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Determining if Creative Activities Relating to and Incorporated in Spelling Lessons Will Bring about Greater Achievement in Spelling than the Traditional Method

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DETERMINING IF CREATIVE ACTIVITIES RELATING TO AND INCORPORATED

IN SPELLING LESSONS WILL BRING ABOUT GREATER ACHIEVEMENT

IN SPELLING THAN THE TRADITIONAL METHOD

A Thesis

Presented to

the Graduate Faculty

Central Washington State College

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Education

by

Nita Melvina Svinth

August, 1969

APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study would not have been possible without the encouragement of my husband, Ed, my daughter, Nita Marie, my friend, Mary Lou, and my chairman, Dr. John E. Davis.

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The little girl appeared downhearted

at the passing of September. 'I

just learned how to spell it,'

she mourned,

'and now it's gone' (10:11).

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Creativity is the "product of a curriculum which opens experiences to children, creates new needs to know, and provides them with the skills which enable them to put curiosity into action" (3:153). Since the traditional academic skills and subject matter are means and not ends in themselves, without them the individual is powerless to create (3:154). If one could incorporate creative activities in each spelling lesson, stressing the phonetic and structural principles, this could be the instrument to make the learning situation richer and to bring about greater achievement in spelling.

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine if the enrichment and supplementing of creative activities relating to and incorporated in spelling lessons would bring about greater achievement in spelling than the traditional method of only stressing skills and principles. Practical application of combining the creative activities and the traditional method of spelling was used in the fourth-year classroom. The null hypothesis

tested was that there was no statistical difference between the achievement made by pupils in the experimental group who received spelling instruction and creative activities to supplement the instruction and the control group who received a traditional spelling program.

Importance of the Study

The writer evaluated her spelling program in the past and felt the need for improved motivation and greater achievement in the children's spelling. The traditional method previously used alone had lacked vitality. Another motivational approach, using creative activities relating to and incorporated in each spelling lesson, could provide greater results in achievement. The writer needed to permit a relaxed atmosphere to develop by incorporating creativity in each spelling lesson, thus providing an encouraging climate for learning spelling. To hold the pupils' interest in any subject is of importance, and it was worth the writer's efforts to study to find out if creative activities proved motivating enough to improve the children's spelling achievement.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Traditional Method in Spelling

This is the study of a basic word list, stressing skills and principles. This can be the study of words and assignments from a workbook or a comparable program of word study without a workbook.

<u>Creative Activities</u>

Activities that provide for a type of thinking in which the facts, concepts, and understandings of spelling as well as spelling skills are put to new uses, while arriving at the correct spelling of a word. Procedures are clear, but flexibility is necessary. Individual contributions are brought out and respected in the activities.

ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE STUDY

Chapter 2 will give a review of the literature on the use of the traditional method and creative activities. Chapter 3 will be a report of the collection of data and research design, together with the evaluative results. Chapter 4 will present the summary, the conclusions, and the recommendations.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

More than five years ago, following a series of discussions of possible causes for achievement test scores in spelling which were consistently lower than scores in other subject areas, there appeared two possibilities: either the faculty and the curriculum were particularly adept in other areas; or conversely, the faculty and curriculum were particularly inept in the teaching of spelling. Many students did not spell well even when they studied diligently. Some had short-term memories enabling them to score high on weekly tests, but their apparent knowledge flew to the winds when they wrote themes for English (26:3).

Concerned by this same issue, the writer attempted to improve

the spelling program through the enrichment of creative activities incor-

porated in the spelling lessons. The purpose of this study was not to set

aside the spelling workbook, but to reinforce the program by creative

activities involving all phases of the curriculum. Horn observes:

How well children learn to spell is affected by what is done in reading, in written work, in handwriting and in speaking, in addition to what is done in periods devoted to spelling. It is also influenced by school morale, by attitudes of teachers toward spelling, and by the design of the curriculum as a whole. No one of these factors should be disregarded (14:3).

Since this study was spelling supplemented with creative activities,

reasons why the two should be combined for better achievement were sought.

Today, amid the wonders of television and space exploration, we are prone to forget that there is really no miracle surpassing the gift of language. For by it we can communicate every thought and

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emotion in the whole range of experience. Indeed, the history of words is the living record of the human race. Civilization stands testimony to the truth that Cardinal Richelieu once uttered: "The pen is mightier than the sword" (1:v).

LITERATURE ON THE TRADITIONAL METHOD

Dolch states: "In the past, the spelling period was devoted almost exclusively to drill. Spelling was called a 'formal' subject, and repetition and drill were therefore assumed to be the methods to be used" (6:129).

As Hildreth emphasizes:

Traditionally, spelling has been taught as a formal school subject having little relation to other skills and content areas in the curriculum. Noah Webster's 'Blue Back' Speller, with its long lists of difficult words drawn up primarily for practice in word-pronunciation as preparation for reading, dominated in spelling instruction throughout the past century. The tradition of oral 'contest' spelling at school and the popularity of the American 'spelling bee' in social life stemmed from the pronunciation exercises of Webster's book (12:8).

The phonics method eventually came to be taken for granted. Then, in the late 1920's, "came the advent of the experiment of Sight-Memory-Only in the method for teaching reading, and its corrolary of Sight-Memory and Kinetic-Memory-Only in spelling methods"(20:6).

Yet, McEathron observes:

The pendulum swings back and forth through over-emphasis and under-emphasis in this and that educational trend, until it settles in a logical balance. Our country has just gone through the swing of both opposites and is, happily, coming now to the balanced, realistic recognition of the necessity of the foundation-- (Yes, the proper framework, the carefully laid plumbing pipes!)-- in the structure (20:17).

Phonics is in style again (20:24), but there still is the cry of teachers and parents that children cannot spell. So, phonics is not all of spelling. However, McEathron stresses that understanding the phonetic principles is the largest single requirement for good spellers (20:23).

By the time children are around nine years of age, there are several distinct though related aims in spelling. Traditionally, they should remain the same. According to Hildreth, these are the following:

1. To memorize the spelling of all commonly used words not clinched in the lower grades, and to learn other frequently used words, about 2500-3000 in all.
2. To continue to establish the habits that make for self-dependence in writing.
3. To practice spelling as a tool for writing.
The second of these aims is a major objective for the middle and upper grades because the amount and scope of context writing are now rapidly increasing (12:167-168).

Spelling has to be learned under school conditions if spelling is to be learned in school. Dolch says:

School conditions must be met in the teaching of spelling. If tradition emphasizes one method of learning, the teacher may retain it and add others. If the text book emphasizes only one kind of spelling knowledge, the teacher may supplement it with other kinds (6:51).

Dolch summarizes the various kinds of spelling knowledge that are now being sought by teachers. They are the following:

Hand-spelling is a motor habit in which the hand seems to write the correct letters while the mind is dealing with thoughts. The "repeated writing" of words was expected to develop hand-habits but was found not to do so. . . . We now teach spelling by other methods but realize that, through sufficient practice over a long enough period of time, hand-habits of spelling will ultimately develop.

Lip-spelling is a motor habit that was originally learned by saying the letters over and over many times. When children study spelling by saying the letters to themselves, they are bound to use lip-spelling whenever they want to spell these same words. But this method of study (1) makes the spelling of each word a separate piece of learning, (2) gets no help at all from words seen in reading, and (3) cannot be recommended for the learning of spelling in high school or college or in later life.

Ear-spelling is the translating of the word sound into letters according to the individual's idea as to what letters the sounds represent. Ear-spelling will always be widely used but may lead to mistakes because the word sound may be incorrect or vague and because spelling may be unphonetic.

Eye-spelling means "knowing what the word looks like," that is, having a clear, correct visual image of the word. This visual image (1) catches mistakes we have made in spelling by other methods, and (2) helps us to spell words by enabling us to "see" the letters they contain. Eye-spelling is not an all-sufficient method (1) because we naturally tend to use ear-spelling, (2) because children often want to write words they have not yet seen, and (3) because many children cannot keep in mind clear visual images of the thousands of words which sooner or later they will wish to write. Native differences in types of imagery preferred are not as important as once thought.

Thought-spelling, or figuring out what the letters should be, is widely used and can be a great help in spelling (6:49-50).

Dolch says that thought-spelling "continues to be used long after other methods may have been forgotten. It also forms an excellent way of teaching other types of spelling knowledge" (6:212).

Not all pupils, however, are able to make use of auditory and visual methods. It has been recommended by leading authorities in the field of spelling that the tactile kinesthetic method be used at all grade levels, even in college. Fernald suggests:

1. The pupil traces the letters saying the word then repeats the word.
2. The pupil pronounces the word again and traces the letters, this time, naming each letter as the finger traces it. Then, he pronounces it again.

3. The pupil pronounces the word and traces it with a pencil while naming each letter as he traces it and then says the word again.

4. The pupil writes the word from memory, compares it with the word he traced. If a mistake has been made, he repeats the procedure.

5. The pupil writes the word in context at the level of his ability (24:18).

Mnemonic devices are memory tricks and are best when they have a direct connection with the meaning of the word. Principle, for example, is a kind of rule. Rule ends in le, as does principle. Principal, on the other hand, has the word pal in it. The child can remember that a principal should be a pal.

The traditional phonetic characteristics and structural analysis are very closely related, and structural analysis logically precedes phonetic analysis. The part (syllable) of the word is seen and then the sound to say and hear is determined before pronouncing.

The knowledge and use of consistent phonetic or structural patterns make basic generalizations and help build independent word power. The majority of words in the English language can be worked out by generalizations and need not be memorized. However, numerous words deviate from basic generalizations. According to Kottmeyer:

Deviations from regular phonetic patterns should not limit their usefulness. When a child scrutinizes a word he wishes to learn to spell, he may observe that it is spelled "phonetically"-- that is, it is spelled as he expects it to be spelled. He notes this fact and tries to remember to spell it phonetically when the need arises. If, on the other hand, the word deviates from the regular phonetic pattern--that is, it is not spelled as he expects it to be spelled, he notes the nature of the deviation. In other

words, he looks discriminatingly at the word. <u>Looking</u> <u>at</u> <u>a</u> <u>word</u> <u>discriminatingly</u> <u>means</u> <u>that</u> <u>we</u> <u>observe</u> <u>agreement</u> <u>with</u> <u>or</u> <u>devia-</u> <u>tion</u> <u>from</u> <u>our</u> <u>body</u> <u>of</u> <u>phonetic</u> <u>generalizations</u> (24:35).

Traditionally, correct spelling has been synonymous with a good education. Spelling is a part of language arts. As such, it should strengthen reading, writing, and English--not contradict them. There is, for example, a definite connection between readiness in spelling and readiness in reading. Hildreth states:

> Readiness plays a part in learning to spell just as it does in reading and the learning of other skills. Until children have attained sufficient mental maturity and linguistic experience they are scarcely ready to begin spelling work in school. Efforts to drill children in spelling prematurely may result in failure. Readiness is essential for learning to spell at all grade levels.
> The factors associated with readiness for reading have a bearing on readiness for spelling as well. These include: mental and linguistic maturity, visual and auditory perception, and motor control, as well as the emotional and social maturity needed to give attention to the teacher's instruction and to work on a short task (12:49).

It is true that many persons have learned to spell by traditional methods, "but not all have learned easily, become good spellers, or formed good spelling habits" (12:9).

LITERATURE ON CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Creative activities in writing, reading, and arithmetic have been used in schools throughout the country (16:1). The writer, however, has found that little emphasis, in comparison, has been placed on creativity in the spelling program. The spelling program, like spelling itself, is

"a hand-made garment which can and must be changed when it becomes a straight jacket" (22:189).

In such a changing world as ours, traditional teaching in spelling can lack the spark of enthusiasm needed to gear our spelling program to fit the time of the present day. Creative activities are important.

> It is becoming increasingly clear that nothing can contribute more to mental health and the general welfare of our nation and to the satisfactions of its people than a general raising of the level of creativity. There is little doubt that the stifling of creative thinking cuts at the very roots of satisfaction in living and eventually creates overwhelming tension and breakdown (27:28).

As Lane and Beauchamp state in Human Relations in Teaching:

> We must keep learning alive, zestful. School should be fun. Childhood is the time of adventure, of wide-eyed speculation, of activity. Teachers must help keep it that way. . . . Some teachers feel it necessary to give an explanation to the principal if he finds the group having a hearty laugh or highly excited about an undertaking. We can't keep youngsters immobilized and expect them to have fun. They must be active. The teacher must see to it that lots of fun, good humor, high moments are included in each day's activities (17:199).

Creative activities in spelling make achievement a means of motivating the pupils to further learning and assist them in exploring the possible ways by which they can achieve their own self-actualization. Assisting the child to self-actualization is probably the most important single function of teaching. Self-actualization can be defined as "the desire for self-fulfillment or the tendency of the individual to want to bring to fruition what he potentially could be" (23:12). Wilt observes in this respect:

The child has vocabulary; he has experiences; he has grammar; and he has his culture. Surely these are worth valuing and preserving. Surely these are worth using as a lever to broader, deeper and richer goals. But more important, perhaps, than the school using what the child brings may be the effect upon the child's self-image of the school's use of what he brings. Dignity and self-respect accompany acceptance of him as he is. Proud of his heritage, he can begin to raise his sights so that his goal will always be just beyond his grasp. On the other hand, if everything he knows is wrong and everything he does is bad, he is apt to stand against the world of the school rather than with and of it. In our society, not only the children of the so-called disadvantaged need the opportunities discussed above. Each in his own way is asking to be accepted, liked, taught, and encouraged to become something more than he is today (28:614).

A child accustomed to failure can be encouraged with a positive, creative approach. Combs and Snygg comment on Lecky's work with poor spellers:

. . . Lecky noted that otherwise normal children who were unable to spell seemed to make about the same number of errors per page in their written work irrespective of the difficulty of the material. Lecky observed, furthermore, that children did not make such mistakes in spelling when they were dealing with a foreign language. He concluded that these children must be spelling in terms of the concepts they held about their capacities as spellers. They were spelling in a manner consistent with the beliefs they held about their spelling abilities.
What is more, when methods were employed to help these children change their concepts of themselves, they learned to spell with little or no difficulty (4:151-152).

It remains, then, that creativity is "the product of a curriculum which opens experiences to children, creates new needs to know, and provides them with the skills which enable them to put curiosity into action" (3:153). Yet, a child must have a "storehouse of knowledge" (8:1). As Moura and Smith stress:

Spelling is a skill that is not acquired easily. Accuracy in spelling results from a knowledge of the basic word attack skills and good auditory discrimination. Legible writing reduces spelling errors. Hearing plays an important part in a person's ability to spell correctly. The teacher strives at all times to speak distinctly so each child he teaches can identify individual-letter and letter-combination sounds. A good oral and reading vocabulary builds through the use of phonetical sounds (21:21).

A child, however, is not only mind. He is heart and he is will. The creative touch serves to meet the needs, interests, and abilities of the child when a rigid plan fails. It helps the child draw on his previous learning in a less frustrating way to grasp the new.

In spelling, as well as in any other subject, pupils should have experiences that contribute to self-discovery and fulfillment (5:76). Childhood is in a spelling classtime as well as in any other part of the school day. Peak experiences can take place in spelling.

Maslow has expressed his belief that education should give some place to peak experiences for the purpose of encouraging unity. He stresses the raw, concrete, esthetic experiences, especially of subjective happenings inside oneself. Peak experiences, according to Maslow, are integrative, combining observation, insight and feeling and help to validate life learnings (3:224). Skills are means to an end, and creativity gives value to the tools and techniques.

A spelling program, then, must have vitality. As Manolakes writes:

The elementary school we need has a responsibility beyond the teaching of the basic skills. The fundamentals for the world of today

and tomorrow extend beyond the limits of a rigid and prescribed subject matter curriculum (19:9).

Manolakes' words are reminiscent of the words of Dr. Colin Scott, an early educator in the Boston Normal School. Scott wrote:

> Nothing is taught until it is learned. Nothing is learned until it is loved and willed an essential and indispensable portion of life. . . . The other kinds of learning will not die, they do not need to die because they were never alive. Their phrases may be learned by rote, may be carved in marble or melted into bronze, may be required by examinations, and solidified into courses of study, and yet they never come alive. They never pass from heart to heart, they are never really taught. Only that which reproduces itself continuously by passing from one to another is alive (11:428).

Since children are expected to acquire spelling skills, these should be made enjoyable by some method (13:98). Creative activities can be used to advantage at the time and many of them can continue into later life. Constructive attitudes are developed in experiences that take place during the time of learning skills creatively. McEathron points out:

> Most people who are poor spellers admit there is quite another reason for spelling difficulty. One that is so basic that years of determined effort to spell without this brings little success. It is: . . . Lack of understanding the SOUNDS of letters. Without this skill of knowing the function of the letters, each one of the words he needed to spell became a memory feat. His creative sense and his logic were not brought into play. Then, when his memory refused the load, or during times of stress or strain, it failed him altogether, discouragement very likely took over. He probably told his subconscious quite clearly: "Boy, am I a lousy speller!" If so, this same subconscious, being obedient, then proceeded to deliver to him a very "lousy" speller (20:22).

Creative activities can help children learn to discipline themselves. Self-discipline will never be learned by a police affair. There should be a feeling of joy and moving forward in learning skills. If a

child can be in a situation where he is free of frustration, he is more able to learn.

Pupils mature gradually, each at his own rate. It is important that they are provided with kinds of experiences--creative experiences-- that will help them in the maturing process. "It is the fixed, static classification, the labeled class assignments which close children to their experiences" (3:155).

The teacher himself can also be strengthened as he participates in creative activities to teach skills. Torrance suggests that "perhaps nothing could do more to improve the mental health of the teaching profession and to increase the satisfaction of teachers with their jobs than to raise the level of their creative functioning" (27:23).

Parts of the English spelling are reasonably consistent, such as syllables, suffixes, word patterns, meanings, and most consonant sounds. If a child can learn the consistent parts of spelling, then he will be better equipped to handle the exceptions. Fitzgerald states:

> Motivation and interest are vital to the success of a spelling program. The child must learn to spell correctly; but to do this, he must understand the value of spelling in writing and the need for correct spelling in written work (7:191-192).

Thomas D. Horn substantiates the writer's belief that testing be a part of the spelling program. Horn states:

> Efficiency in learning requires that valid testing must be part of the spelling program. Pre-tests, final tests of the week's work and review tests are highly valuable in a spelling program. The most valuable phase of such testing is the test correction for and

by each individual followed by individual study of the words he misspelled (15:285).

The workbook in the spelling program gives a consistent, basic guide for these tests.

Spelling skills <u>can</u> be taught in an enriching, exciting, creative manner. Creative activities incorporated in the spelling program provide an unconformed flexibility to a conformed subject. Spelling, itself, is one way and that is that! There is no room for the leniency of wrong spelling. Creative outcomes, however, can result from the past and present experiences in the process of studying spelling. Spelling needs a face-lifting of wholehearted spontaneity. The writer is convinced that creativity cannot be taught, but proper conditions should be developed in every subject (25:175). Spelling has been ear-marked too long as dull but necessary.

Chapter 3

COLLECTION AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

This study took place in the Central Park School, Aberdeen,
Washington, from October 1, 1968, to April 1, 1969. The fourth year
experimental group of twenty-one boys and eight girls experienced crea-
tive activities with each spelling lesson in the Sound and Sense in
Spelling workbook. The spelling program was a social time as well as a
learning time. There was a freedom and an informal atmosphere in each
lesson. The informality of the spelling program was also present through-
out the day in the other subjects. The skills were taught consistently with
the reinforcement of the activities.

The control group was matched with the experimental group on
the basis of sex, chronological age, I.Q., and spelling achievement.
Spelling in each of these classrooms which made up the control group was
taught in the traditional manner.

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP PROGRAM

In the writer's spelling program, the children used the workbook
assignments as recommended by the Aberdeen School District. Creative
activities were used, but were not substituted for the regular program.

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These activities were incorporated daily to enrich each lesson. The schedule for spelling for the experimental group was 9:10 until 9:35 a.m.

The workbook, Sound and Sense in Spelling, emphasizes phonics and spelling generalizations. The workbook is made up of thirty-six units. At the beginning of each unit is a basic word list. The introduction to the unit gives spelling ideas that are applied to the spelling words of that unit. A review program, exercises stressing skills and principles, and additional, non-creative, written activities such as dictation make up the remainder of the unit. Every sixth unit reviews the work of the preceding five units.

In selecting, grading, and grouping the words, the Rinsland, Horn, Gates, Fitzgerald, and other lists, including suggestions for structural grouping by Fries, were consulted and used selectively in varying degrees (18:ii). The New Iowa Spelling Scales were consulted for relative difficulty (18:ii). Sound and Sense in Spelling contains 5,230 words, 970 of which are studied the second time as review words (18:ii).

The weekly study plan was based on a five-day sequence per unit. The first day (Part A) on Tuesday was for the new words of the unit. Every new word was said accurately and distinctly for spelling it correctly. Then the word was written. The article included in each unit emphasized one or more spelling principles or generalizations. These generalizations were applied to the new words as the pupils studied the words. A creative activity was used for promoting interest. For example:

Consonant Fun. The children wrote sentences with each word starting with the same consonant. For example: Cats can catch canaries.

A trial test was given on Wednesday, the second day (Part B) of the spelling unit. The nature of this would depend on the creative activity used that day. For example:

Trial Test with Two Children Having Given Each Other the Test. They checked their work by their word list. The words they missed were spelled correctly to one another and sentences were made with each word.

The third day (Part C) on Thursday was calling attention to special structural or phonetic aspects. These included suffixes or prefixes and syllables. Creative activities were used. For example:

Rhyming Word Game. A child gave a word. Another child gave a rhyming word. An example was making-baking.

The fourth day (Part D) on Friday was a review of words with creative activities incorporated. For example:

Review of All the Words in a Baseball Game. A word was given by the pitcher. The batter gave a sentence and spelled the word. This game was played in the gymnasium.

The fifth day (Part E) on Monday was test day. A child would give the test. After the pupils finished their test, they either checked their work with a friend or the writer checked the work. When the writer

checked the work, there was time later in the day for study of any words missed. When the pupils checked their books with a friend, extra time was given for studying at that time. For example:

Test Day with Creative Writing. The test was given and the children checked their work with one another. There was an informal time of studying their words that they missed. A creative writing was written later in the day, using a number of their spelling words. The number of words was their choice.

Pupil participation in the leading of activities and the giving of trial tests prevailed throughout the study. The writer guided where necessary to help the children realize that learning to spell is a means toward an end of learning to write effectively and correctly.

To spell is to write letters for spoken sounds. The children must hear and think the individual sounds in the words and put on paper the letters that represent them. These words are useful in writing, however, only if their meanings are known; therefore, direct attention was given to word meanings. Alphabetical order, guide words, syllables, accent marks, multiple meanings, diacritical marks, the pronunciation key and abbreviations for parts of speech were also studied.

Language begins with a spoken word. A spoken word consists of one or more speech sounds that represent an idea. To put this idea in writing, phonics comes into play. The workbook, in the writer's mind, is excellent for a basic spelling foundation.

Emphasis was placed, by the writer, upon encouraging correct spelling in all written work, not just in test situations. "Until a pupil realizes a personal need for spelling correctly and accepts the responsibility for so doing, he will make little progress" (2:7).

The use of creative activities obviously did not mean that words were going to be spelled in new ways. Spelling is strictly a conforming subject, but the spelling lessons can be based on experiences of the children in actual participation. The creative activities used throughout the study are the following:

1. <u>Mr. Dictionary Says</u>. Two captains were appointed. Two teams were chosen. The captains announced the words which were defined, used in a sentence, and spelled.

2. <u>The Teacher's Cat</u>. The leader gave a sentence starting with the first letter in the alphabet. Then the next person gave a sentence with the letter <u>b</u>. This continued through the alphabet.

3. <u>Semantics Fun</u>. A child found the different meanings of each word. Sentences were given.

4. <u>Rhyming Word</u>. A child gave a word. Another child gave a rhyming word.

5. <u>Pantomimes</u>. A child pantomimed a word. The one who guessed the word went to the front and pantomimed the next word.

6. <u>The Prefix Game</u>. A child gave a prefix, such as <u>auto-</u>. The next child gave a word beginning with <u>auto-</u>, such as <u>autograph</u>.

7. <u>The Suffix Game</u>. A child gave a root word. Each child gave as many words as he could, using a suffix with it. The child would see who could give the most words for his root word.

8. <u>Surprise Game.</u> Each child opened his dictionary at random. He selected a new word, read its definition, selected one meaning, and used the word in a sentence to show the meaning in the definition selected.

9. <u>Alphabet Cards</u>. A child or group of children made words from the alphabet cards.

10. <u>Antonyms</u>. Two teams were formed. The leader announced a word and gave its correct meaning. Each child on a team gave words opposite in meaning. The first word given had a score of one point. Each additional antonym got an added point.

11. <u>Association</u>. A child announced a word. Each child named a word associated with it.

12. <u>Synonyms</u>. Two teams were formed. The leader announced a word and gave the correct meaning. Each child on the team gave words which meant almost the same as the given word. The first word had a score of one point. Each additional synonym got an added point.

13. <u>Homonyms</u>. Two teams were formed. The leader announced a word and gave the correct meaning. Each child on a team gave words that sounded the same, but had different meanings and were spelled differently. The context was stressed. The first word had a score of one point. Each additional homonym got an added point.

14. <u>Typewriter</u>. The children used the typewriter in the library to type their words. They were guided by the teachers' aid.

15. <u>The Listing Game</u>. A child gave a topic, such as <u>cars</u>. The other children listed all the words they could to illustrate the topic word.

16. <u>Idioms</u>. One child gave an idiom and another child explained what that idiom meant.

17. <u>Beginning and Ending Game</u>. The teacher wrote one column of word beginnings and another of word endings on the chalkboard. The object was to make as many words as possible.

18. <u>Letter Out</u>. The leader listed on the chalkboard a word with one letter omitted. The first child told the letter that was omitted, pronounced the word, and used it in a sentence to reveal the meaning. The leader could also write a sentence in which letters had been omitted. The first child said the correct sentence.

19. <u>I Am Thinking</u>. The room was divided into two groups. The first player in the group said, "I am thinking of something in this room that rhymes with _____. What is it?" The one who guessed correctly took a turn.

20. <u>Compound Word Game</u>. The teacher put compound words on the board. Pupils separated each word and wrote down as many new words as they could make from the small words.

21. <u>Chalkboard Anagrams</u>. A child wrote a letter on the chalkboard. A player added a letter to the first letter and continued to add letters to make

a word until no more letters could be added.

22. <u>Backward Game</u>. The teacher printed a word given by the children on the blackboard in column form. The same word was then printed backwards in column form, opposite the first column. The winner was the first one who filled in the middle line of the beginning and ending letters to make a word. Here is an example:

s	a	d
p	i	n
e	ls	e
n	a	p
d	res	s

23. <u>Poems</u>. The children made poems from the spelling words.

24. <u>Riddles</u>. The children made riddles from the spelling words.

25. <u>Stories</u>. The children made stories from the spelling words.

26. <u>Baseball Game</u>. Teams were formed. The pitcher threw the words. The batter gave a sentence and spelled the word. The game was scored like the sport of baseball. This was played in the gymnasium.

27. <u>Commercial Scrabble</u>. There were four boxed games available in the room for the children.

28. <u>Tape Recorder with Earphones</u>. After a Spelling Bee, the children took turns listening to the words and sentences.

29. <u>Spelling Bee</u>. It was free of tension. A child did not sit down if he missed a word. We usually helped him get it correct. Otherwise, we would go on to the next pupil.

30. Opaque Projector. The teacher put the spelling words on the opaque projector. Each child took a turn expressing a word creatively.

31. Cartoons. A child drew a cartoon from a word in the spelling lesson. The other children would try to guess the word.

32. Partner Game. The children chose partners. Each team found as many small words as possible in each spelling word.

33. Writing for the Newspaper. The children wrote articles for the school paper, The Beaver Splash.

34. Creative Writing. The children used as many of their spelling words as they would wish to choose in their creative writing. Sometimes music would be played to set the mood for writing.

35. Crossword Puzzles. The children made and worked crossword puzzles.

36. Newspaper Clipping Corner. The children brought newspaper articles of interest to them.

37. Letters. The children wrote letters to friends and relatives.

38. Library Corner. Encyclopedias, books, and magazines were available for the children.

39. Creative Art Work. The children started with vowels and created designs. They also started with spelling words and created designs.

40. Puppet Plays. There was a puppet house in the room all year. The children used borrowed puppets at the beginning of the year, while some children had their own from other years. A number of pictures were

taken of the children with their puppets. Later in the year the children made their own puppets in the classroom.

41. <u>Workbook Activities</u>.

42. <u>Syllable Game</u>. The children divided the spelling words into syllables and put the words together again. Then sentences were given.

43. <u>Accent Game</u>. The children found the accented syllables in the spelling words.

44. <u>Other Subjects Game</u>. The children took words from the other subjects and described them. The object was to guess the correct word and to spell it.

45. <u>Scramble</u>. The children would scramble letters in words and the others would put the letters in order, to make the correct spelling of the word.

46. <u>Choral Spelling</u>. The children spelled the words together and clapped the syllables.

47. <u>Word and Sentence Relay Game</u>. A leader was appointed for each row. The leader had a certain number of words to give each row. The first pupil in each row went to the chalkboard, wrote the given word, gave a sentence using the word, and returned to his seat. The row that finished first won.

48. <u>Guess What</u>! A pupil chose a word from the spelling list. He said, "Guess what!" and either clapped out the number of syllables or

described the word. The child who spelled the chosen word correctly took the next turn.

49. But What! The children made up nonsense sentences from the spelling words. An example was A book has a back, but cannot lift .

50. Sound Effects. A pupil gave a sound, such as sh. Another pupil told what the sound suggested to him.

51. Blank! Blank! The leader put blanks on the chalkboard for the number of letters in a word. He described the word and the children guessed which letters belonged in the blanks.

52. Consonant Fun Time. The children wrote sentences in which each word started with the same consonant. An example was Cats can catch canaries.

53. Ladder Climb. A ladder was drawn on the chalkboard with a sound on each rung. A pupil named the sound on a rung and gave a word, using that sound. The other children held up their fingers to indicate the number of syllables they could hear in that word. Then another word with the same number of syllables could be given. They went to the next rung.

CONTROL GROUP PROGRAM

The teachers of the three participating classrooms of the control group wrote the following reports of their traditional spelling programs. These classrooms are identified as Classroom X, Classroom Y, and Classroom Z.

Classroom X

Monday--Introduce new words. Assign the specific words to the three groups in Spelling that I set up at the beginning of the year.

Tuesday--Trial test given by one of the students under my guidance. They check their own words on the trial test.

Wednesday--Written work as suggested in Teacher's Edition.

Thursday--More written work from workbook. Very short assignment. Then usually we have some sort of spelling game.

Friday--Final test.

Extra incentive that I found that works is a small favor (candy sucker) for 100 per cent grades. Works best for low students. High students--I use a chart and put stars for each 100 per cent achieved. I use a good student to help with the low groups. Help by drilling with them and also by giving them their group test. I correct all final tests. I emphasize good penmanship at this time, especially from the top spellers.

Classroom Y

In my spelling program, the children used no text. They were required to keep their own notebooks with word lists, written activities, and tests included.

On Tuesday the group was given a pre-test over the new lesson, taken from my copy of the textbook used in our district. The children had

not seen the list and it was emphasized that this test was given to find out which words they did not know so they could concentrate most of their study time on them.

Wednesdays, they were orally checked on an individual basis to see if they knew the words they missed on Tuesday. Sometimes written activities were assigned.

Thursday was trial test day. Study time was given and again the children were individually checked.

Friday was usually written activity day. (The writer telephoned the teacher about what she meant by "written activities." She said that these written activities were not creative. They were mostly phonics and drill.) I used work from the text or some of my own, if I felt the class as a whole needed work in a particular area.

On Monday a final test was given. I felt the test had greater evaluative use if the children had a weekend away from the words, although they could study at home.

Because the class was a low to average group, I felt much individual work was needed. The final scores usually had 75 per cent of the children scoring 100, with all but one or two of the children scoring average or above. On six-weeks review tests the scores did not run as high, but nevertheless most were still average or slightly above.

It should also be noted that if a child scored 100 on the pre-test, he became a Special Speller and had a special list of about five to seven

words that were usually taken from social studies or science texts. Most

of the children considered this an honor as well as a challenge, but one

boy figured that this was just extra work and always missed at least one

word on the pre-test so he wouldn't be included.

Classroom Z

First Day--Your New Words: We read silently the discussion

on the spelling generalization which helps to make sense in spelling of

the English language. We then pronounce all of the unit words together.

This includes the fifteen new words that have been selected with some

having been included to emphasize the spelling generalization. We also

pronounce five each of the review words, bonus words, and the mastery

words. We then discuss all of the words in regards to difficulties and

use of the generalizations being used. I then emphasize the four most

often missed new words.

Then the pupils write the new words beside a perfect copy of

each one. Now they take paper and pencil and go over the words by using

the five-step study method. This includes say and see the word, check

the spelling, and, if missed, repeat the steps.

Second Day--Trial Test: They are now pre-tested over the new

words and review words. A sentence is given with each word. Each pupil

corrects his spelling from his book list and crosses out any of the new

words he misses and writes them below in the hard word list for more

study. If he misses one or more words, he will do the mastery words on the final test day rather than the bonus words. Then they do their own spelling program and correct it on their own.

Third Day--Sound and Sense: A short dictation story is given that goes with the lesson and includes a number of the new words. I correct this and return it the next day or post it on the bulletin board if it is a perfect exercise. We review the Sound and Sense exercise which is made up of six drills. The pupils write the related words in the back of the book and again study any new word missed the day before. We then check the six drill exercises.

Fourth Day--More Spelling Power: The pupils review the difficulties encountered the first three days and rewrite the dictation exercise if it were very poor. They study the bonus or mastery words for the next day's test.

Fifth Day--Final Test: We scan and discuss the words to be tested shortly before the test. I dictate the test and then have a pupil read back the words to the class for a proof-reading time. Then the books are turned in for spelling and penmanship checking.

PROCEDURE FOR TESTING

In October, 1968, the experimental and control groups were matched according to chronological age, sex, I.Q., and spelling achievement. Table I shows the composition of these groups. The experimental group is identified by the letter W and the control group by the letters X, Y, and Z, which are indicative of the individual rooms from which the children were chosen.

A pre-test was given on October 1, 1968, and a post-test during the first week of April, 1969. These tests consisted of the forty End-of-Year words listed below from the traditional spelling workbook Sound and Sense in Spelling, used by the Aberdeen School System. The New Iowa Spelling Scales were used by authors Madden, Carlson, and Yarborough for relative difficulty in the test (18:ii).

End-of-Year Test (18:73)

push	angry	contest	language
address	lesson	wet	seventh
soil	report	mouth	mountain
toe	raise	thirteen	master
smell	thankful	snake	maybe
taken	twenty-five	wooden	dirty
sir	during	soft	pipe
month	sky	lovely	drop
others	blow	doctor	April
haven't	threw	row	thousand

These tests were administered by an unbiased teachers' aid and not by the writer. All test papers were scored and the results compiled by the tester to assure the most accurate results possible.

Table 1

Composition of Experimental and Control Groups

| | Experimental Group | | | | | Control Group | | | |
| | Age | | | | | Age | | | |
Child	Oct.	April	Sex	I.Q.	Child	Oct.	April	Sex	I.Q.
1W	10-0	10-6	M	92	1Z	9-11	10-5	M	96
2W	9-9	10-3	M	107	2Y	9-11	10-5	M	109
3W	10-0	10-6	M	95	3X	10-5	10-11	M	97
4W	9-7	10-1	M	112	4Y	9-6	10-0	M	113
5W	10-0	10-6	M	108	5X	10-3	10-9	M	106
6W	9-8	10-2	M	105	6Y	10-0	10-6	M	105
7W	9-11	10-5	M	92	7X	10-2	10-8	M	82
8W	9-10	10-4	M	104	8Z	9-10	10-4	M	106
9W	10-0	10-6	M	100	9X	10-2	10-8	M	98
10W	9-11	10-5	M	94	10Y	9-9	10-3	M	87
11W	9-9	10-3	M	97	11Y	10-2	10-8	M	107
12W	9-10	10-4	M	129	12Z	9-6	10-0	M	122
13W	9-10	10-4	M	111	13X	9-9	10-3	M	113
14W	10-3	10-9	M	98	14X	10-4	10-10	M	93
15W	9-4	9-10	M	91	15Y	9-6	10-0	M	90
16W	11-0	11-6	M	105	16X	10-6	11-0	M	107
17W	10-4	10-10	M	82	17Y	10-1	10-7	M	82
18W	9-7	10-1	M	101	18X	9-5	9-11	M	111
19W	9-6	10-0	M	109	19X	9-6	10-0	M	114
20W	10-2	10-8	M	98	20Z	10-1	10-7	M	101
21W	9-4	9-10	M	97	21Z	9-4	9-10	M	98
22W	9-5	9-11	F	111	22X	9-4	9-10	F	112
23W	9-2	9-8	F	114	23X	9-8	10-2	F	114
24W	10-7	11-1	F	100	24X	10-8	11-2	F	98
25W	9-1	9-7	F	107	25Y	9-2	9-8	F	105
26W	8-11	9-5	F	98	26Y	9-1	9-7	F	101
27W	9-10	10-4	F	98	27X	9-5	9-11	F	97
28W	9-0	9-6	F	97	28Y	9-2	9-8	F	103
29W	10-0	10-6	F	94	29Y	10-2	10-8	F	95
Mean	9.3	9.9		101.58	Mean	9.5	10.1		102.13

INTERPRETATION OF DATA

During the first week of April, the End-of-Year test was given

to the experimental group and the control group. The difference between

the pre-test and post-test scores was completed for each pupil. Indivi-

dual scores and pupil gain of the experimental group are shown in Table 2.

Individual scores and pupil gain of the control group are shown on Table 3,

page 35.

Table 4 summarizes a one-tail t test at the .05 significance level

for 56 degrees of freedom. The 56 degrees of freedom is calculated from

the fact that there were 58 independent measurements made (58 students)

in the study and 2 parameters (mean and standard deviation) needed to be

estimated.

Table 4

t-Test for Difference in Mean Gains

	N	$\overline{X}$	S	S^2	t Value
Control Group	29	12.79	13.7	189.3	
					1.71*
Experimental Group	29	18.31	10.0	101.1	

* Significant at the .05 level, one-tailed test.

Table 2

Individual Pupil Gain in Words Spelled Correctly
from Pre-Test to Post-Test
Experimental Group

Pupil	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Gain
1W	13	34	21
2W	10	36	26
3W	16	37	21
4W	21	37	16
5W	12	38	26
6W	32	40	8
7W	23	40	17
8W	19	40	21
9W	25	39	14
10W	18	40	22
11W	10	39	29
12W	30	40	10
13W	18	37	19
14W	7	33	26
15W	13	39	26
16W	0	12	12
17W	3	21	18
18W	12	35	23
19W	28	40	12
20W	25	40	15
21W	25	39	14
22W	16	37	21
23W	23	35	12
24W	25	40	15
25W	30	40	10
26W	25	39	14
27W	15	39	24
28W	10	35	25
29W	23	37	14

Table 3

Individual Pupil Gain in Words Spelled Correctly
from Pre-Test to Post-Test
Control Group

Pupil	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Gain
1Z	24	34	10
2Y	10	29	19
3X	25	36	11
4Y	34	38	4
5X	0	17	17
6Y	7	33	26
7X	0	12	12
8Z	14	20	6
9X	7	28	21
10Y	13	27	14
11Y	15	31	16
12Z	23	34	11
13X	10	34	24
14X	0	0	0
15Y	15	27	12
16X	1	32	31
17Y	9	19	10
18X	11	32	21
19X	8	25	17
20Z	20	37	17
21Z	23	34	11
22X	19	33	14
23X	7	22	15
24X	5	5	0
25Y	22	27	5
26Y	39	36	-3
27X	22	33	11
28Y	25	37	12
29Y	9	16	7

Chapter 4

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to determine if creative activities relating to and incorporated in spelling lessons would bring about greater achievement in spelling than the traditional method.

The procedures were to show the scope of the study which covered the months from October 1, 1968, to the first week of April, 1969. The experimental fourth year room was matched by a control group selected from three other fourth year rooms on the basis of sex, chronological age, I.Q., and spelling achievement.

The experimental group experienced creative activities, while the control group was taught in a traditional manner. Statistical methods were used to measure whether the differences between the two groups were significant at the .05 level of confidence.

Statistical methods for determining the mean gain for each group and the application of a t test in determining the significance of the difference in mean gains give basis for the difference being more than due to chance.

CONCLUSIONS

The null hypothesis for this study was that there would be no statistical difference between the achievement made by pupils in the experimental group who received spelling activities and creative activities to supplement the instruction and the control group who received a traditional spelling program.

Table 4 shows the results of the t test for difference in mean gains between the experimental and control groups. The t-test value of 1.71 exceeds the acceptance level (1.67) at the .05 level of confidence. Rejection of the null hypothesis provides evidence that creative activities relating to and incorporated in spelling lessons bring about greater achievement in spelling than the traditional method.

The writer has found rewards in the spelling program that cannot be measured by statistical tests. The enthusiasm shown by the pupils for the spelling lessons, and other gains such as obvious improvement in attitudes, relaxation, industry, and interest in spelling in other subjects have been rewarding enough to repeat the same spelling program next year. The writer believes that many times, "becoming is more important than arriving" (9:21).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made as a result of this study:

1. More research should be made similar to this study.

2. A different type of test should be given to measure the achievement. In addition, it would be of value to measure the extent to which spelling skills transfer to other writing activities that the children do in the classroom.

3. Some method of measuring the attitudes and interests of the pupils in the spelling program should be found.

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