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A Survey of the Provisions for Critical Reading Skills in Basal Readers

Louis Alan Dillard
Central Washington University

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A SURVEY OF THE PROVISIONS FOR CRITICAL READING

SKILLS IN BASAL READERS

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by

Louis Alan Dillard

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John E. Davis, COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

_____

Doris E. Jakubek

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Wiley E. Peeples

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

One of the principle goals of education is developing the child to think as he reads (21:478). This ability is generally accepted as the basis of all intelligent reading (26:323). It begins with simple reasoning and gradually moves into more and more complex reasoning.

When John Dewey wrote his book, How We Think, he stated:

> The only way in which a person can reach ability to make accurate definition, penetrating classifications, and comprehensive generalizations is by thinking alertly and carefully on his own present level. Some kind of intellectual organization must be required, or else vagueness, disorder, and incoherent "thinking" will be formed. But the organization need not be that which would satisfy the mature expert (7:84).

Critical reading skills form a major part of the comprehension skills taught in reading at the elementary school level. In 1959, Williams (26) reported a study on critical reading skills found in ten basal reading series which had been commonly used in schools during the preceding ten years. She compiled a comprehensive list of thirty-three critical reading skills. Her list is used as a reference by many educators. However, her findings were tabulated ten years ago and since 1959 there have been revisions in the basal reading series and new series have

been published. There is a need to replicate her study, using her inventory to update the number of critical reading skills included in modern basal readers.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the number of critical reading skills included in six basal reading series and how many of these skills each series contained. It was also the purpose of this study to determine the grade level at which each specific skill was introduced and further how many of these skills were introduced at the grade one level.

The six basal reading series surveyed had been revised since 1960 or published for the first time since 1960 and were in common use in the elementary schools. These series included those published by: American Book Company, Ginn Company, Houghton-Mifflin, Lippincott, Macmillan, and Scott, Foresman. The Williams' inventory of thirty-three critical reading skills was used as a basis in making the survey.

Significance of the Study

"Critical reading is a part of the broad spectrum of the comprehension abilities," states Criscuolo (6:106).

Many teachers of primary children look at their role in the reading program as that of teaching the mechanics of reading with emphasis on the literal meaning of what is read. They feel that other comprehension skills should be taught in the upper grades. Austin and Morrison (1), Painter (14), Stauffer (19), Triggs (24), and Young (27) all agree that the teacher must challenge the children to think and read critically beginning in the primary grades. Since most reading programs are built on or around the basal reader, the significance of this study was also to determine the extent to which these critical reading skills are developed and their placement by the authors of basal reading series today.

From a survey of basal readers Williams compiled a list of critical reading skills. She tabulated the number of these skills included in ten basal readers. As her study was completed in 1959 there was seen to be a need to replicate it. Bauernfeind, recently commenting on the need for replication, wrote, "without replication, many single studies are cited, recited, and acted upon as though a great truth had been discovered," (2:126). In this present study the author has replicated that portion of the Williams study which dealt with the tabulation of the total number of critical reading skills in the series and the number of these skills found in each series.

Limitation of the Study

One of the limitations of this study was that it dealt only with the critical reading skills in six basal reading series. These series selected by the author were not necessarily the same series selected by Williams. Since Williams did not name the series which she surveyed, this author was unable to replicate her study exactly. Another limitation of this study was that the skill was tabulated when it was introduced at a grade level and no record was made on the number of lessons included to develop the skill. A third limitation was that the survey was made on the basal readers only and did not include the workbooks.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

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

Basal Reading Series

A set of books issued by a publisher as texts for sequential development of instruction in reading, usually includes a reading-readiness book, a preprimer, a primer, and the first to sixth reader.

Basal Reader

A textbook; usually one book of a graded series used for instruction of reading geared to one specific reading ability level.

Crital Reading

Reading in which the reader involves thinking beyond the level of simple recall.

Critical Thinking

A higher level comprehension ability that proceeds on the basis of careful evaluation of premises and evidence and comes to conclusion as objectively as possible through the consideration of all pertinent factors and the use of valid procedures from logic.

Comprehension Skills

The skills which are involved in understanding the printed or spoken language as contrasted with the ability to perceive and pronounce words without reference to their meaning. Examples of such skills are: ability to find the main points and the supporting details, ability to arrange sequence, ability to anticipate events, the ability to follow directions and the ability to draw an inference.

Reading Skill

An ability that is essential to successful performance in reading; word recognition, comprehension, organization, and remembrance.

III.   ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE THESIS

The remainder of the study will enlarge upon the following material:

Chapter II is a review of the literature.

Chapter III deals with the procedures employed in this study.

Chapter IV reports the analysis of the data.

Chapter V presents a summary of the study, reports the conclusions, and gives suggestions for additional research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter, a brief résumé of the history of
basal readers in America is presented. Comprehension skills
and critical reading skills are described. The Williams'
inventory of critical reading skills is presented and the
need for developing critical reading skills is given.

I.   HISTORY OF BASAL READERS

In the colonial days of American reading instruction,
a single book comprised the complete reading program for the
school year. The first reading textbook printed specifically
designed for the American colonies was the New England
Primer (18:18). It was the outstanding reading material
during the period when the schools were controlled by the
church. It was called a primer "because it contained the
primary or basic teachings of the Puritan religion" (21:275).
This book was very popular and remained as the standard
textbook for reading instruction throughout the colonial
period.

Following the Revolutionary War, Noah Webster's
Blue-Back Speller replaced the New England Primer as the
basic text for developing the fundamental reading skills.
Webster's awareness of the inadequacies of a single reading

textbook led to his early attempts at grading material for reading instruction (18:44). His method was generally used from its inception until the middle of the nineteenth century with some schools continuing to follow it until about 1900. Webster's book did not contain techniques or methods for teaching reading and the material was presented at the literal level. He emphasized the memorization of the alphabet, articulation, and pronunciation as the specific aims of reading instruction (26:324).

Serious concern for a continuous method of instruction became evident in the middle of the nineteenth century when graded series of books were published. Among these were the McGuffey Readers which first appeared between the years 1836-1844. McGuffey must be given the credit for being the first author to produce a clearly defined and carefully graded series consisting of one reader for each grade in the elementary school (18:105). His books became popular immediately and their popularity continued for the next forty years. The last edition of the McGuffey Readers was published in 1907 by the American Book Company.

At the beginning of the twentieth century basal readers were well established as an important part of the elementary program. Some of these were based on elaborate alphabetical-oral phonic systems. Some of these were the

first to use the sight word approach in which the child was taught to recognize a stock of words before advancing to word analysis.

It was at this time that Dr. William S. Gray came into prominence as a reading authority. He played a major role in the development of teachers' manuals and professional books on reading. He was a strong proponent of silent reading and published a study on the superiority of silent reading in the Sixteenth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. In 1919, Gray, as cited by Williams (26:325), reported, from research studies, information concerning the comprehension of material read silently. He concluded:

> The results of practically every investigation of this problem (comprehension) indicate clearly the appropriateness of emphasizing the content of what is read, persistently and consistently, throughout the grades.

By the 1930's the movement for silent reading was gaining considerable popularity throughout the country. Nila Banton Smith's book, One Hundred Ways of Teaching Silent Reading was published during this decade. It was a practical book designed to aid the classroom teacher. During this period the basal readers stressed such comprehension abilities as "content questions, directions to be followed and the relatedness of elements in sentences and paragraphs" (26:325). Teachers' manuals became prominent

at this time. Although the suggestions and directions were generous and precise, the guidance given did not provide for the development of all types of reading skills.

Although considerable progress had been made in the development of basal readers, it failed to consider all the aspects of reading comprehension. Williams noted "up to this point there had been little recognition of the values of a reading program that develops thinking and related comprehension abilities" (26:325).

Today the manuals in the basal reading series have a systematic rather than an incidental instruction. Through the years, author-educators have realized that incidental instruction does not cover all types of comprehension skills. At the present time most basal reading series endeavor to cover the majority of the reading skills and to provide varied experiences for the learning and application of these skills.

II. COMPREHENSION DEVELOPMENT

At the present, there is some uncertainty and lack of agreement among authorities about a definition of "critical reading." Even the term, "critical reading," is not fully accepted by all authorities. Some of the more commonly used names that are applied to the process known as critical

reading are creative reading, inferential reading, reading between the lines, and interpretive reading.

No matter what the process is called, it involves comprehension of reading materials. Because slightly differing viewpoints about reading critically are expressed by different authors, teachers should understand some of the most commonly accepted concepts. Williams describes critical reading as intelligent reading directed toward the learning purposes of the students. It involves thinking beyond the level of simple recall (26:327). Stauffer, for example, considers critical reading "to be a process in which it is mandatory that the reader severely judge the writer's ideas" (19:525).

Russell states that on the basis of thinking processes, literal and critical reading cannot be differentiated (17:579). His opinion is that both literal and critical reading will vary according to (1) the reader's purpose for reading and (2) the type of material he is reading. Understanding what the author states may be literal reading for one student, and critical reading for another whose purpose may be entirely different from that of the first reader. Russell's definition appears in many of the articles written today. His definition is:

> . . .the process of examining both concrete and verbal materials in light of related objective evidence, comparing the object or statement with some norm or standard, and concluding or acting upon the judgment made (16:301).

Triggs also stresses the point that reading tasks differ and that not all reading needs to be critical reading. The purpose for which the reading is being done will determine the kind of reading required (24:158). Painter expressed a similar viewpoint when she noted that assimilative and critical reading are not dichotomous but vary in the degree of comprehension (14:35). She noted that critical reading calls for the use of high level thinking in selecting and rejecting ideas, noting relationship between ideas, and organizing ideas. Marksheffel wrote that critical reading means purposeful reading in which the higher-level thinking processes are used in making sound judgment on the basis of all available evidence (13:250).

According to most definitions, a critical reader makes sound judgments. He must be an efficient, thoughtful reader, capable of withholding judgment until he has obtained all possible valid information about the topic under discussion. In order that he make such judgment, the reader must have a wide background of experiences to aid him in evaluating the evidence presented. He must also be capable of sensing the author's purpose and recognizing the validity of those purposes.

An efficient critical reader is not a born reader but the product of a number of combined forces, processes and time. He is an independent thinker and reader who has

developed numerous skills, concepts and attitudes, and beliefs. He knows what he knows and why he knows it. But as a constant seeker of truth he knows that there is no one answer and is, therefore, willing to modify his beliefs when new evidence justifies such modifications.

Critical reading and critical thinking are not synonymous terms although the two processes are almost identical (25:251). The difference between the two processes is that critical thinking does not necessarily involve written symbols whereas critical reading must. An individual uses written words when he is reading critically but when he thinks critically he may do so without using printed symbols. Critical reading requires rigorous application of a student's total knowledge and skills. Critical reading is learned only from adequate, systematic, continuous guidance. Teachers must not assume that a student will become a critical reader without competent instruction in critical reading.

Critical thinking, in its early stages of development, is not beyond the abilities of most five and six year old children. Research has proved that first graders are capable of using thinking processes. Children who have sufficient experiences, concepts and vocabulary for beginning reading are ready to learn to read critically. It is evident that many first graders are capable of profiting from planned guidance in critical reading when they receive instruction

from a competent teacher at their own developmental level.
Many teachers actually begin teaching critical reading at
the first grade level although most are unaware that they
are doing so. For example, a first-grade teacher is
teaching critical reading when he asks questions about the
reading that requires the children to (1) distinguish
between factual and make-believe stories, (2) make infer-
ences from their reading, (3) anticipate how the story might
end before they finish it, (4) reach tentative conclusions
about what might happen next, (5) consider the validity of
their conclusions, and (6) contrast or compare incidents or
characters in one story with those in another story.

Each teacher, regardless of grade level, is con-
tributing to the pupil's ability to read critically when he
provides the child with learning activities that are in
keeping with his intelligence, background of experience,
concepts and general language development. Improving a
student's skill in word recognition, for example, improves
his comprehension in reading. Likewise, teaching vocabu-
lary may improve a student's rate of reading and compre-
hension. Improved word recognition and vocabulary may also
be reflected in improved concept development.

At present, it is impossible to specify exactly which
skills and abilities determine a student's ability to read
critically. The present state of uncertainty is due to

(1) the extreme complexity of the reading process, (2) the lack of sufficient research in certain areas of reading and (3) the need for more refined instruments for evaluating critical reading development. Obviously, there are additional factors, but these three appear to be the major reasons for the inability to state precisely what critical reading is, how it can best be taught, and which skills and abilities are most influential in determining a student's proficiency in critical reading.

Authorities generally agree that thinking, language, and concepts play an important role in critical reading and that these processes must operate together when an individual reads critically. Because student's thinking, language, vocabulary, and concepts develop gradually and simultaneously in all disciplines, each teacher must understand his role in providing learning activities that will insure such growth. It is evident that the teaching of critical reading is not an impossible task, but it is one that requires much preparation by the teacher and active participation by the student.

III. CRITICAL READING SKILLS

The lack of agreement among educators as to what is critical reading has been a major deterrent to greater accomplishment in critical reading. There are the

discrepancies in the concepts of critical reading when it is
related to critical thinking, to creative reading, to the
total reading process, and specifically to the interpretative
skills. Stauffer (21) defines critical reading as one level
in a hierachial order of reading skills and places it above
literal comprehension and interpretation but below assimi-
lative or creative reading.

Therefore, it is evident that critical reading should
be taught at every developmental level and the teaching of
critical reading skills should begin as soon as the child
enters school. The teacher of grade one should know that
teaching critical reading is as important as teaching word
attack and comprehension skills. These skills should be
reviewed and retaught when necessary and expanded at each
succeeding grade level. Thinking is the basis of critical
reading and every child should be challenged to use his
abilities to read critically at his level of understanding.

In her study Williams (26) found one hundred and
eighty-six critical reading skills listed in the ten series.
From these one hundred and eighty-six skills she compiled a
comprehensive list of thirty-three critical reading skills.
The author of this current thesis accepted this list for the
study. These thirty-three skills are as follows:

1. Anticipating outcomes

2. Appreciating humor, and plot

3. Classifying ideas

4. Comparing and contrasting

5. Critical thinking

6. Distinguishing fact and fancy

7. Distinguishing fact and opinion

8. Drawing conclusions

9. Establishing cause and effect

10. Establishing sequence

11. Evaluating and reacting to ideas in light of the author's purpose

12. Evaluating author's attitude

13. Evaluating and solving problems

14. Evaluating summaries

15. Find information to prove or disprove a statement

16. Forming an opinion

17. Forming sensory impressions

18. Generalizing

19. Identifying elements of style

20. Identifying and evaluating character traits

21. Interpreting figurative and idomatic language

22. Interpreting ideas implied not stated

23. Judging author's statements

24. Judging reasonableness and relevancy

25. Making inferences

26. Making judgment

27. Preceiving relationships

28. Predicting outcomes

29. Reacting to the mood or tone of a selection

30. Recognizing emotional reactions and motives

31. Recognizing story problems and plot structure

32. Relating story experiences to personal experiences

33. Research

IV. NEED FOR CRITICAL READING

The ability to read critically is the goal toward which all teaching of reading should be directed. Students can be taught to be critical and creative persons. However, effective instruction must be given at all levels. Critical reading in the upper grades involves the strengthening and extension of skills that have been built at the primary level. Critical reading also means the introduction of higher-level skills for which older children are ready. Stauffer quotes Piaget as saying:

> The principle goal of education is to create men who are capable of doing new things, not simply of repeating what other generations have done--men who are creative, inventive, and discoverers. The second goal of education is to form minds which can be critical, can verify and not accept everything they are offered (21:478).

Further, Stauffer writes, "it seems reasonable to conclude that critical reading and thinking is a preface to creative reading and the going beyond to the creative choice" (21:481).

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES USED IN THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to determine the number
of critical reading skills included in six basal reading
series and how many of these skills each series contained.
It was also the purpose of this study to determine the grade
level at which each specific skill was introduced and, in
addition, how many of these skills were introduced at the
grade one level.

I.   COLLECTION OF THE DATA

Basal reading series used. The six basal reading
series used in this study represented reading series which
are commonly used in the elementary schools in the State of
Washington. The series had been revised since 1960 or
published for the first time since 1960. Those series which
had been revised were the American Book Company's Basic
Readers revised in 1963, the Ginn's 100 Edition revised in
1966, and the Houghton-Mifflin's Fourth Edition revised in
1966. The more recently published series were Lippincott's
Basic Reading published in 1963-1965, the Macmillan's
Reading Program published in 1966, and the Scott, Foresman's
New Basic Readers (Curriculum Foundation Series) published
in 1962.

<u>Critical</u> <u>reading</u> <u>skills</u> <u>inventory</u> <u>used</u>. The author accepted the Williams' inventory of thirty-three critical reading skills for this study. The inventory is as follows:

1.   Anticipating outcomes

2.   Appreciating humor, plot

3.   Classifying ideas

4.   Comparing and contrasting

5.   Critical thinking

6.   Distinguishing fact and fancy

7.   Distinguishing fact and opinion

8.   Drawing conclusions

9.   Establishing cause and effect

10.   Establishing sequence

11.   Evaluating and reacting to ideas in light of the author's purpose

12.   Evaluating author's attitude

13.   Evaluating and solving problems

14.   Evaluating summaries

15.   Find information to prove or disprove a statement

16.   Forming an opinion

17.   Forming sensory impressions

18.   Generalizing

19.   Identifying elements of style

20.   Identifying and evaluating character traits

21.   Interpreting figurative and idomatic language

22. Interpreting ideas implied not stated

23. Judging author's statement

24. Judging reasonableness and relevancy

25. Making inferences

26. Making judgments

27. Preceiving relationships

28. Predicting outcomes

29. Reacting to the mood or tone of a selection

30. Recognizing emotional reactions and motives

31. Recognizing story problem and plot structure

32. Relating story experiences to personal experiences

33. Research

II. PROCEDURES AND TREATMENT OF DATA

In this study a total of seventy-one teachers' manuals from the six basal reading series were used. Each textbook level of reading was represented from the pre-primer through the sixth grade. In grade one most series had three pre-primers, a primer, and one reader, except Lippincott which had only one pre-primer, a primer and two readers and Scott, Foresman which had two primers. All the series had two books in grade two which were considered as one teachers' manual for this study. Again, in grade three, there were two books which were also combined. Grades four, five and six consisted only of one book in each grade.

The author surveyed each of the teachers' manuals
lesson by lesson using the Williams' inventory of critical
reading skills as a guide. Each of the skills was tabulated
for each level of reading. The skill was recorded when it
appeared for the first time in the teachers' manual in each
series. The author also tabulated the total number of
skills included in each of the six series.

CHAPTER IV

REPORT OF THE STUDY

Chapter IV contains the treatment of the data in tabulated form.

The total number of critical reading skills in each series ranged from seventeen to thirty-two, as is shown in these results:

Macmillan	32
Scott, Foresman	32
Ginn	31
American Book Company	29
Lippincott	23
Houghton-Mifflin	17

Two series which were recently published contained all the skills except one. Four of the series had twenty-nine or more of the critical reading skills and one of the series contained only one-half of the critical reading skills.

A combined list of the thirty-three critical reading skills which were included in the teachers' manuals for the six basal reading series is presented in Table I.

Fourteen of the critical reading skills were included in all of the basal reading series. Twenty-nine of the skills were included in four of the series. Classifying ideas, recognizing story problem and plot structure, judging

TABLE I

NUMBER OF SERIES THAT INCLUDES EACH SKILL

Critical Reading Skills	Number of Series
Anticipating outcomes	4 out of 6
Appreciating humor, plot	6 out of 6
Classifying ideas	3 out of 6
Comparing and contrasting	6 out of 6
Critical thinking	5 out of 6
Distinguishing fact and fancy	6 out of 6
Distinguishing fact and opinion	5 out of 6
Drawing conclusions	6 out of 6
Establishing cause and effect	5 out of 6
Establishing sequence	6 out of 6
Evaluating author's attitude	4 out of 6
Evaluating and reacting to ideas in the light of the author's purpose	4 out of 6
Evaluating and solving problems	4 out of 6
Evaluating summaries	4 out of 6
Finding information to prove or disprove a statement	5 out of 6
Forming an opinion	4 out of 6
Forming sensory impressions	6 out of 6
Generalizing	4 out of 6
Identifying elements of style	5 out of 6
Identifying and evaluating character traits	6 out of 6
Interpreting figurative and idomatic language	6 out of 6
Interpreting ideas implied not stated	5 out of 6
Judging author's statement	3 out of 6
Judging reasonableness and relevancy	6 out of 6
Making inferences	6 out of 6
Making judgments	6 out of 6
Perceiving relationships	5 out of 6
Predicting outcomes	5 out of 6
Reacting to the mood or tone of a selection	6 out of 6
Recognizing emotional reactions and motives	6 out of 6
Recognizing story problems and plot structure	3 out of 6
Relating story experience to personal experience	6 out of 6
Research	3 out of 6

the author's statement, and research were the least
represented of the skills and were contained in only three
of the basal reading series.

The grade level at which each critical reading skill
is introduced for the first time in each of the series is
presented in Table II. The grade placement· of the skills
at all levels for each series was tabulated. These tables
were placed in the Appendix.

The American Book Company included twenty-nine of the
critical reading skills. Twenty-four of these skills were
introduced at the primary level and sixteen of these skills
were presented at the grade one level. Ten of the sixteen
skills introduced at this level were also listed for
instruction at every grade level in the series. Four other
skills presented in grade one were reinforced in the series
at four other grade levels. Sixteen critical reading skills
were reinforced at every consecutive reading level once the
skills were introduced. Seven of the skills were also
reinforced but not at every grade level or in consecutive
grade levels. Six skills were introduced with no further
reinforcement at any level in the series. The skills of
critical thinking, generalizing, judging the author's state-
ment and recognizing story problem were not included at any
level in this series.

TABLE II

GRADE PLACEMENT FOR INTRODUCTION OF SKILLS
IN ALL SIX SERIES

Critical Reading Skills	American Book Company	Ginn	Houghton Mifflin	Lippincott	Macmillan	Scott Foresman
Anticipating outcomes	1	3			4	1
Appreciating humor, plot	1	2	6	2	1	1
Classifying ideas	1	2			2	
Comparing and contrasting	4	1	6	2	2	1
Critical thinking		1	3	3	2	4
Distinguishing fact and fancy	1	2	3	2	3	2
Distinguishing fact and opinion	3	4		3	3	5
Drawing conclusions	1	1	1	1	2	1
Establishing cause and effect	1	3		6	3	1
Establishing sequence	1	1	2	1	1	1
Evaluating author's attitude	5	4			4	4
Evaluating and reacting to ideas in the light of the author's purpose	3	4			2	3
Evaluating and solving problems	1	3			3	4
Evaluating summaries	1	3			1	2
Finding information to prove or disprove a statement	1	1		1	1	1
Forming an opinion	5	2			2	2
Forming sensory impressions	1	1	5	1	1	1
Generalizing		1	6	1	2	2
Identifying elements of style	3	5		6	3	3
Identifying and evaluating character traits	1	2	4	1	1	1
Interpreting figurative and idomatic language	2	3	3	2	2	2
Interpreting ideas implied not stated	5	2		3	2	2
Judging author's statement			5		4	3
Judging reasonableness and relevancy	1	1	6	3	2	3
Making inferences	3	1	4	1	1	1
Making judgments	1	2	4	3	2	1
Perceiving relationships	2	1		6	1	1
Predicting outcomes	3	1		1	1	2
Reacting to the mood or tone of a selection	1	1	4	3	1	1
Recognizing emotional reactions and motives	3	1	4	1	1	1
Recognizing story problems and plot structure		4			3	1
Relating story experience to personal experiences	1	1	1	1	1	1
Research	5			6		5

The Ginn Company included thirty-one critical reading skills. At the primary level twenty-six of the critical reading skills were introduced and fourteen of these skills were presented at the grade one level. Six of the skills introduced at grade one were also listed at every grade level. Eight other skills presented at grade one were reinforced at three or more grade levels. Sixteen critical reading skills were reinforced at every consecutive grade level once the skills were introduced. Ten skills were reinforced in two or more grade levels. Three skills were introduced with no further reinforcement in the series. The skills of judging the author's statement and research were the two skills not included in this series.

Only seventeen of the critical reading skills were included in the Houghton-Mifflin series. Six skills were introduced at the primary level and two of these skills were presented in grade one at the pre-primer level. These two skills were also listed at every grade level in the series. Six critical reading skills were reinforced at every consecutive grade level once the skills were introduced. Five skills were reinforced but not at every grade level. Two skills were introduced with no further reinforcement in the series. Houghton-Mifflin did not present sixteen of the thirty-three critical reading skills.

Lippincott included twenty-three critical reading skills and nineteen of them were introduced at the primary level. Nine of the skills were presented at the grade one level and two of these skills introduced at this level were also listed at every grade level in this series. Seven of the skills presented in grade one were reinforced in the series at one or more grade levels. Five of the critical reading skills were reinforced at every consecutive grade level once the skills were introduced. Eleven of the skills introduced were also reinforced but not at every grade level. Seven skills were introduced only at one grade level without any reinforcement at any other level. Ten of the critical reading skills were not included in this series.

The Macmillan readers included thirty-two of the critical reading skills. At the primary level, twenty-nine were introduced and twelve of these were presented at grade one. Ten of the skills introduced at the grade one level were also listed at every grade level in the series. One other skill introduced at the grade one level was listed in all grade levels except grade five. Twenty-two critical reading skills were reinforced at every consecutive grade level once the skills were introduced. Ten skills were also reinforced but not at every grade level. Anticipating out-comes was the only skill presented without reinforcement. In this series the skill of research was omitted.

The Scott, Foresman readers included thirty-two of the critical reading skills. At the primary level, twenty-seven of the skills were introduced and sixteen of these were presented at the grade one level. Fourteen skills at this level, once introduced, appeared in every consecutive grade level in the series. Two of the sixteen were also reinforced but not at every grade level. Twenty-one of the critical reading skills were reinforced at every consecutive grade level once the skills were introduced. All of the skills introduced in this series were reinforced at one or more grade levels. The skill of classifying ideas was omitted from this series.

In the fourteen critical reading skills included in all of the six basal reading series a noticeable difference in the grade range of introduction of certain skills was noted. The skill of appreciating humor-plot was introduced in three series at the grade one level, in two series at the grade two level, and one series at the grade six level. The skill of comparing and contrasting was introduced in two series at the grade one level, in two series at the grade two level, in one series at the grade four level, and one series at the grade six level. The skill of judging reasonableness and relevancy was introduced at the grade one level in two series, at the grade two level in one series, at the grade three level in two series, and at the grade six

level in one series. The skill of forming sensory impression
was introduced at the grade one level in five of the series
and at the grade six level in one series.

For five critical reading skills the initial intro-
duction ranged from grade one to grade four. Five skills
were introduced at the primary grades only. The only skill
introduced at the same grade level in all six basal reading
series was the skill of relating story experiences to
personal experiences. This skill was introduced at the
grade one level.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The author surveyed six basal reading series used in the elementary schools in the State of Washington. The series were published by American Book Company, Ginn, Houghton-Mifflin, Lippincott, Macmillan, and Scott, Foresman. Each of these series was either published for the first time since 1960 or revised since 1960.

The basal reading series were surveyed to determine the provision for critical reading skills in basal readers today. The Williams' inventory of thirty-three critical reading skills was used by the author to determine this provision. The number of critical reading skills in the six basal reading series was recorded. The number of critical reading skills contained in each series was also recorded. The grade level of the initial introduction of each specific critical reading skills was recorded.

Conclusions

Since all thirty-three critical reading skills were listed in the six basal reading series it might be concluded that many of the thirty-three critical reading skills from the Williams' inventory are being taught in the elementary

school today. It was noted that fourteen of the skills
appeared in all the reading series and thus, it seems
reasonable to conclude that these fourteen skills are being
taught in the elementary schools. However, this does not
preclude that teachers are aware that they are teaching the
critical reading skills.

As the majority of the thirty-three critical reading
skills are initially presented at the primary level it seems
reasonable to conclude that many critical reading skills are
included in the primary basal readers.

It appears that there is not a set grade level of the
introduction of each critical reading skill because of the
inconsistency of the grade levels at which a skill is
initially introduced in each series. Because of this incon-
sistency it would seem that teachers should know the critical
reading skills in order to reinforce and to present new
skills.

As it was noted that three of the series included
thirty-one or thirty-two of the critical reading skills and
followed the terminology used in the Williams' inventory it
is conceivable that the authors of these series may have
followed the Williams' inventory.

As Houghton-Mifflin included only seventeen of the
critical reading skills it appears that the authors may have
(1) labeled the skills differently, or (2) presented them in

a sub-section of skill development and did not indicate them separately, or (3) included them in their workbooks.

Recommendations

It is recommended that this study be replicated. It is also recommended that a survey of the critical reading skills be made in the supplementary reading materials found in the elementary schools. A study of the number of lessons provided for the reinforcement of the critical reading skills is recommended to be made. It is recommended that a survey be made of the critical reading skills included in the Houghton-Mifflin series. In addition, it is recommended that all of the thirty-three critical reading skills be introduced and developed in the elementary schools.

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APPENDIX

TABLE III

AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY:
GRADE PLACEMENT OF SKILLS

Critical Reading Skills	Grade Level							
	PP	P	1	2	3	4	5	6
Anticipating outcomes	x̄							
Appreciating humor, plot			x	x	x	x	x	x
Classifying ideas		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Comparing and contrasting						x		
Critical Thinking								
Distinguishing fact and fancy			x	x	x	x		x
Distinguishing fact and opinion					x	x	x	x
Drawing conclusions	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Establishing cause and effect				x	x	x	x	x
Establishing sequence	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Evaluating author's attitude							x	x
Evaluating and reacting to ideas in the light of the author's purpose					x	x	x	x
Evaluating and solving problems	x			x	x	x	x	x
Evaluating summaries			x	x			x	x
Finding information to prove or disprove a statement	x	x	x	x	x			x
Forming an opinion							x	x
Forming sensory impressions		x		x	x		x	x
Generalizing								
Identifying elements of style						x	x	x
Identifying and evaluating character traits		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Interpreting figurative and idomatic language				x	x	x	x	x
Interpreting ideas implied not stated							x	
Judging author's statement								
Judging reasonableness and relevancy	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Making inferences					x			
Making judgments	x			x	x	x	x	x
Perceiving relationships				x	x	x	x	
Predicting outcomes					x			
Reacting to the mood or tone of a selection		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Recognizing emotional reaction and motives					x	x	x	x
Recognizing story problems and plot structure								
Relating story experience to personal experiences		x	x	x	x	x	x	
Research							x	

TABLE IV

GINN: GRADE PLACEMENT OF SKILLS

Critical Reading Skills	PP	P	1	2	3	4	5	6
Anticipating outcomes					x			
Appreciating humor, plot				x	x	x	x	x
Classifying ideas				x	x		x	
Comparing and contrasting		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Critical thinking			x	x			x	
Distinguishing fact and fancy				x	x	x	x	x
Distinguishing fact and opinion						x		
Drawing conclusions	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Establishing cause and effect					x	x	x	x
Establishing sequence	x	x		x	x	x	x	
Evaluating author's attitude						x	x	
Evaluating and reacting to ideas in the light of the author's purpose						x	x	x
Evaluating and solving problems					x		x	x
Evaluating summaries					x	x	x	x
Finding information to prove or disprove a statement		x		x	x	x	x	x
Forming an opinion				x	x	x	x	x
Forming sensory impressions	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Generalizing		x		x	x		x	
Identifying elements of style							x	
Identifying and evaluating character traits				x	x	x	x	x
Interpreting figurative and idomatic language					x		x	x
Interpreting ideas implied not stated				x	x	x		x
Judging author's statement								
Judging reasonableness and relevancy			x	x	x	x	x	x
Making inferences	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Making judgments				x	x	x	x	x
Perceiving relationships	x			x	x		x	x
Predicting outcomes	x	x		x	x	x	x	
Reacting to the mood or tone of a selection			x	x	x	x	x	
Recognizing emotional reactions and motives		x			x	x	x	x
Recognizing story problems and plot structure						x	x	
Relating story experience to personal experiences	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Research								

TABLE V

HOUGHTON-MIFFLIN
GRADE PLACEMENT OF SKILLS

Critical Reading Skills	PP	P	1	2	3	4	5	6
Anticipating outcomes								
Appreciating humor, plot								x
Classifying ideas								
Comparing and contrasting								x
Critical thinking					x			x
Distinguishing fact and fancy					x	x	x	
Distinguishing fact and opinion								
Drawing conclusions	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Establishing cause and effect								
Establishing sequence				x	x	x	x	x
Evaluating author's attitude								
Evaluating and reacting to ideas in the light of the author's purpose		-						
Evaluating and solving problems								
Evaluating summaries								
Finding information to prove or disprove a statement								
Forming an opinion								
Forming sensory impressions							x	x
Generalizing								x
Identifying elements of style								
Identifying and evaluating character traits						x	x	x
Interpreting figurative and idomatic language					x	x	x	x
Interpreting ideas implied not stated								
Judging author's statement						x		
Judging reasonableness and relevancy								x
Making inferences						x	x	
Making judgments						x		x
Perceiving relationships								
Predicting outcomes								
Reacting to the mood or tone of a selection						x		x
Recognizing emotional reactions and motives						x		x
Recognizing story problems and plot structure		-						
Relating story experience to personal experiences	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Research								

TABLE VI

LIPPINCOTT: GRADE PLACEMENT OF SKILLS

Critical Reading Skills	PP	P	1	2	3	4	5	6
Anticipating outcomes								
Appreciating humor, plot				x	x		x	
Classifying ideas								
Comparing and contrasting				x	x	x		
Critical thinking					x			
Distinguishing fact and fancy				x	x		x	
Distinguishing fact and opinion					x			x
Drawing conclusions		x			x	x	x	x
Establishing cause and effect								x
Establishing sequence	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Evaluating author's attitude								
Evaluating and reacting to ideas in the light of the author's purpose								
Evaluating and solving problems								
Evaluating summaries								
Finding information to prove or disprove a statement				x	x	x	x	x
Forming an opinion								
Forming sensory impressions	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Generalizing								
Identifying elements of style								x
Identifying and evaluating character traits			x	x			x	x
Interpreting figurative and idomatic language				x	x	x	x	x
Interpreting ideas implied not stated					x			
Judging author's statement								
Judging reasonableness and relevancy					x			
Making inferences	x				x		x	
Making judgments					x	x		x
Perceiving relationships								x
Predicting outcomes		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Reacting to the mood or tone of a selection					x	x	x	x
Recognizing emotional reactions and motives			x	x	x			
Recognizing story problems and plot structure								
Relating story experience to personal experiences	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Research								x

TABLE VII

MACMILLAN: GRADE PLACEMENT OF SKILLS

Critical Reading Skills	PP	P	1	2	3	4	5	6
Anticipating outcomes						x		
Appreciating humor, plot		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Classifying ideas				x	x	x	x	
Comparing and contrasting				x	x	x	x	x
Critical thinking				x	x	x		x
Distinguishing fact and fancy					x	x	x	x
Distinguishing fact and opinion					x	x	x	x
Drawing conclusions				x	x	x	x	x
Establishing cause and effect					x	x	x	x
Establishing sequence		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Evaluating author's attitude						x	x	x
Evaluating and reacting to ideas in the light of the author's purpose				x	x	x	x	x
Evaluating and solving problems					x		x	x
Evaluating summaries			x		x		x	x
Finding information to prove or disprove a statement	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Forming an opinion				x			x	
Forming sensory impressions	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Generalizing				x	x	x	x	
Identifying elements of style					x	x	x	x
Identifying and evaluating character traits	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Interpreting figurative and idomatic language				x	x	x	x	x
Interpreting ideas implied not stated				x	x	x	x	x
Judging author's statement						x	x	x
Judging reasonableness and relevancy				x		x	x	x
Making inferences	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Making judgments				x	x			x
Perceiving relationships		x	x	x	x	x		x
Predicting outcomes	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Reacting to the mood or tone of a selection	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Recognizing emotional reactions and motives		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Recognizing story problems and plot structure					x		x	x
Relating story experience to personal experiences		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Research								

TABLE VIII

SCOTT-FORESMAN: GRADE PLACEMENT OF SKILLS

Critical Reading Skills	PP	P	1	2	3	4	5	6
Anticipating outcomes	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Appreciating humor, plot		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Classifying ideas								
Comparing and contrasting		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Critical thinking						x	x	
Distinguishing fact and fancy				x		x	x	x
Distinguishing fact and opinion							x	x
Drawing conclusions	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Establishing cause and effect	x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Establishing sequence		x	x	x	x	x	x	
Evaluating author's attitude						x	x	x
Evaluating and reacting to ideas in the light of the author's purpose					x	x	x	x
Evaluating and solving problems						x	x	
Evaluating summaries				x	x		x	x
Finding information to prove or disprove a statement	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Forming an opinion				x	x			
Forming sensory impressions		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Generalizing				x	x	x		x
Identifying elements of style					x	x	x	x
Identifying and evaluating character traits	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Interpreting figurative and idomatic language				x	x	x	x	x
Interpreting ideas implied not stated				x	x	x		x
Judging author's statement					x		x	x
Judging reasonableness and relevancy					x		x	
Making inferences	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Making judgments	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Perceiving relationships		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Predicting outcomes				x	x			
Reacting to the mood or tone of a selection	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Recognizing emotional reactions and motives	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Recognizing story problems and plot structure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Relating story experience to personal experiences	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Research							x	x