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ABSTRACT

The Pennsylvania Comprehensive Reading/Communication Arts Plan (PCRP) is a flexible guide designed to advance student competence in reading, listening, and oral and written expression, and to nurture positive attitudes toward reading and the effective use of language. Intended for use on every educational level, preschool through adult, the PCRP develops four critical experiences: responding to literature (heard, read, visualized or dramatized), engaging in sustained silent reading of self-selected books, composing (written and oral) and investigating and mastering language patterns (sound/spelling, syntax, and meanings). Other portions of the plan discuss the following topics: the resources that the learner brings to learning, developing and using curriculum-related tests, the effective use of standardized tests, informal appraisals of student competence and attitude, and ways of obtaining teacher feedback for evaluation and development of curriculum. The final portion of the plan lists research studies and references supporting the four critical experiences approach and selected references for use in implementing PCRP. (MAI)

# A COMPREHENSIVE READING COMMUNICATION ARTS PLAN

1977 WORKING EDITION



By Morton Botel
University of Pennsylvania
for the Pennsylvania Department of Education

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None of the above, however, are responsible for any inadequacy remaining in the present verision of the PCRP.

Morton Botel

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This is a working document that will be used by the Department in various field testing and training activities during the year. It is subject to further review, evaluation and revision based upon the outcomes of these initial implementation activities.

# I. THE PLAN: GOALS AND GUIDELINES

However we may differ, most American teachers share two basic and interacting goals for reading/communication arts instruction:

1. To advance student competence in reading and listening and in oral and written expression.

2. To nurture positive attitudes toward reading and the effective use of language.

Basically the Pennsylvania Comprehensive Reading/Communication Arts Plan (PCRP) proposes a framework of goals and processes for advancing these goals under the active leadership of the chief school administrator of each school system in the Commonwealth.

The PCRP is an *outline guide* for action, not a prescription. Its main elements have considerable support from experimental and other research (see references in III and IV), but its implementation is flexible and responsive to the uniqueness of each school system.

The PCRP relates to every person, preschool-through-adult level, to every content area of the curriculum and to all the communicative arts and skills.

The PCRP embraces not only the average student, but also the exceptional student – whether the *slow learner*, the *educationally disadvantaged*, the *bilingual/bidialectal*, the *learning disabled*, the *gifted*, and the *functionally illiterate adult*.

The PCRP is a plan of shared accountability – from administration to the staff, from the staff to administration and from both to the students and community. The administration provides for the staff a flexible plan (PCRP) for continuous strengthening of the curriculum and the resources for implementing it, including materials and a staff development program. The staff, in turn, brings its collective energies and wisdom to implementing, evaluating and improving the program. The more limited notion of accountability as scores on a series of tests, with the teachers alone being accountable for improving them, has proven bankrupt in recent years and has damaged the collaborative potential of the administration and staff working in concert.

> The PCRP is a plan in process. It will need to be revised as we gain experience in using it in the school systems of the Commonwealth to bring about more progress in reading/communication arts.

## The PCRP Action Plan

The schoolwide and classroom management objectives for both administrators (and by inference, teachers) are set forth in the PCRP *Action Plan.* The research reported herein strongly supports the prospect that efficient and creative implementation of this action plan will produce optimal growth in reading achievement and positive attitudes.

This Action Plan proposes four major categories of action on the part of the administration and staff of a school system. They are outlined below and elaborated on in the remainder of the report.

1. The institution or improvement of a preschool-through-adult reading/communication arts curriculum based on the four critical experiences* in reading/communication arts:

- Responding to Literature (heard, read, visualized or dramatized)
- Sustained Silent Reading of Self-Selected Books
- Composing: Oral and Written
- Investigating and Mastering Language Patterns: Sound/Spelling, Syntax and Meanings.

Each of these experiences uses and cultivates the skills of languaging: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

2. The institution or improvement of a curriculum-related and standardized test evaluation design for management of instruction: proper placement of students, diagnosis of student needs and measurement of student progress.

3. The institution or improvement of informal measures of student growth in interaction (talking together) skills, writing skills, study skills and positive attitudes toward reading.

4. The institution or improvement of systematic methods for obtaining teacher observations and evaluations as a prime basis for the continual evaluation and development of the curriculum.

The implementation of the four kinds of actions for achieving the goals of greater competence and motivation constitutes the broad objectives of the PCRP for the improvement of reading/communication arts instruction and the improvement of the literacy ethic of all citizens.

*By critical experiences we mean preschool-through-adult experiences which students cannot do without if they are to develop optimally the arts and skills of language.

## II. THE FOUR CRITICAL EXPERIENCES FOR READING/COMMUNICATION ARTS

### A. Critical Experience 1: Responding to Literature

Responding to oral and written literature means that students will *hear, read or see enacted* a literary selection and will be encouraged to respond to it personally through discussion, written expression, simulation (role-playing, informal dramatizations, etc.), and other expressive arts.

Before school and systematic instruction begin, the earliest means by which young children learn to read are by listening and responding to literature at home. In fact, a literate environment at home usually produces children who read early and maintain their competence throughout school (13, 14, 15. 19, 22, 29, 34, 39, 55, 63, 65). Such an environment has several characteristics. Family members have a general commitment to the benefits and pleasures of oral and written language. There is a home library and writing materials. Family members read silently, read aloud to their children and to one another, and talk about what they read with each other. The implication for schools is clear: Any effort to improve reading/communication arts instruction should include parents. Parents of very young children should be influenced to provide a literate environment at home. Research shows that no factor is more potent than this influence. Most Japanese children, for example, are fairly competent readers at age five (when they enter school); their mothers teach them simply by reading to them daily and answering their questions (55).

The school should also provide a literate environment rich in language experiences that excite and challenge thinking and imagination, touch values and feelings, and improve reading and writing competence For these purposes nothing is more effective than being exposed to literature by hearing and reading it and responding to its ideas, images and sounds. (2, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 20, 29, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 49, 51, 58, 64). Even when students are capable of reading literature on their own, they should continue to experience literature read aloud.

Responses to hearing or reading imaginative* literature from primary levels through secondary schools should be elicited from students and include all four *comprehensive perspectives* indicated in the chart which follows.

*Narrative, poetic, expository and descriptive. Response to reading highly structured textbooks and references as well as other study skills is dealt with under Critical Experience 4.

Comprehensive Perspectives in Responding to Literature[1]

| Plain Language | Comprehension Labels Used by Reading and English Specialists |
|---|---|
| 1. How does it make me feel? | engagement/involvement (also called personal response, creative thinking) |
| 2. What does it say? | literary perception (also called literal, factual, recall, stated meaning, observational) |
| 3. What does it mean to me? | interpretation (also called inferential, beyond the information given) |
| 4. How appealing and worthy is it? | evaluation (also called critical) |

Encouraging responses from the engagement/involvement perspective is desirable because it is the natural first response of persons to imaginative literature (4, 35, 40, 48, 52, 57).

Any experience, whether in books or in real life, can be viewed, thought about and talked about from all of the four perspectives. Doing so stimulates and develops thinking. On the other hand, there is little evidence of comprehension subskills[2] which can be reliably measured and distinguished from one another for diagnosis of differential comprehension within an individual. Apparently it is not true that whatever is taught can be measured, at least not reliably. If we were to limit the involvement of our students to that which tests can reliably measure, we would deny them opportunities to become fully involved with real and vicarious experiences.

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[1]Engagement/involvement, literary perception, interpretation and evaluation are terms used by Purves and Beach (50) who define them as follows:

*Engagement/involvement*: personal reaction to literature in relation to the fictional world of the work, the author, the moral standards of the work/author and the artistic form of the work.

*Literary perception:* Analytic statements about the elements of the form of the literary work, as they contribute to the total meaning of the work.

*Interpretation*: the act of relating the literary work to one's own conception of the knowledge of the work and the consequent meaning one finds in the work.

*Evaluation*: subjective or objective appraisal of the literary work in terms of emotional appeal, aesthetics, moral significance or other criteria.

[2]Except possibly for vocabulary and general comprehension of prose. Specific evidence for this fact will be found in the later section on testing (see 6, 38, 63).

Research shows that elementary and secondary teachers seem to overuse questions that call for short answers rather than those that generate discussion and involvement (31, 44). Unfortunately they seem to be encouraged in this biased emphasis by the suggestions in many teacher's guides of basal reading and literature programs (53). The effect of this is to discourage and dampen student interest and involvement and thereby to limit the flow and quality of thought. Recently, leading university teachers of English (24, 50, 59) have joined elementary and secondary leaders in severely criticizing over-emphasis on factual elements, short answers and formal analysis to the detriment of full involvement of students at all four perspectives.

We propose a variety of productive activities to tap all the four comprehension perspectives. The best of these activities often involve the interaction of several or all perspectives.

- discussions
- compositions
- oral and choral readings and rereadings
- simulations (role-playing and informal dramatizations)
- question/answer formats
- retelling (including retelling by changing characters, actions, or setting)
- art and music interpretations

Response to hearing or reading poetry should also begin at a personal or engagement/involvement level. The meaning of poetry is conveyed by special arrangements of words and sentences which convey strong images, therefore poetry must be experienced and felt to be comprehended. By working on an interpretation of a piece of poetry, students can express their personal reaction to it.

An example of one of many appropriate responses to poetry at the primary and middle school levels that involve all perspectives would be to *do* a poem.

Since poetry has aspects of music, poetry can be interpreted to bring out the rhythm and the musical use of speech sounds. Pantomime or dance can add visual and movement dimensions to the interpretation. When appropriate, students may write additional verses to a poem or poems of their own following the same form using sentence frames. To do these things causes the student to return again and again to the directly stated and implied meanings of the poem.

The significance of hearing, reading and responding to literature for the bilingual/bicultural student is worthy of note. A rich diet, both qualitatively and quantitatively, of the language in literature provides such students with the solid base in oral language necessary to become competent in reading and writing.

To summarize, teachers must learn to give balanced emphasis to all four comprehension perspectives in encouraging and eliciting student response to narrative and poetic literature, beginning with personal responses.

Leadership Actions for Implementing Critical Experience 1

1 Encourage and train parents to read to their children daily and to engage their children in oral language responses beginning at the earliest possible age (6 months to 1 year is not too young) and continuing throughout their school careers.

2 Set guidelines for preschool and elementary teachers to read something to their students *daily* from a wide variety of appropriate imaginative literature.

3. Set guidelines for secondary teachers to read to students *regularly* literary selections related to their units of study.

4 In the elementary school have the leadership staff set the model by occasionally visiting classrooms and reading to students.

5. Set guidelines for having students hear and read a wide variety of literary types at each grade level.

6. Set guidelines for eliciting responses to all literary experiences from all four comprehension perspectives: engagement/involvement, literary perception, interpretation and evaluation.

7 Arrange staff development programs to increase understanding of this critical experience and methods for implementing and evaluating it.

Hearing, reading and responding to literature clearly transcends both grade level and subject matter. All parents and teachers can contribute to advancing the understanding and enjoyment of literature and therefore, according to research, contribute to reading achievement and positive attitudes toward reading and language.

B. Critical Experience 2: Self-Selected and Sustained Silent Reading

Self-Selected and Sustained Silent Reading means that students will be able to choose among a wide assortment of books and periodicals and read them in school without interruption at their own pace and in their own way. They have the further option of choosing how they will respond to their books, including the option of not having to respond formally to some of what

they read. As we have noted earlier, having, valuing and using a library is a major characteristic of a literate environment.

It should not be surprising that having students read on their own is not only a major objective of reading, it is a way of becoming a more effective, efficient and versatile reader. There is no better form of practice and drill in reading. It is also a way of encouraging a lifetime commitment to reading as a means to knowledge and entertainment (3, 5, 8, 24, 40, 69).

The most effective and simplest management systems for introducing this critical experience is *Sustained Silent Reading* (SSR), which has been proposed by Lyman Hunt of the University of Vermont for elementary classrooms and *English in Every Classroom*, which has been proposed by Daniel Fader for secondary classrooms.

We recommend seven steps to teachers in establishing an SSR component of the reading/communication arts program. They are:

1. Gather a classroom library. Your school or public library can help you rotate your collections. Circulate your books often Paperbacks have particular appeal for students at both elementary and secondary levels.

2. At the beginning of each SSR period, introduce one or more of the books by reading from them or commenting about them.

3. Ask each student to select a book.

4. Have *everyone read* and join in yourself.

5. Start with a period of three to five minutes at the early kindergarten/primary levels and build up gradually to fifteen to thirty minutes as students show that they can handle it. In middle grades and secondary schools thirty minutes a day, on the average, seems workable. Teachers in each *major* subject might set aside one half hour, one day a week for SSR. At the primary level, use a kitchen timer to signal the end of SSR. Some days you may want to spend less or more time, depending on your students.

6 At the end of SSR, give students an opportunity to voluntarily share something from their reading, but have students understand they are not required to do so.

7. Allow students to select from other response options, which include those for experiencing literature in Critical Experience 1:

- discussions
- compositions
- simulations (role-playing and informal dramatizations)
- question/answer formats
- retelling (including retelling by changing characters, actions, or setting)
- art and music interpretations

These responses should be shared with other students and not offered for teacher evaluation.

**Leadership Actions for Implementing Critical Experience 2**

1. Set guidelines for kindergarten and elementary teachers to set up daily SSR periods providing a wide choice of material and a choice of ways to respond to reading. Kindergarten children can read pictures in books and "read" story books.

2. Set guidelines for secondary teachers to set up regular sustained silent reading periods related to units of study in their disciplines as a way to broaden the intellectual reach of their students.

3. Have the leadership staff occasionally visit classrooms to participate in SSR sessions and show by their presence and participation the significance of this experience.

4. Provide means of evaluating progress in reading and writing which are consistent with the goal of motivating lifetime reading and writing.

5. Provide funds for increasing the number of books, periodicals and paperbacks in classroom libraries. Expect to replace unreturned and disintegrating paperbacks.

6. Invite students to lend or give books from their personal libraries to classroom collections or to exchange books.

7. Provide a means for circulating classroom collections through cooperation with the school library. Develop less strict regulations for circulating these books.

8. Plan an annual book fair, book auction or book swap.

9. Create a small bookstore, especially in secondary schools.

10. Arrange staff development programs to increase understanding of this critical experience and ways to implement and evaluate it.

## C. Critical Experience 3: Composing – Oral and Written

Composing has had widespread use thoughout the world as a means for learning to read as well as for its own value as the *other* dimension of literacy. In other English-speaking countries where children enter school a year younger than American children, dictating and writing compositions are widely used as a basic approach to learning to read.

In our own country there has always been strong advocacy for having children dictate their own words, sentences and stories, which are then recorded by the teacher and read back by the children. Fernald (27) used, with remarkable success, a composing approach to learning to read with severely handicapped older readers.

As early as preschool level, children are interested in writing the letters of the alphabet and copying their dictated words and sentences (15). When children see their own oral expressions recorded, they are more likely to develop an understanding of the connection between oral sentences and written sentences. When they write their words and sentences, they are more likely to understand the connection between pronunciations and English spellings. Thus, composing is the other side of the coin in language learning: when reading, one goes from writing to speech; and when composing, one goes from speech to writing. Each experience sharpens the understandings: what can be written can be said; what can be said can be written.

### Sustained Writing (SW)

We recommend that all elementary (beginning at grade 1) and secondary students write something of their own each day in response to their reading, their other experiences, or in exercise of their fantasies. They might keep these writings in a journal, copybook or folder. These products should not be graded because grading is likely to impede the writing flow of students and discourage teachers by the time it takes.

To bring about daily writing, we propose the establishment of periods of *Sustained Writing* which parallels *Sustained Silent Reading.* The objective of SW is to foster the habit of writing by providing a daily period of uninterrupted writing time. In SW students choose their own books or topics to write about in their own way without having to make an accounting. The teacher does not score these writings, although she/he may want to read some of them and make constructive and supportive comments.

The value of SW is that it gives students needed practice in writing. SW is a common practice of accomplished writers: to get started, they often sit down and let ideas flow without worrying about editing or prestructuring.

## Establishing SW Involves Six Steps

1. Have students keep a notebook to serve as a journal for SW. They might make their own books with a personally designed cover. Entries should be dated.

2. Stimulate the flow of writing. There are many ways to do this: an uncompleted sentence, something that touches the student from literature, recording the day's events and so on. Probably one of the best ways for some students, regardless of age, to get started is to copy a favorite passage from a book and, perhaps, to illustrate it.

3. Since the teacher writes too, arrangements or directions must provide for the student's desire to spell correctly. At the primary levels a list of words on the board, a personal file box with word cards, words on cards pinned on the wall, etc., are advised. An available dictionary will aid older students.

4. At the primary level use a kitchen timer to signal the end of the period. Gradually increase the time as you see the students are able to write for longer periods. Fifteen minutes is a good top limit.

5. Provide time for voluntary sharing. As stated above there is no grading of this kind of writing except pass or fail for writing a certain number of words or pages. As time goes on and the practice of SW is established, have students work in pairs, taking turns reading aloud what they have written. They each tell what they like in the other's composition, and let each other know if something is not clear. The object is to help and support the other person.

6. Encourage each student to look for some part of their writing they like enough to develop, edit and prepare for publication – either in a classroom publication or posted on a bulletin board.

## Guided Structured Writing

In addition to SW, students at every level benefit from specific teaching of the conventions of writing (usage, punctuation, capitalization and spelling) and from a wide variety of writing assignments, including stories, poems, letters and essays. These activities are known as guided structured writings (GWS).

Good writing products from SW or GSW which might be worthy of publication should be rewritten after close editorial examination by the teacher and student, or by the student and peers acting as proofreaders.

Leadership Actions for Implementing Critical Experience 3

1. Set guidelines for kindergarten and elementary teachers to provide both daily Sustained Writing periods and regular periods of Guided Structured Writing for their students.

2. Set guidelines for secondary teachers to provide students with regular writing periods.

3. Encourage the writing and informal publication of student articles and books. See that these works are included in classroom and school libraries.

4. Develop seminars and workshops with journalists, editors and writers who live in the community.

5. Stimulate the development of writers' clubs during and after the school day.

6. Arrange staff development programs to increase understanding of this critical experience and ways to implement and evaluate it.

> Before describing the last of the four critical experiences, we will consider aspects of the first three that deserve special mention. For one thing, each provides for experiencing language whole – students listen, read, write and talk together. For another, each can be used with whole classes and with heterogeneous groups. To organize reading solely in small, ability groupings is inappropriate for both able and slow students. For the able, it encourages a sense of superiority; for the slow, inferiority and hopelessness; and for both, a sense of alienation from their peers. This is not to deny the validity of limited range grouping for some aspects of reading instruction. Indeed, the fourth critical experience proposes grouping students at their instructional levels in basal readers as one way to meet their special skill needs.

## D. Critical Experience 4: Investigating and Mastering Language Patterns

Investigating and mastering language patterns means the systematic study of:

*Sound/spelling patterns* – the way pronunciations are related to the spelling patterns of English.

*Syntax* – the ways in which sentences are formed.

*Meanings* – the ways of comprehending words, sentences, paragraphs and longer units of textual and other factual or expository material.

Basal readers and other teaching resources at the elementary school level and study skills texts at the secondary level present activities to develop mastery of the patterns of language listed above. According to research, three things are called for if we are to get the most out of these resources:

1. Students should be placed at their appropriate instructional levels in basal readers and other scaled skill development materials.

2. Problem-solving approaches in the study of sound, structure and meaning should be introduced if skill development materials do not provide adequately for this mode of study.

3. The reading/study skills must be taught by content teachers in the content areas.

[We have, under *Responding to Literature*, dealt with the fundamental question of comprehending imaginative literature. Basal readers (mainly anthologies of such literature), other anthologies, books and periodicals are sources for such experiences. In Critical Experience 4 we are concerned with mastery of textbook patterns in content areas and the means for responding to and mastering textbook assignments.]

## Instructional Level Placement

Placement of students at their proper instructional level in a basal series has been found to improve the achievement, motivation and study skills of students, particularly the slower readers who are easily frustrated by material too difficult to read and comprehend (28).

This is best accomplished by the use of curriculum-related tests. A simple, reliable means for doing this is described in a later section devoted to curriculum-related tests.

## Investigations in the Study of Sound, Structure and Meanings

It is very clear from research that we get higher achievement in reading if instruction stresses *meaningful* decoding and encoding at the level of syllables, words and sentences (12, 20).

It is important to distinguish here between two ways of learning to decode and encode meaningfully: associative learning and investigations.

Associative learning – that is, learning from being told and from practice and drill – is very important and begins in the first years of the child's life. In associative learning, we are told what we must know, or we go to our memories for answers to questions. At all ages, much is remembered and memorized based on the psychological rules of associative learning: understanding, repetition, recency, spaced review and so on.

An investigation, in the study of language, is a search for patterns. Students are presented with data which they investigate to see what patterns they can find and what conclusions they can draw from their findings. Of course, an investigation calls upon earlier associative learning in the search for patterns.

## Reading/Study Skills in Content Areas

Under *Critical Experience 1 - Responding to Literature*, emphasis on the four main comprehension perspectives was placed on imaginative literary selections rather than on textbooks and reference materials. The general perspectives, however, are almost identical for developing thinking and comprehension in both types of reading. What is different is the nature of the material (appeal and purpose). The following chart shows that *literary perception* is applied to imaginative literature and *formal perception* is applied to textual material ,including textbooks, reference books, and consumer reading.

**The Comprehension Perspectives of Imaginative and Textual Literature**

| | Narrative | Expository |
|---|---|---|
| 1. How does it relate to my life? | Engagement/ Involvement | Engagement/ Involvement |
| 2. What does it say? | Literary Perception | Formal Perception |
| 3. What does it mean? | Interpretion | Interpretion |
| 4. How good is it? | Evaluation | Evaluation |

By the reading/study skills in the content areas, we mean the growing ability to handle variations of these questions effectively and independently.

Learning to respond to textual and consumer reading requires continuous guided experiences in identifying, relating and remembering the key vocabulary, main ideas, details, and sequences of main ideas and details. These are interrelated subskills of *formal perception* and are best handled

by guiding students through such reading material in the search for structure and meaning.

For this search in textbooks, a variation of the SQ4R unified study procedure is recommended. SQ4R represents the steps in independent study of textbook-type materials.

S -previewing the text (making use of summaries and other organizational aids; making preliminary outlines)

Q -turning headings into questions

R -reading to answer the questions and making notes

R -self-recitation

R -reflection

R -review

At early primary levels and continuing on through college, students should be guided and drilled through these routines of study as the means of grasping the content of the subject matter in social studies and science texts. While students will become increasingly self-directing in using these routines for independent or peer group study, it cannot be assumed at any grade level that students know how to use a unified study procedure independently. For that reason the teaching of this key reading/study strategy, as it pertains to a certain subject, is the responsibility of each content teacher at every grade level.

Because SQ4R focuses on *formal perception* almost exclusively, in every textbook teachers should approach the content in textbooks from the other comprehension perspectives, too. This can be accomplished by eliciting response from students through a wide variety of activities, including:

-discussions
-compositions
-simulations (role-playing and other informal dramatizations)
-debates
-visual interpretations

To learn well in content areas involves the mastery of other reading/study skills, including:

1. Organizing a notebook to take notes from listening and reading.

2. Preparing for and taking standardized and curriculum-related tests, whether objective or subjective.

3. Writing reports.

4. Solving word problems (in math).

5. Reading scientific articles and lab reports.

6. Following directions in shop manuals and recipes.

To be an effective consumer in life involves the specific learning of still other reading/study skills, including:

1. Reading advertisements, want ads, entertainment schedules.

2. Reading such legal documents as leases, mortgages, income tax forms.

3. Reading and filling out job applications.

We make particular mention of the need for developing the student's *testwiseness* on standardized tests. In the area of reading, analyses of standardized tests show a few interesting patterns. The large divisions of the test are vocabulary and comprehension subtests. Vocabulary items are typically definitions or phrases with words underlined. These are followed by four answers, one of which is the word defined or a synonym for the underlined word. Comprehension items are short paragraphs followed by four to six questions, usually one *main idea* question like *What would be the best title for the paragraph;* two or so *detail* questions based on exact statements or paraphrases of the text; one or more *inference* questions that can be inferred from the text; and often one *vocabulary in content* question in which the student must find a synonym. Typically, these categories rather than the four comprehension perspectives we have proposed are regarded as the valid dimensions of a reading program. They wrongly become the generators of the reading curriculum rather than what they might legitimately be – the generators of the testwiseness portion of the curriculum. A similar analysis can, of course, be made of the *language* section of the standardized test.

These reading/study skills cannot be taken for granted at any level. They cannot be learned incidentally by most intermediate and secondary students any more than the decoding skills can be learned incidentally by most younger students. Teachers at every grade level need to walk students through SQ4R and other routines of reading and study that lead to mastery of the course objectives and to greater consumer effectiveness.

Leadership Actions for Implementing Critical Experience 4

1. Develop a system whereby students are placed in scaled reading skills programs such as basal readers or programmed reading materials and are advanced from one level to the next based on simple cost-effective and reliable curriculum-related tests* or other informal procedures.

2. Set guidelines for providing students with a balance of systematic problem-solving and associative-learning experiences in learning to make use of sound, syntax and meaning in learning to read and spell.

3. Set guidelines for having content teachers take responsibility for providing alternative learning experiences for students who cannot read their books. Examples of such experiences are:

   -more careful preparation for reading assignments

   -a choice of books to provide for differences in reading ability, interests and needs

   -opportunities to experience the ideas in other ways (filmstrips, visits and hands-on experiences, lectures, hearing the material read aloud by an able reader, etc.)

4. Set guidelines for having elementary and secondary content teachers take responsibility for helping students learn the vocabulary and study skills needed to understand their subject and to become more effective consumers.

5. Arrange staff development programs to increase understanding of this critical experience and ways to implement and evaluate it.

*Consult the later section of the PCRP for a more detailed account of the need for and ways of designing a simple CRT in reading.

The proposed curriculum design calls for a balance among the four ways of learning to read. It is not a question of choosing the *best* way. Each contributes to the larger goals of high achievement and high interest. Each is an avenue for learning not only reading but also other language arts: writing, listening and talking together. The chart that follows shows how these critical experiences interrelate.

## E. The Interrelatedness of the Four Critical Experiences

| | Responding to Literature | Composing | Self-Selected Reading | Studying Language Patterns |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Responding to Literature | X | Hearing and reading literature stimulates composing. | Hearing and reading stories read aloud prepares students for self-selected reading. | Listening to literature read aloud teaches reading skills by *The Lap Method* - a method accounting for the skill of children who come to school knowing how to read. |
| Composing | Literature provides models of forms of writing. Composing produces stories which can be read aloud or dramatized. | X | Composing produces teacher-made or student-made books for the classroom library. | Composing gives insight into the encoding of speech and perceptually reinforces understanding. |
| Self-Selected Reading | Children tend to return to books read aloud. | Reading literature stimulates composing. | X | Self-selected reading, and lots of it, has been called the best possible practice and drill. |
| Studying Language Patterns | Students gain insight into the coding of speech by looking at print as it is read aloud. Students' vocabulary increases as they listen to stories beyond their reading level. | Students are motivated to master the system in order to express themselves in writing. Much practice in writing improves foundations for later notetaking and report writing. | Wide reading produces growth in vocabulary and broadens experiences, thus facilitating the reading of textual materials. | X |

## III. THE RESOURCES THE LEARNER BRINGS TO LEARNING

While the four critical experiences have been causally associated with reading/communication arts improvement, the quality of these experiences will vary. Their quality depends on how well teachers make use of resourses the student brings to the learning situation. These resources are their language, affect, search for meaning, perception and study skills (LAMPS). By keeping these resources in mind, blocks to learning can be avoided.

The following teaching practices and attitudes help students make the most of their learning resources while engaged in any of the critical experiences.

1. Language: Students are given extensive opportunities for verbal interaction with peers and with the teacher as an integral part of each of the four critical experiences (32, 39, 48, 62).

2. Affect: Students are motivated to feel interested and challenged (39).
Students are encouraged to feel successful (41, 54).
Students are inspired to feel respected by others (42, 54).
Students are helped to feel self-respect (41, 54).
Students are given literary experiences that touch their lives (2).

3. Meaning: Students are encouraged to search for meanings, both structural and semantic, in problem solving situations by doing - observing - talking (10, 46, 48).
Students are given response options that enable them to bring a wide variety of thought processes to their work (6, 10, 47, 48).

4. Perception: Students are given significant opportunities to use multisensory approaches for learning to read and spell. These opportunities include tracing, writing, typing, using manipulative devices and games, as well as hearing literature and responding to it (25, 27).

5. Study Skills: Students become increasingly capable of learning independent of teacher direction - alone and with small groups.

The teacher or supervisor can use the above list to prepare for or to evaluate a lesson in which the focus is on any of the four critical experiences. It is important that all members of a staff have time to consider the significance of the LAMPS criteria in enhancing learning before the criteria are used to evaluate teaching practices. It is helpful to collect examples of specific practices that illustrate how teachers make use of these student resources.

## IV. DEVELOPING AND USING CURRICULUM-RELATED TESTS

Both curriculum-related tests (criterion-referenced) and standardized tests (norm-referenced) play important but different roles in assessing student competence in reading. Together they can provide the basis for managing the placement, diagnosis and progress of students through Critical Experience 4. But, while such measures are useful, it is taken for granted that diagnostic teaching, the daily response to student interaction with materials, activities and peers, is the teacher's most valuable assessment tool.

### Curriculum-Related Tests for Placing Children at Their Instructional Level

Curriculum-related tests (CRT) like the Informal Reading Inventory, the Miscue Analysis Inventory or criterion-referenced tests focus on *principal measurable skills* or *behavioral objectives* at each level of a scaled reading program.

The principal measurable skills in reading are *comprehension* and *decoding*. Mastery of these skills at any level is judged by the achievement of a certain minimum score or *criterion*. This information suggests how students might be grouped for instruction, that is, how they might be placed at an appropriate instructional level based on the skill sequences actually taught in the program. The same information is diagnostic and provides the basis for judging mastery and pacing through the program. These tests also serve the administration, school board and parents by showing status and progress through a sequenced skill-development program adopted by the staff with the approval of the school board.

The major problem in the use of CRTs is this: What is a reliable, efficient and cost-effective means for knowing whether the objectives at each level of a scaled reading program have been mastered? Many CRTs have dozens and even hundreds of objectives at each level. Measures of these objectives are usually called subskills. But the actual ability to decode and comprehend words, sentences and longer units are the principal learnings at each level. We believe it is possible to measure mastery of these more global and fundamental skills directly without also analyzing and testing the many items that make up the subskills of decoding and comprehending.

We present this fundamental argument: that subskills have been taught when principal learnings have been mastered. A simple analogy will introduce the argument. A person taking a driving test may be asked to drive around the block in busy traffic. If the driver can accomplish that task, it can be assumed that he or she has mastery of the subskills of braking, steering, shifting, using turn signals and attending to traffic signals. No separate tests need be devised to determine competency in these subskills. Mastery of the subskills can be observed when the student demonstrates his/her *integration* and *application* of the subskills in a practical situation.

## The Matter of Reliability

What we need for diagnosis and for judging placement and mastery in reading is analogous to the driving test: a performance of the principal skills which reveals an ability to use the subskills. Beyond the logic of the analogy, we need to be parsimonious about our testing programs: We can not afford to take the time to give tests that are not reliable. Specifically, the reliability of a test is a measure of the likelihood that a student's test score would be the same if he or she took the test again. Let us examine this problem with respect to comprehension and decoding in CRTs.

As to comprehension, research in reading and statistics (6, 25, 40, 66) has shown that we are presently able to measure with reliability something called general comprehension. This is done by having students respond to word, sentence and paragraph meanings as seen in standardized tests. Further analysis of these skills into subskills is not reliable. Evidence of this low reliability can be found in the research manuals provided by test publishers.

We have already shown that there are four major perspectives of comprehension response to literary and textual materials: engagement/involvement. literary or formal perception, interpretation and evaluation. It is these perspectives that must guide us in teaching, but since the science of measurement does not yet enable us to measure reliably these kinds of responses, not to mention so-called subskills of these responses, the usefulness of identifying these perspectives is *for teaching and not for testing.*

In short, a test of comprehension cannot at present distinguish reliably, for individual students, among the separate comprehension perspectives. Thus, it is not always true that what we can teach we can test reliably. We may conclude that as far as comprehension is concerned, a scaled group of general comprehension measures is likely to be the most reliable, efficient and cost-effective *estimate* of the thinking processes in reading. The ability to meet the criterion at each level constitutes presumptive evidence that the subskills that underlie general comprehension are also mastered.

Structural linguists have proposed that a valid analysis of the syllable/spelling patterns of English for instruction in decoding should be an ordering of the most common and therefore productive syllable/spelling patterns. Depending upon the linguist, there are from three to perhaps six major pattern groupings, each of which is further analyzed into subgroupings.

Traditionally, basal readers have chosen their core vocabularies on the basis of frequency of use rather than on the basis of regularities in spelling. These frequency vocabularies are designated as preprimer (the most common words found in books and writings for children), and by the less frequently used words, which are scaled as: primer, $1^2$, $2^1$, $2^2$, $3^1$, $3^2$, etc.

More recently, basal readers have made increased use of syllable/spelling pattern research in developing their programs. Basal reader series today typically present some combination of high-frequency sight words and syllable/spelling patterns for students to master. Programming the syllable/spelling patterns and their variants (noun, verb, adjective, adverb forms) and weaving them together is the function of the instructional program within and across the levels of a basal reading program.

Now let us come back to the matter of a reliable CRT of the decoding processes. What we need is a measure of the ability of a student to recognize and decode a sampling of the sight words and syllable/spelling patterns introduced at each level of the basal reading program through the fourth reader level. By that level, all the important word processing skills have been introduced We would propose that an efficient and manageable CRT of the decoding processes should measure the mastery only of these major spelling patterns and basic vocabulary taught at each basal reader level and *not* the separable elements that can be furtner analyzed out of these larger patterns. This can be done through word recognition tests in isolation and in context.

To summarize, a management system for placing, diagnosing and advancing students through a scaled program in reading need only include two simple subtests at each level through fourth grade level books:

1. A measure of general comprehension

2. A measure of word recognition

Mastery of the criterion for each of these objectives constitutes evidence that the other subskills have been mastered as well. Needless to say, these two subtests should be reliable.

## V. MAKING MORE EFFECTIVE USE OF STANDARDIZED TESTS

The major function of curriculum-related tests is to tell us what skill sequences of an instructional program the students have mastered. The major function of standardized tests is to enable us to know how students compare with a national cross-section of students of the same age range. Although the CRT is definitely superior in monitoring student placement and needs through the fourth reader level of a scaled skills program, the standardized test serves this function as well or better from the fifth reader level on. In fact, in the absence of a CRT at the primary levels of reading, the standardized test provides general information for rough placement of students.

When standardized tests are used at any level, standard scores rather than grade equivalent scores should be used. Grade equivalent scores are point scores and therefore less reliable than

standard scores, which are a band or range of scores. In addition, grade equivalent scores are misleading before students have become competent in reading at least fourth reader level materials. The use of grade equivalent scores for placement of the lowest third of the students tends to place them in materials that are too difficult for efficient learning.

If reliable CRTs are available for the primary levels of reading, the administration of the standardized tests could be limited to a sample of students at these levels or even be postponed altogether till the end of second or third grade.

**Leadership Actions for Implementing a Curriculum-Related and Standardized Testing Program**

1. Develop or obtain cost-effective and reliable CRTs for placement, diagnosis and monitoring of students within your structured reading program up through the level of functional literacy (fourth reader level).

2. Use standardized tests as a guide to placement of students within your structured reading program after they have shown functional competence at a fourth reader level.

3. Arrange staff development programs to increase understanding of the nature, values and uses of these instruments.

## VI. OBTAINING INFORMAL APPRAISALS OF STUDENT COMPETENCE AND ATTITUDE

If the PCRP has been implemented successfully, we can expect the following observable behaviors by students in addition to higher performance on standardized and curriculum-related tests:

1. An increase in the number of books students read and an increase in the amount of pleasure they get from them.

2. An increase in the quantity and quality of students' written expression, including both control of written Standard English and competence in written communication of ideas.

3. An increase in the use of study skills in independent work and in collaboration with peers.

4. An increase in the quantity and quality of verbal interaction.

Below we give some of the possibilities for appraising objectively the behaviors stated above.

1. Measuring Growth in Self-Selected Reading

a. Classroom, school, and community librarians have records of circulation of books. They might compare records over a period of time.

b. Student attitude scales can be used. At the beginning *or* end of the school year (66), students respond *anonymously* to questions like those below by circling the number on an attitude scale that represents their personal evaluation of their reading habits.

How much do you read?

very little — a great deal

1 2 3 4 5

How much do you like to read?

not much — very much

1 2 3 4 5

How much do you like to be given time in school to read books of your own choice?

not much — very much

1 2 3 4 5

2. Measuring Growth in the Quantity and Quality of Written Expression

The teacher keeps a folder for each student. The students date their work and keep it in their files. Compare later written expression with earlier examples to look for changes in the length of the compositions, the quality of expression and evidence of greater control of the mechanics of writing.

3. Measuring Growth in Study Skills

The teacher might keep periodic examples of a set of notes taken for a chapter in a text that was done independently or with peers.

A published or locally developed study habits inventory could be administered to students annually.

4. Measuring Verbal Interaction

The teacher might make informal checks at the beginning of the year, at the middle of the year and at the end of the year by using audio or video tapes of children either responding to literature chosen by the student or involved in problem solving while investigating language. The teacher would compare the children's talk on the three tapes by listening for the quantity, quality and broadness of participation.

**Leadership Actions for Implementing the Informal Appraisal of Student Competencies and Attitudes**

1. Set guidelines for obtaining and using informal information about student competencies and attitudes.

2. Arrange staff development programs to increase understanding of the nature, values and uses of such appraisal.

## VII. OBTAINING TEACHER FEEDBACK FOR EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULUM

Monitoring the effectiveness of the implementation of the four critical experiences requires the involvement of teachers as they apply their expertise and individual styles to curriculum development. The following inventory illustrates how staff may report periodically on their progress in implementing each of the critical experiences. Such an inventory may be even better employed by principals or others responsible for improving instruction, who can use it as a basis for interviewing individual staff members. An analysis of the reports should be shared with staff. Such a system of feedback will be effective only if teachers are convinced that their efforts will be respected and used.

The sample inventory follows:

**How Well Are We Implementing the Comprehensive Reading Plan?**

Put an 'x' on the line that best indicates how well you feel you have been able to provide your students with quality critical experiences in reading. Then cite specific things you are doing to provide these experiences. Propose new plans and make recommendations to the administration on things they may do to help you.

I. Responding to Oral and Written Literature

little progress _____ much progress

Specific Activities:

New Plans:

Recommendations:

II. Self-Selection and Sustained Reading

little progress _____ much progress

Specific Activities:

New Plans:

Recommendations:

III. Composing

little progress ——— much progress

Specific Activities:

New Plans:

Recommendations:

IV. Study Language Patterns

little progress ——— much progress

Specific Activities:

New Plans:

Recommendations:

**Leadership Actions for Obtaining Teacher Feedback**

1. Set guidelines for obtaining responses to an inventory of teacher experiences and problems in implementing the four critical experiences.

2. Develop a plan for analyzing and synthesizing the responses to the inventory.

3. Publish commendable solutions to problems and creative strategies developed by individual staff members, crediting each contributor.

4. Provide worthwhile staff development activities for the entire staff and support for teachers who indicate specific needs.

We said in the introduction that the PCRP was also for the *special* student, regardless of classification.

Which student does not need:

1. To respond to oral and written language from a variety of perspectives: engagement/involvement, literary or formal perception, interpretation and evaluation?

2. To select books and read them in sustained periods of silent reading?

3. To compose, orally and in writing, his or her own thoughts?

4. To use more recognition and decoding strategies?

5. To work at his or her *instructional* level in scaled skill development materials?

6. To learn to read through problem-solving as well as associative-learning activities?

7. To learn to study and respond to textual materials from all four cognitive perspectives and, as a result, to become increasingly independent in study?

8. To make full use of his or her language, affective needs, search for meaning and perceptual strategies?

The answer is, of course, that *all* students need these experiences. Providing them for the educationally different does not require a different comprehensive plan, but rather a different implementation plan that considers the special student's level of cognitive functioning, attentiveness, pacing and motivation.

A local *needs assessment* could properly begin with the questions:

1. How well does our program provide all our students with the four critical reading/communication arts experiences?

2. Are we diagnosing and placing students in basal-type materials with reliable curriculum-related tests?

3. Where do we stand against national norms?

With this knowledge we can go about the continuing process of upgrading the program and monitoring progress through informal and standardized appraisal strategies.

## VIII. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What is the significance of the order of the four critical experiences as presented in the PCRP?

The four experiences are of equal importance. Each seems to be supported by significant research. Some have proposed that Critical Experience 4 should be presented first because it is more familiar. The arguments for the order in PCRP are (1) it corresponds to the natural history of child development, with specific instruction in abstract skill sequences coming later; and (2) experiences 1, 2 and 3 are typically ignored or preempted by specific skills instruction. The directed reading activity of basal readers places the first three experiences last, regarding them as enrichment (and therefore, for most educators, dispensable). Our experience is that if these productive experiences are to have credibility, they must be regarded as equally important and given balanced emphasis in the curriculum.

2. Why isn't the PCRP more specific?

The structure is quite concrete in terms of the kinds of experiences that have a payoff in achievement and positive attitude and the need for simplicity, reliability and parsimony in management, testing and informal evaluation. The point is that there are many ways to put flesh on the bones through processes best known to school leaders and their staffs.

3. Does the PCRP represent a swing away from accountability and the diagnostic/prescriptive model of reading and other communicative skills?

The PCRP proposes a broader notion of accountability than the monitoring of hundreds of subskills on criterion-referenced tests. In the first place, accountability begins with the school board and superintendent's declaration that providing the four critical experiences for students is a matter of priority and commitment – that resources will be made available to implement all experiences. These resources include materials, staff development activities and resource persons. Secondly, curriculum-related and standardized subtests need to be reliable enough to provide usable information for diagnostic purposes. We have shown that, while measures of general comprehension and word processing skills at each level of a scaled program are fairly reliable, the subskills of these principal skills cannot be measured reliably enough for diagnostic purposes. What we can diagnose reliably is the student's instructional level, which enables us to place him or her properly in a skills program. This is a reasonable *prescription* if one wishes to use such a medical analogy. We prefer calling it an *instructional decision.* Beyond that, effective diagnostic teaching is the quality of the day-by-day way in which teachers respond to student success and failure. In short, enlightened accountability, as far as testing is concerned, is the monitoring of placement of students at the proper instructional level and staff development to strengthen the teacher's informal diagnostic skills.

4. Will use of the PCRP lead to thinking of comprehension as an amorphous whole?

It should lead to quite the opposite. From the point of view of testing, we have noted in several places that general comprehension seems to be all we can presently measure in a cost-effective, reliable way. But from the point of view of the classroom teacher, all of the four major perspectives of comprehension proposed and the unlimited number of strategies for involving students in response to this perspective provide a structure for studying the seemingly countless dimensions of meaning.

5. Does the evidence in the bibliography provide conclusive evidence supporting the PCRP framework?

Definitely not. From the evidence presented, it seems a *reasonable inference* that the balanced curriculum experiences called for in the PCRP will produce the goals of high achievement and interest as well as or better than any other design presently known. Each school or system that implements the PCRP will be able to provide further data for refining and improving it.

6. Does the PCRP really address the needs of secondary students and adults?

Much of the leadership in response to literature and self-selection of books has come from secondary and college teachers such as Alan Purves, Daniel Fader and Walter Slatoff. We have emphasized the study of textbook materials in terms of SQ4R and the other reading and study tasks needed by secondary students and adults to become increasingly competent in their roles as homemakers, citizens and workers and in their leisure pursuits.

7. What further research can we conduct in Pennsylvania to enhance the ideas set forth in the PCRP?

Surely there are many. Two that stand out are:

a. Systematic implementation of the PCRP and evaluation of its effectiveness on achievement and attitude in an entire district, a school, or a special population like Title I students, the learning disabled, etc.

b. A new comprehensive study of vocabulary from perspectives of frequency of use and grammatical patterns (sound, meaning and structure).

8. How does the PCRP relate to *Project 81*?

Five key dimensions of Project 81 are to identify, and help students achieve, competencies needed to be successful in adult life. A vital component of adult competency is communication skills as they apply to knowledge and life areas.

9. How can we get wide community involvement in the PCRP?

First of all, parents should be helped to understand the four critical experiences and should be instructed specifically on how they can take responsibility for providing such experiences at home. Secondly, parents and other interested members of the community can be trained to serve the staff of a school as volunteer aides. Third, the school can join with other community agencies and institutions like the library, parent groups, scouts and religious institutions to become aware of and make use of the broad learning resources of a community.

10. Why doesn't the PCRP address itself to minimal competencies of students at various grade levels?

"The U.S. Office of Education estimates that there are 23 million American adults who are unable to perform basic coping skills, such as reading a train schedule." (*N.Y. Times*, 2/20/77, page 1). It is safe to say that few of these adults had the benefit of systematic exposure to the critical experiences over an extended period of time. Until school systems provide students with the critical experiences, it is impossible to know how competent students might become.

One minimum standard for now might be the guarantee that no student shall fail to get the educational experiences which will make him/her literate, i.e., able to read at a functional level of a fourth grade reader. The responsibility for competence cannot be passed on to the student, who is the victim of inadequate instruction.

11. What are the first steps the school leader can take to implement the PCRP at a local level?

a. Study with your leadership team the ideas and implications of the PCRP.

b. Present and interpret the PCRP to the board of education for its understanding, support and approval.

c. Present the plan to the staff with requests for feedback.

d. Establish a time line and specify the processes, support systems and steps to be taken toward continual upgrading of the program.

## IX. RESEARCH SUPPORTING THE PCRP ACTION PLAN

The following studies provide evidence supporting the actions proposed in the PCRP. Specific citations are found in the bibliography. Where available, studies are listed under experiments, correlational and longitudinal studies.

### Critical Experience 1: Responding to Literature

1. Experiments

   Baily (first grade, 1969), Broening, A.M. (middle grades, 1929), Cohen (second grade, 1969), Haught (high school, 1970), Hession (first grade, 1973), Jackson (fifth grade, 1974), Porter (middle grades, 1969), Raftery (second grade, 1974), Schneeberg (grades one and four, 1976), Sirota (fifth grade. 1971), Strickland (kindergarten, 1971).

2. Correlational and longitudinal studies

   Clay (1976), Chomsky (1971) (1972), Elkind, D. (1975), Hilliard and Troxell (1937), Lowenstein (1975), Thorndike (1973), Sakamoto (1975).

### Critical Experience 2: Sustained Silent Reading of Self-Selected Books

1. Experiments

   Bissett (fifth grade, 1969),Bowen (elementary, 1964), Pfau (first and second grades, 1966), McNeil (tenth grade, 1968 in Fader and McNeil), Wilmot (second, fourth and sixth grades, 1975).

2. Longitudinal study

   Bogart (all grades).

### Critical Experience 3: Composing: Oral and Written

1. Experiments

   Server (first and second grades, 1969), Dykstra (first and second grades, 1968).

2. Clinical study

   Fernald (middle grades and older students, 1943).

Critical Experience 4: Studying Language Patterns

Experiments

Chall (1967), Cooperative Reading Studies (1968), Gibson and Levin (1976), Guth (1976), Jackson, et al (1976), O'Hare (1973).

A Simpler Curriculum-Related and Standardized Testing Program

Theoretical discussions

Botel and Botel (1975), Bormuth (1973), Carver (1973), MacGinnitie (1973), Thorndike (1973).

LAMPS

Bruner (1973), Gibson and Levine (1976), Jackson, Robinson and Dale (1976), Labov (1972), Maslow (1962), Moffett (1968), Piaget (1959, 1970), Rogers (1969), Smith, Goodman and Meredith (1976).

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63. Squire, J. (ed.) **Response to Literature.** Urbana, Illinois: National Council Teachers of English, 1968.

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68. Thorndike, R. L. **Reading Comprehension Education in Fifteen Countries: An Empirical Study**. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1973.

69. Wilmot, M. P. *Toward Reading of Elementary School Students Including in the Reading Program a Period of Sustained Silent Reading*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Colorado, 1975.

## SELECTED REFERENCES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE FOUR CRITICAL EXPERIENCES

### 1. Responding to Literature


Bettelheim, B. **The Uses of Enchantment.** New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976.

A noted child psychiatrist discusses the critical importance of having children respond to folk and fairy tales. These experiences are necessary for full emotional development because they give children a vehicle for sorting out questions of identity and values.

The Children's Book Council, 175 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10010.

This is the headquarters for the National Children's Book Week. The IRA pre-convention institutes conducted by the Council are consistently outstanding. They bring together gifted authors, illustrators and teachers who have been trying out books with children. The council is a source of good reviews, bibliographies and events relating to books.

Kahn. N. B. *A Proposal for Motivating More Students to Lifetime Reading of Literature.* **English** Journal. February 1974, 34-43.

Based on Kahn's doctoral dissertation and extensive experience in developing curricular materials for cultivating a broad and varied response to literature. Kahn presents a brilliant and readable account of the theory and practice of motivating self-selected reading and self-selected response to reading.

Kahn, N. B. *Using Analogies to Help Students Become More Versatile Readers.* Unpublished, Reading/Language Arts Program, University of Pennsylvania, 1976.

Using analogies, Kahn shows how factual and fictional material differ. Most useful for the teacher who is concerned with the cultivation of versatility in reading.

Moffett, J. A. **Student-Centered Language Arts Curriculum, Grades K-13: A Handbook for** Teachers. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973.

This book provides professional inspiration and a wealth of practical applications which exemplify a thesis: linguistic and cognitive growth are interrelated -- power in reading is closely related to power in writing and speech. *"Learners should use language far more than they customarily do in most schools today."*

Purves, A. C. (ed.). **How Porcupines Make Love.** Lexington, Mass.: Xerox College Publishing, 1972.

An invaluable guide to secondary teachers on how to elicit response from students in all cognitive categories appropriate to coming to grips with literature. This book is paraphrased from Purves, **Elements of Writing About a Literary Work.**

Slatoff, W. J. **With Respect to Readers: Dimensions of Literary Response.** Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970.

A strong rationale and plea for balanced responses to literature at the secondary and college level, with more emphasis on what Purves calls the engagement/involvement level.

### 2. Self-Selected Reading

McCracken, A. and M. McCracken. **Reading Is Only the Tiger's Tail.** San Rafael, Calif.: Leswing Press, 1972.

Very practical how-to-do-it with a wonderfully communicated sense of real classrooms and real children as the proving ground for these ideas.

Fader, N. and McNeil E. B. **Hooked on Books: Program & Proof.** New York: Berkley Medallion Paperback, 1968.

Self-selected reading applied to intermediate grades through senior high; a very readable account; a bibliography of books students choose; the extensive study that supports the method.

Sources of books for classroom libraries:

-see the catalogues of paperback book publishers
-cultivate a partnership with local public and school librarians

### 3. Composing

Ashton-Warner, S. **Teacher.** New York: Bantam (paperback), 1963.

The book reads like a novel. It is a book teachers can identify with as well as draw from professionally. Children tap their own experiences and are helped to express them through writing. They learn the patterns of written English as they branch out from this starting point.

McCracken, R. and M. McCracken. **Reading Is Only the Tiger's Tail.**

Described above under Self-Selected Reading, it explains how to make composing a daily activity in the primary classroom.

Teachers and Writers Collaborative, 186 West 4th St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

From this fine group one can receive a newsletter, paperback books and **The Whole Word Catalogue**. These publications describe ways to start children writing and then carry them along until, in the words of one of their number, Phillip Lopate, there is a *"rational work flow"* These are accounts of sustained trials in New York City public schools. The accounts are well-written, for most of the participants are professional writers.

Koch, K. Wishes, Lies and Dreams. Chelsea House Publishers, N.Y., 1970.

"Mr. Koch describes his own writing experiments with classes at P.S. 61 in Manhattan. He shows what beautiful poems children are capable of writing when they are freed of the traditional constraints of rhymed lines and 'proper' sentiments... Yet there are problems. The formula quality of many of the assignments is one that encourages mindless mimicking by less inspired practitioners... Reservations aside, Mr. Koch's book is the best possible introduction to children's writing for the uninitiated."

-Marvin Hoffman in **The Whole Word Catalogue.**

Elbow, Peter. **Writing Without Teachers.** N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Elbow presents a strong rationale and methodology for regular periods of sustained writing unencumbered by grading, preplanning and concern for the mechanics of writing.

Lundsteen. Sara W. (ed.) **Help for the Teacher of Written Composition (K-9).**

A collection of seven practical articles written by committee members of the National Conference on Research in English based on significant research findings.

Pooley. Robert C **The Teaching of English Usage.** National Council Teachers of English, 1974.

The dean of English usage presents a most comprehensive analysis of problems of usage from the point of view of communication.

### 4. Studying Language Patterns

Guides to basal readers.

Textbooks on the teaching of reading and the communicative arts and skills.

Reading/language arts aids published by the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Council Teachers of English (NCTE)