books in history, geography, and general literature which she studied present a very large range of words as well as a number of complex sentences. Farquhar studied fifth grade books. She reported that a great many of the words in history and geography were not found in readers and recommended definite specific teaching of history and geography material.\(^9\)


\(^8\)McKee, *op. cit.* p. 18

Pressy also states that, "Many teachers do not realize how many such hard words there are which are constant stumbling blocks in the path of the pupil. The pupil is not likely to learn the meaning of these special words from his general reading. He must be specifically taught the meaning of the terms used as a part of his training in each subject."\textsuperscript{10}

In view of the findings in an investigation of this sort, the question naturally arises as to what can and should be done about vocabulary development. Pupils who are average and good readers should get more from their texts than they do. Granted that the material in the texts is difficult, as it was found to be the case in this study, they are the texts in use. Except in the case of poor readers, there is no point in oversimplifying or watering down of the material in the texts. This does not mean that it is not possible to have texts written on reading grade level. This is not the practice, however, and all the pupils in a given school grade are expected to master the material for that grade regardless of their reading grade level. There is this advantage in the somewhat difficult reading material in school texts—it offers a challenge to the pupil that no simplified material will offer. In order that pupils be prepared to meet this challenge, it is necessary that some quite definite vocabulary training be done.

\textsuperscript{10}Pressy, Luella S., "The Determination of the Technical Vocabulary of the School Subjects," \textit{School and Society}, p. 96
Table 1
SCORES ATTAINED ON READING TESTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil</th>
<th>I.Q.</th>
<th>Gates Basic Reading Test</th>
<th>Metropolitan Achievement Test (Reading)</th>
<th>Progressive Achievement Test (Reading)</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Group A. Grade Five</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winifred*</td>
<td>115</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Louis</td>
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<td>4.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
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<td>Class Average</td>
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Group A. Grade Six

<table>
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<th>Pupil</th>
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<th>Metropolitan Achievement Test (Reading)</th>
<th>Progressive Achievement Test (Reading)</th>
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<td>9.8</td>
<td>9.0</td>
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<td>8.0</td>
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<td>Dorothy</td>
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<td>Claire</td>
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<td>7.2</td>
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<td>Donna</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dick</td>
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<td>Class Average</td>
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<td>7.2</td>
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* Fictitious names are used.
CHAPTER II

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

It has been the experience of the writer in teaching the social studies that very many pupils who were of average and high intelligence and who were also good readers, failed in their social-studies classes. In subjects in the curriculum other than the social studies and those in which reading of content is not essential, comprehension was better and failures fewer. This deficiency was not always apparent in the daily work of the pupils. The more gifted pupils were able to acquit themselves creditably in class. It was only upon investigating the knowledge of the less gifted and the results of tests given to the abler pupils that it was found that they had an inadequate comprehension of the social studies material. Not infrequently, pupils declare their preference for such subjects as arithmetic and spelling, and their dislike of history. It might well be that there is an element of frustration due to lack of comprehension of history and other social studies material. It has always seemed that something quite definite could be done to remedy this situation. In order to arrive at some conclusion as to what might be done to prevent these failures it was necessary to investigate their causes and determine wherein lay the difficulty. The purpose of this study, then, was to ascertain the reasons for pupils' failure to comprehend the material in the social
studies texts and to determine what procedures should be followed in order to facilitate comprehension of this and other content material.

While this investigation is original in the experiment situation, the idea is not new. Several very complete and extensive studies of comprehension have been made in various educational fields. The most notable studies examined by the writer are those of Dewey and Stolte, and it is upon these two investigations that this study has been modeled.

Groups Studied and Materials Used:

Two groups of thirty-one pupils each were the subjects of this investigation. Group A was composed of the fifth and sixth grades of Lourdes Academy, Ellensburg, Washington. Group B comprised the sixth grade of St. Paul School, Yakima, Washington. Three pupils of Group A withdrew from school before the testing program was completed.

Group A had an I. Q. range from 70 to 127 on the Kuhlmann-Anderson Test, and a reading range of 3.2 to 9.9 on the Gates Basic Reading Test. The pupils of Group A were given reading material with which they had had no previous experience. The only preparation that this group was given was the reading of the material orally several times to insure the correct pronunciation of the words in the selections chosen.

Group B was used for motives of comparison. It was matched as nearly as possible in I. Q. with Group A. In this matching of I. Q.
two types of Intelligence Test were used; the Kuhlmann-Anderson Intelligence Test and the Otis Intelligence Test. On this account the comparisons were relative rather than absolute. The I. Q. range of this group was 69 to 127 on the Otis Intelligence Test. Group B was given identical reading material as Group A with this difference: in the case of Group B the tests were given at the end of the school year and after this group had studied the material as part of their regular class work. The purpose of using Group B was to ascertain if there was an appreciable increase in comprehension of the material after an ordinary process of instruction.

A variety of tests were used, some standardized, others teacher-made. The pupils in Group A were given the Kuhlmann-Anderson Intelligence Test so that the data furnished by this test could be available throughout the study. Forms 1 and 2 of the Gates Basic Reading Test were given to find the pupils' reading grade. As a further check, the reading tests in the Metropolitan Achievement Test and the Progressive Achievement Test were given. A Free-Expression Test was constructed to measure the pupils' comprehension of the material in the selected paragraphs. Following the Free-Expression Test each pupil was given an Oral Interview as a check against the Free-Expression Test to determine to what extent pupils are inconsistent in their responses on one test and on another; and as a means of determining whether the oral type of test would reveal a better understanding of the social studies material than the pencil and paper
type. Two tests for word-comprehension were devised to determine whether pupils have a better comprehension of words in context as compared with words out of context.

The pupils of Group B had been given the Otis Intelligence Test. They were also given the Free-Expression Test, the Multiple-choice True-false Test, and the two tests for word meaning. They were not given the Oral Test because there was not sufficient time available which would be necessary to interview each pupil at the end of the school year. Comparisons, therefore, had to be based on the results of the pencil and paper tests.

To increase the reliability of the teacher-made tests there was provision made for a sufficient number of items and no definite time limit was set, all the pupils being allowed to finish each part. None of the tests were recall tests, and the pupils were permitted and encouraged to re-read the material as often as they wished. To eliminate guessing, the pupils were told to write "I do not know" for those items of which they were sure that they did not know the meaning. There was no evidence of verbalism in the responses because the pupils were directed to make their responses in their own words and were told that more credit would be given for their own words rather than for those copied from the text. During all the tests the pupils had access to the selections in the text on which they were being tested and were encouraged to re-read the material as often as they desired.
The paragraphs for this study were taken from *The Old World and America* by Philip J. Furlong, published by William H. Sadlier, New York, 1937. The following paragraphs selected at random are typical of the material in the reading selections. The words, phrases, and sentences underlined are those which were used in testing the comprehension of the social studies material.

Perhaps one of the most important accomplishments of the Egyptians was their system of writing. The *Egyptian way of writing had an influence on the alphabet we use*. The earliest form of Egyptian is called hieroglyphics or picture writing. The Egyptians put some of their records on tall stone shafts.

*Pericles was another outstanding figure in the history of Athens*. He was a sort of political leader of the people. During the "Age of Pericles" 461-429 B.C. Athens was enjoying its Golden Age. In the time of Pericles some of the most beautiful of the Greek temples were built; the merchants enjoyed perhaps their greatest prosperity and the citizens their greatest measure of freedom.

The nobles were frequently at war. When at home they spent much of their time at amusements. They played games. *Chess was a great favorite*. The people of the castle were often entertained by strolling minstrels who got their board for their songs.

The Free Expression Test: This was the first test given to the pupils. Its purpose was to determine just what was their comprehension of the material in the text. In this test the pupils were required to write in their own words what they understood the sentences and phrases to mean.

The Free Expression Test proved to be the most difficult of all for the pupils. As they were not allowed to copy from the text, they
were confronted with more than one language difficulty: to transpose the textual material into their own words, to construct sentences, and to spell words not in their spelling vocabulary. They succeeded fairly well in endeavoring to put the material in their own words, but the sentence structure left much to be desired, for the responses were given mostly in phrases and single words. As the pupils were not permitted to ask the spelling of any word so as not to give clues, the spelling was poor. In many instances they had to be asked to interpret what they had written. There was little or no agreement among the responses given by the pupils. Each pupil interpreted the material in his own way and according to his own ability in comprehension and in the light of his own experience. There were as many versions of the material read as there were pupils. Dewey says in this connection that in reading material each child looks at what he reads from the background of his own experience, according to his mental set at the time and interprets what he reads on this basis. The facts indicate that one is not justified in assuming, when a group of children are given printed material to read, that each child would understand the material in the same way. 11

While there were a number of erroneous responses given by Group B this group on the whole gave better responses than did Group A. Samples of the pupils' varied responses on the Free Expression Test are given here. It will be remembered that the excerpts in the Free Expression Test are not isolated items for the pupils had access to the entire contextual material.

The Egyptians put some of their records on tall stone shafts.

Pupils' responses:

2. They would write on rocks.
3. Wrote their history on a plant.
4. Put some of their writing on flat rocks.
5. So wouldn't break the things you hear from a phonograph.
6. Put their scores on big pieces of rock.
7. Laid some letters on a tall rock.
8. Put pictures on stone signs.
9. Put pictures they drew on shelves.

During the "Age of Pericles," 461-429 B. C., Athens was enjoying its Golden Age.

Pupils' responses:

1. Was the birthday time.
2. He was happy of his age.
3. They would enjoy life.
4. Athens was glad of his old age.
5. It was a certain time.
6. They made pretty stores.
7. Having fun with age.
8. They built pretty buildings for old people.
9. They were built of gold.
10. Golden temples were built.
The people of the castle were often entertained by *strolling minstrels* who got their *board* for their songs.

Pupils' responses:

1. They liked to sing.
2. People dressed up like negroes.
3. People who sang to get some money.
4. Walking singers who got to sleep for their songs.
5. They were given prizes.
6. They entertain them.
7. Money to pay their expenses.
8. People sang songs.
9. They went and played instruments.
10. They sang songs to get their pay.

**The Oral Interview:** After the Free-Expression Test was given, each pupil was given an oral interview, and his responses were recorded on the same sheet as were his written responses. In this test, as has been mentioned, the pupil had the reading material at hand, and was permitted to re-read as often as necessary.

The oral interview might well be considered the most adequate type of test. It was unhampered by the language difficulties of the free-expression test, and the pupils proved themselves to be definitely correct or incorrect in their comprehension of the material. In defense of the value of the oral interview over other types of test, Stolte says, "A correct score on objective test does not prove an adequate understanding, nor does it prove that the pupil does or does not understand. Both the Objective Test and the Free-Expression Test are limited in possibilities for discovering the concepts formed in contrast with the oral interview. The individual oral interview is in comparison
the most satisfactory method of testing. Record may be made of all that is said by both pupil and teacher and thus a complete analysis is made. One of the most valuable features of the method is the fact that children's answers may serve as "leads" to further questioning and so provide the opportunity to explore and discover just what constructs have been formed.\textsuperscript{12} Dewey says, "It is probable that the use of the oral interview technique will aid greatly not only in the diagnosis of individual reading comprehension but in the enrichment of our understanding of the total reading process."\textsuperscript{13} To prove this assertion he says in his conclusion to his investigation: "On the whole the pupils make a larger percentage of correct responses on the oral interviews than on written tests. This tendency may be attributed to the fact that in the interview the investigator not only has the opportunity of making plain to the pupil what he (the investigator) is attempting to test, but also allows the child to make plain what he (the child) is trying to say. This fact indicates that more use should be made of the oral interview in studying children's reading comprehension. If the case study technique is properly perfected and refined it should prove valuable as a means for securing new data on reading comprehension difficulties."\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{12}Stolte, Helen Bertha, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 32

\textsuperscript{13}Dewey, Joseph C., \textit{op. cit.}, p. 51

\textsuperscript{14}Dewey, Joseph C., \textit{op. cit.}, p. 32
Samples of the oral tests of three pupils are given here: the pupil with highest score on the Gates Reading Test, one with a middle score, and one with the lowest score.

The first pupil was a fifth grader with an I. Q. of 115 and one who made an average of 9.9 on the Gates Test. He was a good student and read continually. During the Oral Test he was rather reserved and cautious in his responses. While there was some agreement between the responses given on the Free-Expression Test and those given on the Oral Test, the oral responses were more detailed and complete than those put in writing. There was a tendency to answer "I don't know" to the oral questions, but the testing situation was such that he knew another response was expected of him. The results of the test were not as had been anticipated. Considering his I. Q. and his high rating on the reading test, better and clearer responses might have been expected.

Teacher: What does it mean where it says, "The Greeks were unusually self-reliant"?

Robert: I don't know.

T.: Do you know the meaning of "unusually"?
R.: No.

T.: What do you think it might mean?
R.: Different.

T.: What is the office of king?
R.: I don't know.

T.: What is an office?
R.: Business place.

T.: Would the office of king be where he lived?
R.: No, it would be where he talked to other people about what they were to do.
T.: What does it mean where it says, "They had no ordinary conveniences, such as artificial light."
R.: I don't know.

T.: Do you know the meaning of "artificial"?
R.: Not real.

T.: What would artificial light be?
R.: Light that wasn't real.

The second pupil, a sixth grader, from the middle group had an I. Q. of 105 and a score of 6.5 on the Gates Test. The results of the oral test were unexpected. In contrast to the pupil with the higher I. Q. and the higher reading score, she showed evidence of a greater facility in reasoning and appeared to have a more thorough comprehension of the material than he. Her responses could be considered sufficiently clear and her comprehension of the material read fairly adequate.

Teacher: Sally, what is meant by "development of Civilization"?
Sally: Gradually got civilization.

T.: What do you mean by gradually?
S.: Little by little.

T.: Do you mean that they did not have civilization from the beginning?
S.: They weren't exactly cannibals. Later on they got in contact with civilized people.

T.: What happened then?
S.: Gradually they got civilized themselves.

T.: How could Draco serve the Athenians by giving them a written body of laws?
S.: He gave them laws they were to follow. By giving them these laws they could abide by them. He gave the poorest people a chance to talk, a voice in the government.

T.: What was a written body of laws?
S.: He had them all written out on a piece of paper.
T.: Didn't they have any laws before that?
S.: No, they went by custom.

T.: What does that mean, "Before Draco's time people followed custom"?
S.: They followed different manners.

T.: What do you mean by manners?
S.: The way they did things.

T.: The way they did what things?
S.: The way they dressed—way they acted—way their homes were built.

The last pupil, a fifth grader, with an I. Q. of 74 and a score of 3.2 in reading, responded true to form on his oral test. Definitely a poor reader, his responses were predominately "I don't know." Further questioning revealed that he did not know the meaning of any of the important words in the selection. His I. Q. rating on the Kuhlmann-Anderson Test might be open to question. The Kuhlmann-Anderson Test presupposes a certain amount of reading skill and as this pupil was seriously deficient in reading ability he might possibly have achieved a higher score on another type of intelligence test.

Teacher: What is civilization, James?
James: I don't know.

T.: Have you ever heard the word civilization?
J.: I think I have.

T.: When you heard it what did you think it meant?
J.: I don't know.

T.: Do you have any idea of what civilization means?
J.: I remember I heard it, but I can't remember it.

T.: What is meant by development of civilization?
J.: I don't know.
T.: Do you know what development means?
J.: Like you develop a cold, but I don't think that is right.

T.: Can you think of what development might mean?
J.: Would it mean when they develop a film?

T.: Do you think that is what it means in that paragraph?
J.: No.

T.: Why not?
J.: It doesn't tell anything about films here.

When the oral interviews were completed the oral responses were checked against the written responses and each item that did not have the same response (right or wrong) in both tests was considered inconsistent. Likewise, if the responses were the same (right or wrong) for an item in both tests the pupil was considered consistent for that item. It was found that there was considerable inconsistency in the pupils' responses on the Free-Expression Test as compared with those given in the Oral Interview. The class average of inconsistency amounted to 57%. Percentages of inconsistency of individual pupils are given in the following table.
Table 2

PERCENT OF INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN PUPIL RESPONSES
ON FREE EXPRESSION TEST AND ORAL INTERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil</th>
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</table>

Average Inconsistency 57
Table 2 shows that the children were not consistent in their responses on written and oral tests on the same material. Dewey found that children often respond one way on a written test and another way on the oral interview.\textsuperscript{15} It is likewise true that the brighter children are less inconsistent in their responses than the duller children. The writer found in this study that the brighter children tested had a lower percentage of inconsistency than had the less gifted. Stolte says in this connection, "...it would seem that the more intelligent pupil is more certain of his knowledge, and the less likely to vary from one response to another for a given question."\textsuperscript{16} Dewey in his investigation found that there is a marked relationship between intelligence and consistency of children's responses to different types of tests on the same material.\textsuperscript{17} The writer found, furthermore, that the brighter children were uniformly consistent, often giving word for word orally what they had previously written, although some time had elapsed between testing periods. The brighter children had a lower percentage of inconsistency, but still there was inconsistency, and Dewey's findings corroborate this where he states, "Even superior children interpret printed matter erroneously."\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{15}Dewey, Joseph C.,\textit{ op. cit.} p. 44

\textsuperscript{16}Stolte, Helen Bertha,\textit{ op. cit.} p. 30

\textsuperscript{17}Dewey, Joseph C.,\textit{ op. cit.} p. 51

\textsuperscript{18}Dewey, Joseph C.,\textit{ op. cit.} p. 44
The Multiple-Choice True-False Test: As a final check on comprehension the pupils were given a multiple-choice true-false test. This was an inference test consisting of 150 items. The highest possible score was 96.

The following are some paragraphs which tell of people who lived long ago. After each paragraph there are some sentences about it. Some of the sentences are true and some are not. Put a check ✓ in front of each sentence that tells something true about the paragraph.

People are said to have civilization when they do not wander from place to place and when they have found better ways of living. Three rivers helped in the development of civilization. These rivers were the Nile in Egypt and the Tigris and the Euphrates in western Asia. The important civilizations which grew up about these rivers are called the river civilizations. The people of the river civilizations learned many things of value which the people in Europe learned in turn from them.

1. The people were not savages.
2. They built their villages along the rivers.
3. The Egyptians learned how the rivers grew.
4. They learned better ways of living.
5. The people along the Nile were civilized before the people in Europe.
6. It was peaceful along the rivers.
7. There were other civilizations besides river civilizations.
8. When they were civilized they lived in freedom.

The Egyptians were folk who lived in the valley of the Nile. The Nile River helped the Egyptian farmers. Once a year there are heavy rains in the mountains where the river has its source. This water floods down and on reaching the lower Nile valley overflows the river's banks. At that time much of the country is under water. During the dry season, the river returns to its channel but it leaves behind a deposit of the richest soil. The country on either side of the river is evenly coated with a fertile loam.

1. The Nile River begins in the mountains.
2. The Nile River is in Egypt only once a year.
3. The Egyptians were people who lived in the valley of the Nile.
4. A rich soil was left where the river overflowed.
5. Only the Egyptians' parents lived in Egypt.
6. There was a layer of silt on the land on either side of the river.
7. The land was under water the year round.
8. There was good farmland in Egypt.

The class average for Group A on this test was 70, while the average for Group B was 76, which average does not show the increase
which could be expected of a group to whom the material had been taught. A comparison of scores is shown in Table 3.
Table 3

A COMPARISON OF GROUP SCORES ON MULTIPLE-CHOICE TRUE-FALSE TEST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>I. Q. Kuhlmann-Anderson Test</th>
<th>Pupil</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>I. Q. Otis Test</th>
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To secure further insight as to causes for comprehension difficulties, pupils were directed to read the paragraphs and submit a list of words of which they were sure that they did not know the meaning. The number following the word indicates the number of times that it appeared on the pupils' lists. The asterisks indicate the words which might be considered a historical vocabulary.

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</table>
There was a total of 110 words submitted. From this list 25 words were selected for testing for meaning. The first test was constructed with the words out of context.

Draw a circle around the number before the word which gives the best meaning for the underlined word.

**Ancient** means

1. far
2. old
3. past
4. always

**Huge** is

1. last
2. steep
3. large
4. plenty

**Government** means

1. care
2. rule
3. success
4. politics

**Marshy** is

1. cool
2. shady
3. bare
4. damp
The second test for word meaning was devised with the words given in context. During this second test the pupils had access to the paragraphs in order that they might have a fuller meaning of the word than that given in the sentence used for testing.

Draw a circle around the number before the word which you think gives the best meaning for the word which is underlined.

Sometimes those who attacked the castle were aided by war engines. They were——

1. hurt
2. saved
3. helped
4. carried

The game of chess was a great favorite. It was——

1. very interesting
2. well liked
3. easy to play
4. difficult to win

Some of the useful things learned by the Egyptians were used centuries later by the people of Europe. Centuries have to do with——

1. money
2. place
3. time
4. distance

Table 4 shows the frequency with which the words were submitted by the pupils of Group A, and the frequency with which the words were missed both in and out of context. The underlined scores show the increase of one test over the other. Scores marked with an asterisk indicate those which were identical on each test. Table 5 shows the scores made by the individual pupils.
Table 4

A COMPARISON OF THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH THE WORD APPEARED
IN THE PUPILS' LISTS
AND THE NUMBER OF TIMES THE WORD WAS MISSED IN THE TESTS

Group A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Times Listed by Pupils</th>
<th>Times Missed Out of Context</th>
<th>Times Missed in Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aided</td>
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<td>*7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambition</td>
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<td>*10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>*7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bestowed</td>
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<td>*10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board</td>
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<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centuries</td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considerable</td>
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<td>21</td>
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<td>Consisted</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conveniences</td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorite</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huge</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborers</td>
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<td>*3</td>
</tr>
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<td>Majority</td>
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<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshy</td>
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<td>*5</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ownership</td>
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<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
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<td>Sections</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5

A COMPARISON OF SCORES
MADE ON TESTS OF WORDS IN AND OUT OF CONTEXT

Group A

Highest Possible Score - 25

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil</th>
<th>Score Out of Context</th>
<th>Score In Context</th>
<th>I. Q.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louis</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>93</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grace</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martha</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>111</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
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<td>Raymond</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marvin</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sally</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherman</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlene</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joyce</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geraldine</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cecelia</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbara</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frances</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorothy</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irene</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philip</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vincent</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dick</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winifred</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arnold</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
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<td>Carol</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average Score: 17
Fourteen pupils made their highest score on the words out of context, while fifteen pupils made their highest score on the words in context, and two pupils had the same score on each test. Eight words were missed more frequently in context, seven were missed the same number of times both in and out of context, leaving only ten words missed more frequently out of context as compared to fifteen missed more frequently or as often as in context.

The inference to be drawn from these tabulations is that there is not a noticeable gain in comprehension of the word in context over the same word out of context. In some instances having the word in context caused confusion. The word favorite for instance was not missed out of context while it was missed four times in context. Government is another word which illustrates this point. It was missed but twice out of context and fifteen times in context. The word board seems to have been the most troublesome. It appeared on but one pupil's list. It was probably overlooked by the others because they likely selected the words from the paragraphs as isolated words and without reading the sentences which contained them. The pupils were quite sure that they knew the meaning of the word board and they thought that it could have but one meaning—wood. However, when the word was presented in the multiple-choice type of test where there were four suggestions given—clothing, home, food, sleep—an idea, though erroneous, was recalled from their experience, and the majority answered home or sleep. The few who responded with the word food were very likely guessing because in
the oral tests no one gave the word **food** as a response.

There is a noticeable correlation between the I. Q. of the pupils and their scores on the tests. Those with a score of twenty or above were in the I. Q. range of 105 to 127, those with a score between 10 and 20 had an I. Q. range of 93 to 104, and those with scores below 10 were in the range of 70 to 75 I. Q. The results of the tests show that there is but slight variation between the individual pupil's score on one test and his score on the other. The results of these two tests were not what was anticipated. One would expect that a greater number would have the higher score in the test containing the words in context. Instead, the scores were rather evenly balanced between the two types of test, fifteen pupils attaining a higher score in the test for words in context against fourteen pupils having a higher score for words out of context, and two pupils having identical scores in both tests.

The table of comparisons of words submitted as not being known by the pupils and the number of times these words were missed in the tests proves that a list of words which pupils may submit when asked to do so is no measure of their understanding or misunderstanding of the words in the reading material. In some instances the pupils included in their lists words of which they knew the meaning. In many instances words were omitted from the pupils' lists because they thought that they knew their meaning.

Group B was tested on the same words as was Group A. The results of this testing showed an exact balance between the scores on the two
types of tests. Twelve words were missed for the words out of context against twelve words missed in context. Tables 6 and 7 show the comparison of scores. The scores of individual pupils did not have as even a balance as did the pupils in Group A. In Group B seven pupils attained a higher score in the test for words in context against fourteen pupils who made a higher score in the test for words out of context. Eight pupils had identical scores in both tests. Just why more pupils did not attain their higher score in the test for words in context is not clear, when it is remembered that the words were selected from material which had been previously studied by this group.

In summary, it may be affirmed that pupils do not comprehend the meanings of words when used in context, and the teacher can take nothing for granted in regard to the meaning children have for words or to the extent of their comprehension of words either in or out of context. In this study the writer hesitated to give the test for comprehension of the words selected because their meaning seemed very obvious and common. The results of the tests were surprising, for it was found that the pupils did not know the words even though they were common. All the words tested for comprehension have a high rating on the Thorndike-Lorge List. Because the words are considered common and familiar is no indication that they are comprehended by children. In this connection Gray states, "Pupils are unable to acquire readily new ideas through listening or reading even when words relate to situations, events, or
Table 6

A COMPARISON OF THE FREQUENCY
WITH WHICH WORDS WERE MISSED IN AND OUT OF CONTEXT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Times Missed out of Context</th>
<th>Times Missed in Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aided</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambition</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancient</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>Bestowed</td>
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<td>Board</td>
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<td>*26</td>
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<td>Centuries</td>
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<td>Combined</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>Considerable</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consisted</td>
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<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conveniences</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favorite</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
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<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
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<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huge</td>
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<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborers</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marshy</td>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>Occasional</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Ordinary</td>
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<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7

A COMPARISON OF SCORES

MADE ON TESTS OF WORDS IN AND OUT OF CONTEXT

Group B

Highest possible score = 25

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil</th>
<th>Score Out of Context</th>
<th>Score in Context</th>
<th>I. Q.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pat</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe L.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angie</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>119</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roy</td>
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<td>Bernie</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>115</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joe M.</td>
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<td>*9</td>
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<td>Elsie</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dick</td>
<td>*14</td>
<td>*14</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Sylvia</td>
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<td>*19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fred</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>*18</td>
<td>*18</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>*17</td>
<td>*17</td>
<td>112</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lillian</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeanne</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marilyn</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frances</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keith</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie H.</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shirley</td>
<td>*14</td>
<td>*14</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walter</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>*21</td>
<td>*21</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie Z.</td>
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<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janice</td>
<td>*21</td>
<td>*21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Darlene</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>111</td>
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<td>Eddie S.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverly</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average Score 16 15
things which are very familiar." More surprising was the fact that in the results of the test for comprehension of words in context there was not an appreciable gain over the comprehension of words out of context. The author quoted above makes this assertion, "It often happens that the stock of meanings previously acquired does not include those implied by the sentences in which the particular words are used."\(^20\)

In regard to the pupils' failure to comprehend the words in context it may be that they considered the words in isolation rather than a related part of the whole idea. It is highly probable that in addition to not knowing the meaning of the words, the pupils checked the meanings on the test without any attempt at keeping the problem in mind, or of weighing and verifying their conclusions and responses. Gray states, "The meaning of words vary to a considerable extent in the context in which they are used. In listening or reading it is necessary to grasp the essential ideas in each sentence as a whole before reaching conclusions."\(^21\) Just how much of the deficiency in comprehension can be attributed to the difficulty of the textual material and how much to

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\(^{19}\) Gray, William S., "The Development of Meaning Vocabularies with Special Reference to Reading," *Elementary English Review* 17:71-76 (Feb., 1940)

\(^{20}\) Ibid. p. 73

\(^{21}\) Ibid. p. 73
superficial reading was not determined by this study, but it is quite probable that these two factors were interactive, for Brooks in his *Psychology of Reading* says, "Children often fail to comprehend the thought in reading because they do not keep the problem in mind. They can be found aimlessly looking through books and upon questioning they are found to have forgotten what they started out to find. Sometimes they do not know how to pick out important words and phrases or to neglect irrelevant ones. Poor readers are likely to select the first word or phrase that happens to come to mind without re-reading any part of the paragraph to see if the response is suitable."\(^{22}\)

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF RESEARCH RELATED TO PROBLEM

Extensive research has been made in the field of the content subjects relative to difficulty of comprehension. All the findings of these investigations point to the fact that the social studies material, especially that of history, is of its very nature too difficult for most pupils to comprehend. The primary causes of this difficulty in comprehension can be traced to the abstract nature of the concepts involved, to the generalizations which are found throughout the material, and to the limited background of experience of the pupils.

Stolte found that there is, in general, a correspondence between Intelligence Quotient and reading grade and comprehension in geography, history, but in the latter the scale is considerably lower. That is, a child who ranks high in intelligence and reading is also one who ranks high in the group in comprehension of concepts in geography, history, but in comparison with his reading grade it is low. In this connection McKee says, "...there are thousands of pupils in our schools who possess what we call adequate control of the mechanics of reading, but who are quite incapable of making correct and clear meaning for the language they read." From this it follows that the difficulty

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23 Stolte, Helen B., op. cit. p. 68-69
24 McKee, Paul, op. cit. p. 11
of the problem does not lie in the lack of the mastery of reading skills, but rather in the type of reading required in each subject.

Wilson states, "The problem is still more complicated by the fact that each subject, in addition to the fundamental habits common to all reading, requires specific skills peculiar to its purpose and subject matter." 25

Ritter and Lofland make this affirmation, "Reading can never be learned except in connection with some content, but the technique of interpreting one type of content is probably very different from that required in another. It is as much the duty of the school to teach the reading technique which underlies the interpreting of history and geography as it is to teach such a technique for literature." 26

Hester in her thesis, The Vocabulary of the Sixth Grade, says, "...There appears to be an overwhelming burden placed on the sixth grade child by the use of uncontrolled vocabulary in the textbooks. To read with understanding only the basic textbooks for this grade would require the child to learn an average of twenty-eight new words a day.

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during the entire school term of one-hundred-and-eighty days. That task is impossible and certainly not desirable." Hester makes the above statement in regard to textbooks in general, but it is to be presumed that social-studies textbooks were included in the investigation.

Another study of vocabulary in the fifth and sixth grades was made by Bedillon. In his investigation of ten modern textbooks in history he found that there were 1100 person and place names as well as 3300 technical terms including many foreign words and phrases; 3147 words had historical meaning. Some of the books investigated covered all periods of human history and included in the reading material many technical terms, and hundreds of names, including many foreign names. He makes the startling statement that the problem that children face is tantamount to learning a three-thousand word foreign language vocabulary. Bedillon's estimate is somewhat lower than that made by Hester, but the implication is that in this phase of his investigation

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only foreign words and names were included. It is important that the children know the words in the text because as Pressy says, "The failure to know this or that word is not an isolated condition, but is primarily evidence of failure to comprehend the idea." 29

Brown, in the study of five history texts designed for the sixth grade, found a similar situation in that the texts showed, "... a great variation in the amount of repetition, the number of different words introduced, and the rate of introduction of new words. A great many words were not in the Thorndike list and the number of technical terms implies considerable reading difficulty." 30

Gray 31 in his article, "The Development of Meaning Vocabularies with Special Reference to Reading," states:

The need for a rich and meaning vocabulary becomes greater as the ideas, concepts, and information involved depart from the everyday experience and language activities of children. Many meanings of words are in reality generalizations and do not have special referents in the physical world, for example, truth, rights, power, justice, law, civilization. Such words represent more or less complicated and abstract sets of ideas and feelings that are difficult to represent concretely. The farther the concept is removed from the realm of immediate experience, the more largely must we rely on language in acquiring its meaning. Frequently the words used in explaining

29 Pressy, Luella C., op. cit. p. 96


and developing certain concepts with children are new and unfamiliar to them. They fail, therefore, to grasp the new meanings presented. Furthermore their effort to use words representing general or abstract meaning results, as a rule, in verbalism. The solution does not lie in eliminating such words from the curriculum, but in acquiring greater skill in associating meaning with them.

Horn, in speaking of the influence of experience in the problem of meaning, infers that books and references which are placed in the hands of students contain a great many concepts far removed from their experience. He says in part, "Ideas must be built up by the student out of his experience. . . . many of the data of history, geography, and other social studies are far removed from the experience of the students at the grade levels where these data are presented. The gap between the experience of the child and the realities that he is expected to understand is so wide that it can be bridged only with great difficulty."\(^{32}\)

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\(^{32}\)Horn, Ernest, *Methods of Instruction in the Social Studies*. p. 120
CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to ascertain to what extent pupils do not comprehend the reading material in the social studies and to discover the causes of this deficiency. Two types of research techniques were used: (1) pencil and paper tests which were given to sixty-two pupils, and (2) oral interviews with thirty-one pupils who had previously taken the pencil and paper tests.

The conclusions drawn from this investigation are as follows:

1. Although the group tested was of average reading ability, the tests showed that the pupils did not have an adequate comprehension of the social studies material. There were as many interpretations of the subject matter as there were pupils tested, and these interpretations were predominantly erroneous.

2. A list of words which pupils may submit as not understood is no measure of the pupils' understanding or misunderstanding of the vocabulary of the reading material. Pupils are likely to omit from their lists words of which they do not know the meaning because they think that they know their meaning.

3. Pupils read into a selection their own meanings which are the results of their own experiences and not the meanings which the author intended.
4. The results of the tests given for word meaning both in and out of context showed that there was not an appreciable gain in the scores made on the test for words in context over the scores made on the test for words out of context. The corollary to be deduced is that children do not know the meanings of words in context.

5. The test results of Group B showed that this group, while attaining somewhat higher scores on the tests, did not demonstrate that they had overcome comprehension difficulties by instruction.

6. Many of the erroneous constructs formed in reading social studies material are caused by inadequate explanations given in the textbook as well as by difficulty of vocabulary, complication of sentence structure, and figures of speech.

Limitations

Regardless of the limitations of this study which made available but a small sampling from which it is not possible to draw more definite and valid conclusions, the data furnished by this experiment and the findings of previous researches are sufficiently convincing to warrant that what was true of this group would be typical of any group reading history or other content subjects. The findings in this investigation provide a point of departure into further research and experimentation as to what techniques and teaching procedures would be best calculated to insure more effective teaching for comprehension in the content fields.
Educational Implications and Recommendations

In order that pupils may comprehend what they read in history or other content subjects, much more must be done to give them clear concepts of the reading material than has been considered necessary. The majority of investigators are of the opinion that something quite definite should be done in regard to the improvement of pupils' vocabulary.

Training in and improvement of vocabulary cannot be left to the reading instruction as such. The pupil should be specifically taught the meaning of the terms used as part of his training in each subject. This conclusion has the implication that the task of teaching "reading" in so far as the process is dependent on special meanings is left to the teacher of each subject.33

The teacher can take nothing for granted in regard to the meaning children have for the words or to the extent of their comprehension of words either in or out of context. Some studies have proved that there is danger of depending too much upon context as a means of developing vocabulary, but there is no doubt that training children to infer meanings from context has its value.

Horn maintains that the high frequency with which words occur on a word list is no measure of simplicity because even the simplest words vary in meaning in context. Simplification of vocabulary is not the

33Pressy, Luella C., op. cit. p. 96
whole answer—it is perhaps the simplification of concepts that is needed.34

With reference to improvement of vocabulary, Gates is of the opinion that children in each grade should be given experience in trying to read material of increasing difficulty, and opportunities should be made available in the school for extensive independent reading at higher levels.35

Handlan summarizes her theories of vocabulary development by saying in part that growth in vocabulary goes hand in hand with growth in experience—the natural everyday experiences which boys and girls have, the selected experiences that we can offer them through such means as wide reading, motion pictures, and excursions. A knowledge of the limitations and strengths of the children we teach will help us to choose the experiences which we will try to provide. . . We can clinch a student’s understanding of a word by giving him the experience of seeing it illustrated and amplified in many ways. We can help young people become independent in attacking unfamiliar words, teach them the importance of close attention to precise meanings of words, help them understand their own use of language, and provide an atmosphere which will directly and indirectly lead to increase in and

34Horr, Ernest, op. cit. p. 166-67
35Gates, Arthur I., Improvement of Reading, p. 413
enrichment of vocabulary, and we have truly helped our students.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{36}Handlan, Bertha, "Vocabulary Development," The Elementary English Review 23:350-57 (Dec., 1946) p. 356
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APPENDIX

In the appendix the reader will find the selections on which the pupils were tested, and also the complete tests which were administered throughout the study.
The paragraphs for this study were taken from *The Old World and America* by Philip J. Furlong, published by William H. Sadlier, New York, 1937. The words, phrases, and sentences underlined are those which were used in testing the comprehension of the social studies material.

I Three rivers helped in the development of civilization. These rivers were the Nile in Egypt and the Tigris and Euphrates in Western Asia. The important civilizations which grew up about these rivers are called the "river civilizations." The people of the river civilizations learned many things of value which the people of Europe learned in turn from them.

II The Egyptians were folk who lived in the valley of the Nile. The Nile River helped the Egyptian farmers. Once a year there are heavy rains in the mountains where the river has its source. This water floods down and on reaching the lower Nile valley overflows the river banks. At that time much of the country is under water. During the dry season, the river returns to its channel but it leaves behind a deposit of the richest soil. The country on either side of the river is evenly coated with a fertile loam.

III The Egyptians constructed huge pyramids of stone as tombs for their kings. They also built large and beautiful temples, for they were a religious people. They believed so firmly in life after death that the bodies of the dead were preserved as mummies.

IV Some of the useful things learned by the Egyptians were used centuries later by the people of Europe. The Egyptians were expert
farmers. They understood the importance of the rotation of crops.

V Perhaps one of the most important accomplishments of the Egyptians was their system of writing. The Egyptian way of writing had an influence on the alphabet we use. The earliest form of Egyptian writing is called hieroglyphics or picture writing. The Egyptians put some of their records on tall stone shafts.

VI Greece is located between Europe and Asia. It is in an especially interesting spot at the crossroads between Europe and Asia. Now that is important because in ancient times there was considerable civilization in Egypt and in that part of Asia which is quite near Greece. The Greeks, then, were in a position in Europe to receive the benefits of these ancient civilizations. They were protected by the sea and tall mountains which surrounded them from the less civilized people, those living in the west.

VII There are certain peculiar features about the land of Greece. The country of Greece is divided into small sections because of its many mountains and valleys. You can easily see that in such a country the people might come to live in small groups each cut off from the other. The Greeks were unusually self-reliant. In time there developed in Greece many little states called city-states.

VIII The Greeks developed a good form of government. At first there was no real ruler but a leader of the tribe. This leader was not satisfied until he became a ruler as well. This was how the office of
king began. But while the office of king was being brought about, a new part of government was forming. Certain men of the tribe began to grow more wealthy than their neighbors. Naturally, such men being the most powerful in the village would be closest to the king. They would have a great deal to say about how the village should be run. Out of this situation there developed the council. The king and the council, however, were not always free to act as they liked. In some city-states they had to consult the citizens. The citizens were summoned to the market place where questions were put before them.

IX The ideal form of government is that kind in which the people rule themselves. The government by the people is called democracy. But Greek democracy while a great improvement over the government in other lands during ancient times was far from perfect. The Greeks did not understand the value of human life or the dignity of man.

X In the story of democracy the names of Draco, Solon, and Pericles are important. Draco served the Greeks in Athens by giving them a written body of laws. Before Draco's time people followed custom. Custom is not as satisfactory as written law because customs can be changed easily. A set of written laws was needed, but since Draco's laws were so severe, they left much to be desired. Solon greatly improved the lot of the ordinary Greek by his reforms. He gave even the poorest citizen a voice in the government.

XI Pericles was another outstanding figure in the history of Athens. He was a sort of political leader of the people. During the "Age of
Pericles 461-429 B. C. Athens was enjoying its Golden Age. In the time of Pericles some of the most beautiful of the Greek temples were built; the merchants enjoyed perhaps their greatest prosperity and the citizens enjoyed the greatest measure of freedom.

XII During the Middle Ages a new form of order was tried out. This was the feudal system. Feudalism divided the people into a ruling class and a working class. At the top were the feudal lords or landowners. Less important members of this class were the vassals. They were those who held land because some feudal lord had bestowed it upon them in return for a promise of military service or some other service. The feudal system was not the same at all times and in all countries. The powers of a feudal lord in England differed from those of a feudal lord in France. The authority which a feudal lord enjoyed in one century his descendants might not possess at a later date.

XIII The one receiving land from a feudal lord is called a vassal. When the lord granted land to a vassal, the vassal received merely the use of the land; the lord still retained the title of owner. But after the death of the vassal the land did not return to the feudal lord who was its legal owner; the use of the land passed to the sons of the vassal and in time the ownership of the land became hereditary.

XIV The ceremony which took place when a man became a vassal shows the relationship between lord and vassal. The ceremony was called homage. The new vassal came into the presence of the lord. Kneeling before him
with head bowed, the vassal promised to be the lord's man. The lord declared himself ready to defend the vassal even at the risk of his life. As a sign of the agreement the lord sometimes gave his new vassal a clod of earth or a green twig.

XV The majority of the people in the early Middle Ages were farm workers. In many cases they were not free laborers but serfs or workers who were bound to the soil. This meant that the serfs generally had to remain on the land where they were born. The serfs lived in small houses which clustered about the house or castle of their lord forming a village. The homes of the serfs were miserable houses consisting of a single room.

XVI The feudal lord lived in a great stone house or castle. It was a home and fort combined. If no rocky height was available, the castle was erected in a marshy place. In this case, it was surrounded by a ditch or moat which was filled with water. To enter or leave the castle one had to cross a drawbridge. When not needed, this was drawn up close to the castle walls.

XVII During an attack the people in the castle were quite safe from the enemy. The castle usually could not be captured easily except by starving the garrison. This could be done if the enemy could besiege the castle long enough, for rarely was there a large food supply on hand. To attack a castle required great courage. In almost perfect safety, the defenders could shoot arrows at the attacking party. When the attacking party did come close their position was not enviable.
The garrison hurled great stones upon them, or poured oil or molten lead over them. Sometimes those who attacked the castle were aided by war engines. **Battering rams were used; the purpose of these was to make a breach in the walls of the castle through which the attacking force could rush.**

XVIII The Castle made a much better fort than home. The most ordinary conveniences we have in our homes such as artificial light, running water and good heating were unknown to the castle dwellers. The plan of the residence was simple. It consisted of a great hall with several smaller rooms opening into it. The rooms usually were connected with each other. There were no passageways, so that to get from one part of the residence to the other, you had to pass through the rooms between. There could be no privacy. **The walls were perfectly bare except for an occasional tapestry.** There was little furniture and this was usually uncomfortable.

XIX The nobles were frequently at war. When at home they spent much of their time at amusements. They played games. **Chess was a great favorite.** The people of the castle were often entertained by *strolling minstrels who got their board for their songs.*

XX To belong to a class of men called knights or to achieve knighthood was the ambition of almost every boy whose father was a feudal lord. **Just about the time our boys go to school the boy of the Middle Ages, if eligible, began to prepare for knighthood. He began as a page.**

When he reached his fourteenth birthday he might be promoted to be a
squire. As a squire the boy learned more about the duties of a knight. Having reached the age of twenty-one, the squire was ready to become a knight. The knights had their amusements. Sometimes two knights would have a sham battle called a joust.
The following excerpts from the pupils' responses on the free-expression test demonstrate the wide variation of interpretation which pupils have on reading identical material.

Three rivers helped in the development of civilization.

Pupils' responses:

1. Land that is open
2. Boats, power, rivers
3. Lot of land
4. Have good sense
5. European people
6. Big body of water
7. More boats and more cars
8. Group of people
9. People lived in freedom.
10. Like there's peace

Three rivers helped in the development of civilization.

Pupils' responses:

1. Something turns out.
2. People learned the value of it.
3. Rivers helped to make the world.
4. Certain people there to help it
5. To explore something
6. It was talked about.
7. Like making a picture you can see. (photography?)
8. Bring people together so they can be united.
9. Ditches run into each other and make a bigger ditch.
10. Make friends together and learn things together.
The important civilizations which grew up about these rivers are called "river civilizations."

Pupils’ responses:

1. Water made more electricity.
2. Rivers got larger.
3. Along the rivers they were quiet people.
5. They were made up.
6. Civilized people kept those rivers clean.
7. They knew many values.
8. More boats, food supplies, and tools.
10. They learned things from them.

Egyptians were folk who lived in the valley of the Nile.

Pupils’ responses:

1. Parents lived in valley of the Nile.
2. Band of people came there.
3. There were a
4. They were the people.
5. A lot of people lived there.
6. They were born and raised there.
7. They were people.
8. People lived by the Nile.
9. Old people who lived in the valley of the Nile.
10. They lived in the valley.

During the dry season the river returns to its channel, but it leaves behind a deposit of the richest soil.

Pupils’ responses:

1. If you have some money in the bank.
2. Good land
3. Foam of the water
4. A lot
5. Get more
6. Stirred up the soil
7. They find something.
8. Some place where you keep something
9. Overflow
10. To put in
The country on either side of the river is evenly coated with a **fertile loam**.

**Pupils' responses:**

1. That the ground was fertilized.
2. The soil was soft.
3. Covered with water
4. Land lays flat.
5. Same all around
6. Each side of the river had as much.
7. No bumps
8. Sand
10. Each side had fertile dust.

The Egyptians believed so firmly in life after death that the bodies of the dead were preserved as mummies.

**Pupils' responses:**

1. They're dead.
2. Saved for 100 years and then gradually rot away.
3. Didn't want to bury them so made a dummy of them.
4. Wasn't real people, just made up.
5. People believe in mummies.
6. After they were buried they were still alive.
7. They put a sort of doll over top.
8. After he's dead his flesh wears off and he's a mummy.
9. Being dead
10. Pickled them so they would keep.

They understood the importance of the rotation of crops.

**Pupils' responses:**

1. How much crops there were
2. Understood the values of crops
3. Knew how things grew
4. Good parts of crops
5. Understood the way they grew
6. How to put so many seeds in the ground
7. Knew how to farm
3. They understood the ground.
9. Different seasons for crops
10. Knew how to fertilize, weed, and water the crops.

The Egyptian way of writing had an influence on the alphabet we use.

Pupils' responses:

1. Different than our way of writing.
2. Wrote a picture instead of writing an alphabet.
3. In the early days they used pictures instead of a word.
4. It was different.
5. They used our alphabet.
6. Had an idea of what it meant.
7. Wrote it on a plant.
8. Had a hard time learning it.
9. They didn't know how to use our alphabet.
10. They write different than we have.

The Egyptians put some of their records on tall stone shafts.

Pupils' responses:

2. They would write on rocks.
3. Wrote their history on a plant.
4. Put some of their writing on flat rocks.
5. So won't break the things you hear from a phonograph.
6. Put their scores on big pieces of rock.
7. Laid some letters on a tall rock.
8. Put pictures on stone signs.
9. Put pictures they drew on shelves.

There was considerable civilization in Egypt.

Pupils' responses:

1. Good civilization
2. That they lived in Greece
3. It was sensible.
4. Civilization was O.K.
5. They were friendly.
6. They didn't fight.
7. There was lots of bare land.
8. They respected their rights.
9. There were a lot of people.
10. Sort of lived in groups.

The Greeks, then, were in a position to receive the benefits of these ancient civilizations.

Pupils' responses:

1. They had the right to receive.
2. It was a useful thing to remember.
3. They got the idea of being united from the older cities.
4. They were ready for anything to happen.
5. They could remember the things of long ago.
6. That they were receiving the peace.
7. They were ready to do what the ancient Greeks did.
8. They were ready to learn.
9. They should have took the credit.
10. To rule the land.

There are certain peculiar features about the land of Greece.

Pupils' responses:

1. Some strange ways about Greece.
2. Funny things.
3. Because it is divided into separated parts.
4. It is divided into two small sections.
5. Very strange happenings in Greece.
6. There are certain important things about the land of Greece.
7. They don't care what they do.
8. It means there were strange things they did.
9. Different ideas than ours.
10. Greece is different.
The Greeks were unusually self-reliant.

Pupils' responses:

1. Told the truth
2. Not trustful
3. They liked to be alone because they were peace lovers.
5. They worked together.
6. They were useful builders.
7. They could be trusted.
8. They were strongly taken for granted on themselves.
9. Because they started many little city-states.
10. They kept care of themselves.

This combination of gifts the Cretans were to hand on to yet another people, the Greeks.

Pupils' responses:

1. They reserved gifts for someone.
2. They were a religious people, the Cretans.
3. They handed their gifts to each country.
4. Because they followed them in this religion.
5. They were to give the gifts to the Greeks.
6. That means to pass on things from one year to the next.
7. They were strong.
8. They used the same ideas as the Cretans.
9. These people gave their gifts to their sons.
10. This number of presents the Cretans were going to give to the Greeks.

But while the office of king was being brought about, a new part of government was forming.

Pupils' responses:

1. The office of king was going to come while the the new government took his place.
2. Government was growing.
3. A new law was forming.
4. A new government was going in office.
5. The king was getting wealthy.
6. While the king was coming, the government were making something new.
7. They were forming council of the tribe.
8. They chose a new king.
9. While the king was being made king the people were making government.
10. Other people were becoming wealthy.

Naturally, such men being the most powerful in the village would be closest to the king.

Pupils' responses:

1. The king would have powerful knights.
2. The king liked strong men.
3. People were stronger than the king.
4. They were richer and had the best.
5. They had greater interest.
6. They were brave men.
7. They were the richest of the citizens.
8. They would tell the king how to rule the people.
9. Wealthy men would be friends of the king.
10. The strongest men would be helpers of the king.

Out of this situation there developed the council.

Pupils' responses:

1. Developed a program
2. They were the men the king decided.
3. That some of the powerful men became councilmen.
4. Because they were not free to act as they liked all the time.
5. That means a war.
6. Other men would be head of the village.
7. They made a jury.
8. The king couldn't act as he wished.
9. They had to obey.
10. They gathered a large group of men together.
The citizens were summoned to the market place where the question was put before them.

Pupils' responses:

1. They had to go.
2. They were asked questions about the council.
3. They were taken to the market place and sold for money.
4. No one would buy from them.
5. A place where you buy food.
6. They were eager to get things.
7. That means where they sold food or clothes.
8. They were to go to town.
9. Where they could be questioned.
10. People went to the place where they bought things.

The ideal form of government is that kind in which the people rule themselves.

Pupils' responses:

1. So that they would not fight.
2. The people would not believe in a governor.
3. The good form of government.
4. The kings didn't have anything to say about it.
5. The people thought like there was no king at all, and they did anything they wanted.
6. That means that no other man rules over them.
7. The people can be trusted.
8. They can do what they want to do.
9. It was the best way of ruling.
10. They all wanted to rule themselves.

The Greeks did not understand the value of human life or the dignity of man.

Pupils' responses:

1. They didn't have any laws.
2. They didn't care if they did.
3. They did not understand the way of man's life.
4. They did not know what was right and wrong.
5. Because they did not learn them.
6. They did not know the life of their.
7. Leaders were always rich and did not know about the poor people.
8. They did not know the cost of life or good of people.
9. Greeks did not understand about human life or the hardships of man.
10. That they should be like.

Before Draco's time people followed custom.

Pupils' responses:

1. People came behind him.
2. They did things that we don't do nowadays.
3. They did whatever they wanted to.
4. People followed the right.
5. Before he came on earth the people did the way they used to.
6. That would be no good.
7. Folk had their own rules.
8. People lived their own way.
9. That means they didn't have any hard work.
10. All the people did the same thing.

Pericles was another outstanding figure in the history of Athens.

Pupils' responses:

1. He was a good man.
2. He was another outstanding shape in the history.
3. That means it was sort of a hobby.
4. He stood for his rights.
5. Pericles was a model in Athens.
6. He was known all over.
7. He led the Greeks.
8. He made people rich.
9. Pericles was another good man in ancient history of Athens.
10. He was a good king.

During the "Age of Pericles," 461-429 B. C., Athens was enjoying its Golden Age.
Pupils' responses:

1. It was the birthday time.
2. He was happy of his age.
3. They would enjoy life.
4. Athens was glad of his old age.
5. It was a certain time.
6. They made pretty stores.
7. Having fun with age.
8. They built pretty buildings for old people.
9. They were built of gold.
10. Golden temples were built.

Galen greatly improved the lot of the ordinary Greek by his reforms.

Pupils' responses:

1. He was good.
2. He made better living.
3. Galen grew stronger.
4. Galen made the Greeks become more friendly.
5. He did better things.
6. He became strict.
7. He made the Greek language better.
8. He was working his way up to a great place.
9. This made things better than the usual things.
10. He did better to rule any Greek.

The people of the Middle Ages lived under the feudal form of society.

Pupils' responses:

1. The people long ago.
2. Every man had his place for middle age—especially farmers.
3. They were not too old.
4. Every man had his place.
5. The people of old age.
6. Every man had his liking for old age.
7. They were in the center.
8. They weren't too young and they weren't too old.
9. When they were around fifty.
10. It made the kind of people they are.
The use of the land passed to the sons of the vassal and in time the ownership of the land became hereditary.

Pupils' responses:

1. Someone could not take it away.
2. They took it away.
3. The land was worth a lot of money.
4. The people had a hard time to find land.
5. Ownership of the land became inherit.
6. They show relationship between lord and vassal.
7. They passed it to one another.
8. Gave the land to—don't know hereditary.
9. Sometimes they became the owner of their property.
10. After the men died their sons took their place.

The ceremony which took place when a man became a vassal shows the relationship between lord and vassal.

Pupils' responses:

1. They had a party for him.
2. One is higher than the other.
3. To show that he was liked in some way.
4. Shows the friendship between lord and vassal.
5. There was a big feast for the men who received land.
6. It shows how kind the lord is to the vassal.
7. They could trust each other.
8. It showed how the lord and vassal felt about each other.
9. When a man becomes a vassal it shows companionship between lord and vassal.
10. The vassal became a relative.

In many cases they were not free laborers but serfs or workers who were bound to the soil.

Pupils' responses:

1. The soil was rich and good.
2. They couldn't do any work they wanted. They could do only one work.
3. They were tied to the dirt.
4. Because they made them work hard.
5. People who liked to work in rich soil.
6. They were sort of slaves.
7. They had to work but were free.
8. They worked for very little.
9. Not many had freedom.
10. They put them in jail.

Battering rams were also used to make a breach in the walls.

Pupils' responses:

1. Machines hit against the walls of the castle.
2. They had stone corners.
3. They help the people in the castle.
4. These kind of goats were used.
5. They used them to knock down the door.
6. The don't know rams would break the walls.
7. It helped the people.
8. So they could rush them.
9. To attack.
10. For a home.

The people of the castle were often entertained by strolling minstrels who got their board for their songs.

Pupils' responses:

1. They liked to sing.
2. People dressed up like negroes.
3. People who sang to get some money.
4. Walking singers who got to sleep for their songs.
5. They were given prizes.
6. They entertain them.
7. Money to pay their expenses.
8. People sang songs.
9. They went and played instruments.
10. They sang songs to get their pay.

The tournament was a sham battle between two groups of nights.

Pupils' responses:

1. It was a contest battle between two.
2. They did not like to fight this battle.
3. It was horrible to watch the battle.
4. They fought furious.
5. This was a bad battle between two groups of knights.
6. Hard fight among them.
7. This was a war.
8. Kings from one castle against other kings.
9. These two groups fought between each other.
10. Of a fight.
The oral tests of three pupils are given here: the pupil with the highest score on the Gates' Reading Test, one with a middle score, and one with the lowest score.

The first pupil was a fifth grader with an I. Q. of 115 and one who made an average of 9.3 on the Gates' Test. He was a good student and read continually. During the oral test he was rather reserved and cautious in his responses. While there was some agreement between the responses given on the free-expression test and those given on the oral test, the oral responses were more complete than those put in writing. There was a tendency to answer, "I don't know," to the oral questions, but the testing situation was such that he knew another response was expected of him. The results of the test were not as had been anticipated. Considering his I. Q. and his high rating on the reading test, better and clearer responses might have been expected.

Teacher: What does civilization mean?
Robert: Where people were.

T.: What people do you mean.
R.: People who lived by the rivers.

T.: Are people who live by the rivers the only people who are civilized?
R.: No.

T.: What do you think civilization means?

T.: What is meant by development of civilization?
R.: Three rivers helped people to go there.

T.: To go where?
R.: Helped the people to live by the rivers.
T.: Read the sentence again. What does it mean to you?
R.: I think it means the way I have it.

T.: What do you think is the meaning of the phrase, "civilisation which grew up about these rivers"?
R.: People came and lived there.

T.: Lived where? Lived on the rivers? Built houses on the rivers?
R.: No, built them by the rivers.

T.: How would civilization grow up?
R.: More people came.

T.: Tell me, what is meant by, "the Egyptians were folk who lived in the valley of the Nile"?
R.: More people who lived in the valley of the Nile.

T.: What does folk mean?
R.: People.

T.: What is a deposit?
R.: Left behind good soil.

T.: What does the word "deposit" mean?
R.: Like you put money in the bank is all I know.

T.: Is that what you think it means in that paragraph?
R.: No.

T.: What does it mean if it doesn't mean money?
R.: I don't know what it means.

T.: What is fertile loam?
R.: Good soil.

T.: Can you tell me what the phrase, "preserved as mummies means"?
R.: Kept them.

T.: What are mummies?
R.: Dead.

T.: Do you know how they were preserved?
R.: They wrapped cloth around them.

T.: Why did they use cloth?
R.: To keep them so they wouldn't rot.
T. : The Egyptians understood the importance of rotation of crops—what does that mean?
R. : They knew when to plant crops.

T. : What does the word "rotation" mean?
R. : I don't know.

T. : The books say that the Egyptian way of writing had an influence on the alphabet we use. How is that?
R. : Like our writing.

T. : Do you mean that the Egyptian writing was like our writing?
R. : Yes.

T. : How would it be like our writing?
R. : In their letters.

T. : Do you think their letters were like ours?
R. : Yes.

T. : What does this sentence mean, "The Egyptians put some of their records on tall stone shafts"?
R. : They put some of the things they did on stone.

T. : What do you mean by records?
R. : Things they did.

T. : What things for instance?
R. : Important things.

T. : What would some of the important things be?
R. : When the king died.

T. : What else?
R. : When they got a new king.

T. : And what else?
R. : I don't know what else.

T. : "The Greeks, then, were in a position to receive the benefits of these ancient civilizations." What does that mean?
R. : To get the people.

T. : What do you mean by "get the people"?
R. : I don't know.
T.: What do you think "in a position" means? The Greeks were in a position.
R.: I don't know.

T.: What does "benefits" mean?
R.: I don't know.

T.: What are ancient civilizations?
R.: Long ago.

T.: Tell me the meaning of, "People living in Greece were protected by the sea and the tall mountains from the less civilized people in the west."
R.: People from the west couldn't get at them.

T.: Why would they want to get at them?
R.: To fight them.

T.: Why would they want to fight them?
R.: Because they weren't civilized.

T.: Who weren't civilized?
R.: The people from the west.

T.: What is meant by "Greece"?
R.: Land.

T.: There were certain peculiar features about the land of Greece. What does that mean?
R.: Different things.

T.: What does "peculiar" mean?
R.: Punny.

T.: What are features?
R.: There's more than one.

T.: There is more than one what?
R.: More than one of those city states.

T.: What does it mean where it says, "The Greeks were unusually self-reliant"?
R.: I don't know.

T.: Do you know the meaning of "unusually"?
R.: No.
T.: What do you think it might mean?
R.: Different.

T.: The palaces of their kings were indeed magnificent. What does that tell you?
R.: They were richly built.

T.: What does "indeed" mean?
R.: I don't know.

T.: What does it mean, "This combination of gifts the Cretans were to hand on to yet another people, the Greeks"?
R.: The things they built.

T.: What does the word "combination" mean?
R.: Lot of different things.

T.: Anything else?
R.: No.

T.: Tell me, what is the meaning of the sentence, "But, while the office of king was being brought about, a new part of government was forming"?
R.: Different people were getting wealth and powerful.

T.: What is the office of king?
R.: I don't know.

T.: What is an office?
R.: Business place.

T.: Would the office of king be where he lived?
R.: No, it would be where he talked to other people about what they were to do.

T.: "Naturally, each man being the most powerful in the village would be closest to the king." What does that mean?
R.: They would be a ruler.

T.: What is the meaning of "naturally"?
R.: I don't know.

T.: What would you say closest to the king means?
R.: I don't know.
T.: What would you think it means to be closest to the king?
R.: They would be higher than the other people.

T.: What does closest mean? Closest to the king?
R.: I can't think.

T.: What is the meaning of "Out of this situation there developed the council"?
R.: I don't know.

T.: What is a situation?
R.: I don't know.

T.: Do you know what a council is?
R.: No.

T.: Did you ever hear of a council?
R.: No.

T.: Tell me what does this sentence mean, "The citizens were summoned to the market place"?
R.: They were called to the business place of the town.

T.: It says here that the ideal form of government is that kind in which the people rule themselves. What does that mean?
R.: People to what they want.

T.: What is an ideal form of government? What does ideal mean?
R.: I don't know.

T.: When something is ideal, what is it like?
R.: I don't know.

T.: "The Greeks did not understand the value of human life or the dignity of man." What is the meaning of that?
R.: They didn't know it was bad to kill someone.

T.: What do you think "value of human life" mean?
R.: I don't know.

T.: What is meant by "dignity of man"?
R.: I don't know.

T.: Drses served the Athenians by giving them a written body of laws. What does that mean?
R.: It gave them some laws.
T.: What does it mean, "Draco served the Athenians"?
R.: Helped them.

T.: What is a body of laws?
R.: I don't know.

T.: What would written laws mean?
R.: I don't know.

T.: Do you think they had other laws besides written laws?
R.: They had custom.

T.: What does it mean that before Draco's time the people followed custom?
R.: They all wore the same clothes and did the same things.

T.: Would they do those things only on holidays?
R.: I don't know.

T.: Custom could be only for holidays, is that what you mean?
R.: Yes.

T.: What does it mean, "Pericles was another outstanding figure in the history of Athens"?
R.: He was a great leader.

T.: What does "outstanding" mean? "He was an outstanding figure."
R.: Numbers are figures.

T.: Do you think that is what it means in this paragraph?
R.: No, because he was a leader.

T.: He was sort of political leader, what does that tell you?
R.: I don't know.

T.: What does political mean?
R.: I don't know.

T.: What does leader mean?
R.: One who is ahead.

T.: What would a political leader be?
R.: I don't know.

T.: What does the "Age of Pericles" mean?
R.: While he was alive.

T.: What was the Golden Age of Athens?
R.: When they had gold.
T.: What kind of gold?
R.: There's only one kind of gold, isn't there?

T.: What would "Golden Age" be?
R.: A lot of the buildings were gold.

T.: How did Solon greatly improve the lot of the ordinary Greek by his reforms?
R.: I don't know.

T.: What does improved mean?
R.: He helped.

T.: What is an ordinary Greek?
R.: A plain one.

T.: What are reforms?
R.: I have no idea.

T.: Solon gave every poorest citizen a voice in the government. What does that mean?
R.: The worst people had something to do with the government. The poorest citizen could say something about the government.

T.: What would they say?

T.: Who were people of the Middle Ages?
R.: I don't know.

T.: Did you ever hear of it before?
R.: Yes.

T.: Where?
R.: I don't know. I don't remember.

T.: What does it mean when it says, "At the top were the feudal lords or land owners"?
R.: They were the rulers.

T.: Rulers of what?
R.: Rulers of the other people.

T.: Vassals were those who held land because some feudal lord had bestowed it upon them in return for a
practise of military service or some other service." What does that mean?

P.: That if the ruler gave them the land they would do work for him or fight for him.

T.: What does hereditary mean? "The use of the land passed to the sons of the vassals and in time the ownership became hereditary."

R.: I don't know.

T.: Read the paragraph again and tell me what you think it means.

R.: It was given to his son.

T.: "The ceremony which took place when a man became a vassal showed the relationship between lord and vassal." What does that sentence mean?

R.: It meant that they were related?

T.: How were they related?

R.: I don't know.

T.: Do you think that they were relatives?

R.: They might have been.

T.: Were they always related? When did they become relatives?

R.: When the man became a vassal.

T.: What does homage mean?

R.: I don't know.

T.: "In many cases they were not free laborers but serfs or workers who were bound to the soil." What does that mean?

R.: They always had to work in the same place.

T.: Do you think they were paid?

R.: They got some of the food that they grew.

T.: Do you think that they received money?

R.: No.

T.: Were they like slaves?

R.: Sorts. Always had to work all the time.

T.: Would you say, then, that people who have to work all the time are slaves?

R.: Yes, without money.
T.: What do you think of the serfs' homes? It says, "They were miserable houses consisting of a single room."
R.: They were not good houses and had only one room.

T.: What were miserable houses?
R.: Not good houses and only one room.

T.: Do you think their homes were unhappy?
R.: No.

T.: How was the castle a house and fort combined?
R.: It was a house and a fort both.

T.: What is a fort?
R.: A place behind which you fight.

T.: What does "combined" mean?
R.: Two things in one.

T.: "If no rocky height was available, the castle was built in a marshy place."
R.: If they couldn't find a hill they built in a swamp.

T.: What does erected mean?
R.: Built.

T.: "The castle could not be captured easily except by starving the garrison."
R.: They could not get into the castle without starving the people.

T.: Would they take their food away from them?
R.: No.

T.: What would they do?
R.: The people inside would use up all the food.

T.: Why couldn't they get more food?
R.: Because the enemy was around the castle.

T.: What does it mean where it says, "This could be done if the enemy could besiege the castle long enough."
R.: They could capture the castle.
T.: How could that be done?
R.: By starving the people.

T.: "Except for the difficulty of storing food, those defending the castle had the advantage."
R.: If those in the castle had enough food they had a better chance of winning the war.

T.: What does "advantage" mean?

T.: "It was, therefore, a great accomplishment for the attacking party to get near the castle. When they did come close their position was not enviable."
R.: It was hard for the attacking party to get close to the castle, because the ones in the castle could shoot arrows at them.

T.: What does it mean where it says, "When they did come close their position was not enviable"?
R.: When they got near the castle it wasn't a very good place to be.

T.: It says that sometimes the defenders poured oil or molten lead on the attacking force.
R.: Those in the castle poured hot melted lead on the attacking party.

T.: "Battering rams were also used. The purpose of these was to make a breach in the walls."
R.: They were logs used to make a hole in the wall.

T.: What does it mean where it says, "They had no ordinary conveniences such as artificial light."
R.: I don't know.

T.: Do you know what artificial is?
R.: Not real.

T.: What would artificial light be?
R.: Light that wasn't real.

T.: What were the "strolling minstrels who got their bread for their songs?"
R.: They would sing and people would give them something to eat.

T.: What does "bread" mean?
R.: A place to sleep.
T.: Do you mean that they slept on a board?
R.: No, it would be a place in the house to sleep in.

T.: "To achieve knighthood was the ambition of almost every boy." What does ambition mean?
R.: Wanted to do it.

T.: "The boy, if eligible, began to prepare for knighthood." R.: If he was able he began to be a knight.

T.: What do you mean by able?
R.: I don't know any other word to use for it. I think it means do it if you could.

T.: "He began knighthood as a page,"—what is a page?
R.: A boy.

T.: How do you know?
R.: It says so here.

T.: The squire merely acted as an attendant.
R.: I don't know what attendant means.

T.: What does merely mean?
R.: I don't know.

T.: A tournament was a sham battle between two groups of knights.
R.: Just a fun battle.

T.: What do you mean by a fun battle?
R.: It was not a war.

T.: What is meant by the statement, "Even the amusements of the knights called for skill and daring"?
R.: I don't know.

T.: What is skill?
R.: I don't know.

T.: What is daring?
R.: I don't know.
This sixth-grade pupil from the middle group had an I. Q. of 105 with a score of 65 on the Gates Test. The results of the oral test were unexpected. In contrast to the pupil with the higher I. Q. and reading score, she showed no hesitation in her responses and gave evidence of a greater facility in reasoning than he. Her responses could be considered sufficiently clear and her comprehension of the material read fairly adequate.

Teacher: What is meant by "civilization"?
Sally: They made their living.

T.: What is meant by "development of civilization"?
S.: Gradually got civilization.

T.: What do you mean by gradually?
S.: Little by little.

T.: Do you mean that they didn't have civilization from the beginning?
S.: They weren't exactly cannibals. Later on they got in contact with civilized people.

T.: What happened then?
S.: Gradually they got civilized themselves.

T.: The civilization which grew up about these rivers — what does that mean?
S.: I don't know.

T.: What do you think it means?
S.: All civilized people made villages up among these rivers.

T.: You could civilization "grow up"?
S.: Later on more and more people came to the villages.

T.: Then what happened?
S.: The villages grew bigger.

T.: What is the meaning of the sentence, "The Egyptians were folk who lived in the valley of the Nile."
S.: I don't know what folk means.
T.: What do you think it means?
S.: Well, folk songs were songs sung from generation to generation, but no one knows who wrote them.

T.: Yes, but what does folk mean in this paragraph?
S.: Well, people of different races and creeds lived in the valley of the Nile. All of these races made friends and lived in the valley.

T.: What is a deposit?
S.: When the river goes it leaves the soil fertile.

T.: The country on either side of the Nile was evenly coated with a fertile loam. What does that mean?
S.: They were both flat and had the same equal.

T.: What is loam?
S.: I don't know.

T.: Did you ever hear of it before?
S.: No.

T.: What does fertile mean?
S.: Rich in minerals. Plants can grow very well.

T.: That is right but can you tell me now what loam is—fertile loam?
S.: Minerals?

T.: Do you think loam means minerals?
S.: Yes, and very rich, very full of these minerals.

T.: Where did you hear of minerals?
S.: They say the minerals in the food are very rich.

T.: Can you name some minerals.
S.: Nutrition, full of vitamins.

T.: What is meant by "preserved as mummies"?
S.: They sort of pickled their people—their kings.

T.: When?
S.: Right after they died.

T.: Why?
S.: They wanted to look at them after they were dead.

T.: The Egyptians understood the importance of rotation of crops. What does that mean?
S.: They understood the importance of different crops.
T.: What does rotation mean?
S.: I know rotation the earth but not rotation of crops.

T.: What does rotation of the earth mean?
S.: The earth goes round.

T.: Would rotation mean the same in that paragraph?
S.: I don't think so.

T.: Why?
S.: I don't see how crops could go round each other.

T.: What is meant by the sentence, "The Egyptian way of writing had an influence on the alphabet we use"?
S.: Somewhat like our alphabet.

T.: How was it like our alphabet?
S.: I don't know.

T.: What does influence mean?
S.: I don't know.

T.: Did you ever hear the word influence before?
S.: No.

T.: The Egyptians put some of their records on tall stone shafts. What does that mean?
S.: They carved on tall stones.

T.: What did they carve?
S.: Their stories.

T.: Stories about what?
S.: Stories about all the happenings.

T.: What are shafts?
S.: Big slabs of stone.

T.: What is the meaning of the sentence: "The Greeks were in a position then to receive the benefits of these ancient civilizations"?
S.: They were in a place where they could get from Europe civilization long time ago.

T.: What are benefits?
S.: I don't know.

T.: Did you ever hear that word before?
S.: I think I have.
T.: What do you think it right mean?
S.: I don't have any idea what it means.

T.: The people living in Greece were protected by sea and the tall mountains which surrounded them. What does that mean?
S.: People living in Greece were guarded by high mountains and sea.

T.: What were they guarded from?
S.: From cannibals and savages, and the less civilized people?

T.: Where were the cannibals, savages, and less civilized people?
S.: In back of the hills.

T.: What would they do to the people in Greece?
S.: I think they would kill them and make slaves of them.

T.: What is Greece?
S.: It is a country. I think it is a country over by Europe.

T.: "There are certain peculiar features about the land of Greece." What does that mean?
S.: Special features—outstanding things about it.

T.: What does "features" mean?
S.: Outstanding things.

T.: What is meant by: "The Greeks were unusually self-reliant"?
S.: They depended upon themselves too much.

T.: What does "unusually" mean?
S.: Strange.

T.: What does this sentence mean: "The palaces of their kings were indeed magnificent"?
S.: They were beautiful and very richly built.

T.: What is the meaning of "indeed"?
S.: Most.

T.: Tell me the meaning of this sentence, "This combination of gifts the Cretans were to hand on to yet another people, the Greeks."
S.: They knew civilization and handed it down to the Greeks.
T.: What does combination of gifts mean?
S.: They had many different kinds.

T.: But, while the office of king was being brought about, a new part of the government was forming. What does that mean?
S.: They were forming a new government.

T.: What is meant by "office of king"?
S.: He had this place and honor of being king.

T.: What is an office?
S.: I don't know how to explain it.

T.: Was it where the king lived?
S.: No, it is like where people are secretaries and some people are presidents of a company.

T.: Is it a room or building?
S.: No, it's a person's rank.

T.: "Naturally, such men being the most powerful in the village, would be closest to the king." What does that mean?
S.: They would have their say about the city. They could say what they wanted to.

T.: They could say what they wanted to about what?
S.: About the city—how it should be run.

T.: What does it mean: "closest to the king"?
S.: They could go in conference with the king.

T.: What is meant by the phrase "such men being the most powerful"?
S.: They owned most of the stores in the city.

T.: What is the meaning of "Out of this situation there developed the council"?
S.: Out of this going on they developed sort of meetings to see how their village should be run.

T.: What would you say, then, a council was?
S.: I don't know.

T.: What would it be made up of?
S.: People—treasurer, secretary, and president.
T.: Tell me, what is the meaning of "the people were summoned to the market place"?
S.: They were called to the market place.

T.: What would a market place be?
S.: Their stores and shopping places.

T.: Do you think that is what it means in that paragraph?
S.: I think so.

T.: Any particular store?
S.: It was an open place and people would come with their things and sell them.

T.: Would that be the only reason they came?
S.: They came if they were going to make a treaty.

T.: "The ideal form of government is that kind in which the people rule themselves." What does that mean?
S.: They could do whatever they want to.

T.: What is meant by a form of government?
S.: A kind.

T.: What would be the ideal form of government? What is meant by ideal?
S.: The right kind.

T.: What is meant by the sentence, "The Greeks did not understand the value of human life or the dignity of man"?
S.: I don't know what dignity means, but if a man did something they didn't like they would kill him.

T.: What was strange about that? Men are put to death nowadays for doing wrong.
S.: They killed them for little things. They didn't understand you had only one life. They didn't know what life was worth.

T.: "Greece served the Athenians by giving them a written body of laws." What does that mean?
S.: We gave them laws they were to follow.

T.: How could Greece serve the Athenians?
S.: By giving them these laws they could abide by them. He gave the poorest people a chance to talk, a voice in the government.
T.: What was a written body of laws?  
S.: He had them all written out on a piece of paper.

T.: Didn't they have any laws before that?  
S.: No, they went by custom.

T.: What does that mean, "Before Draco's time the people followed custom"?  
S.: They followed different manners.

T.: What do you mean by manners?  
S.: The way they did things.

T.: The way they did what things?  
S.: The way they dressed--the way their homes were built--the way they acted.

T.: What does it mean where it says, "Pericles was another outstanding figure in the history of Athens"?  
S.: He had a high place in the history of Athens.

T.: What do you mean by high place?  
S.: Looked upon him as a high man of politics.

T.: What are politics?  
S.: I don't know.

T.: Why do you use the word politics if you do not know what it means?  
S.: It's in the book, and has something to do with government.

T.: What does it mean, "He was sort of political leader"?  
S.: I don't know what political means.

T.: Do you know what leader means?  
S.: He was a high man, all the other people looked up to him.

T.: "During the 'Age of Pericles,' 462-429 B.C., Athens was enjoying the 'Golden Age.' What is the meaning of that?  
S.: Would Golden Age be a good harvest year?

T.: Are you guessing?  
S.: Yes, I don't know what Golden Age is.
T.: What is meant by the "Age of Pericles"?
S.: When Pericles was alive.

T.: What do you think Golden Age was?
S.: They had gold or something to build temples of.

T.: "Solon greatly improved the lot of the ordinary Greek by his reforms." What does that mean?
S.: They had laws and all the rich people were closest to the king.

T.: What did Solon do about it?
S.: He gave the lowest Greek a place in the city.

T.: What is an "ordinary Greek"?
S.: A man who wasn't rich and wasn't exactly poor.

T.: He improved the "lot"; what is the meaning of "improved the lot of the ordinary Greek"?
S.: Lot means ground.

T.: Do you think he improved the ground of the Greeks?
S.: No.

T.: But, it says that he improved the lot of the ordinary Greek.
S.: He improved quite a few of them.

T.: What are reforms?
S.: Would it be strict?

T.: Do you think it means strict?
S.: Not exactly, but by his changes.

T.: What does this mean? "He gave even the poorest citizen a voice in the government."
S.: Before he came all the rich people governed the people.

T.: What happened after Solon came?
S.: He let the poorest people talk.

T.: Talk about what?
S.: About how the city should be run.

T.: What is meant by people of the Middle Ages?
S.: I haven't any idea.
T.: Could you guess?
S.: No.

T.: Did you ever hear of it?
S.: My grandma said she was middle-aged.

T.: What did she mean?
S.: She meant she was fifty.

T.: Do you think it means the same about the people they speak about in the history?
S.: I don't think so.

T.: Why not?
S.: I think it had something to do with the towns.

T.: What would it have to do with the towns?
S.: Is this the year one-thousand one-hundred-forty-nine?

T.: Yes.
S.: Well, when their towns were built long enough and they had their kings and all their rulers.

T.: Then it would be "Middle Ages"?
S.: Well, they had a few kings before that.

T.: What would "Middle Ages" be?
S.: That's what I don't know.

T.: It says that "At the top were the feudal lords or land owners." What does that mean?
S.: People owned property.

T.: Which people?
S.: The lords.

T.: What is meant by "top"; "at the top"?
S.: Top of the class.

T.: What do you mean by class?
S.: The king had them group off in classes.

T.: And then?
S.: The lords would be at the top of the class.

T.: Do you mean the lords were in the first class?
S.: Yes, they were very high.
T.: "Vassals were those who held land because some feudal lord had bestowed it upon them in return for military service or some other service." What does that tell you?
S.: The vassals had worked for the (the lords) at some time.

T.: What does it mean where it says, "the lords bestowed it upon them"?
S.: Gave it in return for their services.

T.: What is military service?
S.: I don't know what military means.

T.: Did you ever hear of military?
S.: Yes, I heard Wally say, "military secret."

T.: What kind of secret would a military secret be?
S.: Army secret.

T.: If military secret means Army secret, what would military service be?
S.: Help them when they fought wars.

T.: The History says, "that the use of the land passed to the sons of the vassal and in time the ownership became hereditary." What does that mean?
S.: I don't know what hereditary means?

T.: Who owned the land at the beginning?
S.: The feudal lord.

T.: What did he do with it?
S.: He let the vassal use it.

T.: When the vassal died what became of the land?
S.: It became hereditary.

T.: What does hereditary mean?
S.: I don't know.

T.: What became of the land?
S.: It passed to the sons of the vassal.

T.: Do you know what hereditary means?
S.: It passed to the sons of the vassal.
T.: The ceremony which took place when a man became a vassal shows the relationship between lord and vassal.
S.: I don't know how they could be related.

T.: Do you think they were related?
S.: Not exactly blood relations.

T.: What kind of relatives, then?
S.: Friendship and service.

T.: Are friends related?
S.: Not exactly.

T.: How were lord and vassal related?
S.: Vassal promised to work.

T.: Would that make them relatives?
S.: Not exactly relatives.

T.: What would the relationship be between lord and vassal?
S.: I don't know exactly what it means.

T.: What was homage?
S.: It is what took place between lord and vassal.

T.: What took place between lord and vassal?
S.: It is a ceremony.

T.: What kind of ceremony?
S.: I don't know.

T.: What did they do?
S.: Showed relationship between lord and vassal.

T.: How did they show it?
S.: I don't know.

T.: In many cases the people were not free laborers but serfs or workers who were bound to the soil.
S.: They would have to stay there and take care of their soil so they could pay their lords and vassal.

T.: What does it mean where it says they were not free laborers?
S.: They had to do this in order to keep the land.
T.: That is meant where it says that they were not free?  
S.: They just had to do it or they couldn't keep the land.

T.: Did the serfs own the land?  
S.: No, they were just using it.

T.: Didn't they get anything in payment for working?  
S.: They got what was left over from what they paid the lord and vassal.

T.: Did they get money?  
S.: No, they got food and products they raised.

T.: What does it mean, "They were bound to the soil"?  
S.: They had to stay on this land where they were born.

T.: "The homes of the serfs were miserable houses consisting of a single room."  
S.: They were poor built houses and very uncomfortable.

T.: How were they uncomfortable?  
S.: They had only one room.

T.: Do you think they were unhappy, miserable means unhappy, doesn't it?  
S.: No, it seems uncomfortable.

T.: How would they be uncomfortable?  
S.: Wouldn't have much furniture and would be small.

T.: What does this sentence mean: "The castle was a home and fort combined"?  
S.: They lived on the inside and on the outside there were strong walls.

T.: What is a fort?  
S.: A place with a big wall on it.

T.: What is it used for?  
S.: To defend themselves.

T.: Defend themselves from what?  
S.: Enemies in war.

T.: What does combined mean?  
S.: Both.
T.: If no rocky height was available, the castle was erected in a marshy place.
S.: If there wasn't a great big rocky place, they would build it in a swamp.

T.: Why would they choose a high place?
S.: Hard for enemy to get up.

T.: Why would the castle sometimes be built in a swamp?
S.: They could put big streams of water to keep the enemy out.

T.: What does "available" mean?
S.: If they couldn't find a rocky height.

T.: What in a drawbridge?
S.: Bridge with two chains on each side—when someone wanted to go past they let these chains down. Then the bridge would fall down.

T.: How do you know it was like that?
S.: I've just seen pictures of them.

T.: "The castle could not be captured easily except by starving the garniers."
S.: They couldn't overtake their enemies because the castle was too big. They couldn't climb over the walls and the doors were all locked.

T.: What is meant by "starving the garniers"?
S.: If they could keep them in long enough, the garniers would get hungry and they would have to come out.

T.: What are the "garniers"?
S.: People.

T.: What kind of people?
S.: They were the "weak people."

T.: What were they doing?
S.: I think they were enemies.

T.: What does this mean: "Except for the difficulty of raising sufficient food, those defending the castle had the advantage"?
S.: The enemy in the castle had the easiest place.
T.: What is the meaning of "advantage"?
S.: I don't know how to explain advantage.

T.: What do you think it means?
S.: I know what it means, but--can't explain it.

T.: "It was, therefore, a great accomplishment for the attacking party to get near the castle."
S.: The party in the castle would throw stones on the attacking party.

T.: What is an "accomplishment"?
S.: A gain.

T.: "Then they did come close their position was not enviable."
S.: I don't exactly know what enviable means.

T.: What do you think it means?
S.: Then they got to a place where they were going to attack nobody else would want to be there.

T.: Why?
S.: Their enemies would be throwing stones.

T.: What is the meaning of "position"?
S.: Spot or place.

T.: "Battering rams were also used; the purpose of these was to make a breach in the walls...."
S.: I don't know what it means.

T.: What were "battering rams"?
S.: I don't know.

T.: What are rams?
S.: That's what I don't know.

T.: What is meant by "battering"?
S.: I don't exactly know.

T.: What do you think it means?
S.: Heavy.

T.: What was heavy?
S.: Rams—but I don't know that word is.
T.: Did you ever hear of it?
S.: Yes.

T.: Where?
S.: The Sign of the Ram.

T.: What is it?
S.: My mother was reading a book about the Sign of the Ram.

T.: But, you do not know what a ram is?
S.: No.

T.: "The most ordinary conveniences we have in our homes such as artificial light, running water, and good heating were unknown to the castle dwellers."
S.: They always used sunlight.

T.: Why?
S.: They didn't know any other kind.

T.: What other kind?
S.: They had firelight.

T.: What does artificial mean?
S.: Not real.

T.: What was chess?
S.: It is a game.

T.: What is it like?
S.: You move things all over a board.

T.: How was it "a great favorite"?
S.: They liked it.

T.: "The people of the castle were often entertained by strolling minstrels who got their board for their songs."
S.: White people dressed up like colored people.

T.: What is meant by "strolling"?
S.: They went from town to town to put on their shows.

T.: How did they get from town to town?
S.: They wouldn't have buses, would they?

T.: Read the paragraph again.
S.: It doesn't say how they got from town to town.
T.: Read the paragraph again and see if you can tell how they went from place to place.
S.: They could walk or go by horseback.

T.: Does the paragraph tell how they got there?
S.: It doesn't say how they got from town to town.

T.: What does "strolling" mean?
S.: Walking.

T.: What kind of minstrel would a strolling minstrel be?
S.: Walking minstrel.

T.: How do you think they went from place to place?
S.: Walked.

T.: What does this mean: they "got their heard for their songs"?
S.: It doesn't sound right.

T.: What do you think "heard" is?
S.: I don't know.

T.: Did you ever hear of it?
S.: I've heard of an ordinary heard, but can't express it in this kind of sentence.

T.: What do you think they would get for singing their songs?
S.: Would it be a medal, like a medal nowadays and long ago they got a heard?

T.: Do you mean that it was a prize for singing?
S.: Yes.

T.: "To belong to a class of men called knights or to achieve knighthood was the ambition of almost every boy whose father was a feudal lord."
S.: All the boys wanted to be knights.

T.: What does "achieve" mean?
S.: To gain.

T.: What is ambition?
S.: They aimed to be.
T.: "...the boy of the Middle Ages, if eligible, began to prepare for knighthood."
S.: If he was the right age.

T.: Is that all that he would have to be, just the right age?
S.: He would have to be strong.

T.: Anything else?
S.: Have to be free of disease.

T.: What more besides being the right age, strong, and free of disease?
S.: He should have a good background.

T.: What do you mean by a good background?
S.: If he was not put in jail.

T.: Many of the boys may have been strong and healthy. Why didn't they become knights?
S.: They weren't rich enough.

T.: Would that be all that was necessary?
S.: Well, they had to be sons of noblemen.

T.: "The squire merely acted as an attendant to his knight."
S.: He helped.

T.: What does merely mean?
S.: I know what it means, but I can't exactly explain. I think it means sort of "just"; just acted as an attendant.

T.: Sometimes two knights would have a sham battle. What was a sham battle?
S.: It was a hard battle.

T.: What does sham mean?
S.: I don't know what sham is.

T.: You said that a "sham battle" was a hard battle; would sham mean hard?
S.: Yes.
T.: "Even the amusements of the knights called for skill and daring."
S.: They were very hard and the knights had to know how to do it.

T.: What is meant by "skill"?
S.: They are very good at it.

T.: What is daring?
S.: Men had to be very brave to do it and they had to take chances.
This pupil, a fifth-grader, with an I. Q. of 74 and a score of 3.2 in reading, responded true to form on his oral test. Definitely a poor reader, his responses were predominantly "I don't know." Further questioning revealed that he did not know the meaning of any of the important words in the selection. His I. Q. rating on the Kuhlman-Anderson test might be open to question. The Kuhlman-Anderson test presupposes a certain amount of reading skill and as this pupil was seriously deficient in reading ability he might possibly have achieved a higher score on another type of test.

Teacher: What is civilization, James?
James: I don't know.

T.: Have you ever heard the word civilization?
J.: I think I have.

T.: When you heard it, what did you think it meant?
J.: I don't know.

T.: You have no idea of what civilization means?
J.: I remember I heard it, but I can't remember it.

T.: That is meant by development of civilization?
J.: I don't know.

T.: Do you know what development means?
J.: Like you develop a cold, but I don't think that's right.

T.: Can you think of what development might mean?
J.: Would it mean when they develop a film?

T.: Do you think that is what it means in that paragraph?
J.: No.

T.: Why not?
J.: It doesn't tell anything about films here.
T.: What is meant by civilization which grew up about these rivers?
J.: It says rivers are called civilization.
T.: What does that mean?
J.: I don't know.
T.: Would it mean civilization which grew up with the rivers?
J.: I don't know.
T.: What does "grew up" mean?
J.: I don't know.
T.: Egyptians were folk who lived in the valley of the Nile--what does that mean?
J.: I don't know.
T.: What are folk?
J.: I don't know.
T.: Did you ever hear of folk?
J.: Do you mean real folks?—would it mean mother and father?
T.: That is what folks mean, but what does folk mean in the paragraph that you read?
J.: I don't know what folk means.
T.: What is a deposit?
J.: I don't know.
T.: Did you ever hear of a deposit?
J.: Yes, unless it means money in the bank.
T.: The country each side of the Nile river is evenly coated with a fertile lean. What does that mean?
J.: I don't know.
T.: Do you know what lean is?
J.: No.
T.: Did you ever hear the word lean before?
J.: I don't think so.
T.: What does fertile mean?
J.: I don't know.
T.: Did you ever hear the word fertile before?
J.: Yes.

T.: Where?
J.: I don't know.

T.: Read the sentence again, and see if you can tell what it means.
J.: I don't know. I can't think.

T.: What does "preserved as mummies" mean?
J.: I don't know.

T.: Do you know what a mummy is?
J.: No.

T.: Did you ever hear of a mummy?
J.: Yes.

T.: Where?
J.: I don't know.

T.: Read the paragraph through again and see if you can tell what it means.
J.: I don't know.

T.: What does preserved mean?
J.: Saved for somebody else. (Probably he meant preserved.)

T.: The Egyptians understood the importance of rotation of crops. Can you tell me what that means?
J.: I don't know.

T.: What does "understood" mean? the Egyptians understood?
J.: I don't know.

T.: What could you say instead of saying "I understood what you mean"?
J.: Would it be "I know what you mean"?
T.: Yes.

T.: What does rotation mean?
J.: I don't know.

T.: What are crops?
J.: Corn, wheat, barley.
C.: What does rotation of crops mean?
J.: I don't know.

C.: What is meant by the sentence, "The Egyptian way of writing had an influence on the alphabet we use"?
J.: I don't know.

C.: What do you think "their way of writing" means?
J.: They write different.

C.: What does influence mean?
J.: I don't know.

C.: What does it mean that the Egyptians put some of their records on tall stone shafts?
J.: I don't know.

C.: What are records?
J.: The only thing I can think of is records you put on a phonograph.

C.: Do you think that is what records means in that paragraph?
J.: I don't know.

C.: Why would they put their records on tall stone shafts?
J.: I don't know.

C.: What are tall stone shafts?
J.: I don't know.

C.: What does it mean where it says, "The Greeks were in a position to receive the benefits of these ancient civilizations"?
J.: I forget.

C.: What does received mean? — to receive something?
J.: To have a letter.

C.: What are benefits?
J.: I don't know.

C.: Did you ever hear the word benefits?
J.: Yes.

C.: What did you think it meant?
J.: They could depend on you.
T.: The people living in Greece were protected by the sea and tall mountains which surrounded them. Can you tell me what that means?
J.: I don't know.
T.: What does protected mean?
J.: I don't know.
T.: Did you ever hear the word protected?
J.: Yes.
T.: What did it mean?
J.: Like somebody would be after you and you would be safe.
T.: How would the Greeks be safe?
J.: Safe by sea and tall mountains.
T.: What would they be safe from?
J.: Safe from war.
T.: What is Greece?
J.: Greece.
T.: Yes.
T.: Would it mean the Greece you grease something with?
T.: Do you think that is what it means in that paragraph?
J.: I don't think so.
T.: Why don't you think so?
J.: Because people wouldn't live in grease. I don't think they would, but the book says they did live in grease. It wouldn't be nice.
T.: Do you think that is what it means in the book?
J.: I don't know, unless it means the place where they lived.
T.: What is meant by the sentence, "There were certain peculiar features about the land of Greece"?
J.: I don't know.
T.: What are features?
J.: I don't know.
T.: What does peculiar mean?
J.: Does it mean strange?
T.: What would you say peculiar features are?
J.: I don't know.

T.: What does self-reliant mean? The Greeks were unusually self-reliant.
J.: I don't know.

T.: What does unusually mean?
J.: I know what it means, but I can't think of a sentence.

T.: Did you ever hear of something being unusual?
J.: Like when you do something and someone says that's unusual.

T.: What would they mean?
J.: If you were bad, they would say it was unusual for you to be good.

T.: What would unusual mean?
J.: That's the first time for a long time.

T.: The palaces of their kings were indeed magnificent. What does that mean?
J.: Real pretty. They keep it nice and clean and have lots of pretty things.

T.: This combination of gifts the Cretans gave to still another people, the Greeks. What does that mean?
J.: I don't know.

T.: What are gifts?
J.: Presents.

T.: Would you say that the Cretans gave presents to the Greeks?
J.: I don't think so. Aren't they against each other?

T.: Do you think, then, that they gave presents to the Greeks?
J.: They must have not been against each other.

T.: But while the office of king was being brought about, a new part of government was forming. What does that mean?
J.: I don't know.
T.: What is an office?
J.: It is like the office in school.

T.: Do you mean a room?
J.: Yes.

T.: What do you think the office of King would be?
J.: Would it be the King's office?

T.: Do you mean his room?
J.: Yes.

T.: "Selon greatly improved the lot of the ordinary Greek by his reforms."
J.: I don't know.

T.: What does lot mean?
J.: Like land but it wouldn't be that, I know.

T.: What is an ordinary Greek?
J.: I don't know.

T.: What does ordinary mean?
J.: Always the same thing.

T.: What are reforms?
J.: I don't know.

T.: What were the people of the Middle Ages?
J.: They weren't young and they weren't old.

T.: "At the top were the feudal lords or land owners."
J.: I don't know.

T.: Can you make a guess about it?
J.: No.

T.: "Barons were those who held land because some feudal lords had barons, i.e., men in return for a promise of military service or some other service."
J.: I don't know.

T.: What is the meaning of military?
J.: I don't know.

T.: What is service?
J.: When they protect the castle.
T.: 'The use of land passed to the sons of the vassal and in time the ownership of the land became hereditary.'
J.: I don't know what it means.

T.: Read it again.
J.: When the father died the son would take over the land.

T.: 'The ceremony which took place when a man became a vassal shows the relationship between lord and vassal. This ceremony was called homage.'
J.: I don't know.

J.: What does relationship mean?
J.: I don't know.

T.: Do you know what a ceremony is?
J.: They celebrate because they have a new lord.

T.: The serfs were not free laborers but rather bound to the soil.
J.: I don't know.

T.: What is meant by 'they were not free laborers'?
J.: If they did something wrong they had to work.

T.: The homes of the serfs were miserable hovels consisting of a single room.
J.: I don't know.

J.: What does miserable mean?
J.: They weren't clean or nice.

T.: How was the castle a home and fort combined?
J.: I don't know.

T.: What does combined mean?
J.: I don't know.

T.: Did you ever hear of it?
J.: No.

T.: 'If no rocky height was near the sea, the castle was erected in a marshy place.'
J.: If there wasn't a big rock, they would build the castle in a swamp.
Q: To enter or leave the castle one had to cross a drawbridge.
J: They had a bridge in the castle.
Q: What kind of bridge?
J: A bridge that no one can go through unless it is someone who is important.
Q: "The castle could not be captured easily except by starving the garrison."
J: I don't know what that means.
Q: What is a garrison?
J: I don't know.
Q: Except for the difficulty in starving food, those defending the castle had the advantage.
J: I don't know.
Q: Do you know what advantage means?
J: They would have more men.
Q: "It was, therefore, a great accomplishment for the attacking party to get near the castle."
J: I don't know.
Q: What does accomplishment mean?
J: I don't know.
Q: The garrison could be starved if the enemy could besiege the castle long enough.
J: I don't know.
Q: What was besiege mean?
J: When they get closer.
Q: "Then they did come close their position was not tenable."
J: I don't know.
Q: What is meant by position?
J: In the same place all the time.
Q: What is the meaning of ambushed?
J: I don't know.
E: "Sometimes the defenders poured oil or molten lead on the attacking party."
J: I don't know.

E: What is molten lead?
J: When they melt it.

E: Why would they pour molten lead on them?
J: I imagine to kill them.

E: Battering rams were used to make a breach in the walls.
J: I don't know.

E: What is a battering ram?
J: I don't know.

E: What does battering mean?
J: I don't know.

E: Do you know what breach means?
J: No.

E: The people in the castle did not have ordinary conveniences such as artificial light and so on.
J: I don't know.

E: What are conveniences?
J: I don't know.

E: What is the meaning of ordinary?
J: Usually have something.

E: What is artificial light?
J: I don't know.

E: Chess was a great favorite.
J: They liked it.

E: What is chess?
J: A game.

E: The people in the castle were entertained by strutting minstrels who got their board for their songs.
J: I don't know.

E: What are minstrels?
J: I don't know.
T.: What does strolling mean?
J.: I don't know.

T.: What is bored?
J.: They got tired of it. (bored?)

T.: "The boy, if eligible, began to prepare for knighthood."
J.: I don't know.

T.: Do you know what eligible means?
J.: You can do it.

T.: What is the meaning of prepare?
J.: When you're ready to do it.

T.: The boy began as a page.
J.: Then he started to school, is when he studied to be a page.

T.: The squire merely acted as an attendant.
J.: I don't know.

T.: What is an attendant?
J.: I don't know.

T.: Did you ever hear of it?
J.: No.

T.: The tournament was a sham battle between two groups of knights.
J.: I don't know.

T.: Do you know what sham means?
J.: No.

T.: "Even the amusements of the knights called for skill and daring."
J.: I don't know what it means.

T.: What are amusements?
J.: I don't know.

T.: What does amuse mean?
J.: To bother somebody.

T.: What is the meaning of skill and daring?
J.: I don't know.
Multiple-Choice True-False Test

Here are some paragraphs. After each paragraph there are some sentences about it. Some of the sentences are true and some are not. Put a check $\checkmark$ in front of each sentence that tells something true about the paragraph.

I. People are said to have civilization when they do not wander from place to place and when they have found better ways of living. Three rivers helped in the development of civilization. These rivers were the Nile in Egypt and the Tigris and the Euphrates in Western Asia. The important civilizations which grew up about these rivers are called the "river civilization." The people of the river civilizations learned many things of value which the people of Europe learned in turn from them.

..... 1. The people were not savages.
..... 2. They built their villages along the rivers.
..... 3. The Egyptians learned how the rivers grew.
..... 4. They learned better ways of living.
..... 5. The people along the Nile were civilized before the people in Europe.
..... 6. It was peaceful along the rivers.
..... 7. There were other civilizations besides river civilizations.
..... 8. The rivers grew larger.
... 9. When they were civilized they lived in freedom.
... 10. Civilization began near the river.
... 11. There were three rivers in Egypt.

II The Egyptians were folk who lived in the valley of the Nile. The Nile River helped the Egyptian farmers. Once a year there are heavy rains in the mountains where the river has its source. This water floods down and on reaching the lower Nile Valley overflows the river's banks. At that time much of the country is under water. During the dry season, the river returns to its channel but it leaves behind a deposit of the richest soil. The country on either side of the river is evenly coated with a fertile loam.
... 1. The Nile River begins in the mountains.
... 2. The Nile River is in Egypt only once a year.
... 3. The Egyptians were people who lived in the valley of the Nile.
... 4. A rich soil was left where the river overflowed.
... 5. Only the Egyptians' parents lived in Egypt.
... 6. There is a layer of silt on the land on either side of the river.
... 7. The land is under water the year round.
... 8. There was good farmland in Egypt.

III The Egyptians constructed huge pyramids of stone as tombs for their kings. They also built large and beautiful temples, for they
were a religious people. They believed so firmly in life after death that the bodies of the dead were preserved as mummies.

... 1. They buried their dead in temples.

... 2. The Egyptians believed people lived after their death.

... 3. They preserved the corpse of the dead.

... 4. Some of the Egyptians believed in ghosts.

... 5. They wrapped the skeleton of the dead person in cloth.

... 6. They did not burn their kings underground.

IV. Some of the useful things learned by the Egyptians were used centuries later by the people of Europe. The Egyptians were expert farmers. They understood the importance of the rotation of crops.

... 1. They planted many crops in a year.

... 2. The Egyptians planted a different crop in the same field each year.

... 3. They knew that the soil wears out.

... 4. Soon the people of Europe learned from the Egyptians.

... 5. They understood how to plant their crops in rows.

... 6. The farmers of Egypt learned many things about farming.

V. Perhaps one of the most important accomplishments of the Egyptians was their system of writing. The Egyptian way of writing had an influence on the alphabet we use. The earliest form of Egyptian writing is called hieroglyphics or picture writing. The
Egyptians put some of their records on tall stone slabs.

1. The Egyptians took pictures of their writing.
2. Their alphabet was somewhat on the same principle as ours.
3. Inventing a way of writing was one of the greatest things
   the Egyptians did.
4. They wrote by drawing pictures.
5. The Egyptians wrote on stone as an account of what they had
   done and what they thought.
6. We got our idea of an alphabet from them.
7. They put words on tall pillars.

VI. Greece is located between Europe and Asia. This is an especially
interesting spot at the crossroads between Europe and Asia. Why that
is important because in ancient time there was considerable civiliza-
tion in Egypt and in the rest of Asia which is quite near Greece.
In Greece, they were in a position in Europe to receive the benefits
of those ancient civilizations. They were protected by the sea and
hill mountains which separated them from the less civilized people,
these living in the West.

8. Greece is a city between Europe and Asia.
9. The people of Greece were the first civilized people.
10. Greece is a very interesting place.
11. People in the West were not as civilized as the Greeks.
The Greeks were in a place where they could get their food from other countries.

The Greeks protected their city with high walls.

The Greeks had many islands that they could use for defense.

There was a great deal of division among the Greeks at first.

There are certain peculiar features about the land of Greece.

The country of Greece is divided into small sections because of its many mountains and valleys. You can easily see this from the map.

The land was not flat, so it would produce good crops only from the valleys. The Greeks were mostly farmers, and they were more developed in Greece than little cold, rainy islands like elsewhere.

The Greeks were very wealthy.

The Greeks were very healthy.

People of Greece looked after themselves.

The geography of Greece caused the land to be divided into small sections.

The Greeks were not united.

People of different sections had little to do with each other.

Greeks were independent.

People lived in groups.
The Greeks developed a good form of government. At first there was no real ruler but a leader of the tribe. This leader was not satisfied until he became a ruler as well. This was how the office of king began. Out of the old office of king was being born, a new form of government was forming. Certain men of the tribe began to grow more wealthy than their neighbors. Naturally, and not being the most powerful in the village would be closest to the king. They would have a great deal to say about how the village should be run. Out of this situation there developed the council. The king and the council, however, were not always free to set as they liked. In some city-states they had to consult the citizens. The citizens were summoned to the market place where questions were put before them.

1. The first ruler of the Greeks was the leader of the tribe.
2. The citizens were called to the market place to vote.
3. The king's office was built for him.
4. The tallest and strongest men would be nearest to the king.
5. The council began when the most powerful men helped run the village.
6. The king and the council had their own say about the government.
7. All the men were not equally wealthy.
8. The citizens of Greece had a say in how the village should be run.
IX. The ideal form of government is that kind in which the people rule themselves. The government by the people is called democracy. But Greek democracy while a great improvement over the government in other lands during ancient times was far from perfect. The Greeks did not understand the value of human life or the dignity of man.

... 1. The best government is a democracy.
... 2. Greek democracy was the very best.
... 3. The Greeks did not think that men were very important.
... 4. Government is better when people rule themselves.
... 5. Other ancient peoples could rule themselves.
... 6. The Greeks did not mind putting people to death.
... 7. When people rule themselves they have a democracy.
... 8. The Greeks did not think that man was worth much.

X. In the story of democracy, the names of Draco, Solon, and Pericles are important ones to remember. Draco served the Greeks in Athens by giving them a written body of law. Before Draco's time people followed custom. Custom is not as satisfactory as written law because customs can be changed easily. A set of written laws was needed, but since Draco's laws were so severe, they left much to be desired. Solon greatly improved the lot of the ordinary Greek by his reforms. He gave even the poorest citizen a voice in the government.
1. The people desired Draco's laws.
2. Solon improved the land of the poor people.
3. When laws were not written they might be changed.
4. No one could be sure about the laws which were not written.
5. Draco's laws made the people happy.
6. Solon let all the poor citizens vote.
7. The laws made by Draco were not the best.
8. Solon made the Greek laws better.

XII Pericles was another outstanding figure in the history of Athens. He was a sort of political leader of the people. During the "Age of Pericles," 461-429 B.C., Athens was enjoying its Golden Age. In the time of Pericles some of the most beautiful of the Greek temples were built; the merchants enjoyed perhaps their greatest prosperity and the citizens enjoyed the greatest measure of freedom.

1. Pericles was a leader in the government.
2. Athens was made of gold.
3. The story-tellers were very rich.
4. Pericles was very old.
5. Beautiful buildings were built in the time of Pericles.
6. The citizens had quite a bit of freedom.
7. The merchants had a good time while Pericles was living.

XIII During the Middle Ages a new form of order was tried out. This was the feudal system. Feudalism divided the people into a ruling class
and a working class. At the top were the feudal lords or landholders. Less important members of this class were the vassals. They were those who held land because some feudal lord had bestowed it upon them in return for a promise of military service or some other service. The feudal system was not the same at all times and in all countries. The powers of a feudal lord in England differed from those of a feudal lord in France. The authority which a feudal lord enjoyed in one century his descendants might not possess at a later date.

1. During the Middle Ages some people ruled and others worked.
2. The most important people were the lords.
3. The vassals had to fight for the lords.
4. An English lord would not be the same as a French lord.
5. People in the Middle Ages bought their land.
6. Middle Ages was when they were forty or fifty years old.
7. The vassal did not own the land.

XIII. The one receiving land from a feudal lord is called a vassal. When the lord granted land to a vassal, the vassal received merely the use of the land; the lord still retained the title of owner. But after the death of the vassal the land did not return to the feudal lord who was its legal owner; the use of the land passed to the sons of the vassal and in time the ownership of the land became hereditary.

1. The lord allowed the vassal the use of the land.
2. The rightful owner of the land was the lord.

3. Later the land was inherited by the sons of the vassal.

4. When the vassal died the lord took the land.

5. The lord and vassal had equal rights.

6. The land was passed from father to son.

XIV The ceremony which took place when a man became a vassal shows the relationship between lord and vassal. The ceremony was called homage. The new vassal came into the presence of the lord. Kneeling before him with head bowed, the vassal promised to be the lord's man. The lord declared himself ready to defend the vassal even at the risk of his life. As a sign of the agreement the lord sometimes gave his new vassal a clod of earth or a green twig.

1. The lord promised to protect the vassal.

2. The vassal became the lord's relative.

3. The lord would risk his life for the vassal.

4. The vassal showed that he belonged to the lord.

5. The lord and vassal made an agreement.

6. After the ceremony the lord gave the vassal some flowers.

XV The majority of the people in the Middle Ages were farm workers. In many cases they were not free laborers but serfs or workers who were bound to the soil. This meant that the serfs generally had to remain on the land where they were born. The serfs lived in small houses which clustered about the house or castle of their lord forming
a village. The homes of the serfs were miserable houses consisting of a single room.

... 1. The serfs were not free.
... 2. Most of the people in the Middle Ages were serfs.
... 3. They had to stay where they were born.
... 4. Only the older people worked on the farm.
... 5. The homes of the serfs were unhappy.
... 6. Serfs lived close to the castle.
... 7. We would not find a serf's home very comfortable.
... 8. The serfs did not receive money in payment for their work.
... 9. The serfs were sometimes tied on the farm.

XVI The feudal lord lived in a great stone house or castle. It was a home and fort combined. If no rocky height was available, the castle was erected in a marshy place. In this case, it was surrounded by a ditch or moat which was filled with water. To enter or leave the castle one had to cross a drawbridge. When not needed, this was drawn up close to the castle walls.

... 1. The lords preferred to build their castles on a hill.
... 2. The castle was used as a place to live and as a place of defense.
... 3. Sometimes castles were built in swamps.
... 4. One would have to swim across the moat to enter the castle.
... 5. The drawbridge was not needed all the time.
... 6. A high place might not always be found for the castle.

XVII During an attack the people in the castle were quite safe from the enemy. The castle usually could not be captured easily except by starving the garrison. This could be done if the enemy could besiege the castle long enough, for rarely was there a large food supply on hand. To attack a castle required great courage. In almost perfect safety, the defenders could shoot arrows at the attacking party. When the attacking party did come close their position was not enviable. The garrison hurled great stones upon them, or poured oil or molten lead over them. Sometimes those who attacked the castle were aided by war engines. Battering rams were used; the purpose of these was to make a break in the walls of the castle through which the attacking force could rush.

... 1. It was rather safe inside the castle.

... 2. The attackers made a hole in the wall to bring in their sheep and goats.

... 3. One had to be brave to attack a castle.

... 4. The soldiers in the castle could shoot the enemy with guns.

... 5. There was always plenty to eat in the castle.

... 6. It was dangerous to go too close to the castle walls.

... 7. The soldiers in the castle would surrender when they were hungry.
The castle made a much better fort than home. The most ordinary conveniences we have in our homes, such as artificial light, running water, and good heating, were unknown to the castle dwellers. The plan of the residence was simple. It consisted of a great hall with several smaller rooms opening into it. The rooms usually were connected with each other. There were no passageways, so that to get from one part of the residence to the other, you had to pass through the rooms between. There could be no privacy. The walls were perfectly bare except for an occasional tapestry. There was little furniture and this was usually uncomfortable.

1. The castles were kept quite warm.
2. The only light was daylight.
3. There was much furniture, but it was uncomfortable.
4. Sometimes there was a curtain hung on the walls.
5. You could not have a room to yourself.
6. The people would have to carry water to the castle.
7. There were no corridors in the castle.
8. The main room was not very large.

The nobles were frequently at war. When at home they spent much of their time at amusements. They played games. Chess was a great favorite. The people of the castle were often entertained by strolling minstrels who got their board for their songs.

1. There were many wars in those times.
2. When the nobles were at home they had no work to do.

3. The minstrels sang for their food.

4. They liked chess which is somewhat like checkers.

5. The minstrels rode from castle to castle.

6. Minstrels were men who traveled about the country singing songs.

7. They were given wood for singing.

8. The people in the castle did not care for singing.

XX To belong to a class of men called knights or to achieve knighthood was the ambition of almost every boy whose father was a feudal lord. Just about the time our boys go to school the boy of the Middle Ages, if eligible, began to prepare for knighthood. He began as a page. When he reached his fourteenth birthday he might be promoted to be a squire. As a squire the boy learned more about the duties of a knight. Having reached the age of twenty-one, the squire was ready to become a knight.

1. Only the sons of the feudal lord could become knights.

2. Not very many of the boys wished to become knights.

3. A person could not be a knight until he had reached middle age.

4. The squire was the last step in the making of a knight.

5. No one could be a knight before he was twenty-one.

6. The boy had to learn all the duties of the knight.

7. A boy began to be a page when he was six or seven years old.
There was a total of 110 words submitted. From this list 25 words were selected for testing for meaning. The first test was constructed with the words cut out of context.

Draw a circle around the number before the word which gives the best meaning for the underlined word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aided means</th>
<th>Combined means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. called</td>
<td>1. put together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. carried</td>
<td>2. kept in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. helped</td>
<td>3. built of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. saved</td>
<td>4. put aside</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consisted means</th>
<th>Conveniences are</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Divided among</td>
<td>1. a large amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. made up of</td>
<td>2. carefully made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. taken apart</td>
<td>3. things that are handy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. fixed with</td>
<td>4. unusually good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Favorite means</th>
<th>Frequently is</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. asked for</td>
<td>1. high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. taken from</td>
<td>2. always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. pleased with</td>
<td>3. often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. liked best</td>
<td>4. near</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government means</th>
<th>Huge means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. care</td>
<td>1. last</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. rule</td>
<td>2. steep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. success</td>
<td>3. large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. politics</td>
<td>4. plenty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Laborers</th>
<th>Rarsly is</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. plan</td>
<td>1. cool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. idle</td>
<td>2. damp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. serve</td>
<td>3. shady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. work</td>
<td>4. bare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants</td>
<td>Military has to do with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. ask</td>
<td>1. government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. control</td>
<td>2. property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. sell</td>
<td>3. war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. save</td>
<td>4. secrets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occasional is</th>
<th>Ordinary means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. nearly so</td>
<td>1. useful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. now and again</td>
<td>2. perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. far apart</td>
<td>3. same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. in between</td>
<td>4. usual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ownership means</th>
<th>Satisfactory is</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. to possess</td>
<td>1. surprising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. to share</td>
<td>2. continually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. to take</td>
<td>3. all right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. to gather</td>
<td>4. pleasant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centuries has to do with</th>
<th>Ambition means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. money</td>
<td>1. wish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. place</td>
<td>2. purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. distance</td>
<td>3. chance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. time</td>
<td>4. idea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ancient means</th>
<th>Bestowed means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. far</td>
<td>1. prepared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. old</td>
<td>2. taken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. past</td>
<td>3. collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. always</td>
<td>4. given</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Majority means</th>
<th>Considerable means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. several</td>
<td>1. very often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. most</td>
<td>2. scarcely any</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. number</td>
<td>3. a great deal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. frequently</td>
<td>4. nearly enough</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Board has to do with

1. clothing  
2. home  
3. food  
4. sleep

Usually means

1. nearly always  
2. sometimes perhaps  
3. perfectly sure  
4. hardly ever

Sections are

1. spaces  
2. parts  
3. lines  
4. edges

The second test for word meaning was devised with the words given in context. During this second test the pupils had access to the paragraphs in order that they might have a fuller reading of the word than that given in the sentence used for testing.

Draw a circle around the number before the word which you think gives the best meaning for the word which is underlined.

1. Sometimes those who attacked the castle were aided by war engines. They were—
   
   1. hurt  
   2. helped  
   3. saved  
   4. carried

2. The castle was a fort and home combined. It was—
   
   1. divided  
   2. built
3. safe
4. both

3. The castle consisted of a great hall with several rooms opening into it. The castle was--

1. fixed
2. put together
3. made up of
4. arranged

4. The castle dwellers did not have the most ordinary conveniences. They did not have--

1. A large amount
2. things that are handy
3. much furniture
4. good homes

5. The nobles were frequently at war. They were--

1. near to the battle
2. often in wars
3. killed in the war
4. always fighting.

6. The game of chess was a great favorite. It was--

1. very interesting
2. well liked
3. easy to play
4. difficult to win
7. The Greeks developed a good form of government. They developed a form of—

1. success
2. politics
3. control
4. rule

8. The Egyptians constructed huge pyramids of stone as tombs for their kings. The pyramids were—

1. hollow
2. close
3. large
4. strong

9. In many cases they were not free laborers but serfs bound to the soil. Laborers are those who—

1. serve
2. idle
3. act
4. work

10. The castle was sometimes erected in a marshy place. It was built in a place that was—

1. Shady
2. bare
3. damp
4. cool
11. During the "Age of Pericles" the **merchants** enjoyed their greatest measure of freedom. Merchants are those who—

1. ask
2. pretend
3. receive
4. sell

12. The vassal received land in return for **military** service or some other service. Military has to do with—

1. secrets
2. property
3. war
4. cities

13. The walls were bare except for an **occasional** tapestry. There was a tapestry on the walls—

1. here and there
2. in between
3. close together
4. very high

14. Castles did not have artificial light or other **ordinary** conveniences. Ordinary conveniences are those which are—

1. useful
2. perfect
3. same
4. usual
15. In time the ownership of the land became hereditary. Ownership means to--

1. share
2. possess
3. take
4. divide

16. Custom is not as satisfactory as written law. Satisfactory means--

1. nearly so
2. all right
3. helpful
4. useful

17. The country of Greece is divided into small sections because of its many mountains and valleys. Sections are--

1. lines.
2. edges
3. parts
4. spaces

18. The castle usually could not be captured except by starving the garrison. Usually means--

1. now and again
2. sometimes perhaps
3. very likely
4. nearly always

19. Some of the useful things learned by the Egyptians were used centuries later by the people of Europe. Centuries have to do with--
1. money
2. place
3. time
4. distance

20. To belong to a class of men called knights was the ambition of almost every boy. Ambition means--

1. purpose
2. wish
3. idea
4. chance

21. The Greeks were in a position to receive the benefits of those ancient civilizations. Ancient civilizations were--

1. last
2. past
3. old
4. always

22. The feudal lord bestowed the land upon the vassal. The land was--

1. collected
2. given
3. rented
4. sold

23. The majority of the people in the early Middle Ages were farm workers. Majority means--

1. several
24. There was considerable civilization in Asia in ancient times. Considerable means—

1. A great deal
2. nearly enough
3. scarcely any
4. almost always

25. Strolling minstrels received their board for their songs. Board has to do with—

1. clothing
2. food
3. home
4. sleep