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**AN INDIVIDUALIZED READING PLAN FOR FIRST
GRADERS AT OAKMONT SCHOOL**

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AN INDIVIDUALIZED READING PLAN
FOR FIRST GRADERS AT OAKMONT SCHOOL

An Independent Study
Presented to
the Graduate Council of
Austin Peay State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Education Specialist

by
Sara Phillips Caudill
August 1976

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith an Independent Study written by Sara Phillips Caudill entitled "An Individualized Reading Plan for First Graders at Oakmont School." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Specialist in Education degree.

Bryan Crutcher, Ed. D.
Major Professor

We have read this independent study and recommend its acceptance:

H. B. Jolly, Jr.
Second Committee Member

Fred Bunger
Third Committee Member

Accepted for the Graduate Council:

Wm. E. Shaffer
Dean of the Graduate School

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Since the early 1960's, the public has been questioning practices of teaching reading in the public schools. Books, television documentaries, and magazine and newspaper articles have brought the problem of poor reading achievement into focus. "Right to Read" legislation and Federal Title Programs have attempted to solve the problem. In 1961, Austin and others found that one in six children in their study was not reading up to his potential.¹ Since that time, millions of dollars have gone into programs to improve reading instruction; but both the problem and the attendant public outrage persist. The State of California now requires candidates for high school graduation to take a reading proficiency examination. The State of Tennessee ranks forty-eighth among the fifty states in the ability of pupils to read.² Locally, more than twenty-five percent of the students at Oakmont Elementary School in Dickson County, Tennessee, are disabled in reading.³

¹Austin, et al. Cited by Lawrence E. Hafner and Hayden B. Jolly, Patterns of Teaching Reading in the Elementary School (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), p. 189.

²Oprah Winfrey, paraphrased from a statement made during broadcast of WTVF Reports: Public Education in Tennessee (Nashville, Tennessee: WTVF Broadcasting, Inc.), February 1, 1976.

³Sara E. Caudill, "Number of Disabled Readers at Oakmont School," An Informal Survey, March, 1976.

Educators, accountable to the public for their failure to teach children to read, are faced with a very serious problem. The time has come to examine the instructional practices which have been used to teach reading in the past and to explore new and different strategies in reading instruction for the future. Through early intervention, an individualized program may greatly reduce the chance of children becoming disabled readers.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of the study was to design an individualized reading plan for first graders at Oakmont Elementary School in Dickson, Tennessee. The reading program was aimed at developing the following: word attack skills and comprehension, study skills, and favorable attitudes toward reading. The curriculum plan included pre-assessment, objectives, scope and sequence for developing skills in reading, strategies, evaluation, and administrative procedures. Flexible approaches for teaching reading, using a variety of materials, were suggested.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms are defined as used in this study.

Individualized instruction: Individualized instruction is an approach to teaching reading by finding children's abilities, interests, and needs before instruction begins. Varied materials are used, with emphasis upon setting individual goals. Children are taught

individually or in a group, according to their needs' assessment.⁴

Disabled readers: Disabled readers are the individuals who are achieving significantly below their capacity level for achievement, rather than merely below their grade level.⁵

Proper instruction: Proper instruction is teaching all children at their level, pacing instruction so that all pupils can master material at each level before going on to new and more difficult material, and making available to teachers and pupils materials and methods that make independent, individual, self-instruction possible.⁶

Multi-basal approach: The multi basal approach is a progressive movement from sight words to analysis of words. Many basal reader series are used on each level to expose the students to more words, more stories, and more characters.

Language-experience approach: The language-experience approach is when ideas and thoughts of the children are recorded as they state them to the teacher. This approach can be used with an individual or with a group.⁷

Directed reading-thinking activity: A directed reading-thinking activity is when the teacher directs a reading group by means of

⁴George D. Spache, The Teaching of Reading (Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., 1972), p. 79.

⁵Alan H. Robinson and Sidney J. Rauch, Guiding the Reading Program (Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1965), p. 57.

⁶Hafner and Jolly, op. cit., p. 190.

⁷Russell G. Stauffer, Directing the Reading-Thinking Process (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), p. 152.

provocative questions that require the children to interpret and make inferences from what they have read. The teacher serves as a directing catalyst.⁸

Linguistics: The linguistic-oriented lesson plan is a systematic, sequential presentation of both spelling pattern words and sight words involving (1) close attention to the construction of the word, (2) much behavior on the part of the pupil--saying the word, spelling it, noting likenesses and differences among words, (3) reading the word in sentences and stories, and mastering the material at each step in the sequence.⁹

METHODOLOGY

The author, who has spent seven years teaching five and six year olds in kindergarten and first grade, is presently a remedial reading teacher at Oakmont School, Dickson, Tennessee. She holds a Master of Arts in Elementary Education with certification for reading specialization. Her experiences in the classroom and as a student of educational theory and practice enabled her to design a program of individualized instruction for practical application in beginning reading.

The following procedures were followed in conducting the study:

⁸Ibid., p. 35.

⁹Hafner and Jolly, op. cit., p. 82.

1. A review of the literature was made to secure information pertinent to the study.

2. An individualized reading program was designed. It included:

- A. Pre-assessment techniques
- B. Behavioral objectives based upon the Wisconsin Design of Reading Skills¹⁰
- C. Scope and sequence for developing skills in reading
- D. Strategies used in developing positive attitudes toward reading
- E. Strategies used in beginning reading
- F. Evaluation techniques

3. Administrative procedures were outlined.

SIGNIFICANCE TO EDUCATION

It has been determined that over twenty-five percent of the students at Oakmont School, Dickson, Tennessee, are disabled readers. (See page 1.) Currently, reading authorities view individualized reading as the approach that will help prevent disabled readers. These authorities know that prevention is far preferable to remediation. Therefore, the author planned an individualized program in the hope of overcoming or preventing children from becoming disabled readers in first grade at Oakmont School.

¹⁰Wayne Otto and Eunice Askov, Report from Project 204, Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin, 1970). Cited by Hafner and Jolly, op. cit., pp. 319-334.

Recognizing the importance of meeting the individual differences of students in schools means recognizing that no one approach to reading will work for all. It is unlikely that educators will ever have a reading program that will "completely" accommodate individual differences among children.¹¹ However, the author used the recommendations of reading specialists to design a program for Oakmont School in an effort to improve skills and attitudes toward reading.

Those who say that the linguistic approach to beginning reading is the best for children are as faulty in their thinking as those who oppose it in favor of the sight method.¹² Extending this idea to the basal reading approach versus the language-experience approach, one can again raise the point of faulty thinking. One approach may be best for some children, while unsatisfactory for other students. Rather than one approach, the incorporation of several approaches will more likely meet the goal. Individualized reading is the approach that can easily incorporate other reading approaches, such as basal, linguistic, language-experience, or sight method, by selecting materials according to needs.

¹¹Spache, op. cit., p. 52.

¹²Alan S. Cohen, Teach Them All to Read (New York: Random House, 1969), p. 4.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

One of the roles of the school system is to help each child to develop his potential to whatever degree his abilities permit. For too long, educators have tenaciously held to the premise that all children should be taught the same thing at the same time, and in the same manner, because they are in the same grade and are approximately the same chronological age. It is presumed that when a child reaches a point of academic readiness, he can proceed in normal fashion at normal speed. However, with the present acceleration of the first grade level, many children are presented with tasks for which they are not ready and, consequently, experience failure at a very early age.

MEETING INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

Research has shown conclusively that children differ widely in capacity to learn and in other basic characteristics.¹ Teachers today are better informed than a generation ago in regard to the need for meeting individual differences in children's rate of learning. They know that children of the same chronological age differ in as many ways

¹Charles W. Harris, ed. "Individual Differences and Grouping," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, 3rd ed. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960), p. 1118.

as can be measured.² The problem of adjusting instruction in reading to meet the wide variation among children of the same age is probably the most difficult problem the teacher has to face.³ Of prime concern to educators has been their effort to formulate programs which will help children develop reading interests and abilities, prevent reading difficulties, and aid in diagnosing and correcting problems which do occur.⁴

These authorities know that it is necessary for the teacher to have the insight and the time to become aware of each pupil's abilities, difficulties, and needs before skillful individual help can be provided.⁵ The implication for instruction is that the best educational program must be highly personalized or geared to differing abilities and achievement.⁶

In her "Criteria for a Sound Reading Program in the Elementary School," Gertrude Whipple stated that a good elementary reading program provides varied instruction and flexible requirements as a means of

²William J. Dodds, "Highlights from the History of Reading Instruction," The Reading Teacher, XXI (December, 1967), p. 278.

³Arthur I. Gates, "Individual Differences," Teaching Reading (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, February, 1968), p. 11.

⁴George Shephard, "Reading Research and the Individual Child," The Reading Teacher, XXI (January, 1968), p. 335.

⁵Gates, op. cit., p. 11.

⁶Dodds, loc. cit.

making adequate adjustments to the widely different reading needs of the pupils.⁷ Educators need to ascertain whether or not this criterion is being met with the instructional practices in use. It is generally accepted that proper instruction can raise a child's level of reading achievement.

PRACTICES IN READING INSTRUCTION

Much has been said and written in recent years about meeting the needs of learners. However, Rouch and others found that the following has been true in many classrooms:

. . . reading instruction has consisted primarily of taking either the whole class or groups of children through the basal reader found at that particular grade level, irrespective of the needs of individual learners. The major objective seems to have been to proceed from the front to the back of the book . . . In other words, the emphasis has been on teaching books, rather than children.⁸

Durkin observed, also, in visiting classrooms over the last ten years, that whole-class instruction was very common. She stated that teachers followed the suggestions in a basal manual as if they were divinely inspired and right for every child.⁹

Olive S. Niles proposed that a solid, well-planned curriculum

⁷Gertrude Whipple, cited by H. Alan Robinson and Sidney J. Rauch, Guiding the Reading Program (Chicago: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1965), p. 77.

⁸Roger L. Rouch, Joyce Frink Chandler, and Lloyd C. Fleetwood, "Teaching Books or Teaching Children?" Language Arts, LVI (September, 1975), p. 790.

⁹Delores Durkin, "After Ten Years: Where Are We Now in Reading?" The Reading Teacher, XXVIII (December, 1974), p. 264.

was vital to the success of a reading program; but Niles found that the only reading curriculum in many schools was the basal reading series. Niles pointed out that while many of these books were well thought out and carefully written, they did not serve as a good curriculum but were merely the tools through which it could be implemented.¹⁰

Durkin observed that schools today still use the practice common a decade ago of grouping pupils according to reading achievement levels in order to achieve some individualization. However, grouping in many of the schools which Durkin visited was so inflexible that she was forced to concur with a statement by Austin and Morrison in their book, The First R (1963): "Once a blue jay, always a blue jay."¹¹ In the same vein, Gary R. Peterson observed that ability-grouped basal reading instruction appeared to stigmatize publicly the slow or disabled reader.¹²

In her observation, Durkin found that advanced readers suffered a lack of challenging material in the basal program and were often given larger quantities of the same activities than slower readers.¹³

¹⁰Kenneth S. Goodman and Olive S. Niles, "School Programs: The Necessary Conditions," Reading Process and Program (Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1970), p. 48.

¹¹Mary C. Austin and Coleman Morrison, cited by Delores Durkin, loc. cit.

¹²Gary R. Peterson, "A Complete Guide to Individualized Reading," Teacher, XCII (September, 1974), p. 85.

¹³Durkin, loc. cit.

BASAL READING PROGRAM

The basal reader series offers a planned sequential development of basic reading skills through varied reading material. Unlike the language experience approach, which demands much preparation by the teacher to select and sequence the reading skills, the basal approach gives to the teacher a sequencing of reading skills so that by using the teacher's manual for guidance and ideas, one can prepare and create activities to reinforce learning. The newer basal programs, both interesting and well done, give variety in reading material and are moving toward more multi-ethnic selections with material written for culturally disadvantaged city children.¹⁴

Schools using basal readers need not stick to just one series, but should purchase several different basal series materials on the same level. This allows a child to read more books on the same level, thus exposing him to more words, more stories, and more characters. In using the multi-basal approach, Carol Kidder found not only that this was true, but her students acquired more sight vocabulary and reading strategies. Offering more chances for story appeal at the child's reading level resulted in reinforced reading skills and increased reading by students.¹⁵

¹⁴Rosaland M. Ashley, Successful Techniques for Teaching Elementary Arts (New York: Parker Publishing Company, Inc., 1970), p. 194.

¹⁵Carol L. Kidder, "Choosing a Basal Reading Program," The Reading Teacher, XXIX (October, 1975), pp. 39-41.

However, the basal approach lends itself toward group work with students through oral reading and responding in front of peers rather than on a one-to-one basis with the teacher. When the standard three reading groups are seen in a classroom, specific reading skills are often neglected. Students may be in a group too high or too low for them. When this grouping has taken place, a student may never be moved from the original group. Unless the teacher can so individualize the basal program that she can have individual conferences with the students, the lack of mobility will result in movement further away from the goal of meeting individual skill needs.

Besides this deficiency of specific skill requirements, other factors are lacking in the basal approach. Reading in other subject matter fields is not aided. The ability to survey materials to determine their general nature, to be flexible in reading rates due to content, to handle graphic and illustrative materials, to use the library and basic references peculiar to each field, to gain skill in note taking and outlining are a few factors which are neglected.¹⁶ In his article on "Individualizing a Basal Reader," Ronald Bruton gave a list of missing features of the basal approach, which included behavioral objectives, diagnostic tests, appropriate reading materials that reveal skill needs, charting or record keeping system, and a format that facilitated individualized assignments and interaction.¹⁷

¹⁶George D. Spache, The Teaching of Reading (Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., 1972), pp. 119-124.

¹⁷Ronald W. Bruton, "Individualizing a Basal Reader," The Reading Teacher, XXVI (October, 1972), p. 59.

INDIVIDUALIZED READING INSTRUCTION

If the preceding observations by authorities in different parts of the country regarding the use of the basal reader can be accepted as indicators of a national pattern, then basal readers and the teachers who use them may be suspected as contributors to the current reading problem. The problem of poor reading achievement has existed for over a decade without change; yet the same methods and materials continue to be employed by teachers, despite the continuing problem. Simple logic dictates that these methods and materials must be changed in order to attack the problem.

An alternative to basal readers is individualized instruction, which Durkin defined as teaching what children are ready to learn and moving them out as quickly as they are able to learn.¹⁸ Because all pupils will not be ready to learn a given concept at the same time, each pupil must be taught at his level according to his needs. By using individualized instruction, then, it is possible to meet Whipple's criterion. (See paragraph 3, page 8.)

Betts stated that individualized reading is independent reading plus skill development. It is individualized teaching to support learning, which has always been individual.¹⁹ The teacher must arrange, then, to meet students in individual conferences. In this one-to-one contact,

¹⁸Durkin, op. cit., p. 263.

¹⁹Emmett A. Betts, "What Is Individualized Reading?" The Reading Teacher, XXVI (April, 1973), p. 678.

the student can read for the teacher, discuss problems, make plans, and evaluate himself. There is no embarrassment in front of a group and no "tag" marking the student as slow, remedial, or "dummy" because of special help needed.²⁰

Wheeler reported that self-selection, self-pacing, and intrinsic motivation were developed in an individualized approach.²¹ Peterson pointed out that the gifted reader in an individualized program progresses at his own pace. He also stated that the individualized approach did not stigmatize publicly the slow or disabled reader.²²

Barron described the advantages of an individualized reading program in the following excerpt:

It allows the use of a multitude of materials. The teacher, by using his professional judgment, can assess and help his students to the best of available time and materials. For the student, firstly, he is able to work in skills areas that are personally necessary . . . Secondly, objectives are short-term . . . and attainment of these objectives is highly visible. Thirdly, the student is working at his own level and speed, in competition with himself only. Finally, the student is learning habits of independence²³ and responsibility that are invaluable throughout life.

²⁰Kay Trusty, "Principles of Learning and Individualized Reading," The Reading Teacher, XXIV (May, 1971), pp. 730-732.

²¹Alan H. Wheeler, "New Ways with Individualized Reading," Elementary English, L (March, 1973), p. 425.

²²Peterson, loc. cit.

²³Ruth J. Barron, "An Individualized Programme--A Practical Approach," Reading Improvement (Winter, 1973), p. 792.

STUDIES ON INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION

The final determiner of the advisability of implementing any new program must be authoritative, clinical proof that the new program is superior to the old. In 1972, a program of individualized instruction and a basal reading program were compared in fifty-six Warren Township, Illinois, classrooms. After one year, researchers found that children in grades one and two maintained comparable growth in either program, each group recording an average gain of thirteen months in reading achievement. However, in grades three and four, the achievement of the children in the basal program dropped significantly.²⁴ An earlier study, in 1967, compared individualized reading with a basal reading program. From the data and observations made during this study, the following implications in favor of individualized instruction were drawn.

1. An individualized intensive phonetic program aids reading more effectively than the less formal, more widely spaced, basal reader phonics.
2. The program which adjusts to individual progress in the sub-skills by teaching to the point of weakness provides more effective learning than group analysis techniques.
3. Individualized reading is more effective than the basal method since pupils may progress at their own mastery.
4. Individualized story reading provides independent application of skills and promotes interest in reading.

²⁴Rouch, op. cit., p. 792.

5. The teacher-pupil conference is a valuable technique for adjusting instruction to the individual learning needs.
6. Pupil-team learning activities develop effective learning results when team-mates change often, varying from pairs with equal ability to teams of unequal ability.
7. Writing and spelling skills are effectively developed in the individualized reading program.
8. The individualized reading program serves ability levels effectively.
9. Boys and girls are served equally well by the individualized reading method.²⁵

Individualized reading was compared to ability grouping. Vite (1962) reported that of seven controlled studies, four showed results favoring individualized reading, while three obtained results in favor of grouping.²⁶

In other research reports on using individualized reading in various grades and schools, the researchers brought out the point that attitudes changed in favor of reading, although achievement scores remained equal or slightly higher than those obtained by students not in the individualized program. In a research project reported by Charles Hill and Kathleen Methot, first graders were moved from a programmed approach (Sullivan) to individualized reading. Six conditions dictated the program. There was a classroom environment of openness, silent or

²⁵Doris U. Spencer, "Individualized Versus a Basal Program in Rural Communities," The Reading Teacher, XXI (December, 1967), p. 17.

²⁶Irene W. Vite, "Individualized Reading--the Scoreboard on Control Studies," Education (1961), pp. 289-299, cited by Robert Kerlin, "Research Results and Classroom Practices," The Reading Teacher, XXI (December, 1967), p. 215.

quiet reading, instructional guidance, book talks and conferences, skill development, uninterrupted sustained silent reading, record keeping, and evaluation. Results of the individualized reading approach indicated that students were using decoding skills, writing about books, and liking reading.²⁷ Kay Trusty, McGuffey Laboratory School of Miami University, reported that after five years of individualized reading with young learners, she had children to score satisfactorily on achievement tests or to score better than students in more traditional approaches. She also found that her students read more books, enjoyed reading, read more at home, and chose reading as a favorite subject and free activity.²⁸

If these favorable attitudes toward reading are to be fostered, then the approach which can incorporate the varied approaches, and thus reach the varied needs of children in the classroom, should be used. In the opinion of the author, the individualized reading approach is that approach.

SUMMARY

The criteria for a sound reading program in the elementary school was defined as one which provided varied instruction and flexible requirements as a means of making adequate adjustment to the widely

²⁷Charles H. Hill and Kathleen Methot, "Making an Important Transition," Elementary English, LI (September, 1974), pp. 842-845.

²⁸Trusty, op. cit., pp. 735-736.

different reading needs of the pupils. It was found that instructional practices in use do not meet this criterion. The basal reading series was found to be the approach used most often to teach children to read.

The authorities who made contributions in favor of individualized reading instruction did not advocate the abandonment of the basal reader. On the contrary, the basal reader was shown to be a useful and versatile tool when it was included in an overall plan of reading instruction geared to the needs, interests, and abilities of the pupils concerned. For the majority of the students, the basal approach provided a foundation for beginning reading; but nowhere did the literature state that teachers were to do nothing more. Definitely, Bruton's list of what was lacking from the basal (page 12) has shown the need to turn to individualized reading as the best approach for first graders.

Chapter 3

AN INDIVIDUALIZED READING PLAN FOR FIRST GRADERS AT OAKMONT SCHOOL

An individualized reading plan was designed for first graders at Oakmont School in an effort to prevent disabled readers. The reading program was aimed at developing the following areas: word attack skills and comprehension, study skills, and favorable attitudes toward reading. The curriculum plan included pre-assessment, objectives, scope and sequence for developing skills in reading, strategies, evaluation, and administrative procedures. Flexible approaches for teaching reading, using a variety of materials, were suggested.

PRE-ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES

In testing for reading readiness, attention will be given to mental age, physical factors, social and emotional factors, and educational factors.

Metropolitan Readiness Test

The Metropolitan Readiness Test, which provides reliable and valid data on readiness, will be given to each student in the first grade.¹

¹Harry Singer, "Metropolitan Readiness Test," The Seventh Mental Measurements Yearbook, ed. by Oscar Krisen Buros (Highland Park, New Jersey: The Gryphon Press, 1972), p. 758.

It will further confirm the teacher's judgment of the student. This test includes six subtests: word meaning, listening, matching, alphabet, numbers, and copying.

Slosson Intelligence Test

The Slosson Intelligence Test will be given to each child to get an estimate of the child's potential. This test was recommended by Mr. Hayden Jolly, Dickson County reading consultant, because of the convenience in administering and scoring.

Informal Tests

Informal auditory discrimination and visual discrimination tests will be given to each student as a screening device to know what further information is needed to plan the curriculum more effectively to meet the child's needs.

Parent Interview

Each parent will be interviewed and asked pertinent questions about his child's interests, strengths, and weaknesses (Appendix A).

Cumulative Records

Records of the child's kindergarten experience will be studied in an effort to find where each child has progressed in readiness for reading.

The results of these tests, records, and interviews will be used to guide the teacher in proper instruction for each child. The students who score two standard deviations above the norm (130) on the Slosson

Intelligence Test and/or in the ninetieth percentile on the Metropolitan Readiness Test will be referred to be mainstreamed in the gifted class. Those students who score two standard deviations below the norm (90) on the Slosson Intelligence Test and/or below the fortieth percentile on the Metropolitan Readiness Test will be observed closely to detect the learning problem. If, after much instructional guidance on the child's level, the child does not progress, the school counselor will be asked to help the teacher plan a program to fit the child's needs.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES

Following is an outline of reading skills and behavioral objectives for beginning reading. The objectives are aimed at developing word attack skills, comprehension skills, and study skills. These objectives were patterned after the Wisconsin Design for Reading Skill Development: Rationale and Guidelines.²

I. Word Attack

Level A

1. Listens for rhyming elements

- a. The child is able to tell when two words pronounced by the teacher and/or the names of two objects do and do not rhyme.

²Wayne Otto and Eunice Askov, Report from Project 204, Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin, 1970), cited in Lawrence E. Hafner and Hayden B. Jolly, Patterns of Teaching Reading in the Elementary School (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1972), pp. 319-329.

- b. The child is able to pick out the rhyming words in traditional verses and nonsense verses read by the teacher. The child is able to supply the missing word in a rhyming verse read by the teacher.
- 2. Notices likenesses and differences
 - a. The child is able to match key shapes with shapes that are identical in terms of form and orientation.
 - b. The child is able to pick the letter--upper or lower case--or number in a series that is identical to a key number or letter.
 - c. The child is able to pick the word or phrase in series that is identical to a key word or phrase.
 - 3. Distinguishes colors
 - a. The child is able to identify colors named by the teacher.
 - 4. Listens for initial consonant sounds
 - a. Given two common words pronounced by the teacher, the child is able to tell when the words do and do not begin alike.

Level B

- 1. Has a sight vocabulary of 50-100 words
 - a. The child is able to recognize the first 92 words of the Kucera-Francis list. (See page 28.)
- 2. Follows left-to-right sequence
 - a. The child reacts to number, letter, or word stimuli in a left-to-right sequence.
- 3. Has phonic-analysis skills
 - a. Consonant sounds
 - (1) Beginning
 - (a) Given two common words pronounced by the teacher, the child is able to tell when the word or words begin alike.

- (b) Given a real or nonsense word pronounced by the teacher, the child is able to give the letter that makes the initial sound.
- (c) Given a word pronounced by the teacher, the child is able to give another word that begins with the same sound.

(2) Ending

- (a) Given two common words pronounced by the teacher, the child is able to tell when the words do and do not end alike.
- (b) Given a word pronounced by the teacher, the child is able to give the letter that makes the ending sound.

b. Consonant blends

- (1) When directed to listen for the first two sounds in a real or nonsense word pronounced by the teacher, the child is able to identify words that begin with the same two sounds and identify the two letters that make the initial sounds.
- (2) The child is able to pronounce real and nonsense words that begin with the following blends: pl, qr, pr, cr, fl, cl, bl, ql.

c. Rhyming elements

- (1) Given a word pronounced by the teacher, the child is able to give a rhyming word.

d. Short vowels

- (1) The child is able to give the sound and letter name of the vowel in single syllable words with a single short vowel sound.

e. Simple consonant digraphs

- (1) The child is able to identify simple two-consonant combinations--ch, th, sh--that result in a single new sound.

4. Has structural analysis skills.

a. Compound words

- (1) The child is able to identify compound words and to specify the elements of a compound word.

b. Contractions

- (1) The child is able to identify simple contractions and use them correctly in sentences.

c. Base words and endings

- (1) The child is able to identify the root word in known inflected words.

d. Plurals

- (1) The child is able to tell when known words--essentially noun plus s forms--are singular or plural.

e. Possessive forms

- (1) The child is able to identify the possessive forms of nouns in context.

II. Comprehension

Level A

1. Develops listening skills

- a. The child is able to demonstrate active participation in classroom listening situations.
- b. The child is able to remember sufficient details from an oral presentation.

2. Increases vocabulary through listening

- a. The child begins to use new words learned in school in his own spoken language.

3. Can relate details to each other to construct a story

- a. The child is able to relate details to each other to construct a story.

4. Anticipates outcome of stories.

- a. Given a picture of an event, the child is able to select an appropriate outcome from two pictured choices.
 - b. Given the facts essential for the beginning of a story line, the child is able to project relevant outcomes.
5. Interprets pictures critically
- a. The child is able to point out incongruities in pictures and to pick out pictures with incongruous details.
6. Can identify main characters in a story
- a. The child is able to name and describe up to four main characters in a story told by the teacher.

Level 8

1. Uses picture and context clues
- a. Picture clues
 - (1) The child is able to use picture clues in drawing conclusions and answering questions.
 - b. Context clues
 - (1) The child is able to use context clues in drawing conclusions and answering questions.
2. Is able to gain meaning from:
- a. Words
 - (1) The child demonstrates his understanding of individual words in connected text by responding correctly to specific questions with a single word focus.
 - b. Sentences
 - (1) The child demonstrates his understanding of specific sentences by responding correctly to specific questions regarding the literal content of single sentences.

c. Whole selections

- (1) The child demonstrates his understanding of a coherent passage of connected text by responding correctly to questions regarding literal meaning and appropriately to questions regarding implied meaning.

3. Uses punctuation as a guide to meaning

- a. The child demonstrates his attention to punctuation at the ends of sentences and punctuation of dialogue through his oral reading of familiar sentences.

III. Study Skills

Level A

1. Follows simple directions

- a. The child is able to perform the actions in simple one- and two-stage directions.

2. Demonstrates elementary work habits

- a. Shows independence in work

- (1) The child shows independence in his assigned work by asking questions that are necessary for clarification of the task, now asking attention-seeking questions once the task is clear, and keeping the necessary tools at hand.

- b. Accepts responsibility for completion and quality of work

- (1) The child shows acceptance of responsibility for completion and quality of work by making a reasonable effort to do neat work and pacing himself to complete a task acceptably in allotted time.

3. Shows development of motor coordination

- a. The child is able to make a legible copy of given manuscript writings.

Level 8

1. Follows directions
 - a. Follows oral directions given to a group
 - (1) The child is able to perform the actions in two-stage directions that require some judgment when the directions are administered to a group.
 - b. Follows oral directions given individually
 - (1) The child is able to perform the actions in two-stage directions that require some judgment when the directions are given directly to him.
 - c. Follows written directions
 - (1) The child is able to perform independently and sequentially the actions called for in a series of four to six written directions.
2. Has adequate work habits
 - a. The child shows independence and acceptance of responsibility by asking only the questions that are necessary for clarification of a task, keeping the materials required to complete a task available and organized, showing an awareness of the standards of neatness and general quality in assigned work, and pacing himself to complete assigned tasks in sequential order.
3. Recognizes organization of ideas in sequential order
 - a. The child is able to recognize sequential relationships among two or three ideas.
4. Begins to make judgments and draw conclusions
 - a. Given a series of four to six related facts, the child is able to respond correctly to questions requiring that he make judgments and draw conclusions on the basis of the facts presented.

5. Uses table of contents

- a. The child is able to respond to appropriate questions with information gained from the tables of contents of first-grade books.

The 100 Most Frequent Words in the Kucera-Francis Study³

The list below provides specific words in order to meet the behavioral objective on page 22 (Level B, item 1, a). This is monitored in Appendix C, page 57.

1. the	21. this	41. we	61. can	81. man
2. of	22. had	42. him	62. only	82. me
3. and	23. not	43. been	63. other	83. even
4. to	24. are	44. has	64. new	84. most
5. a	25. but	45. when	65. some	85. made
6. that	26. from	46. who	66. could	86. after
7. in	27. or	47. will	67. time	87. also
8. is	28. have	48. more	68. these	88. did
9. was	29. an	49. no	69. two	89. many
10. he	30. they	50. if	70. may	90. before
11. for	31. which	51. out	71. then	91. must
12. it	32. one	52. so	72. do	92. through
13. with	33. you	53. said	73. first	93. back
14. as	34. were	54. what	74. any	94. years
15. his	35. her	55. up	75. my	95. where
16. on	36. all	56. its	76. now	96. much
17. be	37. she	57. about	77. such	97. your
18. at	38. there	58. into	78. like	98. way
19. by	39. would	59. than	79. our	99. well
20. I	40. their	60. them	80. over	100. down

³ H. Kucera and W. N. Francis, Computational Analysis of Present-day American English (Providence: Brown University Press, 1967), cited by Hafner and Jolly, op. cit., p. 321.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE FOR DEVELOPING SKILLS IN READING

The author chose to outline the skills in the sequential order through which they are normally presented in a developmental reading program based on the Wisconsin Design of Behavioral Objectives. (See pages 21-28.) These skills are monitored by the device shown in Appendix C, page 57. After the child has acquired the perceptual skills, he is ready for formal reading instruction. Word attack and comprehension skills are taught simultaneously. Through word configuration, the child builds a sight vocabulary. Phonic analysis is taught in a functional setting that is meaningful to the child. Context clues are introduced as the child begins to comprehend meanings. Use of the dictionary becomes an aid to the child as he learns to classify words. Structural analysis becomes a part of the recognition skills as the child begins to analyze word parts. Independent study skills become an asset to the child as he recognizes words and understands what he is supposed to do in the learning setting.

PERCEPTUAL SKILLS

The child's pre-school experience has much to do with the amount of training the child needs in auditory and visual discrimination. When parents in the home have taken the time to teach the child to observe and listen to his world of sight and sound, the foundation for perceptual training has been laid. When the parents in the home have failed the child in this respect, he is penalized and needs perceptual training.

Regardless of background, however, children vary greatly in their visual and auditory abilities when they enter school. They

differ not only because of differences in eyes as organs of sight, but because they have not been trained in habits of observation and careful examination of detail. Nor have they been taught how to listen carefully. To see, hear, and remember words and word elements accurately requires perceptual skills and attention span far beyond the abilities of many children at age six.

At Oakmont School, training aimed at developing perceptual skills is carried on in the latter part of the kindergarten experience; however, many first grade students do not attend kindergarten. For those students who lack the tools necessary to begin formal reading instruction, a systematic training program in auditory and visual perception is conducted within the plan herein proposed.

Visual Perception

Visual perception is based on trained observation. The child's classroom is filled with materials used in teaching him to look carefully at objects and to observe the likenesses and differences. The chairs in the room furnish opportunities for the child to see differences in size and shape. Clothes of the same color but different texture, balls of different size and color, as well as details of many other kinds are used to teach the child to observe things carefully.

The use of pictures and other objects is the next step when the child is taught to express what he is perceiving. The student moves from gross discrimination of forms to the perception of words. The child is taught to observe a whole word. The length of the word is important. Tall letters, letters with tails, and low letters determine

the shape of the word and serve as cues for the student. Perception cues of the beginning and the ending of words are more important than mid-letter cues. The child engages in visual-skill activities in which he matches identical letters, syllables, and words. He has the ability to examine words and sentences from right to left, to see likenesses and differences in single letters, syllables and words. The letters and words may be grossly different, somewhat similar, highly confusing, or reversals.

Visual perception is developed through exercises in visual memory imagery, matching of forms, pattern completion, pattern copying, and letter knowledge.

Auditory Perception

Children live in a world of sound in the classroom. Excellent opportunities are provided for the child to develop auditory discrimination. He is trained to recognize the various qualities of sounds, louder, softer, higher, lower, shorter, or longer. The child is taught to identify different sounds and to compare sounds.

After a child has a rich background of experiences with sounds, he is ready to identify words which begin alike (pig, pen, pan, pencil, peach) and words which rhyme (hen, men, ten). A child is given the opportunity to discover rhyming words and supply the last word in a jingle. Nursery rhymes are read often for the child to hear, recite, or dramatize.

Pictures are used in which the pupil marks only those pictures whose names begin with the same sound (dog, deer). Later the same

procedure is used with ending sounds and with rhyming words. In the beginning, no printed words are used under the picture.

Auditory perception is developed through exercises in listening and following directions, the perception of initial consonant sounds, perception of final consonant sounds, and perception of rhyming words.

When the first grader is able to recognize the sounds he hears in a word and to associate each sound with the appropriate letter symbol, he has made excellent progress in auditory and visual discrimination.

WORD ATTACK SKILLS AND COMPREHENSION

Recognition of words or word parts requires word identification skills. Five areas of word recognition skills, agreed upon by most authors, include: word configuration or sight words, phonic analysis, structural analysis, context clues, and use of the dictionary.

Sight Vocabulary

The child is introduced to sight words by using pictures and context whenever possible. These sight words are repeated numerous times so they are known when seen. Along with picture and context clues, a student uses configuration clues such as shape, length, and distinctive letters or the beginning letter to help him recognize the sight word. From words with picture referents, the student progresses to action and structure words usually found in the Kucera-Francis Sight Words. (See page 28.) With these sight words, generalizations are developed and a beginning understanding of phonic and structural analysis is made.

For those children who find it difficult to remember the appearance of words with the look-and-say approach, extra sensory cues are helpful. Harris suggested that students trace a large copy of the word, letter by letter, while pronouncing the word.⁴ The kinesthetic method helps in building effective discrimination skills.

Phonics

Using phonics as a word identification skill requires the ability to associate a sound with a letter or a combination of letters. This enables the reader to sound out words or parts of words. Used with the other word identification skills, the reader has a greater chance of identifying the unknown word.

Learning the phonic elements includes being able to pronounce consonants, vowels, consonant blends, consonant digraphs, diphthongs, vowel digraphs, murmur diphthongs, and special vowel combinations.⁵

Auditory perception is basic to a phonic program. Because the phonics approach requires similarities and differences between sounds to be heard by the student, it is a necessary first developmental stage in phonic usage. For those students who cannot associate the sounds with the proper letters, ear training, which includes auditory perception of initial consonants, consonant blends, rhymes, medial vowels, and syllables is given. After auditory association is developed, visual

⁴Albert J. Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1970), p. 319.

⁵Hafner and Jolly, op. cit., p. 94.

association, blending, and contextual application are stages developed in phonic usage.

Structural Analysis

Phonics instruction does not stand alone as a word identification skill but is used in combination with structural analysis. In structural analysis, the student is taught root words, affixes, inflectional endings, syllables, compound words, and contractions.

Context Clues

Two types of context clues are used to aid in identifying the word or its meaning. One type involves the child's reading the rest of the sentence, paragraph, or selection for meaning; and a second type involves the child's bringing additional meaning to the unknown word.⁶

When a new word is introduced, the student is led to use structural and phonic analysis. The word is also given in a sentence for the student to guess its meaning. The student improves his reading for meaning when he completes or matches sentences or parts of sentences, selects words to match pictures, and labels objects in the classroom.

When a child is reading silently and encounters word recognition problems, these suggestions are given to the student. First, the child is taught to use the context or pictures for clues. Secondly, the child is helped to use word analysis skills. Finally, the child is told the word, especially if it does not follow phonetic principles.⁷

⁶Emmett A. Betts, Foundations of Reading Instruction (New York: American Book Company, 1950), p. 603.

⁷Ibid., p. 507.

Dictionary

The picture dictionary is used in the beginning of formal reading instruction as the student works in alphabetizing according to the first letter. Exercises that require classification require the child to use the dictionary.

Word recognition results from the use of one or more of the decoding skills, whether it is context, sight, phonics, structural, or use of the dictionary. Besides pronunciation of the printed word, knowledge of its meaning is also involved when reading, rather than "word calling," takes place. So the interrelationship of reading skills indicate the need of developing a balance of sorts between recognizing words and applying meaning to the materials read.

INDEPENDENT STUDY SKILLS

In attempting to provide independent activities to help the first grade learner acquire the reading skills, Robinson and Rauch made a list of suggestions.⁸

1. On full sheets of manila paper or newsprint, the child is asked to draw the following items, using pencil or crayons. (Picture dictionaries might be used as aids.)

Pictures of things that fly
 Pictures of things with wheels
 Pictures of things we eat
 Pictures of things we wear
 Pictures of things we do in summer
 Pictures of things you do to help Mother
 Pictures of things that rhyme with can

⁸H. Alan Robinson and Sidney J. Rauch, Guiding the Reading Program (Chicago: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1965), pp. 86-89.

Pictures of happy words
Pictures of words that start like Tom
Pictures of things that go fast
Pictures of what you want to be when you grow up
Pictures of the story you liked best in our reading book
Pictures of Sally's friends
Pictures of the nursery rhyme you like best

2. On a 9X12 piece of manila paper or newsprint, the child is asked to print descriptive sentences taken from a story that has been read. The child chooses one sentence from a list and illustrates it.

3. The child is directed to poems which are laminated and placed in an interest center. He is asked to choose one, copy it on writing paper, paste the paper to a large sheet of drawing paper, and then draw a picture of what happened in the poem.

4. After listing words with only the beginning and ending letters given, the child is directed to write a real word by filling in the missing letters.

5. On ditto sheets, a story is printed with a number of words underlined. The child is instructed to copy the story and put in a small drawing (rebus) to take the place of each underlined word.

6. On paper marked in half-inch or one-inch squares, the child is directed to do the following:

Write the alphabet using large or small letters.
Color in the squares. (In the fall, when the first grader is still awkward at manipulating writing instruments, coloring work aids in the development of his muscle coordination.)

7. On ditto sheets, pictorial items are drawn with a part missing. The child is asked to copy and fill in the missing part.

8. To help a child learn visually how to distinguish between various geometric designs, the teacher cuts colored pieces of paper into the shape of circles, squares, triangles, and rectangles. These geometric pieces are then matched by the child to identical shapes outlined on a ditto sheet--the pieces of paper to be pasted in the appropriate outlines scattered on the paper.

9. On a ditto sheet, the teacher prints even rows of small geometric figures--a circle followed by a square,

followed by a triangle, followed by a rectangle, followed by another circle, ad infinitum, the figures to be printed in no consistent order. With the sheet before him, the child proceeds from the beginning row and with an identifying mark noting each recurrence of a specified figure--placing, for instance, a dot in each circle he comes across. The directions to the child, of course, are varied. O's can be written in squares, crosses in rectangles, and so on.

10. Using catalogs and old magazines, the child is instructed to find and cut out a picture of a small specified item--for example, something whose name begins with the letter b. Each picture is then pasted on chart paper.

11. The child is given a sheet of paper printed with rows of broken lines somewhat in the form of a labyrinth and is told to trace with a crayon or pencil the path that the "mouse" took to get to the "cheese." The path could be drawn with lines, dots, or circles.

12. After teaching a poem such as "The Toyman's Shop," the teacher directs the child to draw a picture of one toy, either named or alluded to in the poem, and to print the name of the toy under the picture.

13. Working with a list of words printed on a ditto sheet, the child determines the category of things to which each word belongs (animal, plant, grownup, etc.) by writing the numeral 1, 2, or 3 beside it.

14. On ditto paper, several sentences are written, taken from a story recently read or another story from a suitable book. The child is asked to find each sentence in the story and to write its page number in the blank preceding the sentence.

15. On ditto paper, several sentences are written with their word order scrambled (lost her children Mother Duck). The child is asked to write the sentences in correct word order.

16. On a ditto sheet, a series of questions or statements are written, calling for comprehension. ("Draw a picture of your pet." "What can you buy at a grocery store?") The child draws a picture of the answer or writes a word answer.

17. On a ditto sheet, a series of sentences are written, each of which contains a word or phrase making the sentence sound foolish. ("Mary ate a wagon for breakfast.") The child circles the nonsense words or phrases.

18. On a ditto sheet, a series of sentences or very short stories, some funny and some sad, are printed. The child is directed to distinguish the funny from the sad by drawing smiling and crying faces in the margin.

19. Three or four sentences are selected that one by one advance a familiar "story" or set of events from a beginning to a conclusion. These sentences are listed out of their logical or chronological order when the child determines their proper order by numbering them. For example:

- 3 Mary put the flowers in a vase.
- 1 Mary went for a walk.
- 2 Mary saw some pretty flowers.

20. Guided by a series of directions, the child draws a picture on ditto paper. For example:

- Draw a kitten.
- Make a ball by the kitten.
- Put a red collar on the kitten.
- Put a blue dish near him for milk.

21. On a ditto sheet, objects or pictures are drawn--each object having a name containing a different vowel sound (a picture of a boat for the long a; a picture of a tree for the long e). Under these pictures, several words that contain a vowel identical with those in the names of the pictured items (bone and home for the vowel in boat; feet and meat for the vowel in tree). The student matches the words with the pictures according to similar vowel sounds.

22. A simple riddle is written on a ditto sheet. The student copies the riddle, guesses the subject of the riddle, writes its name in the blank provided, and then draws its picture. For example:

- I live in a pool.
- I like to swim.
- Cats like to eat me.
- I am a fish.

23. The student is asked to draw a picture of an object whose name rhymes with the name of another pictured object or with a word given him.

24. On a ditto sheet, a series of questions that can be answered on paper with a simple yes or no are written. ("Can a boat eat?" "Can a rock talk?" "Can a tree swim?").

25. From the comic section of the newspaper, a strip of three or four frames is clipped. The frames are separated in order to give the student the problem of arranging the frames in their proper sequence.

DEVELOPING POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD READING

In schools today, three skill components receive the major portion of the time devoted to reading: word attack skills, comprehension skills, and study skills. While these three cognitive elements justly deserve concern and consideration in the day-to-day reading program, a crucial fourth component--the development of positive attitudes--must not be overlooked.

Huck so aptly stated, "If we teach a child to read, yet develop not the taste for reading, all our teaching is for naught. We shall have produced a nation of 'illiterate literates'--those who know how to read but do not read."¹⁰

Teachers at Oakmont will encourage positive attitudes toward reading by building a reading program around the child's interests. There are three major steps taken in utilizing student interests. First, the teacher becomes familiar with the interest patterns that students typically have at the first grade level. Second, because students in a given classroom may deviate from the typical patterns, further study of

⁹J. Estill Alexander and Betty Heathington, "A Crucial Fourth Component in Reading Instruction--Attitudes," Tennessee Education, V (Fall, 1975), p. 32.

¹⁰Charlotte S. Huck, "Strategies for Improving Interest and Appreciation in Literature." Elementary School Language Arts, edited by Paul C. Barns and Leo M. Schell (Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1973), pp. 203-210, cited by Alexander and Heathington, Ibid.

specific reading interests is needed. Interests of each specific child are studied by interviewing parents; by observing the child in school situations; by listening to him as he works, plays, and eats lunch; by noting the kinds of books he reads in his free time; and by holding conferences with the child. (See Appendix B.) Third, the teacher utilizes what he knows about student interests in planning the instructional program. This is accomplished by:

1. Making books available that reflect student interest and that are on the appropriate readability levels.
2. Establishing interest centers in the classroom. These centers include a wide variety of materials, such as library books, skill games, and reinforcement materials.

From the first stages of beginning reading, the student is helped to "see a need" for reading. The motivational period of a directed thinking activity is geared toward helping the child want to read the story. The child is guided with purposeful reading.¹¹

The child is exposed to books when he is given the opportunity to own books. Old basal readers are cut into individual stories. Covers are put on the books. These are given to the students. Opportunities for joining inexpensive paperback book clubs are provided.

The student writes or dictates experience stories which are bound in manila folders and covered with contact paper. This experience gives the student a book he owns and one of which he is the author.

The teacher reads stories to the class which are selected by the students, with the teacher's guidance. When the student can read

¹¹Ibid., p. 33.

a book, he has the privilege to read it to the class if he desires.

A specified time in which everyone in the classroom reads is provided. Interruptions during this reading time are not permitted unless an emergency develops.

Book parties are held every Friday. Students have the opportunity to talk about a book, tell the most exciting, the funniest, or the saddest event in the story. Parents join in the book interest by attending the parties, providing books for the library center, or helping in other ways.

Many efforts to spark enthusiasm for reading are woven into the reading program. Pupils are motivated to learn to read when there is evidence that reading is fun, interesting, and something they need.

STRATEGIES IN TEACHING BEGINNING READING

The author developed a reading program that will give special recognition to the wide range of children's abilities and needs. An individualized reading program was designed in which teachers will arrange children, equipment, and materials so that each child can learn to the peak of his potential, without undue stress and strain.¹²

Learning stations will be set up which contain carefully planned reading material. A station might be a fascinating corner, table, group of desks, or whatever can be provided where a few children feel comfortable with the structure and, at the same time, realize that they

¹²Henry A. Bamman, "Individualized Reading Programs," The World Book Encyclopedia, Vol. 16 (Chicago: Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, 1973), p. 157.

have choices within it. The steps of instruction were planned so that one builds on the next.¹³

The role of the teacher will change from one of passing information to the children to one of providing experiences for children and guiding them as they use their experiences to teach themselves.¹⁴

The individualized reading program was based on the premise that each child begins wherever he happens to be and progresses at his own rate. The goals are to make each child feel that the teacher is paying attention to him as an individual.¹⁵

Teachers will plan according to the expectancy for each child. Expectancies must be adjusted for the slow and the gifted. The acquisition of skills must be paced to each pupil's rate of intake. The fast learner will need fewer repetitions and more material to aid him in his search for more refined meanings. The slow learner will need more step-by-step presentations, repetitious material at his reading and thinking level, and perhaps extra teacher-pupil guidance.¹⁶

The teacher knows there are many ways to learn how to read. When the child walks into his first grade classroom, he finds a place where he can do many different things. These activities support the teacher in the search for varied approaches to the teaching of reading.

¹³Lorraine Lunt Godfrey, "Individualize with Learning Stations," Teacher, XCI (September, 1973), p. 60.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Gary R. McKenzie, "Personalize Your Group Teaching," Instructor, LXXXV (August-September, 1975), pp. 57-59.

¹⁶Russell G. Stauffer, Directing the Reading-Thinking Process (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), p. 226.

The first words that the child learns to read are his own. Through language-experience, the child sees symbols written to represent his words. After the child's statements are recorded and hung for him to view, the teacher writes words from the language-experience on cards. The student matches the words on the cards with the words on the chart. This informal technique gives the student cues that he uses in word recognition. After the child masters the word, it is placed in his box of "Words I Know."

Different objects in the room are labeled. Identical words are written on cards and placed where the child manipulates them to find letters and words he knows.

The reading approaches used are determined by the students involved and the teacher's ability and creativity. Initial speed of learning words is facilitated by using the look-say method with words which are highly discriminable from each other. The multi-basal reader approach (Holt-Rinehart and Winston, Scott-Forsman, Harper and Row, and Ginn basic series) is used, which exposes the learner to more words, more stories, and more characters. The Sullivan Programmed Reader is used as a guide to teach linguistics.

With a variety of materials and media available, the student selects activities and materials which are meaningful to him. Tapes of stories, slide and record sets, cassettes, overhead projector materials, language master materials, films and filmstrips, games, and much more, including the teacher's own creative games, allow each student an endless number of sensory experiences. Appropriate materials provide skill

development on many levels. Flexibility leading to self-expression and self-recognition is provided.

Flexibility is a key factor, since grouping is done on a temporary basis. Eliminating ability grouping, grouping is done by need. There will be several students needing help on one particular skill, but not all of them need help on the same skills all the time. Thus, new groups are formed, based on need. Activities chosen also determine grouping. Varying projects bring about changes in the grouping due to interest and number of members needed.

The learner is provided a quantity of easy material for reading practice. A specific time in which everyone in the room has an opportunity to read is provided. Interruptions during this reading time are not permitted unless an emergency develops.

Each child is involved in a Directed Reading-Thinking Activity. Time is spent in considering problems for which there are no specific, right answers.

EVALUATION

Evaluation devices determine the student's readiness for future instruction. First grade teachers at Oakmont School will follow the Wisconsin Design of Behavioral Objectives (See page 5.) to know the sequence of skills for the individualized reading program. This device makes it possible for the teacher to see where the student has been and where he is on a skills continuum, which aids in determining individual skills needs. In marking the checklist of scope and sequence (Appendix C), the student is observed daily as he makes written and oral responses.

Teacher-made tests, tests from skills workbooks, as well as exercises done in the center areas, are used to evaluate the child. The Diagnostic Reading Test¹⁷ is given when the teacher deems it necessary.

If the teacher is dubious about challenging the student with material difficult enough or presenting material too difficult, the Gates MacGinitie Standardized Reading Test, Primary A, Form A, is administered. The Slosson Oral Reading Test is used to get an estimate of the child's oral reading. An informal reading inventory is given to gain additional evidence of the learner's abilities. All of the above tests have been recommended by Hayden Jolly, Dickson County reading consultant.

Along with the checklist for scope and sequence, a checklist is made by the teacher to keep a running record of students' skills needs in the various recognition areas. It also has specific information about the child's reading potential, word recognition level, and comprehension level.

Individual conferences are held with each student when the child evaluates himself. This enables the student to see his accomplishments and to become cognizant of his strengths and needs in the reading process.

¹⁷The Committee on Diagnostic Reading Tests, "Diagnostic Reading Test" (Mountain Home, N.C.: Committee on Diagnostic Reading Tests, 1967).

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Dr. Fred Bunker, educator at Austin Peay State University, stated this ground rule: "Teachers teach the best they know." Based on this premise, and seeing a need for an individualized reading program at Oakmont School, it is incumbent upon the Dickson County Board of Education to train their teachers to meet the reading needs of the students.

Supervisor of Instruction, F. D. Bennett, has made plans for these teachers to have instructional guidance during the August in-service workshop. Since there are seven classes of first graders in this school, the program involves seven teachers, the principal, and the curriculum supervisor. Mr. Hayden Jolly, reading consultant for the Dickson County Title I Reading Program, has been asked to guide these educators in planning an individualized reading program which will implement flexible reading approaches.

Since time will be too limited for Mr. Jolly to cover all the needed reading approaches in the in-service period, it became evident that a methods class on how to teach reading was needed for these teachers. Austin Peay State University has contracted to send Mr. Jolly to teach a course entitled "Foundations in Reading." Since this course is funded by Title I, it is free of cost to the teachers, the principal, and the curriculum supervisor.

Mary Jean Field, who has spent many years working with kindergarten and first grade youngsters, has been selected to be the "lead" teacher. She has worked diligently to build a materials center where varied

materials and equipment are available for each first grade teacher to select and use. Materials needed to make games or visuals to teach a concept will be provided.

Dee Chadwick, school librarian, will provide the teachers a list of books, films, records, and tapes. She will rank these materials on readability and interest levels.

A letter has been composed by the principal, the supervisor, the consultant, and the classroom teachers to inform the parents of first graders about the reading program. A copy of this letter (Appendix D) will be given to each parent when he registers his child for first grade.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Realizing a need for improvement in beginning reading for first graders at Oakmont School in Dickson, Tennessee, the author designed an individualized reading program. The literature was surveyed in order to obtain information relevant to the study. Pre-assessment techniques, behavioral objectives, scope and sequence for developing skills in reading, strategies used in beginning reading, strategies used in developing positive attitudes toward reading, and evaluation techniques were outlined in an individualized reading program. Also, administrative procedures were outlined.

The ultimate effectiveness of the program will be determined by several evaluating techniques. The individual skills will be determined by the Wisconsin Design of Behavioral Objectives, which makes it possible for the teacher to evaluate where the student has been and where he is on

a skills continuum. Many of the traditional evaluation devices, which include teacher-made tests, skills workbook tests, and informal reading inventories, will be used. The Gates MacGinitie Reading Test and the Slosson Oral Reading Test will also be used. These two tests inform the teacher whether he is presenting material difficult enough or too difficult to meet the student's needs. The Slosson Oral Reading Test is used to estimate the child's oral reading level.

In the initial stages of this type of program, a child is taught to read by developing the proper skills and attitudes toward reading; in the future, he will read to learn as a result of this type of instruction.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Appendix A contains an outline of questions asked to parents when they are interviewed. The teacher is trying to determine the child's physical factors, social and emotional factors, and educational factors.

PARENT'S INTERVIEW

1. Did your child have a kindergarten experience?
2. Does your child have an opportunity to play with other children often?
3. Does your child have any physical problem? (visual, hearing, and general health)
4. Does your child tire easily?
5. Is your child cooperative with other members of his family? With playmates?
6. Does the child participate in active games?
7. Does your child have self-confidence?
8. Is your child interested in books?
9. Do you ever play games with your child?
10. Do you take your child on trips?

APPENDIX B

Appendix B contains an interest inventory. When parents are interviewed at the beginning of the school term, pertinent information about the child's interest is obtained. Through observation and conferences with the child, the teacher gains additional insights to the child's interests. The interest inventory was taken from Wilma H. Miller's Reading Diagnosis Kit.¹

INTEREST INVENTORY

Name _____ Date _____

1. What is the name of your favorite book which someone has read aloud to you?
2. What is the name of your favorite book or story which you have read for yourself?
3. What kind of stories and books do you like to hear read aloud to you?
4. Have you ever been to the library with your mother or father or your brother or sister?
5. What are the names of some of the books which you have at home?
6. What are the names of your two favorite television programs?
7. Do you look at the funny paper at home?
8. What is the name of your favorite comic book?
9. What do you really like to do after school?
10. What do you really like to do on a Saturday?
11. What kind of games do you like to play?

¹Wilma H. Miller, Reading Diagnosis Kit. (New York: Center for Applied Research in Education, Inc., 1974), p. 250.

12. Do you collect anything? If you do, what kind of things do you like to collect?
13. Do you enjoy reading for fun?
14. Where does your family like to do for a summer vacation?
15. What do you like to do best with your mother? (father?)

APPENDIX C

Appendix C contains a checklist of reading skills in the areas of word attack, comprehension, and study skills.

Name _____

READING MONITORING DEVICE

WORD ATTACK

1. Notices likenesses and differences _____
2. Distinguishes colors _____
3. Has a sight vocabulary of 50-100 words _____
4. Follows left to right sequence _____
5. Has phonic analysis skills
 - a. Consonant sounds
 - (1) Beginning _____
 - (2) Ending _____
 - b. Consonant blends _____
 - c. Rhyming elements _____
 - d. Short vowels _____
 - e. Simple consonant digraphs _____
6. Has structural analysis skills
 - a. Compound words _____
 - b. Contractions _____
 - c. Base word and endings _____
 - d. Plurals _____
 - e. Possessive forms _____

COMPREHENSION

1. Listens
2. Relates details in a story
3. Anticipates outcome of story
4. Uses picture and context clues
 - a. Picture clues
 - b. Context clues
5. Is able to gain meaning from
 - a. Words
 - b. Sentences
 - c. Whole selections
6. Uses punctuation as a guide to meaning

STUDY SKILLS

1. Follows simple directions (one and two stage)
2. Accepts responsibility for completion and quality of work
3. Shows development of motor coordination
4. Follows directions
 - a. Oral
 - b. Written
5. Has adequate work habits
6. Recognizes organization of ideas in sequential relationship
7. Makes Judgments and draws conclusions
8. Uses table of contents

APPENDIX D

Appendix D contains a letter which is given to the parent of a first grade student at Oakmont School. The letter was composed by the reading consultant, the principal, the supervisor of instruction, and first grade teachers.

Dear Parents,

We realize that each child is different. Our School is interested in each child. Our school's purpose is how we can best meet each child's needs.

From the very first day of school, your child will engage in some kind of reading activity, such as reading names, labels, charts, etc. He will also work with many sensory materials. The activities will help him acquire more readily the skills necessary for reading books.

Some children may need to spend only a few weeks in readiness activities, while others may need to spend a month or more. Some children may not need any readiness activities. Children differ in the time when they are ready to read. Since we do not force a child to cut his teeth by a given date, we do not force him to read until the time is right for him. A child's success in reading is determined not by his actual age, but rather by his degree of physical, emotional, mental, and social maturity.

The basic reading book will not be sent home each night for your child to study. Books which reflect your child's interests and readability level will be selected by him to bring home to read to you. We feel teaching your child to read means teaching him to think. It also means learning the responsibility of making choices.

If you have any questions about the activities your child is involved in during his day in school, please contact his teacher or principal.