

R E P O R T R E S U M E S

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AN INVESTIGATION OF MATERIALS AND METHODS FOR THE  
INTRODUCTORY STAGE OF ADULT LITERACY EDUCATION.

BY- HAYES, ANN AND OTHERS

ADULT EDUCATION COUNCIL OF GREATER CHICAGO, ILL.

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DESCRIPTORS- \*LITERACY EDUCATION, \*TEACHING METHODS,  
\*INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, \*ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES,  
\*ILLITERATE ADULTS, ORIENTATION, STUDENT TEACHER  
RELATIONSHIP, LISTENING SKILLS, FIELD INTERVIEWS, WORD  
RECOGNITION, LANGUAGE ARTS, SPEAKING, READING INSTRUCTION,  
COUNSELING, EVALUATION, EXPERIENCE CHARTS, GROUPING  
(INSTRUCTIONAL PURPOSES), TESTING, TEST CONSTRUCTION,  
INTELLIGENCE TESTS, READING TESTS, MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT,

IN THE GREATER CHICAGO AREA A STUDY WAS MADE OF TEACHING  
MATERIALS AND METHODS FOR LITERACY EDUCATION. AN ANNOTATED,  
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF PUBLISHED MATERIALS WAS COMPILED OF  
PROFESSIONAL BOOKS, BASAL MATERIALS INCLUDING PUBLISHERS'  
SERIES, AND SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS. TEACHERS ARE CAUTIONED  
TO ASSUME A SELECTIVE APPROACH BECAUSE NO BASAL SERIES WAS  
FOUND COMPLETE ENOUGH TO JUSTIFY EXCLUSIVE ADOPTION.  
OPEN-ENDED INTERVIEWS WERE CONDUCTED WITH TEACHERS AND  
ADMINISTRATORS OF LITERACY PROGRAMS. MOST TEACHERS CONDUCTED  
SOME ORIENTATION, BUT THEIR METHODS VARIED TOO MUCH TO  
SUMMARIZE. THE MAJORITY REPORTED NO ADVERSE STUDENT REACTIONS  
TO CLASS GROUPING. PRETESTING WITH STANDARDIZED FORMS WAS  
COMMON, AND MANY TEACHER-MADE TESTS WERE USED DURING COURSES.  
TEACHERS DESCRIBED MATERIALS THEY HAD MADE OR USED AND  
PUPILS' REACTIONS TO THEIR TECHNIQUES. TECHNIQUES USED  
INCLUDED THE PHONICS APPROACH TO WORD RECOGNITION, EXPERIENCE  
CHARTS, LISTENING EXERCISES, AND A COMBINED LANGUAGE ARTS  
APPROACH. OVER HALF THE TEACHERS REPORTED PERSONAL  
INVOLVEMENT IN THE LIVES OF THEIR PUPILS. (RT)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE  
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OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION  
Ray Page, Superintendent

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## FOREWORD

The development of sources of materials and methods of instruction as they relate to basic adult education is a necessity. Recognition of the needs of education is the first stage in the solution of existing problems.

One of the long-felt needs in adult education has been for research, analysis, and synthesis of existing instructional materials and methods concerning basic literacy.

The development of this publication, under the auspices of the Adult Education Council of Greater Chicago, the grant made possible through the Chicago Community Trust, and the research, compilation, and writing by Mr. H. Alan Robinson and his assistants of the University of Chicago demonstrate an initial step toward problem solving in this area.

It is my hope that, while the opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the impact of this study and its significance will be felt in every part of the State of Illinois and especially in every center of adult education.



Ray Page

Superintendent of Public Instruction

## INTRODUCTION

An investigation of materials and methods used in the Introductory State of adult literacy education was conducted during the summer of 1964 under the auspices of the Adult Education Council of Chicago, and issued through the cooperation of the Division of Adult Education, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and underwritten by a grant from the Chicago Community Trust.

The term "Introductory State" refers to the beginning of reading instruction. Adults who would benefit from instruction at the Introductory State function as non-readers or those whose reading ability does not exceed the equivalent of grade two in elementary school. Smith and Smith use the term "Introductory State" to describe the reading level of adults receiving their first reading instruction. It is our experience that the adults functioning at this level are not necessarily learning to read for the first time. Grade level was not felt to be a meaningful concept for adults. Smith and Smith further state that at the Introductory Stage the "mechanics of reading" are taught.<sup>1</sup> The investigators found that the literacy programs observed which appeared most effective laid a heavy stress on the meaning of printed material from the first session in addition to word attack skills.

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<sup>1</sup> Edwin M. and Marie P. Smith. Teaching Reading to Adults (Washington, D.C.: National Association of Public School Adult Educators, 1962), p. 8

Two of the research assistants reviewed materials from publishers, at the Chicago Board of Education, and at various libraries. The areas considered in evaluation of materials were adapted from Smith and Smith's suitability list.<sup>2</sup> The following factors were considered to be important in evaluating adult literacy materials:

1. reality of illustrations
2. controlled vocabulary
  - a. total number of words introduced
  - b. rate of introduction
3. controlled sentence length
4. controlled paragraph length
5. number of words on page
6. sequential treatment of basic skills
7. reinforcement of learning
8. adult interest level
9. recency of publication
10. presence and quality of written exercises
11. presence and quality of comprehension exercises
12. orientation of material
  - a. rural
  - b. urban
13. presence and quality of teacher's manual

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p.29

Type size was not considered. Theoretically, day school primers use large type because of the immaturity of eye muscles of primary age children. Even the non-literate adult should be fully matured in this respect. It is interesting to note, however, that some of the teachers interviewed estimated that as many as fifty per cent of their students suffered from visual problems.

In regard to reinforcement of learning, the investigators felt that most of the adult basal materials progress from the beginning reading level too rapidly.

Materials written for elementary school children are listed only if specifically recommended by a teacher and even then with reservations on the part of the investigators since it was felt that the use of such materials tends to reinforce the negative self-image which so many participants appear to bring to literacy programs.

The focus of this project was on materials for reading instruction. The special problems involved in basic arithmetic instruction require a separate study. It has been the impression of the investigators, however, that the vocabulary load of arithmetic texts used with pupils in the Introductory Stage is unrealistically high. There also seemed to be little appreciation of the need to develop the vocabulary and other reading skills of mathematics.

Comic books, particularly the classics comics, were reviewed as a

possibility for supplementary reading at the Introductory Stage. None reviewed were found to be suitable in the judgment of the investigators. Vocabulary and concepts were completely uncontrolled. To be faced with a comic book one cannot read could be especially demoralizing.

Professional books listed are limited to those relatively available and concerned mainly with the teaching of reading to adults. Other materials such as standard vocabulary lists are not included, nor are the standard professional references on reading.

On the strength of their observations, the authors would caution teachers to assume an eclectic approach when selecting materials. No one adult basal series was found to be complete enough in itself to justify exclusive adoption for the use of all individuals. At the present stage of development of materials for the Introductory Stage of adult basic education, the teacher must rely heavily on teacher-made materials in addition to a number of published adult basal materials.



## PROFESSIONAL LITERATURE

Adult Basic Education: Hearings Before the General Subcommittee on Labor and Select Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor. House of Representatives. 87th Congress. Second Session on H.R. 10143 and H.R. 10191. Bills to encourage state programs of Adult Basic Education. Hearings held in Washington, D.C., February 14, 15, 16, and 19, 1962, and in Morehead, Kentucky, February 23, 1962. Adam C. Powell, Chairman. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962).

This document consists of statements to the committee and recent articles on adult literacy problems. A very interesting and varied array of testimony. Could be a useful source for a deep awareness of the scope of the problem and a mine of information for brochures and publicity releases. Of particular interest is the material on "Operation Alphabet," pp. 88-101, and the statement of Eli Ginsberg, pp. 105-117.

Bou, I. Rodriguez. Suggestions for the Preparation of Reading Matter. Occasional Papers in Education, No. 2 (Paris: UNESCO, 1949), 29 pp.

This paper is based on the results of research conducted by the author in Puerto Rico. The conclusion is that reading materials for adults should be designed to meet their interests, needs, and problems. The known postulates of adult psychology and the reading process are also examined. One of the most valuable sections is devoted to developing norms for the evaluation of reading materials. Extensive bibliographies on adult education and the reading process are included.

Brunner, Edmund; Wilder, David S.; Kirchner, Corinne; and Newberry, John S., Jr. An Overview of Adult Education Research, (Chicago: Adult Education Association, 1959).

An inventory of research in non-vocational adult education. The most useful features are the implications and generalizations drawn by the authors in each chapter on the improvement of the teaching of adults. Probably the best way to use this detailed work would be topically through the index and the table of contents.

Cass, Angelica W. Adult Elementary Education, (New York: Noble and Noble, 1956), 280 pp.

This book is designed to identify the needs, objectives, problems, methods, practices, and emerging trends in adult elementary education. The author had been engaged in this field for twenty-five years at the time of writing and has produced various adult literacy materials also noted in this bibliography. Of particular value are the chapters on the Psychology of Adult Learning (Chapter I), Characteristics of Students (Chapter II), Getting Started (Chapter XI), and the section on special projects and materials (Chapters XVI-XX).

Chicago Board of Education. Basic English (Teacher Manual), (Chicago Board of Education, 1962), 235 pp.

This curriculum guide covers the following topics: extending sight vocabulary, development of word recognition, skills of comprehension, oral reading, rate of reading, recreational reading, speech improvement, paragraph building, spelling, and dictionary use. The appendices include a useful basic sight vocabulary adapted from

Dolch.

Since this material was originally developed for "slow learners" in the secondary schools, it should be used with discretion.

Cartwright, Richard W., "Teaching Illiterates to Read: the Role of Literistics," Journal of Developmental Reading II (Winter, 1959), 3-12.

A description of a new sub-specialization encompassing aspects of linguistics, anthropology, sociology, and psychology by the Directors of Baylor University Literacy Studies. The history of the development of "literistics" is also treated. An interesting contribution to the professionalization process which literacy teaching has been undergoing in recent years.

Crossetti, Virginia R. Programs for Combating Adult Illiteracy in the United States, (Unpublished Master's thesis), (Urbana: University of Illinois, Department of Education, 1964), 70 pp.

An overview of current programs in adult literacy under way in Alabama, Texas, and Illinois as of the summer of 1964. The author discusses the principal methods and materials in use and makes several pertinent suggestions for overall improvement in three major areas: teacher preparation, research, and materials. This thesis could serve as a good brief introduction to the problems and prospects of literacy education in the United States today.

Dale, Edgar. Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching, (New York: Dryden Press, 1954), 548 pp.

In addition to the chapter devoted specifically to audio-visual aids in reading instruction (pp. 446-67), there is much that can contribute to an effective use of audio-visual aids in the literacy program, particularly the chapters which describe and discuss the uses of various types of materials (pp. 68-309) and the section on administration and evaluation (pp. 470-507), although there is no specific application to adult literacy programs as such.

Educational Lessons from Wartime Training. (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1948), 264 pp.

Chapter V, "Training Illiterates--The Armed Services Way" (pp. 45-61) describes in detail the methods and materials employed by the armed services to bring inductees from non-literacy to reading, writing, and simple computation at the fourth grade level within sixty days. Chapters IX and X discuss the production and use of audio-visual aids (pp. 114-137) and texts (pp. 138-147). Chapter XV examines the selection and training of teachers (pp. 193-205). Each chapter concludes with a summary of experiences which may have pertinence for civilian education.

Fox, Esther. "Considerations in Constructing a Basic Reading Program for Functionally Illiterate Adults, Adult Leadership XIII (May, 1964), 7-9.

Contains some interesting suggestions on locating non-literate adults and on both diagnostic and achievement testing.

Goldberg, Samuel. Army Training of Illiterates in World War II, (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1951), 312 pp.

This is an exhaustive account of the comprehensive and systematic program of literacy training conducted by the Army during the Second World War. Of particular interest are the sections devoted to selection procedures (Chapter II), development of materials (Chapter IV), the psychological and educational characteristics of the program (Chapter VI), and the evaluation procedures used (Chapter VII). A very helpful book for anyone planning or engaged in a literacy program.

Gray, William S. Manual for Teachers of Adult Elementary Students, (revised edition compiled by C. A. Whipple, M. L. Syton, and E. C. Morriss), (Washington: United States Office of Education, n.d.), 189 pp.

This manual was prepared originally at the request of the National Advisory Committee on Illiteracy in 1934. While the bibliography is now out-of-date, the text is still amazingly timely and contains some of the best material written on the subject. A classic in the field which contains much helpful material in reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic, this manual deals with the instruction of native-born non-literates and also provides helpful material for those learning English as a second language.

The Teaching of Reading and Writing: An International Survey. (Paris: UNESCO, 1956), 284 pp.

This volume was commissioned by UNESCO and consists of a review

of prevailing practices, evaluation of the efficacy of methods being used throughout the world, and the results of pertinent research. This could be most valuable as a text for literacy teacher-training programs. Of particular interest is the material on the nature and aims of adult literacy programs (Chapter I, VIII, and XII), literacy skills (Chapter IV), and writing instruction (Chapters IX and XI). This is one of the most comprehensive works on the subject reviewed.

International Journal of Adult and Youth Education (formerly the Fundamental and Adult Education), UNESCO Publications Center, 801 Third Avenue, New York 22, New York.

Since its inception this journal has had a marked interest in literacy education. Its scope is international and each year there are several excellent articles on adult literacy education. Probably one of the best sources for current developments in the world-wide literacy movement.

Kidd, James R. How Adults Learn, (New York: Associated Press, 1959), 309 pp.

A synthesis of what research has revealed regarding the learning processes of adults. Some of the principal topics covered are: physical and sensory capacity, intellectual capacity, feelings and emotions, and theories of learning. Extensive bibliographies are included with each chapter.

Laubach, Frank C. Teaching the World to Read: A Handbook for Literacy Campaigns, (New York: Friendship Press, 1947), 246 pp.

An outline of the "Laubach Method," covering the use of phonemic principles and frequency word counts to reduce spoken language to writing; creation of inexpensive charts and texts; and the "each one teach one" tutorial method. Of special utility is the chapter on the organization and administration of large scale literacy programs.

Laubach, Frank C. and Laubach, Robert S. Toward World Literacy. The Each One Teach One Way, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1961), xiv-335.

The experiences of the Laubachs, father and son, covering over twenty-five years in the field of adult literacy education around the world form the main theme of the present volume. Specific questions treated which will be of interest to most urban adult literacy programs are "How To Treat the Adult Illiterate" (Chapter 4), "How Literacy Campaigns Are Conducted in Urban Communities" (Chapter 7), and "How To Hold a Literacy Conference." (Chapter 10)

National Association of Public School Adult Educators, Counseling and Interviewing Adult Students, (Washington: NEA, 1959), 24 pp.

This booklet provides guide lines for effective structuring of adult interviews. Also includes helpful advice for the teacher who wishes to make counseling an important part of the program.

National Association of Public School Adult Educators. How Adults Can Learn More Faster, (Washington: NEA, 1961), 48 pp.

Such topics as study techniques, test taking, memorization, effective use of time are covered. A tool for counselors and for classroom discussion.

The National Association of Public School Adult Educators. When You're Teaching Adults, (Washington: NEA, 1959), 25 pp.

This is a general introduction to organizing and conducting adult education classes. The two instruments provided for teacher self-evaluation and participant self-evaluation are of special interest.

Peerson, Nell. An Experiment, With Evaluation, in the Eradication of Adult Illiteracy by the Use of Television Instruction over a State Educational Television Network Supplemented by Supervised Group Viewing and by the Related Use of Project Supplied Materials of Instruction. Grant #701080, Title VII, Project Number 417 National Defense Education Act of 1958. U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. (Washington: 1961), Mimeographed.

Of main interest are the Appendices which contain a bibliography of adult literacy materials used in the program as well as copies of test materials used.

Report of the Task Force on Adult Basic Education Instructional Materials and Related Media. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, January, 1964).

A helpful run-down on available materials. The report is based on an examination of about 150 publications on English Language Skills available in the Adult Basic Education field. Best section of the report is the evaluational summaries at the end of each section.

Richards, Charles G. (ed.) The Provision of Popular Reading Materials, (Paris: UNESCO, 1959).

A systematic attempt to cover all aspects of the problems involved in making available to new literates readable books and periodicals. Of special interest to those charged with the production or selection



of literacy materials are the chapters devoted to research on communication through printed materials (Chapter VIII), factors influencing effectiveness of fundamental educational reading materials (Chapter IX), problems of illustrations (Chapter X), and word counts (Chapter XI).

Robinson, H. Alan. "Libraries: Active Agents in Adult Reading Improvement," ALA Bulletin (May, 1963), 416-420.

A valuable feature of this article is the author's "Stairway of Reading Literacy" which is helpful in conceptualizing the various stages of reading development. Another important aspect is the author's suggestion of ways in which the public library can participate in literacy and reading improvement programs.

Schiavone, James. "Developing a Total Reading Program for Adults," Journal of Developmental Reading, VI (Autumn, 1962), 51-56.

A plan for developing a total reading program for beginners, right on through the advanced higher-level skills of superior readers for adult students. The author feels that such a program is the most efficient way to teach adults.

Smith, Edwin H. and Smith, Marie P. Teaching Reading to Adults, (Washington: The National Association of Public School Adult Educators, 1962), 68 pp.

This booklet outlines a comprehensive, step-by-step program for setting up a reading service for adults from literacy to advanced reading skills improvement; of particular interest for literacy programs

is Chapter 2, "The Introductory Stage." A readability scale is provided for each category of material which should be most useful. All in all an excellent, brief manual.

Thatcher, John H. Public School Adult Education, A Guide for Administrators, (New York: National Association of Public School Adult Educators, 1963), 211 pp.

An all-embracing book of suggestions for setting up an adult evening school. Literacy education is treated directly but briefly (pp. 69-71), but many topics of interest to literacy educators are treated, e.g. Discovering and Selecting Teachers (Chapter VII), Adults and Adult Psychology (Chapter IX), Counseling Adult Students (Chapter X), and Evaluation (Chapter XIII). Treatment of these topics is extensive in scope, but there is not much depth of penetration of the problems posed. It is essentially a "How To Do It" book and as such can serve as a valuable checklist for all matters of concern to the administrator of an adult literacy program.

UNESCO. Simple Reading Material for Adults: Its Preparation and Use, (Paris: UNESCO, 1963), 100 pp.

This book would be helpful for anyone who decides to produce his own materials. Of particular interest is the chapter devoted to testing the value of adult literacy materials while they are in preparation (a task seldom attempted in the past). This booklet also covers the choice of subject matter, vocabulary and style, illustrations, and

a step-by-step procedure for seeing the book through the stages from manuscript to finished product.

Wallace, Mary C. Literacy Teacher's Manual (mimeographed, 1961).

The introduction gives "pointers" on teaching adult illiterates, drawn from the author's experience. Great emphasis is placed on extrinsic reinforcement. Of special interest is a brief collection of short stories using controlled vocabulary though the content is somewhat flimsy and uninteresting. On the whole the manual does not make any attempt to present a complete and well-thought-out psychology of adult learning; the lesson plans are schoolbookish. There is no section of the work devoted directly to the problem of teaching adults to read.

#### BASAL MATERIALS

Boggs, R. S. and Dixson, R. J. English Step By Step With Pictures, (New York: Latin American Institute Press, Inc., 1956), 214 pp.

The total vocabulary is about 800 words. The new word load for each lesson is about 16 words. Great emphasis is placed upon pictures as a learning device. Each lesson comprises a reading selection and vocabulary-building exercise. The level at which material is directed seems to be elementary-school age. A brief set of directions for the teacher is included.

Buchanan, Cynthia D. Programmed Reader Series, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963). Programmed Prereading, 108 pp. Programmed Reading, Book 1, 123 pp. Programmed Reading, Book 2, 119 pp.

These materials were designed for children but have been used with reported success in several literacy programs. The Preprimer encompasses learning the letters and sound-symbol relationships. The Primer deals with the specific skills needed for utilizing Books 1 and 2. Books 1 and 2 deal with a small sight vocabulary and word attack. The vocabulary, while basic, does not seem to have a high utility ratio for adults. The material is amusing and, if used in a supplementary fashion, might be helpful.

#### Croft Publications

##### Home and Family Life Series

A Day With the Brown Family-Reader One, 34 pp.

Making a Good Living-Reader Two, 32 pp.

The Browns at School-Reader Three, 32 pp.

The Browns and Their Neighbors-Reader Four, 16 pp.

(New London: Arthur C. Croft Publications, 1949).

These readers grew out of the Institute on Adult Education held at Hampton Institute in 1946. An attempt is made to approach adult interest level, particularly of a lower socio-economic level. Orientation is small town and rural. Utilizes a controlled vocabulary load and sentence structure.

Mitchell, E. and Griffin, E. Workbook in Learning to Read Better, 5th edition, (New London: Arthur C. Croft, 1958), 3-41, designed to accompany Reader One.

A very simple direct-reinforcement and repetition method is used.

Mitchell, E. and Murphy, M. Language Workbook, 7th edition (New London: Arthur C. Croft, 1959), 3-77.

This workbook uses a simple repetitive direct reinforcement. The format could be more attractive. Manuscript and cursive writing examples are given. Basic punctuation rules of capital letters and dictionary skills are also covered.

Griffin, E. W. Three Instructional Tools for Teachers: Reading Placement Manual, Workbook Guide, Lesson Plans, (New London: Arthur C. Croft, 1950), 9-52.

The only one of these tools the teacher may find useful is the outlined lesson plans for the series of readers.

Griffin, E. W. Reading Placement, (New London: Educator's Washington Dispatch, 1949), 1-4.

This is a test designed for screening a class for placement. A serious drawback is that no norms are furnished for scoring and no treatment is given of any attempt to establish validity or reliability.

Flint, K. D. English for New Americans, (New York: Chilson Co., 1960).

The approach in this series heavily emphasizes phonics. There is a controlled vocabulary and word load. Content is adult and orientation is urban. There is a workbook to accompany the text. Illustrations are simple but geared to adult appeal. Spelling and writing

are combined with reading. Originally intended for aliens but readily adaptable to literacy programs.

Gibson, Christine M. and Richards, I. A. Learning the English Language Series. (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1963).

Learning the English Language. Textbook-Workbook I

Learning the English Language. Book Two

Workbook for Learning the English Language. Book Two

Learning the English Language. Book Three

Workbook for Learning the English Language. Book Three

These materials were produced under the direction of English Language Research, Inc., and utilize Ogden's Basic English as an introductory tool which provides the controlled vocabulary for the first three books. The materials are primarily designed for use with those learning English as a second language but are readily adaptable to English speaking non-literates. By the end of the Third Book the learner should have at his disposal about a 500 word vocabulary. The general quality of these texts and workbooks is quite good. The direct presentation of concrete objects is the basic teaching technique. A high-utility vocabulary with controlled load and exercises in the meaningful use of all new words and sentence structures are emphasized. The illustrations are clear and instructive. Book Three is actually beyond the introductory stage.

Gorman, William E. Step by Step to Better Reading, (Chicago: DePaul University (mimeographed--no date), 50 pp.

Utilizes a basic vocabulary of 490 words with a controlled word

load. A teacher's manual is available. Interest level is directed towards urban adult life. There are no illustrations and material is so abbreviated as to scarcely qualify as a full-fledged text. Thought content of sentences is occasionally trivial.

#### Holt, Rinehart Publications

Henderson, E. C. and T. L. Learning to Read, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1964).

This work has separate lessons on reading, writing, and spelling. Emphasis is placed on the development of the basic reading skills of word recognition. No narrative material is introduced until Lesson 28. The story content is adult in interest level. A teacher's manual is included containing an explanation of the approach taken and a discussion of aims and techniques for each lesson. (Note: Only an advance, partial copy was available for review. Publication is expected in the fall of 1964. This is the first work in a projected series of literacy materials which the publishers plan for appearance in the spring of 1965.)

#### Laubach Publications

Laubach, Frank C. Laubach Streamlined English Series, (Syracuse: New Readers Press, 1964).

Charts and Stories and Writing Book for Charts and Stories.  
Laubach and Cook, Sallie P. Teacher's Manual for Charts and Stories.

Streamlined English: Part 1  
Streamlined English: Part 2  
Teacher's Guide for Streamlined English  
Lesson Plans for Streamlined English  
A Door Opens  
Going Forward  
News for You

These materials have probably been used more extensively than any others. They have been used in more than two hundred languages throughout the world. The general approach is phonemic almost to the exclusion of other approaches. Charts and Stories is the first used and is devoted to the names and principal sounds of the English letters. A "memory-peg" picture is provided for every consonant and vowel sound. The writing method taught is manuscript. The Teacher's Guide for Charts and Stories takes the teacher by the hand, step by step through the charts and stories. The "stories" are generally trivial and pointless. The Writing Book for Charts and Stories is intended to offer instruction in writing the small letters of the alphabet after the student has learned to read them from the charts. Streamlined English: Parts 1 and 2 follow mastery of the charts. The first twenty lessons are devoted to further work with the vowel sounds; and the last ten, to the consonants. Vocabulary is controlled and is drawn from the first 1,000 most commonly used words of the Large-Thorndike Word List plus 600 other words. Generally orientation



is small town to rural middle class. The Teacher's Manual for Streamlined English and Lesson Plans contains a detailed moment-by-moment guide to the teaching of each lesson. The sequence followed in each lesson is conversation, reading, writing, spelling, and an oral lesson. A Door Opens and Going Forward are designed for more advanced work, with controlled vocabulary and sentence structure gradually becoming more extensive and complicated. The New Readers Press also publishes a weekly newspaper, News for You, with separate editions for three reading levels, beginning with the advanced level of the Introductory Stage. A special teacher's edition is furnished.

#### Noble and Noble Publications

Guyton, Mary L. and Kielty, Margaret E. From Words to Stories. (New York: Noble and Noble, 1951), 95 pp.

This work uses a vocabulary of 144 words and a controlled newword load, and includes a very brief "teacher's manual of techniques." The quality of the illustrations is only fair, and the interest level of the majority of the material is marginal.

Cass, Angelica W. Live and Learn, (New York: Noble and Noble, 1962), 158 pp.

The material's special value is that it is built up from the experiences and concerns of the lower socio-economic groups in urban settings. It uses a basic vocabulary of 600 words.

Each lesson is comprised of a reading selection and several exercises devoted to vocabulary building and grammar.

Cass, Angelica W. Your Family and Your Job--Book 2, Adult Education Series, (New York: Noble and Noble, 1948), 70 pp.

The stories are designed to be the center of a correlated work session of discussion, spelling, local geography, civics, meal planning, health, grammar, vocabulary, etc. The subject matter is on an adult level, and each lesson is followed by discussion, questions, and exercises in vocabulary building and comprehension. No indication of presumed vocabulary is given, but an organized introduction of new vocabulary is utilized. Illustrations and format are on an adult level but unattractive. Suggestions for the teacher are at a minimum, particularly in view of the ambitious scope of the stories.

Cass, Angelica W. How We Live--Book I, Adult Education Series, (New York: Noble and Noble, 1949), 148 pp.

This work tries to utilize adult vocabulary and deals with content related to adult interests. Format is unattractive. Each lesson introduces a few facts on the adult interest level and an exercise in vocabulary building and comprehension. Sentence length and vocabulary load are controlled. A brief introduction is devoted to teaching techniques recommended for use with this material.

Alesi, Gladys E. and Pantell, Dora F. Family Life in the U.S.A., (New York: Noble and Noble, 1962), 138 pp.

Each lesson consists of a conversation unit built around a controlled word load and basic vocabulary. This is followed by exercises in comprehension and vocabulary building and discussion questions. Illustrations are neither decorative nor instructional. Sentence and paragraph length place this reader beyond the introductory stage.

National Association of Public School Adult Educators. Operation Alphabet--TV Home Study Book, (Washington, 1962).

This text-workbook is designed for use with a television series of 100 lessons in reading and writing over a twenty-week period. Films are available for local telecast free of charge. The Manual is attractively produced. Illustrations are adult level; a controlled vocabulary, sentence structure, and word load are used. There are review lessons, workbook exercises, and practice in letter writing. Since it is designed to accompany a television series of lessons, there is no teacher's manual. It is suggested that a "helper" be used, and brief directions for the helper are included in the book.

Although some effort is made to treat material of interest and concern to adults, this was not done extensively enough. Orientation is largely middle class-suburban.

There is no discussion material, nor does the book have exercises

to develop word analysis or comprehension skills as these are provided in the telecasts themselves.

#### Steck Publications

Smith, Harley A. and King, Ida Lee. I Want to Read and Write, (Austin: The Steck Co., 1950), 128 pp.

This book combines reading and writing in one workbook-manual. The orientation and cultural level are rural-suburban. The art work is poor in quality and the format could be more attractive. A basic vocabulary of 291 words is used, drawn from a study of ten basic readers of third-grade level currently used in the U.S. Fifty-one words judged necessary to express adult needs and interests were added. Frequent repetition is the basic technique used to build vocabulary. Cursive writing style is used. A brief set of "instructions to the teacher" is included. The text-workbook includes sight vocabulary development drills and comprehension exercises as well as some word-analysis skills exercises. This workbook is widely used.

Robertson, M. S. Adult Reader, (Austin: The Steck Co., 1964).

Original stories of adult level interest. The orientation is rural, and the art work and workbook style are poor. It combines both reading and cursive style writing. Each lesson is comprised of a reading selection and a writing exercise. Every fifth lesson is a review lesson and includes word study. A

periodic "check list" is included in order to capitalize on the value of strong repetition effects in vocabulary building. A brief set of instructions is included for the teacher.

Smith, Edwin H. and Lutz, Florence R. My Country, (Austin: Steck and Co., 1964), 96 pp.

This reader uses a 206 vocabulary taken from the Lorge-Thorndike test as well as certain adult interest words. A systematic developmental program of word-attack skills is incorporated in the 24 lessons. The subject matter is citizenship. The program combines reading and writing. A very brief section is devoted to suggestions to the teacher. Exercises in vocabulary building and comprehension are included in every lesson.

#### U.S. Government Publications

United States Armed Forces Institute Series. Men in the Armed Forces: A Service Man's Reader, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), 256 pp. MB001

Servicemen Learn to Read, (Workbook), Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1956), 109 pp. MB001.2

Narrative material concerning the experiences of a young farm hand in military service provides the context for a series of lessons in reading and writing. The context and consequent vocabulary places considerable limits on the suitability of this material for use with civilian groups.

Federal Textbook on Citizenship. A Home Study Course in English and Government for Candidates for Naturalization. Section I. English and Home and Community Life, (For the Student), (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1951), 120 pp.

Material prepared for candidates for naturalization. There is a companion volume for the use of a helper. Illustrations are adult but dated and many are rural in orientation. Each lesson is composed of a reading selection and a workbook section devoted to vocabulary building and writing exercises. Sentence length and vocabulary are controlled.

Federal Textbook on Citizenship. A Home Study Course in English and Government for Candidates for Naturalization. Section II--English and National Government, (For the Student) (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964), 157 pp. (M-43)

There is a companion volume for helpers, English National Government--For the Helper. The course is 29 lessons. Each lesson contains two reading assignments and a workbook section devoted to vocabulary building and comprehension. An appendix contains the word list used in the lessons. Interest level and illustrations are adult level.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

Barr, Jene. Miss Terry at the Library, (Chicago: Albert Whitman and Co., 1962), (unpaged).

Adult figure is main character. It could serve as a helpful introduction to the Public Library but, again, the format and viewpoint

label this a child's book though the series has been used in some programs with reported success.

Bloser, Parker Z. Our Print Letters and How We Make Them, (Columbus: Zaner-Blaser Co., 1954), 65 pp.

The manual is designed as a "letter game" to help in teaching the letters and stresses each part of the letter. Designed to aid in the visualization of each of the letters and numbers. Provision is made for grouping the letters by similar characteristics. Format is suitable for use with adults.

Browne, Georgiana K. Look and See, (Chicago: Melmont, 1958), 23 pp.

Supplementary reading on nature, but the interest on adult level is practically nil though this also has been used in some programs.

Cass, Angelica W. Everyday English and Basic Word List for Adults, (New York: Noble and Noble, 1964), 60 pp.

A supplementary aid to spelling, grammar, and writing. The general level is above the Introductory Stage but several features such as the "basic vocabulary" list for adults and "important signs" can be used in supplemental fashion.

Chandler, Edna W. Cowboy Sam Series, (Chicago: Benefic Press, 1960).

The first in the series uses a total vocabulary of 113 words. The series consists of western adventure stories with an adult as the main character. Format makes this very definitely a child's book, though it has been used as supplementary material in some literacy programs.

Dale, Edgar. Stories for Today. (Washington: United States Armed Forces Institute, U.S. Government Printing Office, MC002, 1954), 156 pp.

The stories presented here have a general adult interest. Some of them are specifically military in orientation. There is no apparent vocabulary or sentence control. Illustrations are of adult quality. Each story is followed by a brief test of comprehension.

Darby, Gene. The What Is It Series, (Chicago: Benefic Press, 1961).

What is a Simple Machine?

What is a Season?

What is a Plant?

What is a Turtle?

What is a Bird?

What is a Chicken?

What is a Fish?

What is the Earth?

This supplemental material originally developed for children may be useful for adults as well. While these are definitely children's books, the format and illustrations are not embarrassingly childish. Much useful vocabulary and many valuable concepts are contained in this series.

Dixon, Robert J. Elementary Reader in English, English as a Foreign Language Series, (New York: Regents Publishing Co., Inc., 1950), iv-120.

This work makes use of the first thousand words of the Lorge-Thorndike Word List. Each story or article is accompanied by vocabulary and grammar exercises, as well as a list of questions to test comprehension. A brief set of instructions for the teacher is included in the preface. Illustrations are minimal and trivial in interest. The content



of the stories, while of interest to adults, does not deal with those specific problems and concerns with which adults are involved in today's urban living.

Goldberg, Herman R. and Brumber, Winifred T. New Rochester Occupational Reading Series, (Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1963).

The Job Ahead. Level 1. 3-168.  
Student Exercise Books  
Teacher's Guide

This series is advertised by the publisher as suitable for use in adult literacy programs. Though it does contain much useful information relating to various occupations as well as emphasis on appropriate occupational attitudes, the difficulty is that the material is far above the Introductory Stage even though the publisher describes "Level 1" as "for second grade reading ability."

Lismore, Thomas. Welcome to English, Book I and II, (New York: Noble and Noble, 1963), 63 pp. and 78 pp.

These books are recommended by the publisher for use in adult literacy classes. However, they were originally designed for children learning English as a second language. For this reason great emphasis is placed on oral exercises, the vocabulary is schoolroom and child oriented, and the illustrations depict children almost exclusively. They do not seem particularly appropriate or useful even as supplementary material.

Reader's Digest. Adult Education Readers Series: Four Beginning Readers for Adults, (Pleasantville, New York: Reader's Digest Service, Inc., 1964), 1-32.

Workers in the Sky  
Second Chance  
Send for Red  
Mystery of the Mountain

These books are called "Beginning Readers." The use of compound and complex sentences, a starting vocabulary of several hundred words, and fairly rapid introduction of new words with little effort to reinforce them would definitely preclude their use as primers, and perhaps even at the later levels of the Introductory Stage of literacy.

Reader's Digest Readings, English as a Second Language, Book I and II, (Pleasantville, New York: Reader's Digest Services, Inc., 1964), 1-144.

These volumes are built on a 500 word vocabulary based on the Lorge-Thorndike Word List. Each volume introduces 350 to 500 new words. Various devices are utilized to enable the reader to add the most useful of these new words to his vocabulary. Each reading is followed by a comprehension quiz of the self-test variety. A brief section of "Suggestions to the Teacher" gives some general information on the make-up of the material and ways in which it might be used. The sentence structure includes some compound and complex sentences which may preclude the use of this material in the Introductory Stage.

Rosenfeld, J. B. and Cass, A. W. Write Your Own Letters, (New York: Noble and Noble, Inc., 1956), 1-64.

This book provides instruction in social and business letter writing as well as in filling out various forms used in everyday situations. The outstanding feature of the work is the inclusion of many sample letters and forms. Instructions are provided in clear, simple, straightforward sentences. In all a very practical and useful booklet.

Stone, Clarence R. and Burton, Ardis E. New Practice Readers. Book A, (St. Louis: Webster Publishing Co., 1960), 1-144.

While obviously intended for children, this material has been used with reported success in adult literacy programs. The New Practice Reader is a combination text and workbook. Each lesson is composed of a readiness exercise and a brief reading followed by a comprehension-vocabulary test. Reading level would be upper edge of the Introductory Stage.

#### U.S. Government Materials

U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Bill Davis Gets a Social Security Card, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, OASI-84a, January, 1963), 1-13.

Well done introduction to Social Security laws but in an exclusively rural setting.

Federal Textbook on Citizenship Series, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963).

On the Way to Democracy, Book I (M-10)

Rights of the People, Book I (M-14)

The Business of Our Government, Book I (M-18)

Laws for the Nation, Book I (M-22)

Our Constitution Lives and Grows, Book I (M-26)

This material has been prepared for the National Citizenship Education Program and is primarily directed toward aliens preparing for naturalization. However, it is readily usable as supplementary material in literacy programs. The illustrations are adult, sentences simple in structure and short in length, while interest level is mature.

Joe Wheeler Finds a Job and Learns About Social Security, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964), 3-23. (OASI-85a)

The introduction states, "This booklet is designed for use in adult basic reading courses." However, several serious defects should be noted: an extremely rapid rate of introduction of new vocabulary, illustrations oriented towards a middle-class, economic group with which it would probably be difficult for the actual users of this material to identify.

U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. A Social Security Card for You, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, OASI-86, August, 1963), 1-13.

A simple presentation of certain information pertinent to rural migratory workers. It is well done.

The Urban School News. Edition B. (Detroit: Urban Educational Publications, 1964).

Intended as a school newspaper for children attending "inner city" schools. Selected articles can be used with adults. The first

issue (March) contained articles on urban renewal, occupations, and street signs, all of which of course could be used in adult classes. The issue also contained two comprehension tests of good quality. The reading level would be at the upper edge of the Introductory Stage.

## METHODS

The third research assistant conducted open-ended interviews concerning methods and materials with teachers and administrators conducting various types of literacy programs in the Chicago area. Class size ranges from one-to-one in tutorial groups to fifty in conventional classes. Usual class size has approximately twenty as a stable core with a few students coming and going. A large majority of the teachers interviewed have a background of teaching primary grades in day school, though a few have taught or are teaching junior or senior high school. Two teachers have taught EMH classes; one has taught remedial reading; and several of the volunteer teachers have neither training nor previous experience in education. None of the teachers interviewed have received training in the teaching of adults other than an occasional in-service meeting.

The following pages outline some of the techniques found effective by these teachers and some suggestions for improvement of instruction. Obviously, this is by no means an exhaustive summary. There are as many methods as there are teachers. Many of these suggested practices may prove unusable to a given teacher; others may provide a new perspective on an old problem. Indeed, certain common practices and assumptions relating to the teaching of adult literacy need thoughtful reconsideration.

## Initiating Beginning Reading for Adults

Because of the often heard complaint about the difficulty of "getting started" in the Introductory Stage of adult basic education, teachers were asked how they initiated instruction. Of the twenty-five teachers questioned, only two stated they attempted no teaching the first session. The majority feels it important to impress seriousness of purpose upon their pupils by engaging in some kind of instruction the first session, however meager it may be.

Most of the teachers conduct some sort of orientation the first meeting. Particulars of the program such as room number, times of meeting, and general requirements are stated by the teacher after he has introduced himself. Some of the teachers attempt to draw from the class through discussion of the reasons why regular attendance is important.

Many of the teachers ask the students to introduce themselves. While almost all of the teachers recognize that their students are shy and tend to be non-verbal, most testify that individual introductions often ease tension and give a glimpse into the experiential background of the students. Participants are encouraged to talk about their occupational backgrounds, where they have lived, and about their families. Some teachers take notes. Students are also encouraged to state why they have entered the program. A few teachers involve the

class in planning the curriculum during the beginning sessions, urging them to state specifically what they wish to learn, a technique recommended by R. J. Pulling, Chief of the Bureau of Adult Education for the State of New York.<sup>3</sup>

Beyond the specific skills and knowledge to be learned, a general purpose for instruction is set by many of the teachers. The purpose of the program was stated variously as "to gain employment," "to better themselves," and "to improve their citizenship, parenthood, and working skills." It was the observation of the investigator that generally a more enthusiastic atmosphere and greater achievement is evident in the classroom where the teacher stressed more than an occupational end for instruction. While many of these adults show awareness that they have been placed in literacy classes in the hope of removing them from public assistance roles, they evidence the same need for education toward a well-rounded personality as do school-age children. One fact not widely enough recognized in the estimation of the investigators is that a large proportion of the students in literacy programs are mothers who may never be gainfully employed, but who can make a real contribution in breaking the poverty cycle through an

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<sup>3</sup> R. J. Pulling. The New York State Welfare-Education Plan Curriculum Outline and Teaching Objectives, Memorandum #4 to the Directors of Adult Education and Administration of Adult Elementary Education Programs (Albany: The University of the State of New York, The State Education Department, Bureau of Adult Education, June, 1964), p. 3



awareness of their own worth and an ability to provide physical, emotional, and verbal child care.

During the orientation process, some teachers make a conscious effort to ascertain the speaking vocabularies of their students. Other teachers attempt to get at the experiential backgrounds of their students by having them identify pictures, objects, or by employing projective techniques with pictures, methods often employed in the primary grades.

Some of the teachers make a deliberate effort from the first session to impress upon their students a confidence that "it can be done." Most of the teachers stated that they make every attempt to prevent an individual from failing at any given task. One teacher said that he assumes the student "has forgotten if he can't do it." In most classrooms each student is allowed to progress at his own rate of speed. All the teachers stated that they are very liberal with praise for progress, and many noted and said that they encourage praise from members of the group when an individual shows progress.

Several of the teachers attempted to get penmanship samples from their students the first session. These ranged from the individual's name, through street, city, state, and number in family, to a short autobiographical paragraph. The teachers who ask for penmanship samples acknowledged that there are members of the class unable to

write at all, but they pointed out that this is a diagnostic tool regardless of the achievement of the student. One teacher then writes each student's name on both sides of a stand-up piece of manila paper so that he might call them by name immediately, while they have their name before them throughout the period. This particular practice resulted in most of the students learning to write their signature within a very few sessions.

The instructors in one of the volunteer programs has each student fill out an extensive information form the first session. If the student is unable to do so, the teacher reads the questions and fills in the answers, taking care that the student sees how the form is set up and completed. The reasoning behind this approach is that the filling out of forms is a very real and constant problem and should be one of the first problems tackled. The form is designed to shed extensive light on the experiential background of each student.

Several of the teachers introduce the reader the first session. Considering the state of adult basal materials at present, the authors are somewhat dubious about the motivating force of such an approach. In addition to adult basal materials, at the very beginning stages many teachers use preprimers and primers written for children, employing such explanations as, "This is something you can read to your children," "You have to crawl before you can walk," "This is some-

thing you missed; let's go over it quickly," "You use the same words all your life," and "There just isn't anything written for adults that will help you right now." Some teachers said that they "motivate" their students toward children's materials the first session. Most of the teachers using materials written for children stated flatly that they find no problems with distaste for materials with little adult interest. In the view of the investigators, however, this is more of a comment on the depreciated self-image of the students than on the efficiency of the materials. A dependent, self-effacing attitude should not be institutionalized in the choice of materials.

A popular approach to the initial teaching of reading and one of questionable merit is an introduction to phonics, usually with beginning consonant sounds. Pictures of objects with names which begin with the same letter are used. Other phonic approaches utilize sounding out the names of foodstuffs or the names of the students listed on the blackboard.

A few teachers start instruction with the alphabet. One teacher teaches or reviews, whichever needs doing, the capital letters before the lower case letters. Another teacher has his students print, then write, those consonants he introduced.

One of the teachers who does not attempt to teach the first evening reads a short story of interest to disadvantaged adults and then promotes

discussion and asks comprehension questions on both the literal and interpretive levels to ascertain the listening skills of his class.

#### Testing: Standardized and Informal

In most programs prospective students are pretested with some standardized test. The most commonly used standardized tests for adult basic education students in the Chicago area are the various forms of the Stanford Achievement Tests. Several teachers commented that grouping done on the basis of Stanford scores generally proves to be accurate with very few adjustments. The Metropolitan Intermediate Achievement Battery is used, as is the California, the Gates Reading Survey, the Gates Advanced Primary, the old Chicago Reading Tests, and tests accompanying certain materials, such as SRA materials, or the Teamwork Foundation materials. R. J. Pulling also recommends the reading battery of the Iowa Basic Skill Tests.<sup>4</sup>

Some of the programs also test for intellectual capacity. One test a number of teachers and administrators consider fairly reliable is the old Army Beta.

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<sup>4</sup> R. J. Pulling. New York State Welfare-Education Plan: Testing. Memorandum #5 to the Adult Education and Administrators of Adult Elementary Education Programs. (Albany: The University of the State of New York, The State Education Department, Bureau of Adult Education, July, 1964), p. 2

There is much argument pro and con concerning : (1) the necessity of measuring the capacity of adults in literacy classes, and (2) the validity of the I.Q. tests available. Certainly, neither standardized reading nor intelligence tests can be considered "culture-free." Most teachers feel that the level of capacity of each pupil becomes obvious as instruction progresses.

Many authorities recommend that each student be given an initial informal reading inventory. There are several tests available such as the Botel Reading Inventory (Follett, 1961), and Nila Banton Smith's Graded Selections for Informal Reading Diagnosis, Grades One Through Three (New York University Press, 1963). One teacher uses the Gray Oral Reading Test, (Bobbs-Merrill, 1963), a formal test. However, it must be noted that these tests are most definitely written for children. A teacher-made test using adult material of increasing difficulty would be preferable.

Most teachers realize the need for constant diagnosis and point out that the day-to-day work in the classroom provides an opportunity for such diagnosis, at least to some extent. Some teachers seize this opportunity and consequently seem more aware of the individual weaknesses of their students than others.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See Ruth Strang. Diagnostic Teaching of Reading (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1964)

Informal testing both at the inception of the program and during the course of instruction for diagnosis and/or measurement of achievement was the rule rather than the exception. Only three teachers claimed they did little informal testing. One of these teachers uses the tests accompanying the Reader's Digest Skill Builders series. Another teacher uses the quizzes from the reader the class is using; some teachers use various primary tests regularly, reasoning that the adults in the program need a good deal of experience in taking printed standardized tests. The same objections might be raised about the use of primary testing devices as have been raised about the use of primary basal materials.<sup>6</sup>

Many teacher-made tests were described: tests of alphabet involving recognition and manuscript and cursive writing; letter matching; word matching; tests of sight words; completion tests; tests of capitalization; tests of sequence; and tests of sight words. Some teachers used spelling words from readers regularly in a semi-formal test situation. One teacher noted that using one type of test at a time, matching or completion for example, and repeating this type of test several times prevented confusion and gave his pupils a sense of confidence.

Several types of oral tests were discussed such as tests of listening

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<sup>6</sup> Mary C. Austin, Clifford L. Bush, and Mildred H. Huebner, Reading Evaluation (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1961)

comprehension, recognition of the Dolch sight vocabulary, questions on the chalkboard or on mimeographed sheets to be answered or completed aloud.

Another teacher mentioned the usefulness of the survey test of the Teamwork Foundation materials. A few teachers mentioned the use of testing materials they had collected in courses at Chicago Teachers College South, particularly in reading courses.

One question asked in each interview was, "Has it been your experience that initial testing frightens or discourages your students?" Most teachers answered that testing, at least initially, did cause agitation among their students. The majority felt, however, that it is of prime importance to develop a certain sophistication toward testing among their students. Most teachers treat the testing situation as a measurement of progress rather than a pass or fail proposition and find that, in time, their students relax, particularly if they have some advance warning of this measurement. A few of the teachers personally found the testing of their pupils threatening and discouraging. The investigators found some programs that had discontinued pre- and post-testing because of the hostility of some of the teachers who felt that their teaching effectiveness was being measured. Because of the importance of continuous diagnosis and evaluation both for the information of the teacher and of the pupil, and because of the need to help the students

become in some measure test wise, perhaps these teachers should simply set less ambitious goals for themselves and their students.

Almost all the programs do have some type of standardized post-testing. One teacher mentioned that he systematically recorded observations of his students as a mode of evaluation. This is, perhaps, a matter that should be given serious thought by all teachers.

### Grouping

Most classes are formed originally on the basis of standardized test scores. However, most teachers find themselves having to group on the basis of areas of difficulty within the class. Unfortunately, this grouping seems to be done rather haphazardly and solidifies into three (or two, or four) fairly inflexible groups. Bases for grouping were variously described as "by observation," "by fluency of reading," "according to the test at the end of the book," etc. One teacher said that he groups for different purposes: cursive writing, sight vocabulary, speaking vocabulary, and arithmetic skills. These groups are fluid in nature.

However, in other programs, teachers spoke of the positive benefits of a small constant group within the big group, whatever the basis for grouping. A number of the adult educators interviewed stated that some of the insecurity from loss of pride suffered by these people in admitting that they could not read nor write in this literate age was relieved in



realizing that others suffered similar inadequacies. One advocate of a fairly stable group of about ten stated flatly, "Until a man responds to others, he doesn't grow." Most teachers find that their students are very ready to help and encourage each other. A few instructors capitalize on this interaction with small heterogeneous groups, assigning good with slow readers, assigning new pupils to the better reading groups to help them catch up, or encouraging those who finish an assignment first to help the slower class members. It is also helpful to put an advanced student in charge of each group.

In answer to the question, "How do your pupils respond to grouping?" a few teachers reported hurt feelings, but the majority reported no adverse reaction and some positive reactions. Probably labeling of groups and pointed assignments to groups should be avoided.

A few teachers maintained that they attempt no grouping at all, but provide independent work for their class while they work with each pupil individually. This approach approximates the one-to-one tutoring of many of the volunteer units.

#### Word Recognition

A great many of the basal reading materials for adults have a phonic orientation. Certain of the materials developed for basic literacy education are exclusively phonic in orientation. In answer to a question concerning the efficacy of the phonics approach in the Introductory Stage

of adult literacy education, most teachers responded that this is the most successful approach. Several teachers did admit that their pupils displayed an inability to make fine distinctions between sounds. The investigators feel this stand needs careful examination. Perhaps this is only a holdover from the teaching of reading to primary age children. Recent research confirms that primary children learn through different modes: auditory, visual, and occasionally kinesthetic. Consequently, materials oriented toward one mode of learning will be truly effective only with those who can learn through that mode. Literate individuals are known to become, generally speaking, increasingly versatile in their adolescence. The only firm statement that can be made about disadvantaged illiterate adults is that no one orientation will help all individuals; the look-say and even the kinesthetic methods may prove effective where the phonic approach yields no progress. Two teachers with extensive backgrounds in reading courses, both of whom seemed on observation to be extremely effective, maintained flatly that it is too late for these people as far as phonics go. One of the teachers commented, "It is amazing how poorly these adults hear." While both recognize the need for organized skills in word attack, one solved the problem through the teaching of diacritical marks in junior dictionaries; the other used phonics very much as a crutch after teaching a large basic vocabulary through the look-say and kinesthetic methods.

One of the arguments for the use of sight vocabulary rather than phonics in beginning instruction is that words do have meaning and can be immediately used. Therefore the pupil has an immediate sense of progress toward his goal of literacy. Motivation has long been the bugaboo of adult education. Time is a matter of importance just because these adults are easily discouraged. It would seem that the more fragmented the material to be learned, the less apt it is to be transferred to the living situation with ensuing reinforcement and sense of progress. When these adults have achieved confidence in themselves and have begun to demonstrate their use of sight vocabulary in real life situations, perhaps then they will be ready for instruction in phonic generalizations, since these generalizations may then be important in attacking more advanced vocabulary. There is a need to re-examine the basic sight vocabulary requirements of the adult non-literate, also. For example, Wilson's Essential Vocabulary which deals with the vocabulary of signs, may be a more important beginning list than the Dolch 220.<sup>7</sup> Obviously, adults need the same basic vocabulary that children do, but for reasons of motivation if for no other, words immediately useful in adult life must have a front-center place in adult instruction.

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<sup>7</sup> Corlett T. Wilson. "An Essential Vocabulary," The Reading Teacher, XVII (November, 1963), 94-6.

## Experience Charts

The experience chart approach which uses the dictated thoughts of the pupil himself as a reading matter is another aspect of the teaching of reading in the Introductory Stage. Vocabulary is obviously uncontrolled. On the other hand, it is the student's own and the thought patterns and speech patterns are more comfortable and more meaningful for him. Because of the paucity of interesting adult basal materials, the experience chart approach may well be the most effective means of teaching reading in the Introductory Stage. Those teachers using this method were unanimous in judging it a necessary tool for beginning instruction.

## Combined Language Arts

All of the literacy teachers interviewed used some kind of combined language arts approach to the teaching of reading, though there were the expected differences in the stress laid on writing, speaking, and/or listening in addition to reading.

The reinforcing effect of writing what is read or heard is an accepted phenomenon. The teachers interviewed follow the Laubach method and teach manuscript writing first; others feel that the adult beginning reader needs the tool of cursive writing as soon as possible. Beginning assignments vary from writing the letters of the alphabet, and words, to simple sentences using known vocabulary because words are not con-

sidered to have meaning out of context. In some systems of instruction the student writes what he has read, copying directly from the book in manuscript or cursive writing. Early in most courses each student is taught to write his name, address, and telephone number if he has one. One teacher also taught his students to write the address and name of his district Public Aid office. In connection with social studies units, the names of the states where various members of the class have lived are used as vocabulary and spelling words.

Spelling words are dictated often. Words mispronounced, misused, misspelled, or frequently used comprise most spelling lists. Often short meaningful sentences are dictated for the students to write.

Another exercise often used with beginning writers is the copying of scrambled sentences in correct sequence. One teacher had his students make up sentences from nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and articles listed on the chalkboard. The ancient exercise of correcting sentence structure and word usage is also used. Simple pen and pencil tests of literal comprehension requiring short answers are given too. The words may be based on materials read aloud by the teacher or on materials read by the students from readers, mimeographed material, or the chalkboard. In line with attempting to achieve freedom of movement in the classroom, some teachers encourage their pupils to make much use of the chalkboard themselves.

As reading and writing skills increase, length of writing assignments increase. Most of the teachers interviewed did much work with letter writing. There is some instruction in business letter writing, but much more in the writing of personal letters to friends, to relatives, to pen pals located by the teacher. As the occasion arises, the class or members of the class write letters of condolence, thank-you notes, get-well notes, etc.

Short compositions are assigned. They may deal with the reading assignment, be autobiographical, deal with the subjects of class discussion, or be a specific assignment such as, "What are you trying to accomplish in school?" or "What can you do to help your children?" The teacher usually writes all requested words on the board. One teacher noted that words requested by one student gave others ideas, and there was a cross-growth of vocabulary.

Other writing assignments described are practice in filling out forms such as social security forms, making out catalogue orders (which require simple computations), writing up grocery lists, and making out checks.

#### Speaking:

The most common use of speech in adult basic education is an informal discussion. Some of the topics frequently discussed are these: the literacy program in which the participants are involved; personal relationships; race relations; "getting your dollar's worth"; improving

oneself on and off the job; proper nutrition; family problems; how one can profit from mistakes; use of leisure time; general current events as gleaned from radio, television, newspapers and magazine articles; and subjects which arise from social studies units or from reading basal materials. One daytime literacy program has two full class periods a day devoted to informal discussion. One teacher in an evening program devotes the last fifteen minutes of each class to group discussion of those problems individual members care to bring up. The interchange of ideas on how to solve an issue not only gives class members a chance to verbalize, but also builds noticeably good group feeling.

Most teachers feel free to correct the pronunciation of their students. Some do this indirectly by repeating the person's comment with correct pronunciation as if agreeing with what he said; others are more direct, asking the student to repeat the word correctly. Only one teacher reported hurt feelings from such correction. There were, however, sharp differences of opinion as to the reaction of students to correction by fellow classmates. Some teachers simply do not allow it; others find that such correction is good natured and received good naturedly and encourage it. One teacher commented that his class members had reached the point where they were correcting him. Almost all the teachers said they constantly urged their students to speak in complete sentences.

Most teachers observed made extensive use of "round robin" oral

reading. The investigators feel there is reason to question this practice. Oral reading is a diagnostic tool. It also can be used to share information or materials to which all class members do not have access, but it seems to have little value in the general development of literacy skills when used mechanically. If the teacher sets a purpose for reading, perhaps asks a question which can be answered from the text, he may be justified in asking for oral reading. At any rate, good teaching of reading demands that a pupil be required to read a passage silently before he reads it aloud. Other students should listen to the reader and not try to follow along in their books.

Other speaking assignments include oral book reports, spelling bees, the use of mimeographed plays, role playing, reading aloud from flash cards and making sentences from the cards, oral drill in English usage, and individual three-minute expository speeches. Teachers met with different reactions on assignment of individual talks. One teacher said his students would rather cut class than speak; another remarked how individual speeches "help their self-assurance."

The use of tape recorders is reported to be very successful in the adult basic education classroom. Students can work independently or in groups, recording oral reading and playing back the tapes to check pronunciation and kinds of errors. Students' tapes can be compared to reading previously taped by the teacher. One teacher used the Bell and



Howell Language-Master very effectively by taping each word of the vocabulary of a programmed text individually and in order of introduction. If a student was really stuck on a word in his silent reading, he could quickly locate the word and hear it. This same teacher discovered that extensive use of tapes helped his students overcome speech difficulties that seemed to be hindering their progress in reading.

### Listening:

Fewer of the teachers interviewed described structured listening exercises than described exercises in other areas of the language arts. Most of the teachers read to their classes but not all followed up their reading with discussion or literal and interpretive comprehension questions to evaluate the listening skills of their pupils. Selections read to students ranged from paragraphs written by the instructor through short stories to poems. One teacher always reads the day's exercises aloud to the class before they look at them. Several of the teachers mentioned the low listening span of disadvantaged non-literate adults.

One teacher makes an attempt to impress upon his people the importance of listening in a conversation. Another teacher assigns his more advanced students short pieces to read to the class so that they have practice in listening to each other.

Several teachers regularly use recordings in class. Recordings deal with everything from phonics lessons to poetry lessons to music. One

teacher uses classical music to promote discussion about the meaning of music; he also uses popular music with the words dittoed for group singing in an effort to develop an increased vocabulary.

One gentleman tapes Kup's shows, View Point, or any other program when it is mildly controversial and plays them in class to promote discussion and ideas for written compositions. Other teachers use filmstrips and movies to promote discussion.

Some of those teachers making a determined effort to teach their students the phonic generalizations resort to auditory discrimination exercises to develop finer perception of letter sounds. For general listening and comprehension exercises, one teacher uses the McCall and Crabbs' Standard Test Lessons in Reading, Book A.

#### Teacher-Made Materials

The teachers interviewed were asked to describe teaching aids other than published materials that they found useful. Many of the materials that were described were simply those used in day-school primary grades and are not, in the opinion of the investigators, suited for adults. An example is teaching hard c as a beginning consonant sound and using dittoed pictures of a clown, a candy cane, etc.

Some of the most interesting materials are paragraphs, short stories, and plays about practical situations written by teachers, and experience stories that had been dictated by individual students or groups or classes and typed up by the teacher. Some teachers are collecting an impressive

file of such materials.

One clever idea used with ADC mothers was scrambled sentences about a growing baby that had to be rearranged in the proper sequence of child development. Simple concepts of nutrition and need for sleep, etc., were brought in.

Flash cards--of letters, manuscript and cursive, upper and lower case; sight words; vocabulary words; phrases, spelling problems; months; days; and simple sums--are used. The answer to the sums is on a fold-down flap so that there is immediate feed-back. The same technique of the folded flap is used with sight vocabulary cards, using pictures on the flap.

Charts of all kinds are also devised. Some examples are charts of population, student drop-out rates, vowels and consonants, word lists being used in a particular unit. Word lists are also dittoed so that each student has in his grasp the immediate list of words.

Worksheets of many kinds are dittoed, such as simple reinforcement of the work of the reader which usually progresses at too rapid a rate; mimeographed questions to set a purpose for reading or watching a movie film; a list of triple-spaced words with individual cards to watch; penmanship samples to copy; sentences that need a final period or question mark; reproduced forms, such as social security; and completion work such as: make, m\_k\_, m\_\_e, \_a\_e. One instructor builds arithmetic work problems

with a limited yet important vocabulary. He is concerned with such skills as temperature readings and the reading of bar and line graphs which are made up about class test scores, student attendance, etc.

The teacher mentioned previously who uses the Language-Master extensively has, in addition to taping each word as it is introduced in the programmed text, made up a separate card for each letter of the alphabet, pasting a mnemonic picture-letter from a Laubach chart to a card, writing the letter in cursive and manuscript writing, upper and lower case, and taped the sound of the letter. Other teachers use the tape recorder to tape various reading, listening, and speaking exercises.

A few teachers mentioned making and using flannel boards. Others mentioned mounting pictures from newspapers and magazines on cardboard. Several teachers commented on the usefulness of a good picture collection. Some teachers also mounted articles from newspapers and magazines on cardboard for long wear. Teachers concocted a number of games to reinforce learning, also, such as crossword puzzles or word Bingo. The use of actual objects such as the heel of a shoe when one is working with initial h's seems to prove surprisingly effective. These adults may need the security of the concrete before them before venturing to accept the abstract symbol of the word. At least one adult basal series, the Houghton-Mifflin materials, makes extensive use of this technique.

## Teacher-Pupil Relationships

In response to a question on teacher-pupil relationships, over half the teachers answered that they try to maintain a person-to-person or adult-to-adult relationship. A few stated they did maintain a teacher-student relationship; and the remaining teachers said they found themselves shifting from position to position in response to certain individuals and situations. One teacher pointed out that his younger students "were not as businesslike if I am friendly."

In response to the question, "Do you get involved in the personal lives of your pupils?" slightly over half the teachers interviewed replied yes, though a few maintained they would rather not but seemed to have no choice. Interestingly enough, half of the correspondents answering that they maintained a teacher-student relationship also answered that they did get involved in their personal lives and did much counseling. This set of responses leads the investigators to suspect a kind of paternalism in the classroom which may need reconsideration because of the possible poor effects of such an attitude on the independence and self-respect of the adult participants.

In response to the question, "Do you find yourself counseling?" again slightly over half also answered yes. Some of the teachers who answered positively were somewhat apologetic about this role; others accepted counseling as part of their function and actively prepared them-

selves to be useful in this line.

Teachers were asked what attitude they adopted when a student returned after missing sessions. Answers varied from "The welcome mat is always out," to "I try to find out the reason for the absence and get the trainee to evaluate for himself the importance of his reason for staying away," to "I really chew him out and then forget it."

When a participant drops out altogether, there were twice as many teachers who said they take responsibility for trying to contact the student and encourage him to return as there were teachers who said they leave the matter up to other personnel or let it drop entirely.

One thorny problem of teacher-student relationship that most teachers felt unqualified to solve is the problem of how to address their students. Most teachers start out on a Mr., Miss, or Mrs. basis with their pupils, but when and if a first name basis should be reached remains unanswered. The investigators would speculate that the positive effect on the students' self-concept of the continued formal mode of address might outweigh the advantages of the more casual mode of address. The usual adult non-literate evidences a terrible need for respect.

#### Miscellaneous Considerations

Two matters constantly distressed the observer in the adult education classrooms. One was the aesthetically uninteresting surroundings; the other was the lack of readily available reference and supplementary

reading materials. While recognizing that most adult education programs exercise only squatters' rights in their classrooms, the investigators feel that surely something can be done to relieve the dreariness of the rooms.

Budgets for adult education must most certainly include at least small libraries. Such libraries can be kept on rolling carts so that they are available to more than one classroom and can be removed if necessary when the rooms are being used for other purposes. One of the well-known failures of literacy education in the past has been in motivating the new literate to use and solidify his skills. Unless much, much opportunity is given the new literate to transfer his classroom skills to other situations, literacy education will continue to fail. Accessibility and availability of materials coupled with plentiful opportunities for practice are essential ingredients of a complete literacy program.

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