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BETWEEN LANGUAGE READINESS OF INDIAN PUPILS  
AND THEIR ACHIEVEMENT SCORES IN READING.  
- REPORT ON QUESTIONNAIRE RETURNS ON THE  
BEGINNER'S LANGUAGE COURSE.  
- REPORT ON THE SECOND YEAR OF THE READING  
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Miss R.C. Colliou

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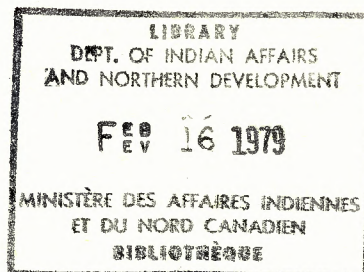
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COURSE.

REPORT ON THE SECOND YEAR OF THE READING RESEARCH IN THE  
MARITIME INDIAN SCHOOLS.

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REPORT ON THE STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE READINESS OF  
INDIAN PUPILS AND THEIR ACHIEVEMENT SCORES IN READING.

The Testing Programme and the Inception of the Language Course for Beginners.

In the fall of 1959, all beginners in the Maritime Indian schools were given the Metropolitan Reading Test. The average chronological age of the beginners in the fall was six years and four months. The result of this initial testing revealed that the great majority of pupils were unprepared to take this test due to a lack of English language mastery. Consequently, this test was discontinued in the fall testing and relegated to the spring testing session.

In the spring test results, it was evident that the beginners had made some progress in learning English, but this was limited to one word vocabulary of naming or identifying objects whereas they showed very poor results on sentence understanding. In summary, beginners had acquired word vocabulary which hardly seemed sufficient language readiness for Grade One entrance in the fall.

Confirmation of the latter statement was verified against the Gates Readiness Test results. This test had the advantage of lending itself to statistical data with percentile scores being available for each of the four subtests administered, namely:

1. picture directions
2. word matching
3. word card matching
4. and rhyming.

Unfortunately letter ratings on the Metropolitan Test were not comparable statistically with the Gates Readiness Scores.

The picture direction subtest was selected for diagnostic purposes as the subtest which relied primarily on language mastery while the other three subtests were more directly concerned with visual and auditory perceptual maturities related to the reading skill proper. Keeping this in mind, it was possible to compare the average percentile scores achieved on picture directions with the average yielded on the total average of the four subtests to find out the relationship of readiness between language mastery and the perceptual maturities of the pupils, as it affects their reading in

subsequent grades.

The results of the comparison on the Grade One fall testing of 1959 appear in Table 1.

Table 1.

Percentile Scores Achieved by Grade One Pupils on the Gates Readiness Test in the Fall of 1959.

Schools	No. of Pupils	Total Av. of four subtests	Average of Picture Direction	Gen. Av. Scores on Picture Directions for 5 Schools
School A	13	63	27	48
School B	11	86	73	48
School C	18	72	69	48
School D	23	69	34	48
School E	15	79	39	48
Multi-graded Schools	50	52	22	

The schools concerned had classrooms of beginners only and Grade One and beginners. Table 1 reveals that two schools only had Grade One entrants with sufficient language mastery considered satisfactory for Grade One readiness. These pupils had entered school the previous year with some knowledge of English. The other pupils had entered school with no spoken knowledge of it.

The serious lack of English language readiness revealed in the above table was looked upon with concern by the teachers and individual efforts were made to remedy the situation. It was felt, however, that most of the stress in coaching beginners to learn English had been developed in conjunction with the Reading Readiness Texts of the reader series which had resulted in one word vocabulary approach. Teachers, therefore, endeavoured to rely more on their insight and experience to provide additional language practice. That a definite effort was made in that line is evident in the scores recorded in Table 2.



Table 2.

Average Percentile Scores Achieved by Grade One  
Pupils on the Gates Readiness Test in the Fall  
of 1960.

Schools	No. of Pupils	Total Av. of four subtests	Average of Picture Direction only	Gen. Average on Picture Directions in	
				Fall 1959	Fall '60
School A	9	76	41	45	52
School B	11	80	79	45	52
School C	14	87	62	45	52
School D	21	74	45	45	52
School E	43	62	25	45	52

Comparing these scores with those of Table 1, School A gained from the 27th to the 45th percentile in picture directions and, from the 22nd percentile to the 45th percentile for School D. School E registered a loss from the 39th percentile to the 25th percentile, while Schools B and C remained relatively constant. The progress made and the overall picture of language readiness for Grade One was noted with reservations that pupil knowledge of English was still insufficient.

In the fall of 1960, a language course for beginners was made available to the teachers. Normally, according to testing schedules, the Gates Readiness Test would have been administered to this new group of beginners in the fall of 1961. With this particular group, however, the picture direction subtest was administered in the spring of 1961 and will be administered again next fall. In this way, we should have additional statistical evidence on the effectiveness of the course in promoting language learning and also of verifying whether there is a language loss during the two months of summer vacation.

The results of the spring testing are tabulated against those of previous years on the Gates Readiness Test in Table 3.

Table 3.

A Comparison of Scores Achieved on the Picture Direction Sub-Test of the Gates Readiness Test in the Spring of 1961 with those of Previous Years.

Schools	No. of Pupils	Fall 1959	No. of Pupils	Fall 1960	No. of Pupils	Spring 1961	No. of Pupils	Gr. 1 Spring 1961
School A	13	27	9	41	11	54		
School B	11	73	11	79	12	63		
School C	18	69	14	62	17	67		
School D	23	34	21	45	22	76	25	81
School E	15	39	43	25	27	62	25	56
Total No. of Pupils	80		98		89		50	

Referring to Schools A, D, and E, the spring results of 1961 show close to a 50 percent increase over the fall results of 1959 as well as a notable increase over the fall results of 1960. Thus, the spring results of 1961 point to the conclusion that non-English speaking beginners made a notable improvement as a result of the use of the beginners' course. On the other hand, beginners who had a knowledge of English on entering school retained a satisfactory language readiness but did not show any improvement over the former years. It must be mentioned that in Schools B and C, the course was followed primarily for correction of incorrect language expressions.

A Grade One sample group of pupils in Schools D and E was also tested this spring and their scores revealed that during the course of the year since the fall of 1960 results, they had increased their knowledge of English by 50 percent. Thus, in Schools D and E beginners of this year were



as proficient in their knowledge of English as their counterpart after two years of schooling. The Grade One sample results confirm the fact that children acquire language learning alongside of the reading course.

In connection with the course, very little direct supervision was given to the teachers, other than the regular one as in previous years. With respect to school visits of this year, however, it must be mentioned that the classroom atmosphere was more dynamic and pupils showed far more spontaneity of response than in previous years. A particularly heartening observation during the second term of the school year was that instead of hearing pupils communicate with each other in their native language as in former years, this year, inter-communication was in English. The Foregoing observations would indicate that the dual purpose of the course:

1. increasing a pupil's knowledge of English
2. stimulating self-expression and spontaneity  
in pupils

has been achieved.

In terms of teacher appreciation, it was felt that Grade One pupils were benefiting from the beginner lessons where Grade One and beginners were combined. In some cases, parents themselves commented to the teacher on the child's progress in English. There were a number of problems which came up in the teacher's use of the course, reference to which is made in the report on the questionnaire returns.

#### Relationship Between Language Readiness and Reading Achievement.

The common assumption with regards to pupils of non-English speaking background has been that language retardation affects negatively the reading achievement scores. The statistical data available from the testing programme was used for a study of the relationship of language readiness and reading achievement scores. The purpose of the study was to probe into the extent that language retardation has affected reading achievement scores of Indian pupils in previous years and also to find out what prognosis in reading could be made on the basis of the increased proficiency in speaking English during the beginner year as a result of using the Beginner's course.

A sample study was therefore made on the basis of a pupil's continuous complete testing scores being available from the fall of 1959 to the spring of 1961. The scores were obtained on:

- Fall - 1959 - Grade 1. - Reading Readiness Test
- Spring - 1960 - Grade 1 - The reading grade average score on the Gates Tests of:  
Primary Word Recognition  
Primary Sentence Reading, and  
Primary Paragraph Reading
- Spring - 1961 - Grade 2 - The reading grade average on the Gates Tests of:  
Advanced Word Recognition  
Advanced Paragraph Reading

The pupil scores were obtained from the same schools referred to in the previous tables.

The average reading achievement scores of the sample group appear in Table 4 below:

Table 4.

The Continuous Average Scores on the Gates Testing Series  
from the Fall of 1959 to the Spring of 1961.

Schools	No. of Pupils	Percentile Scores of 1959 P.D./Totals of Subtests	Ave. Read Gr. Grade 1 Spring 1960	Ave. Read Gr. Grade 2 Spring 1961	Progress in months of a 10 month school year Gr. 1 to Gr. 2
School A	8	27/63	2.6	3.1	+ 5
School B	8	73/86	2.4	3.3	+ 9
School C	12	69/73	2.4	3.3	+ 9
School D	18	34/69	2.7	3.6	+ 9
School E	<u>14</u>	<u>39/79</u>	<u>2.4</u>	<u>3.4</u>	<u>+10</u>
Total Av.	60	48/74	2.5	3.3	+ 8

A cursory glance at the above data points to the fact that no great difference exists in the achievement scores of Grades One or Two in comparing the average for each school with the total average for the five schools. Moreover,



negative relationship of language retardation and reading achievement is questionable from the fact that the positions are reversed for School A versus Schools B and C, in the Grade One results of the spring of 1960. A similar reversal appears with respect to School D versus Schools B and C in the Grade 2 column results. The really apparent significant loss comes up, however, in the rate of progress for School A as it registered a gain of 5 months only against 9 and 10 months for the other schools. In this particular school, however, there is a history of intermittent absenteeism.

To elucidate further on the questionable relationship of language retardation and reading achievement scores as brought forth in Table 4, the same pupil scores were tabulated for both perceptual maturity scores and language readiness scores respectively.

The question in mind was: Is reading progress more dependent on perceptual maturity than on language mastery? In this case, a line of demarcation had to be decided upon. The criterion used was the 70th percentile score for perceptual maturity and the 30th percentile score for language mastery on the basis that in both cases the bulk of the population fell above these scores; those falling below being rated as the weaker group. The average reading scores for each division appear in Table 5.

Average Reading Scores with Respect to Perceptual  
Maturity and Language Mastery Respectively on the  
Gates Test Series.

It is significant to note that the weaker group was 4 months below the higher group, in both classifications in the Spring of 1961, and that again progress rate was lower for pupils below the 30th and 70th percentiles. Thus, the language relationship with respect to reading achievement appears to be cumulative. The implication of this cumulative loss would likely have more bearing on later grade achievements than during the first two years of school. This statement is made with reservation, however, as the lower rate of progress may be due to other causes such as lower mental potential, since four pupils in the lower group had combined lower classification for both language mastery and

perceptual maturities.

With respect to Schools B and C who both achieved the highest average on the Readiness Scores, and Schools D and E on the other hand whose Language Readiness scores were poor, there is no loss in progress rate and, moreover, as indicated in Table 4, Schools D and E achieved higher scores than Schools B and C.

This leads into the relationship of reading and language development, in the case of pupils coming from homes of non-English speaking background, and the teaching programme in individual schools.

Table 5.

<u>Maturities</u>	No. of Pupils	Grade 1 Spring 1960	Grade 2 Spring 1961	Gain in months of a School Year.
Perceptual				
Above 70th Percentile	50) ) )60 )	2.6	3.5	+9
Below 70th Percentile	10)	2.4	3.1	+7
<u>Language Mastery</u>				
Above 30th Percentile	46) ) )60 )	2.6	3.5	+9
Below 30th Percentile	14)	2.5	3.1	+6

(a) Reading and Language Development.

The foregoing discussion of test results in the first three years of school implies that in previous years language acquisition has been intimately dependent on the reading course and also the fact that children may have acquired language mostly through reading. An illustration of this fact has come up in the course of the year. In using the reader series workbooks with pupils, teachers mentioned the problem of needing to give far more assistance to pupils in these preparatory exercises than the handbook actually called for. It was a



matter of plugging along with these texts for both pupils and teacher. The suggestion followed in individual cases was that workbook assignments be taken once the reader had been read through, the workbook being used for review rather than preparatory exercises. The result was that pupils became more independent and self reliant and completed their work books much faster than they formerly had. They were now in a position to understand on their own with fewer teacher explanations. Thus without deviating from provincial reading achievement standards, it seems that changes in timing of presentation of some texts as well as methods of teaching could stand revision for adaptation to Indian pupils.

In connection with reading and language development of the primary grades, teacher and pupils are both faced with a controlled vocabulary. Unless a supportive language programme is developed alongside of reading in those grades, are Indian pupils faced with a slump from Grade 3 to Grade 4 where vocabulary control is relegated mostly to extending factual information? Is library reading sufficient to overcome this expected weakness from the primary to the elementary grade transition or should stress be pressed upon teachers to accelerate reading of the primary reader series?

The initiative on these points was taken by individual teachers in Schools D and E this year and leads to the desirability of recommending such procedures in the primary grades. Their scores of 3.6 and 3.4 respectively as compared with the average score of 3.2 for the total Grade 2 population in the graded schools, is indicative of the need for accelerating the reading level of pupils on the basis of student potentiality rather than on the curriculum grading of covering only two sets of readers in the school year. In other words, schools would gain in pupil performance by promoting greater flexibility in encouraging teachers and pupils to accelerate the grade-text curriculum outlines.

Another aspect that could be mentioned is the recognition of timing as a learning factor in the pupil's life. Most educators agree that pushing the child ahead before he is ready for more difficult school work usually has negative repercussions. The contrary of this fact should also be recognized inasmuch as delaying the introduction of more difficult material to pupils who are ready for it also has negative effects. Particular reference to this point will be discussed in detail in a further report on the testing programme in relation to promotions and failures. The latter point stipulates that beginners who came to school with

a fair knowledge of English could be expected to do Grade One reading before the end of the year. Possibly, it is the too strict adherence to curriculum year-grade outlines that have curtailed greater initiative on the part of teachers in schools adhering strictly to a policy of year-grade-text standards.

#### Summary and Conclusions.

1. The introduction of the Beginner's Language Course has resulted in a 50 percent increase in English proficiency during the beginner year. In sample testing the proficiency in English at the end of the beginner year was comparable to the level reached by Grade One pupils tested at the same time.
2. The bulk of the sample population, beginner age being 6 years and 4 months, attested to the fact that in terms of physiological development, beginners have reached a perceptual maturity enabling them to cope with the skill aspects of the printed word. At this stage of their schooling it is knowledge of the new language which is lacking for most. Speeding up language learning in the first months of the school year would, therefore, bridge the gap between language readiness and the technical skills of the reading readiness programme.
3. The test results indicate that raising the language standard in the beginner year does not necessarily validate the same assumption in connection with reading achievement, unless acceleration is also promoted in the reading programme.
4. In this study, pupils who were weak in both language mastery and perceptual maturities made slow progress in reading. The small number of pupils who revealed this slow progress pattern would seem to indicate that these pupils were slower learners in terms of normal classroom distribution on the basis of slow, average, or bright pupil classification.
5. In studying the problem of the relationship between language and reading, a cumulative study of test scores of a sample group places the problem in a new light. The language learning of Indian children would seem to have been more dependent on the reading programme than the reading programme being dependent on language learning. A truer perspective would imply the inter-dependency of both. It seems, therefore, desirable that language learning in Indian schools be promoted by a special course to complement the reading course



rather than continue with language being subordinated to reading achievement as implied above. Follow-up research should help clarification of this issue.

6. Individual school scores revealed reverse patterns of reading achievement in Grades One and Two on the basis of language readiness percentile scores. It would seem that this is due to the year-grade-textbook rigidity of the curriculum followed by individual school policies. More initiative and flexibility on the part of school authorities in accelerating the reading programme over the span of the primary grades should promote higher standards of achievement on a grade-year ratio.

7. Timing in connection with the readiness of pupils to cope with higher levels of the provincial curriculum outline, with regards to the introduction of work books in reference to Indian pupils with a language handicap, while still meeting provincial requirements of achievements, could stand revision. A study into the method of teaching primary reading skills - as presented in teacher handbooks also offers scope for revision with regards to Indian pupils.

8. Intelligence quotients of pupils tested in this study are not available and curtail valid interpretation of low achievement scores as being due to low mental potential or other causes. However, the number of pupils achieving very poor scores is very small and does not affect the statistical data.

9. The Indian child is one year over-age by school entrance standards of most non-Indian schools. Moreover, although the reading grade achievement of Grades One and Two, as reported in this study, would imply that Indian pupils are achieving grade mean norms, a follow-up study on Grades Three to Six reading achievement does not uphold satisfactory reading achievement scores in the latter grades. As a result, both age and grade mean retardation, by standardized test norms, are present at the elementary grades. Grade retardation is discussed in detail in the following pages. As for the age factor, without legal compulsion to change the school entrance age of Indian pupils, the chronological age retardation can best and preferably be dealt with, as is being done, by local school pressure on the Indian parent to send his child to school at an early age.

10. No reference is made to social and emotional problems or to physiological handicaps associated with reading retardation as this study is not dealing with a small clinical population but with research at the administrative level.

## REPORT OF QUESTIONNAIRE RETURNS ON THE BEGINNER'S LANGUAGE COURSE.

### 1. Distribution:

Out of 65 questionnaire returns from teachers experimenting with the course, 47 of them were using it with classes of beginners and grade one combined; 18 with beginners only.

Knowledge of English of beginners entering school ranged from nil to the conversational level of questions and answers. The distribution in range was as follows:

Nil: 35

Word vocabulary only 10

Statements only 9

Question and Answer 11

### 2. Use made by the Teachers at the Various Levels:

Where pupils spoke English at the question and answer level, the course in some cases was judged as an additional text which would hamper the regular school year work and have little benefit for the class as the children already knew the language. By others, it was referred to occasionally to correct speech usage; and, by others still, as a means of developing spontaneity in pupil expression.

With respect to the classes where children spoke little or no English (statement only, word vocabulary only or nil), the course was followed quite closely, lesson by lesson.

### 3. General Teacher Appreciation of the Course:

For the most part, the comments have been favourable. A number of points were criticized unit by unit in reference to improved substitutions teachers had developed with their group and the length of lessons. In general, most teachers indicated surprise and pleasure at their pupils' progress in comparison with their efforts of former years with respect to both language and spontaneity of expression. For others, it was a happy confirmation of their own approach to language teaching.

### 4. Difficulties Encountered:

The major difficulties were: provision of materials and



meaningful seatwork; conflict with reading programme and the time table; controversy on phonics; mispronunciations and speech correction; need for a teacher course in using the new text; managing reviews; bridging the gap from English in the classroom to English in the school yard; use of audio-visual aids; and, over-age pupils.

(a) Provision of Materials:

The request was for the availability of large outlines necessary for group teaching. The problem of materials was particularly crucial to teachers in isolated areas and who are new to primary work. Teachers close to shopping areas found suitable materials which they bought from time to time. Teachers who have done primary teaching for years, relied on the personal stock of materials they had accumulated through the years. A request came in for the provision of a kit for teachers in remote areas.

The question of black and white versus colour presentation was also noted.

With respect to materials, a supplementary loose leaf text of large black and white drawings is under consideration as an aid to be used with the course; the uses of these outlines should be to provide outlines for seat work, tracing, colouring, scrap book review, yearly group development of charts as well as to provide immediate visual material for the teacher with her frequent reviews. With respect to the latter, a coloured cardboard set of charts would be most desirable.

(b) Grouping:

As in the teaching of most skills in the primary grades grouping is necessary in recognition of the different learning rate of individual pupils. It is towards the middle of the course that grouping problems arose. As this is greatly dependent on teacher tactics and capabilities, the general advice given on this subject was to develop small groups of four or five children spreading, on a reasonable proportionate basis, the faster learners with the slower learners to involve them in the activities especially in those where games were involved. Teachers who experienced the most trouble in this area seemed to have been over-protective of their class, doing too much for them in previous units and accepting imposed participation on the part of the pupils;

not realizing early enough that this would condition the children to remain dependent on her. In set-ups where much stress is laid upon formal classroom discipline as the epitome of good classroom management, the atmosphere of spontaneity inherent to the effective development of language learning at this age level may also lead to the fear of adverse comments by visiting authorities. By and large, however, from the many suggestions of games and units developed by individual teachers, it would appear that a happy informal atmosphere exists in most primary classroom learning.

(c) Conflict with the Reading Programme and Time Table Demands.

Unfortunately, due to the primer reader introduction beginning at Unit 15 of the 25 Units, few reports have come in to reflect on the relationship of the language preparation and the reading proper. On the other hand, as a number of teachers were teaching language alongside of their regular reading programme, there may have been reticence in this respect to indicate that they had diverged at this point, although a number wrote in mentioning that they had already started on reading readiness and reading approach by the time they received the course. Rather than create a conflict in the teacher's mind over the issue, this group was advised through individual correspondence to consider both the course approach and their own and to feel free to decide on their own terms. In cases, however, where personal contact was possible, teachers seemed anxious to start the reading programme earlier as they feared they would be later in completing the primer work at the end of the year since they considered they were behind in starting the primer programme with previous years. However, comments made on starting the primer programme at a later date, were that they could proceed much faster with it as a result of the language preparation of their pupils. One particular beginner class whose English was nil at the onset of the year, ended up by having two thirds of the class, covering part of the Grade one reading.

The foregoing statements made in reference to this issue seemed to arise from the fact that many teachers received the course quite late in the school year as mentioned above, but also from the fact that the course was basically planned for classrooms of beginners. As such, it spanned a whole day's work so that approximately 85 per cent of the time was devoted to learning



English.

For teachers who were coping with a classroom of Grade One and beginners and who are more prone to follow a compartmentalized time table, their interpretation seemed to be that language learning, following the course, was a one hour or 30 minute period of its own. As such, the lessons of the course were much too long and in the light of the teacher's dilemma for time, her concern was no doubt most legitimate. In the course of the year, more insight seemed to develop into the use of suggested activities as common material for both beginners and Grade One.

The realization of this fact calls for greater modification of the course in its revised version. It is felt that sections dealing with the language learning proper could be streamlined for various classroom situations. In line with the latter point, it is also felt that the reading section of the course should be presented as an appendix and not incorporated in the units. This would allow the teachers to accelerate or retard the teaching of reading proper according to the needs of each particular classroom and/or in reference to the particular series of readers being used in the school.

The few comments sent in on following the reading approach were mostly by a few teachers whose approach to reading was similar to that recommended in the course. In schools under direct supervision during the year, the course approach was followed. Through it, teachers felt they had more direct observation of the individual difficulties of their pupils and their rate of learning. In one particular case, a teacher who introduced the method with her slower group, had the faster group, who had started on the reader handbook approach, review according to the method used with her slower group on the basis that their retention and reading understanding was considerably improved.

(d) The Phonics Controversy:

On no other section of the course was there such a divergence of opinions as on the phonics section. It would seem that no teacher rejects the need for phonics teaching, but each one has adopted a theory of her own on the matter. However, it has had controversial revivals in the press every decade or so, and there will always be pros and cons on the matter. The fact is that the phonics controversy in relation to the language course was set in

the background thinking of the reading approach on the teacher's part whereas it actually is introduced primarily as a speech-language presentation. Most of the speech selections, whether verse or song, were for lip and ear training.

The use of phonic cards is an adjunct to afford constant review on the sounds of the language and secondarily relates to reading when it is introduced. In this respect phonics extends to reading and is not meant to create a problem but to follow its logical course when the spoken language is seen in printed form. The issue revolves not around phonics per se, but over the teaching of reading method particularly suited to pupils of non-English speaking background and the vocabulary content of the first grade readers where 70 per cent of the words are easily learnt by phonetic approach and 30 per cent by sight. The author of the text has not touched upon the Grade One curriculum standards and takes the position that the beginner's year is not an entity in itself but, a preparation for Grade One, as Grade One is a preparation to Grade Two and so on. Furthermore, recognition of the need of both phonics and sight as being included in a sound approach to primary reading is also inherent to the author's thinking on the subject of the teaching of reading. These statements lead to the fact that the pupil of non-English-speaking background can hardly be expected to become an independent reader unless he can rely on phonetic clues. Pushing the matter a little further, with regards to the sight method at the Grade Three level, phonics are still being learnt through the analytical approach, in reader handbooks under the terminology of the structural approach;

For example:

What little word do you see in seashore?

sea, or, ore

This method, for the child of non-English speaking background, becomes limitative with reference to vocabulary development. He is much better off being able to synthesize, because of phonetic training, the reading of the word seashore and develop vocabulary meaning along the lines of:

seashore

seaside

coastline

beach.

In brief, pupils lacking an English-speaking background, in the author's opinion, should become adept at the phonetic synthesis of words and as a result extend



their vocabulary through analytical use of words in context. The above criticism omits reference to the age-grade factor, which is equally important in Indian Schools.

(e) Mispronunciations and Errors of Speech.

The typical mispronunciations and errors of speech presented early in the course "s" instead of "sh" "d" instead of "th", confusion of "he" and "she" and use of the possessive pronouns etc., were listed by teachers as specific difficulties which took a much longer time to overcome. For some, it was felt that this was hitting the nail on the head: while for others, it seemed that early introduction of these particular difficulties could have been left for another grade.

On this issue there seems to be no alternative or compromise. Either the Indian child learns the correct use or correct pronunciation during his first year of learning contact with the new language or he is allowed to grow up with these language limitations which may end up in social discrimination in later years in a country where English is the business language of the nation.

As many comments regarding the selection of verses were for and against the ones chosen from "Better Speech and Reading Text", the adverse ones were related to the difficulty of the vocabulary in these selections.

Poetry or singing as such is for enjoyment through rhythmic picture words and moods. Due to vocabulary difficulty, the mental understanding may have been weakened, but on the other hand, the rhythm and mood can still be carried across as an effective choral speech response. Poetry is written by poets but can be felt and enjoyed by many, just as one can enjoy a song in a foreign language without necessarily understanding the literal meaning of the words. It is in this sense, that choral speech should develop a response and a liking for the new language in non-English-speaking children.

It must be admitted, however, that one would have preferred selecting poems from various sources. Copyright limitations curtailed this aspect of the choice on the preparation of a text that was subject to early revision. This particular aspect of the course is of little concern, however, inasmuch as most teachers have selections of verses and rhymes collected through the years which a great number substituted for the ones mentioned in the course.

The important fact is that children be exposed to a great amount of choral speech and singing.

On receipt of a number of choral speech selections, possibly original, it was thought that a compilation of appropriate beginner's verse sent in by teachers might provide a better source for teacher selections.

(f) Request for a Teacher Course.

A few teachers expressed the desirability of attending a summer school on the use of the Beginner's Language Course. The fact that the majority of teachers showed competency in using it points to the desirability of workshop approach at the regional level rather than a summer school session.

(g) Review Work.

All teachers claimed that constant frequent reviews were necessary. Such being the case, the revised version should especially take cognizance of this fact and the lessons could be modified to facilitate these reviews through provision of materials and the adaptability of verses or playlets. In the case of the latter, the level of these should be of higher interest to include Grade One pupils and simple enough on the other hand to provide a skeleton pattern upon which the teacher can innovate to provide variety both for herself and for the pupils.

(h) Bridging the Gap from English in the Classroom to English in the Schoolyard.

This problem is closely related to the formal or informal atmosphere of the classroom or the formal or permissive discipline of the teacher. It is also associated with the game-like presentation of the lessons. Including a number of activities as was done in the early part of the course, that lend themselves to outdoor play, aims at bridging this gap. In this instance, however, it seems that the initiative must be taken by the teacher in promoting recess play at first. Too often, the Indian child seems at a loss to know what to do at recess. On the other hand, one must keep in mind that learning a new language is a tiring activity for the mind and for awhile, reverting to the native language is more like a necessary mental and emotional relaxation, especially in children. Keeping this point in mind, teacher promotion of games at recess should be short and should not occupy more than a third of the recess time. In this respect, only game-like activities that have become quite enjoyable in the



classroom should be selected for recess interest.

With respect to bridging the gap from the school to the home, the course already takes up a number of home and community situations. There is, however, room for improvement through the introduction of more short dialogues as an in-between from verse to singing. Singing selections should somehow be adaptable to either choral speech or singing. Finally, it is most important that teachers keep in mind a tenet of the learning process: When one least expects it, a child starts using expressions spontaneously.

(i) Audio-Visual Aids.

For lack of immediate consultation, no mention was made of any specific filmstrips or recordings in the course. A number of teachers introduced these with favourable comments and it is a fact that more of these should be used. It might be possible to forward blank circulars to teachers using the course requesting a listing of recordings and filmstrips useful for particular units. These could be compiled and relayed back to teachers as additional reference information.

(j) Over-Age Problems.

The course is suited to six and seven year-olds. Where the course was being used with five year-olds, the presentation of activities was considered too difficult, and conversely, in the case of eight and nine-year olds, the activities seemed to lack interest and it seemed more difficult to motivate these pupils. In the latter case, it is particularly difficult to give these pupils leadership in activities as they are more self-conscious than six and seven year-olds. Possibly, these pupils can be reached better through choral speech and playlets, provision for which is to be extended in the revised version.

Conclusions.

1. The introduction of a language course at the beginner level satisfies a basic need for the teacher of pupils who are of non-English speaking background.

2. The course develops spontaneous conversational use of English. It is deviating from the typical labeling of the Indian child as timid and shy which the school may have conditioned him to be in former years from having to listen to a strange language he did not understand.

3. The interim course provided this year is in need of revision in keeping with the above-mentioned points.

4. The provision of a supplementary text of review and seat work materials is a necessity for the teacher.

5. Finally, the revised version should be viewed as a collaborative effort of teachers in the field. Limited as the correspondence had to be, the questionnaires reflected personal involvement on the part of the teachers in promoting better language standards for their pupils through their comments and suggestions.



REPORT ON THE SECOND YEAR OF THE READING RESEARCH IN THE MARITIME  
INDIAN SCHOOLS.

This report is chiefly concerned with results obtained in Grade Three to Six inclusive since testing in the lower grades is presented in a separate report on "The Study of the Relationship Between Language Readiness of Indian Pupils and their Achievement Scores in Reading".

Mention must also be made that the reading programme is concentrated mainly on the beginner to Grade Four group in the schools, although some attention is being given to Grades Five and Six but not to the extent that would be desirable for research at these two grade levels.

Tests Administered.

A new form was used for each test in this year's testing but the test batteries for both fall and spring were based on the same test selection as those of the previous year.

Statistical Information.

The statistical mean score is given in terms of a ten month school year. A score of 3.4 reading as an achievement score of Grade 3 and 4 school months. Standard deviations are given as school months of acceleration or retardation. In computing grade mean and standard deviations, decimal fractions have been rounded off to one full month; values below .5 being deleted, above .5 being credited as a full month value. The same expediency was used in finding the square root from tables, the closest square root being accepted in calculating the standard deviation. In terms of the number of population involved and the consistency of rounding off numbers, adoption of this procedure does not invalidate statistical data, but simplifies the reading of statistical results.

Test Results.

The complete grade reading scores from the fall of 1959 to the spring of 1961 inclusively from Grades One to Grade Six are compiled in the following two pages. From these scores, tables have been drawn up for detailed evaluation and interpretation.

COMPLETE TEST RESULTS OF THE GATES READING SERIES -- FALL 1959 TO SPRING 1961

(Reading grade mean and one standard deviation given)

Fall 1959

Fall 1960

Grade and Tests	No.	Mean Score $\pm$ S.D.		No.	Mean Score $\pm$ S.D.	
I Grade Norm						
II Grade Norm	162	<u>2.2</u>		175	<u>2.2</u>	
Prim. Word Recog.		2.3	$\pm 4$		2.6	$\pm 5$
Prim. Par. Reading		2.5	$\pm 2$		2.5	$\pm 5$
Reading Grade Mean		2.4	$\pm 4$		2.6	$\pm 5$
III Grade Norm	162	<u>3.2</u>		165	<u>3.2</u>	
Adv. Word Recog.		3.2	$\pm 7$		3.2	$\pm 6$
Adv. Par. Reading		3.3	$\pm 7$		3.1	$\pm 5$
Reading Grade Mean		3.2	$\pm 7$		3.2	$\pm 7$
IV Grade Norm	142	<u>4.2</u>		130	<u>4.2</u>	
Noting Detail		3.9	$\pm 8$		4.1	$\pm 9$
Understanding Directions		3.5	$\pm 5$		3.7	$\pm 8$
General Significance		3.6	$\pm 7$		4.0	$\pm 9$
Reading Grade Mean		3.6	$\pm 7$		3.8	$\pm 9$
V Grade Norm	110	<u>5.2</u>		130	<u>5.2</u>	
Noting Detail		5.2	$\pm 11$		4.9	$\pm 11$
Understanding Directions		4.4	$\pm 12$		4.3	$\pm 12$
General Significance		4.3	$\pm 10$		4.5	$\pm 10$
Reading Grade Mean		4.5	$\pm 9$		4.7	$\pm 11$
VI Grade Norm	122	<u>6.2</u>		100	<u>6.2</u>	
Noting Detail		5.8	$\pm 10$		5.8	$\pm 9$
Understanding Directions		6.0	$\pm 15$		5.5	$\pm 17$
General Significance		5.1	$\pm 15$		5.5	$\pm 14$
General Grade Mean		5.4	$\pm 14$		5.6	$\pm 12$



Spring 1960

Spring 1961

Grade and Tests		No.	Mean Score $\pm$ S.D.		No.	Mean Score $\pm$ S.D.	
I	Grade Norm	177	<u>1.8</u>		170	<u>1.8</u>	
	Primary Word		2.2	$\pm 4$		2.5	$\pm 4$
	Recog.						
	Primary Par.		2.4	$\pm 5$		2.4	$\pm 4$
	Read						
II	Reading Grade	174	2.3	$\pm 4$	187	2.4	$\pm 4$
	Mean						
	Grade Norm		<u>2.8</u>			<u>2.8</u>	
	Adv. Word Recog.		2.7	$\pm 4$		3.1	$\pm 5$
	Adv. Par. Read.		2.9	$\pm 4$		3.2	$\pm 6$
III	Reading Gr. Mean	153	2.9	$\pm 5$		3.1	$\pm 3$
	Grade Norm		<u>3.8</u>		187	<u>3.8</u>	
	Speed and Acc.		3.2	$\pm 8$		3.5	$\pm 12$
	Vocabulary		3.3	$\pm 8$		3.5	$\pm 11$
	Comprehension		3.3	$\pm 8$		3.4	$\pm 7$
IV	Read. Grade Mean	142	3.2	$\pm 8$		3.5	$\pm 7$
	Grade Norm		<u>4.8</u>		136	<u>4.8</u>	
	Speed and Acc.		4.1	$\pm 9$		4.3	$\pm 10$
	Vocabulary		3.9	$\pm 6$		4.1	$\pm 10$
	Comprehension		3.8	$\pm 8$		3.8	$\pm 7$
V	Read. Grade Mean	118	3.9	$\pm 6$		4.0	$\pm 9$
	Grade Norm		<u>5.8</u>		135	<u>5.8</u>	
	Speed and Acc.		5.2	$\pm 16$		5.1	$\pm 11$
	Vocabulary		4.2	$\pm 7$		4.8	$\pm 10$
	Comprehension		4.8	$\pm 14$		4.3	$\pm 8$
VI	Read. Grade Mean	116	4.8	$\pm 9$		4.6	$\pm 11$
	Grade Norm		<u>6.8</u>		90	<u>6.8</u>	
	Speed and Acc.		6.7	$\pm 20$		6.8	$\pm 11$
	Vocabulary		5.6	$\pm 14$		5.6	$\pm 10$
	Comprehension		5.2	$\pm 14$		5.8	$\pm 9$
	Read. Grade Mean		5.8	$\pm 16$		5.8	$\pm 11$

Large School Units versus Multi-graded Schools.

A breakdown of schools by classification on the basis of large schools versus multi-graded schools in terms of reading grade mean and population distribution, in the fall and spring results of the 1960-1961 school year appears in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1.

A Comparison of Scores Achieved by Large School Units  
and Multi-graded Schools and Population Distribution  
- Fall 1960.

Gr.	Total Pop.	Grade Norm	Grade Mean ± One S.D.	Percent of Pop.	Large Schools	Percent Pop.	Multi-graded Schools.
II	175	2.2	2.6 ± 5	72	2.6 ± 5	28	2.6 ± 5
III	165	3.2	3.2 ± 7	74	3.2 ± 6	26	3.3 ± 7
IV	130	4.2	3.8 ± 9	75	3.8 ± 9	25	4.2 ± 9
V	130	5.2	4.7 ± 11	79	4.5 ± 11	21	4.9 ± 11
VI	100	6.2	5.5 ± 12	70	5.6 ± 13	30	5.2 ± 11

Table 2.

A Comparison of Scores Achieved by Large School Units  
and Multi-graded Schools and Population Distribution  
- Spring 1961.



Gr.	Total Pop.	Grade Norm	Grade Mean ± One S.D.	Percent of Pop.	Large Schools	Percent Pop.	Multi-graded Schools.
I	170	1.8	2.4 ± 4	70	2.4 ± 4	30	2.5 ± 5
II	187	2.8	3.1 ± 3	62	3.2 ± 2	38	3.1 ± 5
III	187	3.8	3.5 ± 7	60	3.5 ± 7	40	3.5 ± 7
IV	136	4.8	4.0 ± 9	65	3.9 ± 9	35	4.5 ± 9
V	135	5.8	4.6 ± 11	76	4.6 ± 11	24	4.7 ± 8
VI	90	6.8	5.8 ± 11	77	6.0 ± 10	23	5.5 ± 11

From the above tables and on the basis of percentage distribution of population, there is very little difference between the grade achievement scores of pupils in large schools or in multi-graded schools, except for Grade Four and Grade Six. In the multi-graded schools Grade Four achieved consistently higher scores in the fall and spring tests while Grade 6 pupils achieved lower scores than in the larger schools. The significance of the Grade Four higher scores is most important in connection with the discussion of the Grade Three to Four transition. The lower Grade Six scores, on the other hand, are consistent with last year's interpretation that in multi-graded schools the tendency is to concentrate on the Grades Seven and Eight. The trend seems to be, especially in multi-graded schools to set higher standards of achievement for the lower grades and the higher grades per classroom division. Thus, a school teaching Grades One to Three, seems to set standards in terms of Grade Four entrance and similarly standards for Grades Seven and Eight seem to be set in terms of junior high entrance: the intermediary grades of the division suffering from a "sandwiched" position of neglect in terms of lower requirements.

In each of the large school units and the multi-graded schools, school construction curtailed school hours, and may have affected the Grade One reading scores of one large school.

PROGRESS STUDY.

Since last year's scores were interpreted in the first year report of 1960, they are only referred to in this report for comparison with this year's scores to study progress patterns as they affect specific grade areas.

Table 3.

A Comparison of Tests Results on the Fall Test  
Battery of 1959 and 1960.

Grade	Grade Norm	Fall 1959	Fall 1960	Progress Rate Re Norm (in months)	
				Fall 1959	Fall 1960
II	2.2	2.4	2.6	+2	+4
III	3.2	3.2	3.2	0	0
IV	4.2	3.6	3.8	-6	-4
V	5.2	4.5	4.7	-7	-5
VI	6.2	5.4	5.6	-8	-7

The above table indicates that Grade Three entrants are neither ahead nor below the grade norm. This, however, does not imply that the Grade 2 of the preceding year had progressed at a reasonable rate since they had entered Grade Two with a headstart of 2 and 4 months respectively. Thus, incipient retardation is evident at the Grade 2 level in that progress in that grade is below the expectancy of a 10 month year gain.

Checking Grade 3 scores against the scores of Grade 4 entrants, whereas Grade 3 pupils, as mentioned before, were neither retarded nor accelerated with reference to the grade norm, yet, on Grade Four entrance the test results reveal a sudden retardation of 6 months and of 4 months for 1959 and 1960 grade mean respectively. Moreover, this retardation shows high correlation with the results



of the preceding spring reported in Table 4, when Grade 3 is first confronted with a battery that challenges them at the elementary reading level.

Table 4.

A Comparison of Test Results on the Spring Test  
Battery of 1960 and 1961.

Grade	Grade Norm	Spring 1960	Spring '61	Progress Rate Spring '60	Re: Norm Spring '61
I	1.8	2.3	2.4	+ 5	+ 6
II	2.8	2.9	3.1	+ 1	+ 3
III	3.8	3.2	3.5	- 6	- 3
IV	4.8	3.9	4.0	- 9	- 8
V	5.8	4.8	4.6	-10	-12
VI	6.8	5.8	5.8	-10	-10

The fact that Grade Four in the multi-graded schools had scores of 4.2 on the fall tests and 4.5 on the spring tests or were equal to the grade norm in the fall and had a 3 month retardation in Grade 4 suggests higher Grade 3 standards in terms of Grade 3 to 4 promotion as mentioned earlier with respect to fall results as well as the possibility of greater exposure to language impact with respect to the spring results in the case of the multi-graded schools.

A point worth noting from Tables 3 and 4 with respect to the appearance of a negative recording of the Grade 3 retardation is that instead of being eliminated by the end of Grade Six, it has progressed cumulatively ending up with a 10 month retardation in the fall and a 7 month retardation in the spring of the Grade 6 year.

On the basis of the foregoing discussion of the statistical data, it seems valid to deduce that whereas incipient retardation originates at the Grade 2 level, it is precipitated during the Grade 3 school year and weakens the reading achievement of pupils throughout the elementary grades. This information

in terms of curriculum considerations leads to a shift of emphasis from Grade 3 being considered as the end of the primary reading programme to that of the beginning of the elementary reading programme, a shift that necessarily implies concept standards of Grade 3 reading texts per se or modification of the year text planning in the span of the primary grades.

In view of the fact that our research deals with a pupil population of non-English speaking background and that no research counterpart is available to us from non-Indian schools, it may be that this retardation problem is specific to our schools, although research literature has consistently supported the view that a greater failure rate occurs at the Grades 3 and 4 levels. Gates<sup>1</sup> reports: "Of the pupils failing of promotion in the several grades, the percentages failing in reading were approximately as follows: Grade 3, 68; Grade 4, 56; Grade 5, 40; Grade 6, 33; and Grades 7 and 8, 25". In referring to a study<sup>2</sup>, Gates also adds: "... pupils in the fourth or higher grades whose reading attainments fall below the reading norms for the fourth grade are almost always markedly handicapped in their work in other subjects."

Our reading research, therefore, agrees in principle with the reading retardation trend in the research literature, although the causes of reading retardation in our schools may be inherent in language handicap factors or even more likely the interdependency of both with the reservation that language acquisition has been primarily derived from the reading curriculum as discussed in a recent study<sup>3</sup>.

#### Diagnostic Evaluation of Individual Test Grade Scores.

Delving specifically into grade achievement on individual tests for both fall and spring batteries as tabled below, a diagnostic study reveals trends in the mastery of the various reading skills.

<sup>1</sup> Gates, A.I., The Improvement of Reading, New York, The MacMillan Company, 1947, p.3.

<sup>2</sup> Lee, Doris M., The Importance of Reading for Achieving in Grades Four, Five, and Six, Teachers College Contribution to Education No. 556, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1933.

<sup>3</sup> Report on the Study of the Relationship Between Language Readiness of Indian Pupils and their Achievement Scores in Reading, Indian Affairs Branch, Ottawa, unpublished.



Table 5

Individual Test Scores on the Fall Battery of  
1959 and of 1960.

Gr.	Gr. Norm	Read. Gr. Mean		Noting Detail		Underst. Dir.		Gen. Signif.	
		1959	1960	1959	1960	1959	1960	1959	1960
IV	4.2	3.6	3.8	3.9	4.1	3.5	3.7	3.6	4.0
V	5.2	4.5	4.7	5.2	4.9	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.5
VI	6.2	5.4	5.6	5.8	5.8	6.0	5.5	5.1	5.5

Table 6

Individual Test Scores on the Spring Battery  
of 1960 and of 1961.

Gr.	Gr. Norm	Read. Gr. Mean		Speed and Accuracy		Vocabulary		Comprehension	
		1960	1961	1960	1961	1960	1961	1960	1961
III	3.8	3.2	3.5	3.2	3.5	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.4
IV	4.8	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.3	3.9	4.1	3.8	3.8
V	5.8	4.8	4.6	5.2	5.1	4.2	4.8	4.8	4.3
VI	6.8	5.8	5.8	6.7	6.8	5.6	5.6	5.2	5.8

Reading the scores horizontally in both tables, Grades Three and Four show rather close uniformity of scores amongst individual tests of each battery against the respective reading grade means for each test of the fall and the spring. In the case of Grades 5 and 6, in Tables 5 and 6, also, the 1960 fall scores and the 1961 spring scores show greater correlation amongst individual tests of each battery with respect to reading grade means over those of the fall batteries of the 1959 fall

and 1960 spring respectively. This is an internal gain indicating more cohesiveness amongst the various reading skills. This internal gain in a way compensates for the minimal gain in comparing the reading grade means.

The weakest skills of the elementary grades are: understanding directions in the fall battery, and, comprehension in the spring battery. Weaknesses in the 1960 and 1961 spring series are vocabulary and comprehension, although vocabulary scores which were generally equal to or below comprehension scores in the spring of 1960, rated consistently higher than comprehension scores in Grades 3, 4, and 5 in the spring of 1961; remaining the same for Grade 6, but with this grade's comprehension scores registered a gain of 6 months.

The highest scores were on noting details for the fall series and speed and accuracy for the spring scores. In the latter test, Grade 6 scores were in direct relation to the standard grade norm.

To elucidate further on the discrepancy between the high scores and the low scores at the elementary grade level, Tables 7 and 8 were drawn up recording retardation in months on the basis of the standard grade norm.

Table 7.

Retardation in Months on the Reading Skills of  
the Fall Battery.

Grade	Grade Norm	Noting Detail		Underst. Directions		General Significance	
		1959	1960	1959	1960	1959	1960
IV	4.2	-3	-1	-7	-5	- 6	-2
V	5.2	0	-3	-8	-8	- 9	-7
VI	6.2	-4	-4	-2	-7	-11	-7



Table 8.

Retardation in Months on the Reading Skills  
of the Spring Battery.

Grade	Grade Norm	Speed and Accuracy		Vocabulary		Comprehension	
		1960	1961	1960	1961	1960	1961
III	3.8	-6	-3	-5	-2	-5	-4
IV	4.8	-7	-5	-9	-7	-10	-10
V	5.8	-6	-7	-16	-10	-10	-15
VI	6.8	-1	0	-14	-14	-16	-10

A cursory glance at the above two tables read vertically shows a cluster of extreme retardation in:

1. Understanding Directions,
2. General Significance,
3. Vocabulary,
4. Comprehension.

Keeping in mind that Grade 3 precipitated the original retardation, we are apparently faced with another factor that lowers considerably the reading grade achievement, namely: that the four tests listed above required active thinking on the part of the pupils, whereas in the case of noting detail and speed and accuracy, a passive reader could refer back to the printed text for the answer. In other words, in the four tests, the pupil's thinking had to extend beyond the printed content while in the higher scored tests, the pupil could refer back to it. In brief, the indication is that we are dealing with a population trained to stick closely to textbook conformity rather than to its critical evaluation; to too much ingestion of the printed text and not enough digestion of its meaning. This assumption necessarily implies a weakness in instructional methods at the elementary level.

Basic to developing critical thinking in children, is the need for a conversational atmosphere; controversial statements; leisure or time to think;

and, the development of freedom and fluency of expression in a common language.

Reviewing these points in terms of the classroom situation we find a seating arrangement conducive to silence rather than conversation and discussion. Isolation of each pupil facing his own work may be favourable at times but not necessarily at all times.

Controversial statements are seldom found in texts, planned to give the correct information. Except for science projects, very little opportunity is given to verifying the textbook information.

Discussion periods calling for reflection are not easily worked into the timetable in schools facing an overcrowding of grades and subjects to teach. A typical example of this fact is that much emphasis is placed on the question-answer response. If a pupil does not know the correct answer, another one is asked. On the correct answer being given, another factual question follows with little time, if any, given to finding out why an incorrect answer was incorrect. We are expecting correct answers and automatically reject an incorrect one. We have a tendency to question as if we were testing rather than developing critical "weighing" of a statement.

Ability to express one's thoughts in the language medium of the classroom is also important. In the case of pupils of non-English speaking background, who from their first year of school have been conditioned to passive listening of a language they did not understand, teachers are faced with pupils conditioned to a reticence to speak out, a reticence that becomes even more pronounced with an age group that is self-conscious of making mistakes.

Against these odds, teachers are caught in a vicious circle that is extremely difficult to change. There is no magic formula that can alter this set of things, but there are changes needed in the classroom atmosphere and in the teacher preparation to teach at the elementary grade level.

The classroom atmosphere should provide for more project activities at the elementary grade level especially in the language arts subjects of social studies, science, and health.

Another fact which should be mentioned is that a teacher who remains too long with the same grade may become conditioned by the weaknesses of the



incoming pupils to require inperceptibly lower grade standards of achievement thus becoming isolated from the demands of the next grades. A system of a two or three grade rotation from Grades Three to Five might prove beneficial in establishing higher standards from grade to grade. Such a rotational procedure, however, should be supported by a testing programme to enable the teacher to get insight into her teaching standards.

From the discussion of Tables 7 and 8, the impression might be that little progress is being made at the elementary grades. This is not so as the previous discussion is taken from the diagnostic point of view only. Progress is indicated from year to year, but it falls below standard norm desirability in terms of grade achievement.

Table 9.

Grade to Grade Progress on Individual Tests.  
(Progress in months)

Fall 1960						
	Noting Detail	Progress	Understanding Directions	Progress	General Significance	Progress
IV	4.1	8	3.7	5	4.0	5
V	4.9	11	4.3	12	4.5	12
VI	5.8		5.5		5.5	
Spring 1960						
	Speed and Accuracy	Progress	Vocabulary	Progress	Comprehen- sion	Progress
III	3.2	9	3.3	6	3.3	5
IV	4.1	11	3.9	9	3.8	10
V	5.2	15	4.2	14	4.8	14
VI	6.7		5.6		5.2	

Pupils show progress over and above the 10 month school year in the higher grades but fail to do so at the Grades Three and Four levels.

Gain or Loss During the Summer Vacation.

Grades One and Two scores lend themselves to a comparison of spring to fall test results since they were based on the same test selection. This comparison yields the following information.

		Spring 1960	Fall 1961	Gain
Grade I	Av. Grade Mean	2.3	2.6	3
Grade II	" " "	2.9	3.2	3

Due to the fact that there is a history of a 1 - 2 month fall absenteeism in the area, and that the 3 month gain may be due to accelerated learning in the last months of the school year, we cannot conclude that there is a gain during the summer vacation, but conversely we cannot claim that there is a loss either.

Promotion and Failures.

In the course of the year, a number of pupils were accelerated by one grade on the basis of their reading scores. Statistical study of promotion data should be available in next year's report. Meanwhile, a tentative study of individual promotions reveals that in most cases, accelerated pupils scored in the top group of the grade to which they were promoted, although a limited number did not do as well. An interesting observation relative to pupils whose reading scores warranted acceleration, which did not take place due to the time of year that the recommendation would have been suggested and/or overcrowded classrooms, is worth noting. In the latter cases, no gain and even losses appeared in their reading achievement scores. Seemingly, the year's learning offered little challenge for these brighter students.

Another observation that came up with respect to acceleration is that there is a certain tendency in the schools to avoid acceleration on the assumption that accelerated pupils might find it difficult to do as well in Arithmetic. In brief, our schools show greater competency in coping with failures than with accelerated grade promotion.



In connection with failures, those due to reading difficulty as such, enabled a pupil to overcome it, whereas those due to overage and/or slow learner patterns remained static.

Summary and Conclusions:

In this report on the second year of the reading programme, we have limited our discussion to statistical data in order to evaluate the reading achievement of pupils; to diagnose weaknesses in grade and skill areas; and, to get insight into planning next year's work. We do not wish to submit recommendations on the second year evaluation which can best be made in the light of the complete data available at the end of next year. At present, we prefer to summarize the discussion point by point.

1. On the average, mean grade scores achieved by multi-graded schools, on a proportionate population distribution, show consistency with those achieved by the larger school units.
2. There is a greater retardation in the elementary grades than in the primary grades. This retardation however is precipitated at the Grade 3 level, in terms of the Grade 3 to Grade 4 transition, crystalizing in the latter grade and becoming cumulative through Grades 5 and 6.
3. In the light of Grade 3 to 4 transition, the accepted notion evident in curriculum text planning of Grade 3 being the end of the primary grade division could stand revision and be viewed as introductory to elementary reading in both textbook choice and teaching approach.
4. There appears to be no major gain in grade by grade achievement on reading grade mean for this year's scores over last year's, except for a cumulative 6 month gain in the Spring of 1961 over that of 1960 for Grades One to Three. This is of notable significance in the light of the Grade 3 to Grade 4 transition slump of previous years. Internal or diagnostic progress has been made however in leveling off discrepancies in the various skills, giving a more uniform mastery of the various reading skills.
5. The most consistent gain of the year is centred on the vocabulary scores. Grade Six students achieved a grade mean-grade norm correlation on the speed and accuracy tests.

6. Weaknesses are more pronounced in the tests of understanding directions and comprehension. The highest scores were made on tests of noting detail and speed and accuracy. In terms of mental or thinking processes this could be indicative of a teaching approach placing greater stress on stimulus-response learning versus associative learning, or the question-answer pattern versus the critical discussion approach particularly in reference to the Grades Five and Six age-group with respect to mental development.
7. Language weakness of the pupil population has not met with sufficient challenge on the part of the schools.
8. There is need for teacher courses gauged to elementary grade teaching in terms of age-group mental development and learning patterns correlative to the child's maturity of thought.
9. There is no loss of reading ability through the summer vacation lapse at the Grades One and Two level. Data is not yet available on this for the other grades.
10. Schools are generally competent in dealing with failures but there is reticence to accelerate abler students.
11. A supportive language guide is needed for Grades Three and Four.
12. Project approach should be developed at the Grades Five and Six levels in conjunction with reading and the language arts programme.
13. Finally, more supportive direction should be made available to Grades Five and Six in the course of next year, especially in the larger schools in the Maritimes since they hold 70 percent of the population of those grades.

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