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A Comparative Study of the effect of Teacher Stimulation on the Amount of Reading Done by a Fifth Grade Class

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY
OF THE EFFECT OF TEACHER STIMULATION
ON THE AMOUNT OF READING DONE
BY A FIFTH GRADE CLASS

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington College of Education

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

by
Chesley Charles Packer

August 1958

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APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

Mary I. Simpson, COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Man has at his command many modern devices and processes useful in the communication and dissemination of information. However, one of his older inventions is still the best method man has to compare, study, and review the expressed knowledge and ideas of his fellow-man. This invention is reading. Reading makes it possible for man to study and reread the ideas of the printed page. While modern communication devices are useful and have a definite place in society, man needs to read to be intelligently informed about his world.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The purpose of this study was (1) to determine if a classroom teacher could effect an increase in interest in independent reading shown by an intermediate level class through an intensified program of stimulation as measured against the reading interests evidenced by a comparable class not receiving the extra stimulation, and (2) to determine to what extent if any this stimulation of reading interests affected reading ability as measured

by a standardized reading achievement test.

Importance of the study. The formation of a permanent interest in reading is important in the development of well-rounded, well-informed individuals. The formation of these traits in children cannot be assured by merely teaching children the mechanics necessary to read. Discerning readers are not produced but rather are created through the guidance of interested adults. The techniques involved in reading are not unimportant but the development of taste, interest, and good judgment should not and need not be slighted. This study attempts to point out the necessity for the development of an interest in independent reading and the values that can be derived through this interest. Some of the methods that can be used in this development are also discussed. Since a mastery of reading is so important to man in his quest to find out why nature, society, and the universe is as it is; and since reading influences man's well-being, enjoyment and development to such an extent, the author of this study feels that if the study uncovers even a minute bit of useful information on influencing reading interests, it has accomplished its purpose.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Motivation. Motivation as used in this study refers to furnishing the students in the test group with motives to read printed

material.

Stimulation. Stimulation as it pertains to this study shall be interpreted as meaning the inciting or arousing of interest in reading within the students discussed.

III. ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE THESIS

The make-up of the remainder of the thesis falls into four major divisions. First is a review of the literature written by several authorities as to the need for stimulating the reading interests of young people and how this stimulation can be accomplished. The second section is a report of a study conducted in an elementary school at Kelso, Washington. The study consisted of a comparison between the reading habits of two fifth grade classes. One of the classes received a normal amount of motivation toward independent reading while the other received special stimulation as suggested by the authorities reviewed in the review of literature in this study. Records of the students' independent reading were kept by their teachers. The classes were given reading achievement tests at two times during the study to ascertain if extra stimulation of reading interests has an immediate bearing on reading achievement. The specific techniques used and the results obtained are reported in the third section. The fourth and final major division contains a summary

and relates the conclusions formed from the study.

IV. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study of necessity has limitations. It is limited to a comparison of two fifth grade groups in a public elementary school at Kelso, Washington, during two-thirds of a standard school term.

A further limitation is the possibility of reading interests and reading improvement being influenced by sources other than those instigated as part of the study. However, the period chosen for analysis would seem to contain no more than ordinary outside motivations.

Many variables could have affected the ratings of the classes when they were compared with each other. The two groups were not matched as to intelligence quotients. Such unmeasurable factors as home background, personal experience, over-all health and emotional stability of the groups no doubt could have affected the outcome.

The two classes were taught by two entirely different teachers. Both teachers were male; however, their personalities and experience were different.

There was a possibility of false information being given in reading reports. While every effort has been made to assure the truthfulness of reports of material read, the chance of falsification of reports of reading done cannot be entirely eliminated. The students

were reminded weekly that reports of material read were not to be used as a basis for grading. They were told that a study was being made to determine the amount of reading fifth graders do. Questions were asked of all students at regular intervals pertaining to the reading claimed to have been done. Questioning was more intensive in cases where the investigator found reason to doubt the truthfulness of reading reports.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The literate person needs to be adept at reading, writing, listening and conversing. Through reading, individuals may become more proficient in the others.

Literature dealing with the need for and methods of stimulating the reading interests of boys and girls is becoming more and more plentiful and widespread as more people become concerned with this matter. A summary of some of the recently published ideas on this subject will be presented here.

I. LITERATURE ON THE NEED FOR STIMULATION OF READING INTERESTS

Jacobs in discussing the need for continued reading, stressed the importance man should place on reading in order to keep abreast of developments in a rapidly changing world.¹ He further contended

¹Leland B. Jacobs, "Let's Keep on Reading," Association for Childhood Education International, (Washington: Association for Childhood Education, 1949), p. 36.

man should continue to utilize his skill in reading to prevent its waste.²

In stressing the importance of reading in the modern world, Gans stated:

All too often we act as though reading were something very important for children to learn, for use in school or on homework at home, but having no bearing on good, constructive, everyday living at home, work, or play.³

To remedy this problem, Gans urges the formation of a sound and practical reading program of lasting worth which can provide for life needs in reading.⁴

Another problem to be faced is that a relatively small proportion of the adult population of the United States engages in the regular reading of books.

Grambs reported that only about 25 per cent of American adults read as much as one book a month.⁵ Undoubtedly many causes, such as accessibility of book sources, contribute to this low percentage of people reading books. Certainly, though, lack of motivation

²Ibid.

³Roma Gans, Reading Is Fun (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1949), p. 3.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Jean D. Grambs, The Development of Lifetime Reading Habits (New York: R. R. Bowker Co., 1954) p. 4.

cannot be discounted.

In her report on reading habits, Grambs stated, "An informed citizenry is basic to a healthy democratic community, and books play an indispensable role in the continuous process of education."⁶

If reading interests are to be strengthened, it is up to teachers and parents to take the lead in promoting reading. These people are in a position to encourage and direct children's reading.

Parents and educators must use care in the selection and presentation of printed material to youngsters. The first meetings of children with books strongly influence future reading habits. Grambs said children who find reading difficult seldom consider books a source of enjoyment or satisfaction in later years. Similarly, children who derive feelings of success and pleasure from early reading attempts are likely to continue reading in later life.⁷ Therefore, people choosing books or other material for children's reading should secure material suitable to the ability of the reader so that children do not become frustrated.

Care should be taken also to insure the quality as well as the

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., p. 1.

quantity of reading done. Merely increasing the amount of reading done is not the entire answer to the problem of increasing reading interests. Cleworth outlined the objectives for improving reading as being twofold. She said the first objective is to provide for the child's immediate needs and the second is to develop skills and interests for future needs. By meeting immediate needs, the long-range pattern starts to take form.⁸

A well founded interest in reading can help in the development of well informed individuals with broad interests. This interest can help children gain independence in reading and study skills which increases the meaning and insight derived from words and expressions and can help build better vocabularies.

A further benefit of expansion of reading interests according to Cleworth, is that this interest provides motivation and material for developing readers who think in thought patterns rather than in single words or short phrases.⁹

If children are well guided in the formative years of reading habits, they, in time, may learn to achieve the fullest meaning and

⁸Maud C. Cleworth, "Objectives for Improving Reading Interests in Grades Four Through Six," Developing Permanent Interest in Reading, Eighteenth Annual Conference on Reading (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 30.

⁹Ibid., p. 32.

subtleties not evident to students reading "through" material. With proper incentives, students who are prone to fulfill only the most necessary requirements may intensify and broaden their knowledge to good advantage. Reading interests may lead to the perception and clarification that comes after the mere "seeing" derived from the initial contact with written material.

Cleworth said that when people speak of expanding reading power they are actually talking of the more remote type of objective that develops the pupil's sensitivity to things about him, a reasonable imagination, an understanding of figurative language, and the realization that integration of ideas can only come when one has acquired a broad background on any given subject.¹⁰

One of the objectives of the creation of an interest in reading is to give people worthwhile leisure time activity. Delightful entertainment can be derived from printed material by those with an interest acute enough to seek it out. Reading can further the enjoyment derived from other kinds of entertainment and reading in turn takes on new meanings from actual experience.

Ham stated in regard to leisure time reading, that educators must not be content with merely increasing reading but should be

¹⁰Ibid., p. 33.

concerned with the quality of material read as well as the quantity. She said adults must be certain that children do not substitute reading for doing. She emphasized the possibilities of increasing interests through pointing out the possibility of gaining information on hobbies and other interests. She said the task of the educator is to inspire their students to read widely with discernment and enthusiasm.¹¹

When children realize the usefulness of reading, reading for practical purposes may appeal strongly to children who steer clear of books as a form of recreation or enjoyment. If children can be shown that books supply some of the answers to some of their very real problems, they may become more interested readers and better informed people.

Anderson stressed several values that are to be derived from the improvement of quantity and quality of reading interests. Among them are the possibility of the extension of human experience beyond that available in anyone's life; the formation of balance to the content of vicarious experience; the extension of intellectual horizons; the enrichment of emotional and moral life; and the dividend of reading

¹¹Catherine Ham, "Objectives for Improving Reading Interests in Grades Seven Through Nine," Developing Permanent Interest in Reading, Eighteenth Annual Conference on Reading (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 35.

as a rewarding, meaningful experience.¹²

Teachers should not become so involved with the process of teaching children how to read that they overlook the need for the development of tastes and individuality in children. Excessive drill may produce readers with skill in performing the basic mechanics of reading, it is true. However, skill in mechanics is only part of reading. Good readers should know where to seek different types of information, how to organize that information and how to utilize it. Good readers should be able to approach their material creatively, bringing their own experiences and interests to those of the printed page and then utilizing the information gained, whether for solving problems or merely enjoyment.

The building and expansion of reading interests should not be thought of as a problem peculiar to the child of lower ability. Even some gifted or superior readers read below their ability. It is the duty of adults in a position to do so to encourage pupils of all types to more fully utilize their abilities.

¹²Harold A. Anderson, "Objectives for Improving Reading Interests in Grades Ten Through Fourteen," Developing Permanent Interest in Reading, Eighteenth Annual Conference on Reading (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), pp. 37-39.

II. LITERATURE ON THE METHODS OF STIMULATING READING INTERESTS

Wide and varied reading is important in the development of thinking and acting individuals. Adults, both parents and educators, must realize their role in the insurance of a dynamic, forward-looking society. Such insurance is greatly dependent upon wide and wise reading by our citizens. Adults may render society a great service through encouraging the expansion of reading interests. The development of reading interests in our young people is not an easy task. There are numerous devices and methods which can be used to attempt to stimulate reading and reading interests. However, trial and error must often be employed to find a productive method or system of methods. As Zeller said, it is difficult to teach a child to read but even more difficult to foster appreciation in reading and taste in the selection of material.¹³

Gans, in her book on reading interests, stressed the need for interested parents and teachers to actively promote an interest in

¹³Dale Zeller, "Reading Skill Through Reading Interests," Elementary-School Libraries Today (Thirtieth Yearbook, Department of Elementary School Principals, National Educational Association, Vol. XXXI, No. 1, Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1951), p. 71.

reading. She said merely giving a child something to do does not assure development of interests.¹⁴

Teachers and parents must use ingenuity and work to motivate young readers. Naturally, there are boys and girls who are well motivated readers and will not need extra stimulation. This fact should be taken into account by the readers of this study when methods of stimulation are discussed herein. Parents and teachers will usually meet with more success if their first attempts at motivation of reading is not aimed at immediate rigid channeling of interests. It is better to let children read for pure pleasure and then if necessary to channel their interests when reading skill has been sufficiently developed.

The use of television and radio to promote reading.

Some authorities believe television and radio can and do aid educators in furthering a desire in children to read more. Witty said many parents now believe televising has increased reading in their children by creating new interests.¹⁵ Hazard stated television viewing can be a great boon to educators in creating reading interests.¹⁶

¹⁴Gans, op. cit., p. 51.

¹⁵Paul Witty, "A Seventh Report on TV," Elementary English, December, 1956, p. 577.

¹⁶Patrick D. Hazard, "Ladders to Taste on TV," Elementary English, March, 1956, pp. 148-150.

Soderstrom expressed the belief that radio and television can broaden the child's background of experiences, introduce new areas of thought and thereby motivate a desire for more extensive reading. She said further that television and radio have shown their ability to change the lives of the nation and can serve as a strong motivating force if used well by educators.¹⁷

Curtis reported a program carried out in Chicago wherein the Radio Council, Division of Radio and Television of the Chicago Public Schools offers many interesting series of programs to be used as preparation and follow-up activities in reading. This program is designed specifically for use in the public schools and has been very successful in increasing an interest in reading. Under this particular study, children are most often motivated to read for further information after being initially spurred through television or radio.¹⁸

Not everyone, however, holds with the opinions expressed above. For instance, Jacobs maintained reading is being slighted

¹⁷Viola S. Soderstrom, "Using Radio and Television to Incite Interest in Reading in Grades Four Through Six," Developing Permanent Interest in Reading, Eighteenth Annual Conference on Reading (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), pp. 98-101.

¹⁸David V. Curtis, "Using Radio and Television to Incite Interest in Reading in Grades Seven Through Nine," Developing Permanent Interest in Reading, A Report of the Eighteenth Annual Conference on Reading (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), pp. 102-105.

through inroads of television. He said movies, radio, and television in particular, are making great demands on people's time and energy which in the past has been reserved for various reading materials.¹⁹ Witty also reported that some parents are concerned about their children reading less due to more time spent in viewing television and listening to the radio.²⁰

Although the experts' opinions are somewhat divided on the value of television and radio as a stimulant to reading, it seems reasonable to assume that these media can, when used properly, achieve much in the realm of reading stimulation. If educators and parents can utilize some of the selling force that radio and television have exhibited in changing the lives of people and in selling them various goods, reading interests should be greatly advanced.

Promoting reading through use of the content areas. In modern times, more and more material has been published concerning the content fields. Hundreds of books, pamphlets, and magazines come out each year, written on all levels of understanding and dealing with all the content subjects. Some authors maintain the content areas present good opportunities for promoting growth in reading interests.

¹⁹Jacobs, op. cit., p. 36.

²⁰Witty, loc. cit.

Such an author is Mildred Letton who said a permanent interest in reading can be developed through content areas if the student finds reading a pleasant pursuit and if he has skill in reading needed to handle the material effectively and efficiently. She stated further the necessity of the student actively participating in the reading process, having materials easily accessible, and having an opportunity for discussion after reading.²¹

Blackledge said the teacher's job is to help children set up purposes for reading since children will read widely if they feel their reading will serve a real purpose. Difference in reading ability within a class can be provided for quite readily through reading of this type, according to Blackledge.²²

To insure the best use of reading in content areas, the teacher must help the students develop efficient methods of locating, organizing, and sharing information.

²¹Mildred C. Letton, "The Role of the Content Areas in Extending Reading Interests," Developing Permanent Interest in Reading, Eighteenth Annual Conference on Reading (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 141.

²²Helen Blackledge, "Using the Content Subjects to Promote Reading Interests in Grades Four Through Six," Developing Permanent Interest in Reading, Eighteenth Annual Conference on Reading (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 146.

The place of the home in motivating reading. Parents and other relatives can have a great deal of influence on the reading habits of youngsters. In reporting on current reading interests, Wickens reported that more reading and a better quality of reading are associated with higher socio-economic level and that the possession of library cards is an important factor in home reading.²³ Larrick maintains children's interests and attitudes are obviously affected and developed to a large extent during their out-of-school hours, which constitute a large percentage of their time.²⁴ She further states, in speaking of today's child:

How well he reads, what he reads, and how widely he reads will be influenced in part by the guidance he receives from his parents and the opportunities which are provided at home.²⁵

Larrick recommends several ways for parents to encourage reading interest. Taking time for discussions that encourage children to tell of their interests is one of the methods suggested. This

²³Alice R. Wickens, "A Survey of Current Reading Interests in Grades Seven Through Nine," Developing Permanent Interest in Reading, Eighteenth Annual Conference on Reading (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 63.

²⁴Nancy Larrick, "Opportunities in the Home for Stimulating Reading Interests," Developing Permanent Interest in Reading, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 158.

²⁵Ibid., p. 159.

discussion may lead to better observation and reporting of everyday events. Broadening the child's horizons through new situations, travel, and meeting new people is another of the suggested methods. Advance preparation and follow-up activities can add much to meaning and value.²⁶ Parents may encourage the expansion of interests through wise use of television programs. These discussions and new experiences can stir and often do stir curiosity in children. This curiosity may be increased through questions asked by the parents. Without being sufficiently stirred, the child may listen and watch without raising questions.

Parents can help satisfy curiosity and further reading by keeping a worthwhile home library. Such material as encyclopedias, books of poetry, atlases, volumes of science information and similar material can lead to discovery and satisfaction of a curiosity which might fade if days instead of minutes must pass before the desired information is secured.

There are hundreds of books which it would be impossible to have in a home. Books with enjoyment and information, but books in which the information is scattered and incidental are examples. For developing an interest in this type of material, parents can try

²⁶Ibid., pp. 160-161.

reading from selections and leaving the story unfinished for the child to do with as he wishes. If the book or selection has been carefully chosen and introduced, the child will often complete it and search for more material on the same subject or by the same author.

Parents who are unfamiliar with present-day children's authors or books may wish to consult one or more of the worthwhile booklists now available to aid in the selection of good material.

Jensen recommends the following sources of book information for use by parents and teachers:

The Children's Catalog, Compiled by Ruth Giles, Dorothy H. West. Standard Catalog Series. New York: H. W. Wilson Company, 1946, and supplements.

The Horn Book Magazine
The Horn Book, Incorporated. 24 Boylston St., Boston 16, Massachusetts.

Elementary English, An official organ of the National Council of Teachers of English. 704 S. Sixth St., Champaign, Illinois.

The Booklist, A Guide to Current Books, American Library Association. 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, Illinois.²⁷

Methods of motivating reading in the classroom. There are numerous and varied means at the disposal of teachers which can aid in the development of reading interests. Teachers should be aware

²⁷Amy Elizabeth Jensen, "Attracting Children to Books," Elementary English, October, 1956, p. 333.

of these means in order to create a lasting interest in reading.

The methods mentioned in discussing content areas can be helpful, but there are numerous others. The foremost necessity in the creation of reading interests in the classroom is an adequate supply of suitable reading material. This material can be selected by the teacher and displayed attractively and prominently in order to catch the children's attention. The teacher may feel the need of consulting others in the selection of material and the school and public librarians may be of assistance in this. Probably the best source of information on the books to secure and display is the children themselves. The teacher can ask the children the types of reading they enjoy and procure the chosen types from school and public libraries. The teacher can also ask for brief autobiographies from each child and thereby ascertain interests on which a selection of reading materials can be made.

When the material for a room library has been chosen, care should be taken in its display. A book corner should be a part of every classroom. This corner should have a shelf and display space and a bulletin board. Student committees can help in caring for this book corner. With a bulletin board and other display space, interesting and artistic displays can aid in enticing the hesitant student to use the material displayed. For instance, a collection of

stories and poems about the sea and sea life might utilize a bit of fish net and several sea shells to lend atmosphere and create interest. Rock collections may create interest in articles and books on geology and minerals. Model airplanes and boats fit well into some displays. The displays and reading materials should be rearranged as often as necessary to maintain high interest.

If the presence of a book corner and interesting reading material isn't enough to start children on a program of wide reading, teachers may need to employ other means to do so. One method advocated by Arbuthnot is for teachers to employ the use of anecdotes. Simple bits of information from the lives of famous people can especially be used to interest children in biography.²⁸ Another method calls for the class to be divided into their regular reading groups and one group at a time placed at a table. On the table should be a number of books chosen with the group's ability in mind. At a signal given by the teacher, the children choose a book to look at for five or ten minutes, depending upon the attention span of the group. At the end of this period the children must change to another book. Irritation

²⁸ May Hill Arbuthnot, "Promoting Growth in Interests, Appreciations, and Tastes," Reading and Pupil Development, Proceedings of the Conference on Reading, Vol. II (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1940), p. 223.

at having to give up a book is a good sign of interest being formed.²⁹

Letting children review books for the class and the discussion of books in small groups may aid in the promotion of interests. Formal book reports, in the opinion of Grambs, are among the least productive devices to encourage reading.³⁰

Teachers can sometimes stimulate interest in a book or story by reading portions aloud to the class group and leaving the remainder for the students to seek for themselves.

For students who seem to have little or no interest in reading, the teacher should attempt to get them started reading by providing material which is simple and short. The teacher should make sure the child gives the material a fair trial and does not judge it by its cover, print, general looks or beginning pages. If a child will read for a short time, keeping his mind open, he will enjoy reading if he decides at the outset that enjoyment is possible in reading.

²⁹Los Angeles City School Districts Division of Instructional Services, Instructional Guide for the Teaching of Reading Improvement (Los Angeles: Los Angeles City Schools, 1954), p. 27.

³⁰Jean D. Grambs, "The Development of Lifetime Reading Habits," A Report of the Conference Called by the Committee on Reading Development in New York (New York: R. R. Bowker Co., 1954), pp. 1-5.

Some teachers take personal interest inventories in their classes, either orally or written. Children are asked to tell of their interests, hobbies, games they like to play, places they have been or to which they plan to go, and similar information. Using the information attained in this process, books and other reading material is secured and placed on each child's desk. Expressions of interest and delight are often forthcoming when a child discovers his teacher has taken the time and effort to seek material on his specific interests. Care should be taken in the selection of this material to insure the reading level required by the material is within the capacity of the student for whom it is intended.

Children who have read certain material may interest their classmates in the material by putting up bulletin board and table displays, by the use of maps, dramatizations, and group discussions.

Certain children may be motivated by seeing the purposes for reading and the value of reading. Other than for pure enjoyment, reading is used to find information, to help us understand people and our own problems. And of course reading can increase the pleasure to be found in many types of entertainment.

Children should be encouraged to bring worthwhile magazines, newspapers, books, and other material from home for sharing with classmates.

The role of the library and the librarian in the motivation of reading. Librarians, both school and public, have an important task to perform in the formulation of children's reading interests. Their duties and interests should not be limited to shelving, cataloging, and teaching the use of the card catalog. According to Gates, the children's librarian must convince young people of the importance of books and of the pleasure they hold. Gates also said the teachers of art, of shop and of science, must be informed by the librarian of the library offerings which deal with their subject fields.³¹ The librarian, along with the teacher, principal, and pupils, is or should be responsible for the selection of library materials. According to Douglas, the materials selected should fill curriculum needs, answer general reference questions, meet the interest of the pupils, supply general recreational and inspirational needs, and fit the reading abilities of the pupils. Further, these materials should be accurate in treatment of the subject, attractive in format, priced at a cost the school can afford, and should cover many different reading levels.³²

³¹Doris Gates, "The Librarian's Responsibility for Developing and Maintaining Reading Interests," Developing Permanent Interest in Reading, Eighteenth Annual Conference on Reading (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 166.

³²Mary Peacock Douglas, "Selection of Library Materials" (Bellingham, Washington: Library Workshop, Western Washington College of Education, 1957), p. 1 (Mimeographed).

For the most effective utilization of library facilities, the librarian needs the assistance of the school administrator and the entire staff. Efforts should be made to relieve the librarian of time-consuming clerical work, thus making it possible for her to devote more time working directly with teachers and pupils. This can be done through the use of student assistants who can check books in and out, shelve books, and perform other simple though time-consuming tasks.

Teachers should utilize the available school library facilities and may wish to supplement these with public facilities. Some teachers aid their students in securing public library cards to foster wider use of public facilities and to stimulate reading. A school library is useful in insuring the availability of materials within the school. In this modern age, it would seem reasonable to assume that nearly all schools would contain a separate library. However, such is not the case. Grambs reports there is no separate school library in ninety-one per cent of the public elementary schools in the United States and no separate school library in twenty-two per cent of the public secondary schools.³³ It should be taken into consideration, however, that some schools without a separate school library contain

³³Grambs, op. cit., p. 4.

a library of sorts within a study hall or some other room in the building. A room for library use only is much more desirable than a dual-purpose room. No doubt the pressures of rising construction costs and heavy enrollments have combined to hold back the construction and equipping of separate libraries in schools. A shortage of qualified librarians has perhaps also been detrimental to school library expansion. The problem of a lack of libraries should be recognized by educators and the public in order that appropriate action may be taken assuring children adequate facilities.

School and home should provide a wide variety of children's books, magazines and papers which provide a balanced diet of silent and oral reading activities, of informational and recreational reading, and of directed and non-directed reading experiences. With such a diet and wise direction by parents, librarians, and teachers, children can be kept reading because they truly enjoy doing so.

CHAPTER III

GROUPS STUDIED AND MATERIALS USED

I. GROUPS STUDIED

Two groups were used in the study. The first, a test group, was the fifth grade class taught by the writer. The second group, a control group, was a fifth grade class from the same building, Butler Acres Elementary School, Kelso, Washington.

The program of reading stimulation was given the test group, while the control group received only the normal classroom reading program as prescribed by the Kelso Public School system.

II. MATERIALS USED

The materials used during the study covered a wide variety of display and bulletin board materials, display space, bulletin boards, maps, magazines, books, newspapers, and pamphlets.

In order to ascertain the intelligence of the members of the groups studied, all participants in the study were given the Otis Mental Ability Test, Form Beta EM. This was done to compare the intelligence quotients of the groups.

The Durrell-Sullivan Reading Achievement Test, Form Intermediate A, was given to each group near the beginning of the test period and again at the completion of the test period. This test was given to compare groups and, if possible, to determine the effect of a program of extra motivation on the reading achievement of the test group.

CHAPTER IV

TECHNIQUE AND RESULTS OF THE EXPERIMENT

I. TECHNIQUE

For purposes of the study, the school year 1957-58 was divided into two parts. Part One, consisting of September, October, November, and December, was a period during which no extra stimulation to read was given to either group. In Part Two, a period beginning with the completion of Christmas Vacation and ending at the end of April, the test group received a program of stimulation designed to increase the amount of reading done by the students in the group. The control group received no extra stimulation during either part of the study. The period without stimulation was used to ascertain the amount of reading normally done by the test group in order that the effect of teacher stimulation might be measured when the results of the periods were compared. The two periods were each exactly sixteen weeks in length to insure the tabulation would be as accurate as possible.

Various methods of creating reading interest were used with the test group. The investigator began the period of extra motivation by creating a book and reading corner. The equipment

used consisted of a bulletin board, a peg board, a counter top, library table and chairs, a world globe and various maps as they were needed during the study. This material was the portion maintained for permanent use. Other display materials were procured and utilized as the need for them arose during the study. The library corner was cared for by a committee of students who kept it in order and also checked materials in and out for the class.

When the corner had been arranged, the writer secured a supply of reading materials for use in the room library. This material was secured from the main school library and the public libraries of Kelso and Longview, Washington. At both these public libraries, public school teachers are allowed to borrow twenty-four books for a month or six weeks for school use. When a new supply of public library materials was brought to the room, the writer introduced each book, magazine, or pamphlet to the class. The introduction was accomplished by showing the book, reading title, and the author's name, and telling something about the book, the author, and other works by the same person. Sometimes the titles of the chapters were read as well as short passages within the book. At the end of the introduction the book title was given again so that anyone interested in it might jot it down for future reference while using the library corner.

After the introduction of the material, the library committee wrote out simple slips containing the book title and columns for the borrower's name and the check-out date. These slips were placed in the card pockets of the books and then the books were placed on display. When books or other materials were checked out by students, the student librarian placed the book slip with the name of the borrower and the date borrowed in a small card file. Upon return of the material, the card was returned to the book pocket.

Each display of books and materials was built around a theme or themes. The themes were chosen through interests expressed by the members of the test group, current news events, and topics related to material being studied. During a study of rocks and geologic formations in science and social studies, children were asked to bring rock collections and materials for display. Simple geologic maps were utilized in the display also. In this display were various books and articles on rocks, mining, and mineralogy. The members of the test group were allowed to browse through the display during their free time and to borrow any materials in which they were interested. This reading often led to a search for further information on certain areas or phases of a topic. The students were allowed to retain borrowed material for as long as they liked. If the due date came before all the interested students had read a certain

article or book, the material was renewed at the source library.

Although the display discussed above was concerned with rocks and minerals, it was by no means limited to only these subjects. A constant supply of fiction, current news articles and other material was kept in the room's book corner.

Other displays and themes utilized different properties and materials, but the basic idea of display for motivation was similar in all cases.

The investigator took current news items into consideration in the planning of some motivating displays. One display that was particularly well accepted and that motivated considerable reading, concerned man's attempts at space conquest. The advent of the Russian "Sputnik" satellites and the subsequent American tests of rockets and satellite launching, made important headlines during the school term of 1957-58. The excitement created by these events greatly excited many intermediate level children and furnished natural motivation to read and research. This investigator utilized science articles from books, magazines, newspapers and television and chalk-board diagrams and sky maps to acquaint the test group with some of the facts concerning space and earth satellites.

Another way to use current news for stimulation was by placing a world map on a bulletin board and letting the members of the

test group place news items on the bulletin board around the map and pointing out where the event occurred through the use of yarn. This promoted reading of newspapers to locate worthwhile items for display in this manner.

In order to help children gain knowledge of library usage and to encourage wider reading, the present writer questioned the test group to find the number of children possessing public library cards. The results showed twenty of the class members did not have library cards and the other nine did have cards. Of the twenty without cards, fifteen expressed an immediate desire to obtain a card. The investigator then obtained a supply of library service request forms from the Kelso, Washington, public library. These forms were distributed and taken home by the interested students. When they had been signed by parents, they were returned to school. Then this writer took them to the library and obtained the cards requested. About a week later, two more of the children without cards said they would like them and they received cards in the same manner. Most of the recipients of the cards made good use of them. However, the writer feels better utilization could have been made through better cooperation by parents. Some parents seemed to be uninterested in their children's library usage and therefore some students who did not live within walking distance of the public library did not get to use

that facility as often as is desired and some children could not use it at all.

Another motivating method used by the writer, was accomplished by securing supplies of biographical material for display to coincide with the study of certain famous personalities in social studies. Such people as Daniel Boone, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Benjamin Franklin, Betsy Ross, Madame Curie, and Charles Lindbergh have had much written about them. Children often become engrossed in finding out more about someone or something when their interest has been whetted in the content areas.

From time to time children who wished, reviewed books for the rest of the class. They were instructed to tell only why they liked the book and to tell enough to interest others in it without spoiling it for them.

This writer took several interest inventories during the test period. Each student in the test group was asked about the topics or area in which they were currently interested. Several choices were recorded for each child in order to insure some degree of satisfaction in the child. Some children requested similar materials for each inventory while others' interests varied greatly from week to week. When the inventories were completed, the investigator endeavored to borrow library materials fitting each child's interests and needs. The students in the test group seemed to be quite delighted

with this plan and appreciated the investigator's efforts to satisfy their interests.

II. RESULTS

Mental test results. The Otis Test of Mental Ability was given both groups at the beginning of the study in order to compare the intelligence of the groups. The test group's intelligence, as measured by this test, ranged from a low of 78 to a high of 123. The group's average score was 99.42 as shown in Table I. The intelligence quotients of the control group ranged from 91 to 121. The group's mean score was 107.57, which is also shown in Table I. These results indicate a considerable difference in mental ability between the two groups.

Reading Achievement test results. Reading achievement as measured by the Durrell-Sullivan Reading Achievement Test, Form Intermediate A, was checked at the beginning of the test period. Table II indicates the results. Here again the scores of the control group were higher than those of the test group. The normal mean at the time this test was given would have been 5.1 grade level. The mean score of the test group was 4.77 as compared with a mean score for the control group of 5.80. These mean scores indicate

approximately a one grade level difference in reading ability between the groups at the start of the study.

At the close of the study, the Durrell-Sullivan test was readministered to the groups. Table III indicates the results of this test. The normal mean at this time would have been a grade level of 5.8. The test group's mean score was 6.06 as compared with a mean score of 6.66 for the control group.

The mean for the test group rose 1.29 grades and the control group's mean showed an increase of .86 of a grade level. The test group's mean gained .43 of a grade level more than did the mean of the control group.

Uncontrolled factors such as two separate instructors, the intelligence differences of the groups, their temperament, health, home influences and other variables, tend to discount definite correlation between the program of motivation and the greater gain in reading achievement evidenced by the test group.

Record of reading done. A record was kept of the extra-curricular reading done by the members of each group during the study. Tables IV and V show the results of the tabulation. The average number of pages read by the members of the test group increased 487 during the period of extra motivation over the average of the first section of the study. The increase in the average of the control group

was 117. Some of this gain may be attributable to increased reading ability.

The standard deviation of 338 in the test group compared with 168.8 in the control group, shows a wider variation in the increase of pages read by the test group during the second period. In the control group, a cluster of increases occurs. The test group scores are higher and cover a wider range.

TABLE I
OTIS TEST OF MENTAL ABILITY
FORM BETA EM

Test Group				Control Group			
Interval	f	d	fd	Interval	f	d	fd
124.5-121.5	1	7	7	121.5-119.5	1	7	7
121.5-118.5	0	6	0	119.5-117.5	1	6	6
118.5-115.5	3	5	15	117.5-115.5	2	5	10
115.5-112.5	2	4	8	115.5-113.5	2	4	8
112.5-109.5	1	3	3	113.5-111.5	1	3	3
109.5-106.5	2	2	4	111.5-109.5	2	2	4
106.5-103.5	0	1	0	109.5-107.5	4	1	4
103.5-100.5	4	0	0	107.5-105.5	5	0	0
100.5- 97.5	1	-1	-1	105.5-103.5	4	-1	-4
97.5- 94.5	3	-2	-6	103.5-101.5	3	-2	-6
94.5- 91.5	4	-3	-12	101.5- 99.5	1	-3	-3
91.5- 88.5	2	-4	-8	99.5- 97.5	0	-4	0
88.5- 85.5	3	-5	-15	97.5- 95.5	0	-5	0
85.5- 82.5	2	-6	-12	95.5- 93.5	1	-6	-6
82.5- 79.5	0	-7	0	93.5- 91.5	0	-7	0
79.5- 76.5	1	-8	-8	91.5- 89.5	1	-8	-8
Sum	29	-25		Sum	28		15

Mean: 99.42

Mean: 107.57

TABLE II

READING ACHIEVEMENT RATINGS

MEASURED BY THE DURRELL-SULLIVAN READING ACHIEVEMENT TEST

IN SEPTEMBER

TEST GROUP					CONTROL GROUP				
Grade Level	f	d	fd	fd ²	Grade Level	f	d	fd	fd ²
7.25-6.95	1	7	7	49	7.95-7.65	1	7	7	49
6.95-6.65	1	6	6	36	7.65-7.35	0	6	0	0
6.65-6.35	2	5	10	50	7.35-7.05	3	5	15	75
6.35-6.05	0	4	0	0	7.05-6.75	1	4	4	16
6.05-5.75	2	3	6	18	6.75-6.45	2	3	6	18
5.75-5.45	2	2	4	8	6.45-6.15	1	2	2	4
5.45-5.15	1	1	2	2	6.15-5.85	5	1	5	5
5.15-4.85	5	0	0	0	5.85-5.55	5	0	0	0
4.85-4.55	1	-1	-1	1	5.55-5.25	2	-1	-2	2
4.55-4.25	2	-2	-4	8	5.25-4.95	4	-2	-8	16
4.25-3.95	3	-3	-9	27	4.95-4.65	1	-3	-3	9
3.95-3.65	5	-4	-20	80	4.65-4.35	0	-4	0	0
3.65-3.35	2	-5	-10	50	4.35-4.05	1	-5	-5	25
3.35-3.05	1	-6	-6	36	4.05-3.75	2	-6	-12	72
3.05-2.75	1	-7	-7	49					
Sum	29		-22	414	Sum	28		9	291
Mean: 4.77					Mean: 5.796 or 5.80				
Standard Deviation: 1.110					Standard Deviation: .96				
Standard Error of the Mean: .210					Standard Error of the Mean: .185				
Standard Error of the Standard Deviation: .147					Standard Error of the Standard Deviation: .129				

TABLE III

READING ACHIEVEMENT RATINGS

MEASURED BY THE DURRELL-SULLIVAN READING ACHIEVEMENT TEST

IN MAY

TEST GROUP					CONTROL GROUP				
Grade Level	f	d	fd	fd ²	Grade Level	f	d	fd	fd ²
8.15-7.85	2	7	14	98	9.05-8.75	1	8	8	64
7.85-7.55	2	6	12	72	8.75-8.45	0	7	0	0
7.55-7.25	3	5	15	75	8.45-8.15	0	6	0	0
7.25-6.95	2	4	8	32	8.15-7.85	4	5	20	100
6.95-6.65	0	3	0	0	7.85-7.55	2	4	8	32
6.65-6.35	4	2	8	16	7.55-7.25	2	3	6	18
6.35-6.05	0	1	0	0	7.25-6.95	3	2	6	12
6.05-5.75	3	0	0	0	6.95-6.65	0	1	0	0
5.75-5.45	2	-1	-2	2	6.65-6.35	4	0	0	0
5.45-5.15	4	-2	-8	16	6.35-6.05	5	-1	-5	5
5.15-4.85	2	-3	-6	18	6.05-5.75	1	-2	-2	4
4.85-4.55	3	-4	-12	48	5.75-5.45	2	-3	-6	18
4.55-4.25	0	-5	0	0	5.45-5.15	2	-4	-8	32
4.25-3.95	1	-6	-6	36	5.15-4.85	1	-5	-5	25
3.95-3.65	0	-7	0	0	4.85-4.55	0	-6	0	0
3.65-3.35	1	-8	-8	64	4.55-4.25	1	-7	-7	49
Sum	29		15	477	Sum	28		15	359
Mean: 6.06					Mean: 6.66				
Standard Deviation: 1.213					Standard Deviation: 1.00				
Standard Error of the Mean: .228					Standard Error of the Mean: .192				
Standard Error of the Standard Deviation: .159					Standard Error of the Standard Deviation: .135				

TABLE IV

A REPORT OF THE EXTRA-CURRICULAR READING DONE BY THE TEST AND CONTROL GROUPS

TEST GROUP				CONTROL GROUP			
Student	Pages Read First Period	Pages Read Second Period	Increase	Student	Pages Read First Period	Pages Read Second Period	Increase
Wayne S.	2,012	3,275	1,263	Jim C.	1,789	2,646	847
Allen T.	1,239	2,343	1,104	Marsha M.	896	1,202	306
Judy H.	3,756	4,698	942	Martha B.	2,789	3,013	224
Dick R.	829	1,747	918	Dale K.	1,943	2,144	201
Ellen W.	4,291	5,198	907	Jane J.	1,577	1,754	174
Sandra B.	868	1,741	873	Vic H.	2,695	2,847	152
Marsha A.	642	1,445	803	Linda S.	2,232	2,385	153
Barbara W.	2,720	3,514	794	Marsha S.	1,796	1,943	147
Jim B.	1,680	2,459	779	Phillip H.	997	1,143	146
Gregory W.	1,582	2,193	611	Darrell W.	3,453	3,595	142
Dennis F.	1,123	1,639	516	Cecil I.	1,856	1,997	141
Ken G.	1,136	1,651	515	Carmen R.	4,321	4,458	137
Linda S.	1,141	1,653	512	Donna G.	1,465	1,583	118
Barbara B.	1,424	1,923	499	Linda M.	767	883	116
Jim T.	483	964	481	Rae A.	577	689	112
Barbara C.	1,488	1,898	410	Dennis B.	1,141	1,237	96
Herbert C.	1,168	1,537	369	Susan A.	631	727	96
Don M.	898	1,163	265	Jerry B.	640	713	73
Duaine M.	576	823	247	Cynthia B.	1,236	1,289	53
Walter R.	1,234	1,469	235	David H.	463	507	44
Betty C.	653	847	194	Tom J.	1,658	1,699	41
David B.	544	729	185	Sheila W.	753	770	17
Diana O.	475	659	184	Dave V.	979	993	14
Brad G.	323	479	151	Pamela R.	898	905	7
Dale B.	243	379	136	Peggy M.	1,013	978	- 35
Beverly P.	847	963	116	Don W.	356	308	- 48
Jack M.	324	409	85	LaVon F.	795	729	- 66
Mike R.	147	183	36	Linda W.	1,167	1,051	- 116
Sundae C.	121	134	13				
SUM	33,972	48,115	14,143	SUM	40,883	44,178	3,295
MEAN	1,171.45	1,659.13	487.69	MEAN	1,460.11	1,577.79	117.68

TABLE V

AN ANALYSIS OF THE INCREASE IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR READING
FROM PERIOD ONE TO PERIOD TWO OF THE STUDY

TEST GROUP					CONTROL GROUP				
Interval	f	d	fd	fd ²	Interval	f	d	fd	fd ²
1200.5-1275.5	1	10	10	100	825.5-900.5	1	9	9	81
1125.5-1200.5	0	9	0	0	750.5-825.5	0	8	0	0
1050.5-1125.5	1	8	8	64	675.5-750.5	0	7	0	0
975.5-1050.5	0	7	0	0	600.5-675.5	0	6	0	0
900.5-975.5	3	6	18	108	525.5-600.5	0	5	0	0
825.5-900.5	1	5	5	25	450.5-525.5	0	4	0	0
750.5-825.5	3	4	12	48	375.5-450.5	0	3	0	0
675.5-750.5	0	3	0	0	300.5-375.5	1	2	2	4
600.5-675.5	1	2	2	4	225.5-300.5	0	1	0	0
525.5-600.5	0	1	0	0	150.5-225.5	5	0	0	0
450.5-525.5	5	0	0	0	75.5-150.5	10	-1	-10	10
375.5-450.5	1	-1	-1	1	0.5- 75.5	7	-2	-14	28
300.5-375.5	1	-2	-2	4	-75.5- 0.5	3	-3	-9	27
225.5-300.5	3	-3	-9	27	-150.5--75.5	1	-4	-4	16
150.5-225.5	4	-4	-16	64					
75.5-150.5	3	-5	-15	75					
0.5- 75.5	2	-6	-12	72					
SUM	29		0	592	SUM	28		-26	166
Mean: 488					Mean: 118.4				
Standard Deviation: 338.00					Standard Deviation: 168.825				
Standard Error of the Mean: 64.461					Standard Error of the Mean: 324.65				
Standard Error of the Standard Deviation: 44.357					Standard Error of the Standard Deviation: 22.75				

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A brief review of the study may enable the reader to gain a clearer over-all grasp of the need for reading motivation, some methods of motivating reading, and how the students in the study were affected by the motivation.

I. SUMMARY

The need for the creation of reading interests. It is difficult to assess to exactly what extent a mastery of reading affects man's well-being, enjoyment and total development. However authorities tend to agree that the formation of permanent, well adjusted reading interests and habits are very important in the development of well-informed, thinking individuals. Since reading is used during the entire lifetime of the individual, it seems evident that the development of good reading habits and an interest in reading should start when the child's reading instruction starts and should grow in relationship to the growth in reading skill.

Some methods of motivating reading. Motivation to read should take place mainly in the home and at school. The home can

furnish the child a variety of reading materials and understanding assistance. Parents and others can give encouragement and stimulation. With proper home direction, children should become regular users of the public library.

During the child's in-school hours, he should be motivated to read by his teacher and the school librarian. This motivation may take various forms and patterns. One of the most productive in terms of creating an interest to read, is simply to maintain a large variety of suitable material within the classroom and to introduce the material to the students in an interesting manner. Interesting displays of objects with related printed matter nearby can interest students in reading more widely, also. It is seldom difficult to induce children to read when they have discovered the enjoyment it can give and how reading can solve some of their problems.

The present study. The primary problem in this study was to compare the amount of reading done by a certain fifth grade class receiving a program of special motivation, with the amount done by another fifth grade class which did not receive the special motivation. This comparison was done to find if a special motivation program would increase the amount of reading done by the members of the motivated group. Careful checks were made on the amount of

extra-curricular reading done by each group. Although the two classes were not equal in reading achievement or intelligence, as measured by tests of these traits, the amount of reading done by the members of the test group increased substantially over the amount done by the control group.

An incidental finding came from the comparison of the amount of increase in reading achievement in the groups. Here again, a greater gain was made by the group which received extra stimulation and had done more reading.

II. CONCLUSIONS

The amount of reading done by the members of the test group, it was found by checking and tabulation, increased substantially over the amount of reading done by the members of the control group during the test period.

The reading achievement level of the students in the study was tested at the beginning of the study and again upon its completion. The results of these tests showed an increase in the mean grade level of the test group of .43 of a grade level above that gained in the mean of the control group. Uncontrolled factors such as two separate instructors, the intelligence differences of the groups, their temperament, health, home conditions, and other variables, tend to discount definite

correlation between the program of motivation and the gain by the test group in reading achievement.

A further study utilizing groups more nearly equated might tend to add statistical significance to the correlation of reading increases to reading achievement. Such a study's validity might be increased through the use of more than two groups. An interesting related study could be the evaluation of the groups' reading interests in a year or even later, in order to determine what lasting effect, if any, the motivation had.

This study does not propose to ascertain whether the increases in reading amounts among members of the test group will have a permanent effect on the members' later reading habits.

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