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ABSTRACT

The Instructional Materials Center (IMC) was developed in August, 1969, to support the Title I Pyramids Reading Program (PRP) begun a year earlier. The PRP attempted to improve the reading skills of educationally disadvantaged children by (1) using one basal reading series in all Minneapolis Target Area elementary schools, (2) providing an in-service training course in reading for elementary teachers, and (3) developing original instructional materials geared to the reading series in use. The IMC writes, produces and distributes reading materials to teachers in Minneapolis public and parochial Target Area elementary schools who have completed the in-service course. Teachers use the materials to help improve the reading skills of their educationally disadvantaged children. During 1970-71, approximately 400 teachers used IMC-produced materials, nearly double the number in 1969-70. Figures obtained from a survey of teachers in Target Area schools showed that more than 90 percent of the 5,418 Title I eligible children received IMC-produced materials in 1970-71. (Authorized/WR)

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Special School District No. 1
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55413

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Minneapolis Public Schools

Instructional Materials Center
Project Director's Report
1970-71

A Title I, ESEA Project
Mitchell D. Trockman, Director

Ideas expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Minneapolis Public School Administration nor the Minneapolis School Board.

March 1972
Report No. C-70-23

Research and Evaluation Department
Educational Services Division
807 N. E. Broadway
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55413

Instructional Materials Center
Project Director's Report
1970-71

Summary

The Instructional Materials Center (IMC) was developed in August, 1969, to support the Title I Pyramids Reading Program (PRP) begun a year earlier. The PRP has attempted to improve the reading skills of educationally disadvantaged children by (1) using one basal reading series in all Minneapolis Target Area elementary schools, (2) providing an in-service training course in reading for elementary teachers, and (3) developing original instructional materials geared to the reading series in use. (See page 7, 8)

That's where the Instructional Materials Center comes in. The Center writes, produces and distributes reading materials to teachers in Minneapolis public and parochial Target Area elementary schools who have completed the in-service course. Teachers use the materials to help improve the reading skills of their educationally disadvantaged children.

During 1970-71, about 400 teachers used IMC-produced materials; nearly double the number in 1969-70. Figures obtained from a survey of teachers in Target Area schools showed that more than 90% of the 5,418 Title I-eligible children received IMC-produced materials in 1970-71.

All IMC materials are original productions copyrighted by the Minneapolis Public Schools. The Center distributes a catalogue listing available materials. Included are educational games, vocabulary cards, phrase cards, color-coded alphabet cards, short stories in colorful books, diagnostic materials, and tests. (See page 13, 14)

The IMC has a small staff -- a director, a reading specialist, two clerk-typists, an offset press operator, and a part-time duplicating machine operator. (See page 9-12)

The report describes the in-service teacher training course, which is taught by Dr. John Manning of the University of Minnesota. (See page 12, 13)

During 1970-71, the IMC was located in the George J. Gordon Educational Center, 1616 Queen Avenue North. In September, 1971, the IMC moved to much larger quarters in the Florence Lehman Education Center, 2908 Colfax Avenue South. (See page 13)

Federal funds obtained under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 are used to operate the IMC. The 1970-71 budget was $68,114; mostly for salaries, contracted services and instructional materials. A budget addendum provided an additional $21,096 for new materials development and $30,000 in stipends for teacher training. Local funds paid half the reading specialist's salary and provided transportation, utilities, equipment repair and office space. (See page 15)

Several publications describing the Title I Pyramids Reading Program are available. (See page 16, 17)

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About this report . . . . . .

All evaluation reports prepared by the Research and Evaluation Department of the Minneapolis Public Schools follow the procedures and format described in Preparing Evaluation Reports, A Guide for Authors, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Readers who are familiar with these Evaluation Reports may wish to skip the first two sections describing the City of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis Public Schools since these descriptions are standard for all reports.

The City of Minneapolis

The program described in this report was conducted in the Minneapolis Public Schools. Minneapolis is a city of 434,400 people located on the Mississippi River in the southeastern part of Minnesota. With its somewhat smaller twin city, St. Paul, it is the center of a sever county metropolitan area of over 1,874,000, the largest population center between Chicago and the Pacific Coast. As such it serves as the hub for the entire Upper Midwest region of the country.

The city, and its surrounding area, long has been noted for the high quality of its labor force. The unemployment rate in Minneapolis is lower than in other major cities, possibly due to the variety and density of industry in the city as well as to the high level capability of its work force. The unemployment rate in May of 1971 was 4.7%, compared with a 6.2% national rate for the same month. As the economic center of a prosperous region rich in such natural resources as forests, minerals, water power and productive agricultural land, Minneapolis attracts commerce and workers from throughout the Upper Midwest region. Many residents are drawn from the neighboring states of Iowa, Wisconsin, Nebraska and the Dakotas as well as from the farming areas and the Iron Range region of outstate Minnesota.

More Minneapolitans -- three out of 10 -- work in clerical and sales jobs than in any other occupation, reflecting the city's position as a major wholesale-retail center and a center for banking, finance and insurance. Almost as many (27%) are employed as craftsmen, foremen and operatives, and one out of five members of the work force are professionals, technicians, managers, and officials. Fewer than one out of five (17%) workers are employed in laboring and service occupations.

Minneapolis city government is the council-dominated type. Its mayor, elected for a two year term, has limited powers. Its elected city council operates by committee and engages in administrative as well as legislative action.

Minneapolis is not a crowded city. While increasing industrial development has occupied more and more land, the city's population has declined steadily from a peak of 522,000 in 1950. The city limits have not been changed since 1927. Most homes are sturdy, single family dwellings built to withstand severe winters. Row homes are practically nonexistant even in low income areas. In 1970, 48% of the housing units in Minneapolis were owner-occupied.

Most Minneapolitans are native born Americans, but about 35,000 (7%) are foreign born. Swedes, Norwegians, Germans, and Canadians comprise most of the foreign born population.

Relatively few nonwhite citizens live in Minneapolis although their numbers are increasing. In 1960 only three percent of the population was nonwhite. The 1970 census figures indicate that the nonwhite population has more than doubled (6.4%) in the intervening 10 years. About 70% of the nonwhites are Black. Most of the remaining nonwhite population is American Indian, mainly Chippewa and Sioux. Only a small number of residents from Spanish-speaking or Oriental origins live in the city. In 1970 nonwhite residents made up 6.4% of the city's population but accounted for 15% of the children in the city's elementary schools.

Minneapolis has not yet reached the stage of many other large cities in terms of the level of social problems. It has been relatively untouched by racial disorders or by student unrest. Crime rates are below national averages. Continuing concern over law and order, however, is still evidenced

by the election in 1969 and the re-election in June 1971 of Mayor Charles Stenvig, a former police detective.

One's first impression is that Minneapolis doesn't really have serious problems of blight and decay. But the signs of trouble are evident to one who looks beyond the parks and lakes and tree-lined streets. As with many other large cities, the problems are focused in the core city and are related to increasing concentrations there of the poor, many of them nonwhites, and of the elderly. For example, nine out of 10 Blacks in Minneapolis live in just one-tenth of the city's area. While Minneapolis contains 11.4% of the state's population, it supports 27% of the state's AFDC families. In addition, more than one out of every four school children in Minneapolis now is living in a low income (Title I criteria) home.

There has been a steady migration to the city by American Indians from the reservations and by poor whites from the small towns and rural areas of Minnesota. They come to the "promised land" of Minneapolis looking for a job and a better way of life. Some make it; many do not. In 1967 the city supported one out of 10 of the state's American Indians who were on relief; in 1969 the city supported three out of 10. The American Indian population is generally confined to the same small geographic areas where the Blacks live. Estimates of the Indian unemployment rate vary, but range as high as 60%. These same areas of the city have the lowest median incomes in the city and the highest concentrations of dilapidated housing, welfare cases, and juvenile delinquency.

The elderly also are concentrated in the central city. In 1970, 15% of its population was over age 65. The elderly, like the 18 to 24 year old young adults, live near the central city because of the availability

of less expensive housing in multiple-unit dwellings. Younger families have continued to migrate toward the outer edges of the city and surrounding suburban areas.

The Minneapolis Schools

About 78,700 children go to school in Minneapolis. Most of them, about 64,200, attend one of the city's 99 public schools; 14,500 attend parochial or private schools.

The Minneapolis Public Schools, headed by Dr. John B. Davis, Jr., who became Superintendent in 1967, consists of 69 elementary schools (kindergarten-6th grade), 15 junior high schools (grades 7-9), nine high schools (grades 10-12), two junior-senior high schools, and five special schools. Over 3,700 certificated personnel are employed.

Control of the public school system ultimately rests with the seven-member School Board. These nonsalaried officials are elected by popular vote for staggered six year terms. The Superintendent serves as the Board's executive officer and professional adviser, and is selected by the Board.

The system's annual operating general fund budget in 1971 was $72,784,887 up from $62,385,985 in 1970 and $56,081,514 in 1969. Per pupil costs were $715 in 1970. The range of per pupil costs in the state for 1970 was from $387.00 to $908.00. The range of per pupil expenditures for school districts in the seven-county metropolitan area was $536 to $820 with a mean expenditure of $645.[1] Almost 40 cents of each local property tax dollar goes for school district levies. The School Board is

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[1] Per pupil cost is the adjusted maintenance cost from state and local funds and old federal programs, exclusive of transportation, per pupil unit in average daily attendance for the 1968-69 school year. Source of these figures is Minnesota Education Association Circular 7071-C2 Basic Financial Data of Minnesota Public School Districts, February, 1971.

a separate governmental agency which levies its own taxes and sells its own bonds. Minneapolis also received federal funds totaling 4.2 million dollars in 1970-71 from many different federal aid programs. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act provided about 2.9 million dollars of which 2.5 million dollars was from Title I funds.

One of the Superintendent's goals has been to achieve greater communication among the system's schools through decentralization. Consequently two "pyramids" or groups of geographically related schools have been formed. First to be formed, in 1967, was the North Pyramid, consisting of North High School and the elementary and junior high schools which feed into it. In 1969 the South-Central Pyramid was formed around South and Central High Schools. Each pyramid has an area assistant superintendent as well as advisory groups of principals, teachers, and parents. The goals of the pyramid structure are to effect greater communication among schools and between schools and the community, to develop collaborative and cooperative programs, and to share particular facilities and competencies of teachers.

In 1970-71 there were 22 elementary schools, four junior highs, three senior highs, and five parochial schools serving children in areas eligible for programs funded under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The federal criteria for selecting these schools are based on economic factors, in particular the number of families receiving AFDC or having incomes under $2,000. About 20,000 children attend these public and parochial schools. Of that number, about one-third of the children have nonwhite backgrounds, and one-third are defined by the State Department of Education as educationally disadvantaged, i.e. one or more grade levels behind in basic skills such as reading and

arithemetic. Federal programs are concentrated on the educationally disadvantaged group.

Based on sight counts on October 20, 1970 the percentage of Black pupils for the school district was 9.9%. Six years before the proportion was 5.4%. American Indian children currently comprise 3.7% of the school population, more than double the proportion of six years ago. The proportion of minority children in the various elementary schools generally reflects the prevailing housing pattern found in each school area. Although some nonwhite pupils are enrolled in every elementary school, nonwhite pupils are concentrated in two relatively small areas of the city. Of the 69 elementary schools, 11 have more than 30% nonwhite enrollment and five of these have over 50%. There are no all-black or all-white schools. Thirty-three elementary schools have nonwhite enrollments of less than 5%.

The proportion of school age children in AFDC homes has almost doubled from approximately 12% in 1962 to 23% in 1971.

Turnover rate is the percent of students that come in new to the school or leave the school at some time during the school year (using the September enrollment as a base figure). While the median turnover rate for all the city schools in 1969-70 was about 22%, this figure varied widely according to location. Target Area schools generally experienced a much higher turnover rate; in fact only two of the Target Area schools had turnover rates less than the city median. Compared with the city, the median for the Target Area schools was almost twice as large (41%).

Schools and Neighborhoods Served by the Instructional Materials Center (IMC)

The staff of the Instructional Materials Center (IMC) writes, produces and distributes reading materials that teachers use to help improve the reading skills of educationally disadvantaged children in the elementary grades of Minneapolis public and parochial Target Area schools.

Target Area schools are schools located in Minneapolis inner-city areas that have been designated eligible to receive additional funds from the federal government under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Funds must be used to provide preventive and remedial instruction in reading, writing, mathematics and oral language to students who score at the 25th percentile or below on citywide tests or who are one grade or more behind in reading or math skills.

For the 1970-71 year, 21 public and seven parochial elementary schools were designated as Target Area schools eligible for Title I funds. Most of these schools are located in the areas served by the Minneapolis Schools' North Pyramid and South-Central Pyramid; the two Pyramid groups of geographically related schools that form decentralized administrative units of the school system.

The Instructional Materials Center, established in August 1969, provided materials to about 240 teachers in Title I schools during the 1969-70 school year.

During 1970-71, the number of teachers using IMC-produced materials with their disadvantaged children increased to more than 400. Figures obtained from teachers by the Minneapolis Schools' Information Services Center show that more than 90% of the 5,418 Title I-eligible children in Minneapolis elementary schools did receive materials from the IMC during 1970-71.

History of the Project

As every teacher knows, many children's learning and behavior problems stem from poor reading skills. In 1967, a Minneapolis teachers' committee composed of

inner-city elementary school teachers identified reading instruction as the main area in which they needed help.

Teachers also were concerned about the many different reading instruction methods in inner-city elementary schools in Minneapolis. Some 22 different systems for teaching reading were found among 20 inner-city elementary schools. Inconsistency in reading programs was especially hard on inner-city children who moved frequently during the school year. While children who move a great deal often stay in the same general area, they may attend several different schools within the same year. In an effort to provide some continuity for these children, and to provide a basis for more effective instructional materials development in reading, teachers from inner-city schools selected one basal reading series to be used in all their schools.

Teacher interest in reading instruction resulted in an in-service teacher training course to (1) train teachers in specific techniques for teaching reading and (2) train teachers to use a wide range of multi-sensory reading instruction materials. This course also was funded under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Teachers and staff of the Office of Planning, Development, and Federal Programs worked for one year to design the course. Teachers identified their practical day-to-day problems in teaching reading and examined possible alternatives for dealing with such problems. It was up to teachers to decide which problems and solutions would be emphasized in the course.

The teacher-training course, in turn, led to development of the Instructional Materials Center (IMC).

The physical entity known as the Instructional Materials Center, was started in late August, 1969. Official hours of operation during the first eleven months were 7:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m., five days a week. To keep up with the level of

service felt necessary by the IMC staff, many weekends were consumed. In preparation for the start of the 1970-71 school year, the IMC hours shifted to a 7:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. day during the twelfth month of operation. The work week was lengthened during the Spring of 1971 to six and seven days in order that a commitment to the Summer School program could be met.

Objectives of the Project

The job of the IMC is to produce materials that teachers have designed or learned to use in the Pyramids Reading Program teacher training course. The objective is to supply teachers with a variety and quantity of useful instructional materials for specific skills geared to the one basal reading series in use in all Pyramids and other Title I-eligible elementary schools.

The overall goal of the Title I Pyramids Reading Program, which includes the training course and the IMC, is to improve the reading skills of educationally disadvantaged children.

Personnel

The initial IMC staff for the 1969-1970 year included: Mitchell Trockman, an assistant elementary principal on special assignment, as project director; a clerk-typist and an offset press operator. A reading specialist, Alberta Brown, was privately contracted to supervise instructional aspects of the project, including development of instructional materials.

The director was charged with the responsibility for administrating and coordinating the Instructional Materials Center. His responsibilities included: writing specifications for equipment and supplies, coordinating remodeling of physical facilities, training clerical employees in operations of graphic art equipment, setting project priorities, establishing production schedules, preparing

projected budgets and monitoring spending within assigned dollar amounts. Another responsibility of the director was coordinating the production of the IMC with the needs of the reading specialist in the area of staff development, research, and development of new materials.

Responsibilities of the reading specialist included coordinating staff development and workshops, visiting classrooms both on an invitational basis from teacher and/or principal or just "dropping in," demonstrating techniques and materials to individual teachers and small groups of teachers during the school day, writing and developing materials needed by teachers, coordinating teams of teachers in writing new materials, and developing materials for the Summer School Reading Program in the Target Area schools of Minneapolis.

An initial assignment performed by the reading specialist was to act as a consultant to a large committee of teachers who were working on the adoption of reading materials for children in grades 4, 5 and 6. The reading specialist also worked with the IMC project director in establishing production priorities.

Among the responsibilities assigned to the clerk-typist were the tasks of being receptionist, and handling correspondence, payroll and supplies. Under the supervision of the director and reading specialist, the clerk-typist also prepared press-ready copy using various types of graphic art equipment such as photo type composing machine, typewriter, etc. The clerk-typist assisted in filling orders for materials from teachers and kept a detailed inventory of all materials placed in classrooms.

The offset press operator operated the printing and binding equipment, assisted in shipping prepared materials, maintained an inventory of raw materials, and trained several Neighborhood Youth Corps members in the operation of an offset printing press.

Assistance also was rendered by Neighborhood Youth Corps members and other teachers and clerical people assigned on a temporary basis for short periods of time.

Each staff member had special qualifications and training which allowed for an immediate start-up of the Instructional Materials Center without the need to train or "break-in."

The director had been a teacher, an assistant principal, and had performed several miscellaneous administrative functions during previous school years. He had an extensive background in graphic arts, equipment procurement and operation.

The reading specialist had coordinated a similar, but smaller scale operation, in Clovis, California. She had been a classroom teacher at several levels, a curriculum coordinator, an elementary principal, student teacher supervisor, college instructor, and author of reading materials.

The clerk-typist brought to the project many years of clerical experience and rapidly became proficient in the operation of new types of equipment.

The offset press operator had had formal training and was experienced in the operation of high speed printing presses and miscellaneous binding and graphic art equipment.

Both the clerk-typist and offset press operator positions were difficult to fill. These positions were established above the normal entry level and hence required fully experienced employees rather than trainees.

During 1970-1971 the IMC staff was increased by the addition of another clerk-typist and a part-time duplicating machine operator.

Much supplementary service was given to the IMC by the professional and clerical staff of the Department of Planning, Development and Federal Programs

of the Minneapolis Public Schools. The assistant director of the department was instrumental in the original formation of the project. She had worked with teachers, principals, and others since 1967 in planning the Title I Reading Program of the Minneapolis Public Schools.

Training

A major function of the IMC has been to support teachers who have been trained in specific methodology.

Without the intense pre-service and in-service training of teachers and para-professionals that is part of the Pyramids Reading Program, the IMC would be merely a print shop.

Dr. John Manning, of the Uviersity of Minnesota, teaches the in-service course, which was first offered during the summer of 1968 for 84 teachers. Approximately 125 teachers took a similar course during the summer of 1969. Teachers had a choice of receiving academic credit or stipends. One-hundred forty teachers enrolled in the course during Fall 1969, and the same number in Spring 1970. Seventy teachers enrolled in Summer 1970. Parochial school teachers also participated. Title I funds supported this training program.

The course emphasized practical help for teachers. Course instructors taught demonstration lessons to children selected by participating teachers from their own classrooms. Four broad areas were covered.

1. Effective initial instruction in reading for disadvantaged boys and girls;
2. Practical classroom methods for diagnosing reading disabilities;
3. Classroom methods and materials for treating specific reading difficulties;
4. General principles and classroom methods of helping children with severe reading disabilities.

Materials development has been one of the most important aspects of the course. A whole range of materials has been designed to teach each reading skill. For children who do not learn best with auditory aids, there were many materials which utilize a child's visual and tactile senses. Teachers took an active role in constructing materials during the course.

During 1970-71, the IMC logistically supported staff development sessions held prior to the fall term and during the school year. Training sessions ranged from individualized meetings to sessions attended by more than 140 teachers.

Project Operations

Facilities

During 1970-71, the Instructional Materials Center was located in the George J. Gordon Educational Center, 1616 Queen Avenue North. (In September, 1971, it was moved to the Florence Lehmann Education Center, 2908 Colfax Avenue South, where the IMC has five times its former floor space.) The Gordon Center also serves as administrative headquarters for the North Pyramid and provides overload space for Willard Elementary School. The building is widely used by teachers and the total community beyond the defined school day.

Between August 1969 and June 1970, about 1,000 square feet was used by the IMC. In June 1970, the space allocation was doubled to help alleviate a serious space problem.

Production

Main activities of the IMC project are writing, producing and distributing reading materials. The activities have been directly related to the project major objective, which is to improve the reading skills of educationally disadvantaged children in the elementary grades of the Target Area schools in Minneapolis.

None of the materials produced by the IMC are available from commercial publishers. All materials produced are original and are copyrighted by the Minneapolis Public Schools. A basic rationale for the inception of the IMC was the need for materials tailored to the specific needs of disadvantaged readers in Minneapolis Target Area schools. Teachers and the reading specialist work together to design most materials.

The Center has produced a wide variety of materials including more than 30 educational games for kindergarten children, vocabulary cards, phrase cards, color-coded alphabet cards, comprehension games, materials for parents, short stories in colorful booklets, diagnostic materials, and tests. The Center distributes a catalogue to keep teachers informed about what materials are available.

Teachers could not obtain materials from the Center until they completed the special teacher training course. The Center maintained a detailed inventory of all materials sent to each teacher. This inventory helped guide the Center staff in planning new materials, based on what teachers requested most frequently; as well as simplifying auditing and accounting.

Equipment

To produce the materials, equipment was procured which would allow for an efficient low cost operation. Major items are: an offset press, camera for making plates, processing unit to develop plates, power paper cutter, semi-automatic collator, photo type composing machine. The Center uses other equipment commonly found in a printing operation, such as: a light table, waxer, typewriters, and a padding press. The initial capitalization of equipment was approximately $12,000.

The 1970-71 budget included funds for some additional equipment that was needed to keep up with the demands for additional materials by the classroom teachers. The additional equipment included: an automatic collator with the

capability of gathering and stapeling 35,000 sheets of paper an hour, a roll fed laminator which puts a coating of mylar on items, a stock rack for drying of printed materials, additional shelving for storage of finished materials, and a fully automatic electrostatic plate maker which, when delivered, will cut the plate making costs by two-thirds.

1970-71 IMC Budget

Most of the funding for the Instructional Materials Center came from the federal government under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Local funds provided half the reading specialist's salary as well as transportation, utilities, remodeling, machine repair and office space costs. The two Pyramid assistant superintendents paid for many incidental expenses out of their local budgets throughout the year.

The IMC was funded for the 1970-71 year with $68,114 in federal funds. The breakdown follows:

Salaries	$32,404.
Contracted Services	9,090.
Instructional Supplies	15,400.
Postage, special meeting costs, mileage and travel	1,070.
Instructional Equipment	7,234.
9% fringe benefits on $32,404.	2,916.
TOTAL	$68,114

An addendum to the budget provided an additional $21,096 for new materials development and $30,000 in stipends for teacher training. A summer addendum for Summer 1971 provided $7,945.

Parent-Community Involvement

Parents were involved indirectly in the planning of this project. Through

Parent Teachers Associations and Pyramid advisory committees, parents had expressed their desire that improvements be made in the reading program for their children. The Title I Pyramids Reading Program, of which the Instructional Materials Center is an important part, evolved from this parental concern.

After initial plans for the project were made, much effort was exerted to inform the community about the IMC and its role as part of the total Title I Reading Program.

A publication was written by the reading specialist specifically for distribution to parents of kindergarten children. This booklet described the reading readiness program and suggested games and skill improvement methods the parents could follow. A set of letter flash cards was included in the booklet.

Several groups of parents visited the Center during the year. The visits were organized by the schools and by the staff of the IMC. The feedback from the parents was very positive and encouraging.

Results

The enthusiasm created when the project started has continued. Teachers have remained very active in their use of materials and acceptance of training opportunities.

Several informal questionnaires and opinion surveys and evaluations have been made. The response has been overwhelmingly encouraging.

A longitudinal evaluation of the Pyramids Reading Program has been contracted to the Evanston, Illinois office of the Educational Testing Service.

Dissemination and Communications

A booklet entitled Title I Reading Program is available. Enough copies have been printed to insure distribution to concerned individuals and agencies. Copies have been offered to schools for use with PTA and other community groups.

Dr. John Manning and Alberta Brown, the reading specialist, made a presentation about the Title I Reading Program at the 1971 International Reading Association Convention.

More than 1800 visitors toured the IMC during the year. Delegations from as far away as Guam and South America and from several of the major school systems in the United States learned about all aspects of the Reading Program and IMC operation.

The staff has helped other school systems, including St. Paul, Minnesota, to replicate parts of the Minneapolis reading program in their communities.

The IMC director has prepared a slide sequence that has been used to inform several groups of educators and interested parents and community residents.

A description of the project has been published. Title I Pyramids Reading Program Administrative Report, 1969-70 is available from the Research and Evaluation Department of the Minneapolis Schools.

The U.S. Office of Education Compensatory Education Division will publish a report on the Minneapolis Title I Pyramids Reading Program entitled A Title I ESEA Case Study in Spring 1972. The Minneapolis program was the only compensatory reading program in the country chosen for a case study.

For more information about the IMC, contact Mitchell Trockman, Tel. 827-2868. For details about instructional aspects of the reading program, contact Alberta Brown,Tel. 827-2868; Dr. John Manning at the University of Minnesota, Tel. 373-5209; or Mary Kasbohm, assistant director of Planning, Development and Federal Programs, Tel. 348-6147.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The project should be continued and expanded along the current lines of operation. Additional space will be needed for the IMC operation as production is increased.

The attitude of parents, teachers and the community toward the improvement of the basic skill of reading has been very encouraging.

Cost of materials produced in the IMC are considerably less than if produced commercially.

Great flexibility has been achieved by the training and logistical support components working together.

The project, staff and facilities are utilized fully. Any expansion of the program would require additional resources.

Minneapolis Public Schools

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ABSTRACT

In teaching reading, teachers should understand the three categories of language information which all readers draw upon in the processing of information. These three categories are (1) grapho-phonic, the information from the writing system and from the phonological system of oral language; (2) syntactic information, the information from grammatical structures of the language; and (3) semantic information, information related to meaning and concepts represented by the printed word. An effective language experience program is one based on educational, psychological, and linguistic understandings. In the implementation of the program, teachers seek to help children relate the written language code to the spoken language code at the same time as they help children develop strategies for language recognition of the grapho-phonic, semantic, and syntactical information. Communication is foremost in this child-oriented program with reading instruction built on existing language performance, but the instruction does not stop with and is not limited to that performance, as language facility is constantly extended. (Author)

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AN EFFECTIVE LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

(LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH SESSION #3)

The language experience approach has been increasingly used throughout the country in the last decade, and the effectiveness of language experience instruction has varied. Teachers differ in their degree of enthusiasm for this way of working with reading and communication. Some teachers are convinced when they see the enthusiastic response of children, particularly those who were hard to reach with other methods but other teachers need assurance that language experience is more than a few new procedures for enrichment, that language experience is more than the latest "in" thing, and that language experience is more than a philosophy although it is a very sound philosophy. In providing that reassurance we should not convey that language experience is the answer to all reading ills. Teachers need to understand effective language experience instruction which has a strong theoretical rationale which offers insight into the reading process for both the teacher and the learner. That strong rationale must be interpreted for implementation so that language experience instruction can truly be effective.

I'll consider the theoretical rationale - a rationale which is psycholcgical, educational, and linguistic with special emphasis on the linguistic rationale. Then following the rationale, attention will be directed to classroom application of recommended teaching strategies.

The Theoretical Base of Effective Language Experience Programs

An effective educationally based program recognizes the uniqueness of the individual, starts where the learner is, and provides relevant experiences in an optimal learning atmosphere. Basic to an effective reading program is a knowledgeable teacher who understands that an effective language experience program is based on the major goals of reading of developing interest in reading, extending the reading vocabulary, and promoting competence in both word analysis and thoughtful interpretation. Those goals of reading do not change when the approach used to attain those goals may be different from the approaches used previously. However, the emphasis may shift with more stress in language experience programs on communication, on integration of all the language arts, and through concentration on larger language units than words or letters than is characteristic of some methods.

Psychologically, a child should feel better about himself as a result of his encounters with reading. Success, positive attitudes, personal motivation, involvement - all must be present in language experience learning. Much has been said by Sylvia Ashton-Warner (1), by R. V. Allen (8), and by Russell Stauffer (9) about the power of the language experience approach to reach children when communication is centered on their concerns. We want the human touch in teaching reading to be present in language experience classrooms. One first

grade teacher has said the language experience approach is the only human way to teach beginning reading. The individual is valued in the learning process with the focus not on materials, on techniques, on a prescribed program but on the child and his communication. Displays and collections of children's work add to the pride in authorship and communicate that the child and his ideas are valued.

A linguistically-based effective language experience program recognizes the linguistic nature of the reading process. In recent years, there has been growing interest in the implications of linguistic study for the teaching of reading. The term "linguistics" as related to reading instruction often signifies a beginning reading approach based on a phoneme-grapheme correspondence through the presentation of a carefully controlled vocabulary illustrating selected spelling patterns. However, linguistics is used here with a broader application. Since reading is communication through written language, all reading, therefore, is linguistic. Knowledge about language supplied by linguists should lead to reading instruction based on accurate information about language and about the reading process. The relationship of reading and spoken language is basic to a linguistic definition of reading and is basic also to teaching reading with the language experience approach.

The language experience teacher recognizes that the child is a user of the language (4). Upon school entrance that language use is oral but reading should be taught showing the relationship of the unfamiliar written code to the familiar oral code. In teaching reading, the three categories of language information which all readers draw upon in the processing of information should be understood. These three categories are (3):

1. Grapho-phonic. This is the information from the writing system and from the phonological system of oral language. Phonics is the name generally used when discussing the teaching of the code system of letter-sound relationships.

2. Syntactic Information. This is the information from grammatical structures of the language. The language user knows syntactical or sentence patterns and, therefore, is able to use this information orally before he learns to read his native language.

3. Semantic Information. This is information related to meaning and concepts represented by the printed words.

These language systems are interdependent and we shouldn't fractionate them in our teaching. Children use them in integrated ways as they read, selecting cues from all three categories. The ordering in the above list does not mean that one is taught first, then the second one, then finally the third one. No reading program is complete unless we teach children to deal with all three of these language categories. The most logical way to do this is to use natural language in the creation of beginning reading materials so that there is a match between the spoken and written code. Natural, not artificial, language is needed. The natural language of the reading material created by children in the language experience approach provides an excellent vehicle for demonstrating how language conveys meaning and how the written code represents the oral code.

Teaching Strategies in an Effective Language Experience Program

Effective teaching strategies in language experience reading rest upon having children develop language recognition skills. Language recognition skills encompass the abilities needed to deal with the three types of language information. Children should be introduced to language recognition in functional settings using examples selected from their

language with both direct and incidental instruction included. The aim of teaching language recognition is to equip children with tools for decoding for meaning in listening and reading and with the knowledge for encoding meaning in speech and writing. One of the questions I'm frequently asked about the language experience approach is "What about skills?" Unfortunately, to many the term 'skills' means phonics. While I'm not saying discard the teaching of letter-sound relationships, I am saying we need to look at other language recognition skills. We have long talked about phonics and vocabulary in reading wit the frequent result that letter-sound and word units have been over-stressed while the syntactical patterns have been grossly neglected. The research on reading miscues has demonstrated that children do use sentence patterning information to a greater degree than teachers of reading usually acknowledge (3) Attention must be on language as the medium of communication - not on small portions of that language which are devoid of meaning without context.

We need to develop comprehension strategies in the reading of meaningful language. Developing comprehension does not come from isolated word and letter study - such study is usually a non-reading and a non-communication situation.

Let's look now at some concrete applications to reading situations. I'm suggesting some practices in addition to the well-known procedures of having children create and read their experience materials. Those activities are the heart of the language experience program and have been well described in the literature on the approach.

1. The first recommendation is that the teaching of language recognition skills should start with the development of the language terminology such a word, letter phrase, sentence, and sound which was identified by Downing (2) to be missing or confused in studies of five- and six-year-olds' concepts of language. The concepts can be demonstrated with kindergarten and first grade children with the first experience stories. As children match a word, a phrase, a sentence, or a letter to material on a chart story, the language concepts are shown in a natural and functional way. As children listen to words from a chart story which sound alike at the beginning, they are becoming oriented to the language of reading as well as practicing the needed skill of auditory discrimination.

2. Another teaching strategy is to use closure type activities for language experimentation in a functional context. For example, copies of experience stories with selected words left out can be given to children who are asked to supply the missing words. After children have filled in the words, they could be asked to think of other words which might fit. Questions such as "What else could belong?" "Can you put in a word that begins like _____?" "Could _____ be used here?" "Why or Why not?" extend language patterns. The stress here is on context using syntactical and semantic clues - those types of language information likely to be slighted in skill instruction. While the instruction can start with children's experience materials, the closure experimentation can be applied to other reading materials.

3. Another teaching strategy for language recognition can be developed with sentence experimentation and sentence expansion. For

example, children can be asked to find two words in the word banks which go together in some way. They may select things such as "green grass" or "red wagon" or "big rocket". The teacher may help them discover the pattern of a naming word and word which describes it. They could substitute another word for green or for grass or to find other two word patterns. The point here is to have children play around with language - not just to have reading vocabulary practice.

Another sentence expansion and experimentation idea is to use kernel sentences. The teacher can ask children to find words in word banks with patterns such as "rabbit hops" and "boy ran". The children can suggest words and phrases to extend the idea and discover how words such as "a" and "the" make the sentences sound more natural and how additional words give more information.

In game-type activities with language experimentation which starts with examples from their language, children can learn much about how the language operates. In reading we need more time for language exploration.

4. Another teaching strategy is to alert children to the interesting use of language as we seek to develop language awareness. To do this children's literature is a necessity. A teacher can call children's attention to unusual and original use of phrases and words. For example, first grade children are quick to pick out "flabbergasted" as the most interesting word in The Camel Who Took a Walk or to pick up refrains in books such as Horton Hatches the Egg or to identify the description of the lobster, "who moved about like a water-moving machine" from Swimmy.

Interesting language examples can be pointed out as they occur in the writing of children. These can be collected or charted and commented on favorably when creative stories are shared in a group. Growth in language awareness should be reflected in creative writing which improves as children have much to say and the tools for saying it.

5. Teaching strategies for constantly increasing the oral language background must be included in language experience programs. This recommendation may seem quite general and because of this may be overlooked when one talks of reading skills. This "input" responsibility of the teacher can be met in many ways - one major way is through literature although many other situations for oral language development will be used. The greater the oral language background, the better equipped the reader is for interpreting the written code.

6. A teaching strategy for oral reading can be to alert children to use the intonation to make the reading of their language experience stories sound like their speech. The language experience approach provides oral reading situations in which children can truly "Make it sound like someone talking." The teacher's model is important in illustrating fluent natural reading. In their concern that children learn vocabulary, some teachers may tend to distort the reading of experience stories with over-emphasis on separate words and an unnatural slow rate.

Lefevre (8) maintains that "single words, analyzed and spoken in isolation, assume the intonation contours of whole utterances. Single words thus lose the characteristic pitch and stress they normally carry in the larger constructions that comprise the flow of speech and bear meaning." He emphasizes that the sentence is the minimal unit of

meaning, and that children should develop "sentence sense" in reading. In the language experience way of learning to read the beginner does learn to supply the "melodies of speech" as he reads.

7. Strategies for showing the relationship of oral and written codes can be developed as punctuation signals are pointed out incidentally with the emphasis on function and meaning. For example, after a number of experience stories have been written the teacher may casually say, "This is the end of your idea - so we put a period. The next word goes with the next idea so we start this part with a capital letter."

8. A strategy for experimenting with vocabulary can be developed as children discuss and classify words in a variety of ways. For example, beginning readers may find color words, animal words, and words for people, etc. Older children can collect and classify interesting words, descriptive words, action words, etc. Words which describe characters in literature or which describe mood or feeling can form the basis for other discussions. Children can find words which have the same meaning or words with more than one meaning but without the drill this kind of vocabulary learning sometimes takes. Children can use sentences and experiment with sentence meaning as they replace various words in a sentence. The vocabulary study then is done not in isolation but in a meaningful context.

9. Another strategy is to have children classify words from their word banks by the phoneme-grapheme patterns. Discovery of similarities builds as children acquire an ever-increasing sight vocabulary. Instruction in letter-sound relationships will be one part of a balanced reading program but such instruction must be made as meaningful as possible.

10. Teaching strategies for structural analysis need to be employed in contextual situations. When children speak, they use the right s, ed, and ing forms if those forms are part of their speech. As children work with the word endings the changed function of the words can be demonstrated only in context. Closure choice activities are recommended here as children choose the appropriate forms. An experience story can be used to point out the words with endings added to the base words.

Summary

An effective language experience program is one which is based on educational, psychological, and linguistic understandings. In the implementation of the program teachers seek to help children relate the written language code to the spoken language code as they help children develop strategies for language recognition of the grapho-phonic, semantic, and syntatical information. Communication is foremost in this child-oriented program with reading instruction built on existing language performance but the instruction does not stop with or is not limited to that performance as language facility is constantly extended. Children speak language; children can learn to read language with effective language experience instruction.

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