DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 172 182 CS 004 891

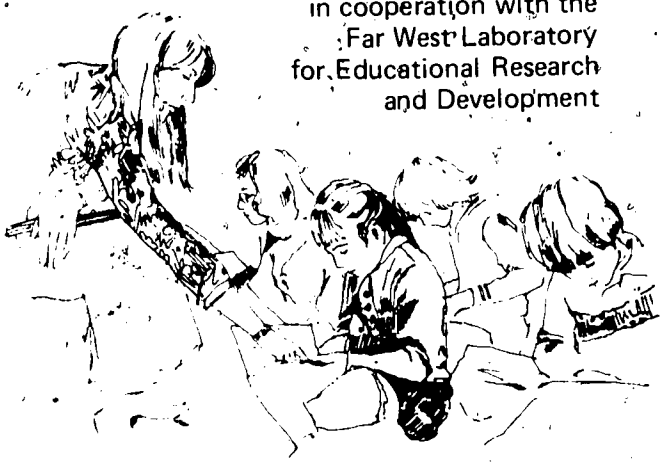
TITLE	Handbook for Planning an Effective Reading Program.
INSTITUTION	California State Dept. of Education, Sacramento.; Far West Lab. for Educational Research and Development, San Francisco, Calif.
SPONS AGENCY	National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	79
NOTE	53p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Publications Sales, California State Department of Education, P.O. Box 271, Sacramento, California 95802 ($1.50)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Elementary Secondary Education; *Language Skills; Program Evaluation; *Program Planning; Questionnaires; *Reading Instruction; *Reading Programs; *Teaching Techniques

ABSTRACT

Intended to help provide breadth to a reading program, this handbook emphasizes that reading is learned and reinforced through the use of the other language skills: listening, speaking, and writing. The first section relates to key instructional components of effective reading programs and includes divisions dealing with skill development (comprehension, language processing, and fluency and flexibility); motivation; and application (reading and responding to literature, reading in the content areas, recreational reading, study skills, and practical uses of reading). The second section relates to key issues for implementing a high-quality reading program and includes divisions dealing with classroom-level issues (classroom climate and organization, personalized instruction, teaching methodology, systems for monitoring progress, and management systems) and with school-level issues (policies and philosophy, availability of programs and courses, student placement, student disabilities, assessment, and reports to parents). Also included is a checklist for use in evaluating the components of an effective reading program. (TJ)

Handbook for Planning an Effective Reading Program

Prepared by the
California State Department of Education
in cooperation with the
Far West Laboratory
for Educational Research
and Development



Wilson Riles--Superintendent of Public Instruction Sacramento, 1979

This publication was edited and prepared for photo-offset production by the Bureau of Publications, California State Department of Education, and was published by the Department, 721 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, CA 95814. The artwork was prepared by Cheryl Shawver of the Bureau of Publications.

The funds for preparing and printing the handbook were made available from the National Reading Improvement Program through the Department of Education's Right to Read Office. Far West Laboratory's work on the document was performed pursuant to a grant from the National Institute of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Office of Education, and no official endorsement by the U.S. Office of Education should be inferred.

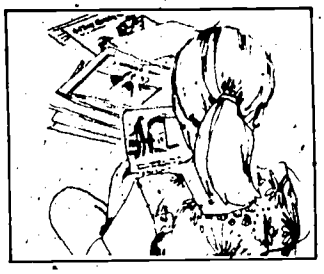
The handbook was printed by the Office of State Printing and distributed under the provisions of the Library Distribution Act.

Sacramento, 1979

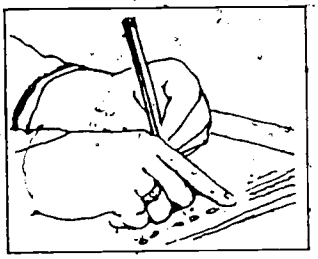
Copies of this publication are available for $1.50 each, plus sales tax for California residents, from Publications Sales, California State Department of Education, P.O. Box 271, Sacramento, CA 95802.

A partial list of publications that are available from the Department appears on page 47. A complete list of Department publications may be obtained by writing to the address given above.

Contents



Contents-continued



Acknowledgments

The State Department of Education acknowledges the important contributions the following people made to the development of this document. The principal authors of the final draft of the handbook were Jo Ellyn Taylor and Davida Egherman of the Far West Laboratory and Louis "Bill" Honig, Member of the California State Board of Education.

Judy Guilkey, Special Assistant to the Superintendent, Vallejo Unified School District, and Mr. Honig wrote the first draft of the handbook. They used the concepts and ideas developed by the following group, working under the auspices of the Right to Read Office of the Department of Education, which is directed by Fred Tillman:

Sandy Biren, Program Specialist, Reading/Language Arts. San Juan Unified School District; and Member, Curriculum Development and Supplemental Materials Commission; and Member, California Reading Framework Committee

Marilyn Hanf Buckley, Coordinator, Advanced Leadership Program in Reading/Language, School of Education, University of California, Berkeley

James Calbert, Consultant, Elementary Education Field Services, California State Department of Education

Joan Cheifetz, Consultant for Specialty Schools. Oakland Unified School District

Vivian Ford, Consultant, Elementary Education Field Services, California State Department of Education

Bruce Hagen, Consultant, Right to Read Program. California State Department of Education

Mary Landis, Chairperson, Reading Department, Tracy High School

Joan Maxwell, Demonstration Teacher, University Elementary School, University of California, Los Angeles

Sally Mentor, Consultant, Rowland Unified School District

Herbert Thompson, Coordinator, Special Projects, Corona-Norco Unified School District

Edith Schwartz, Reading Specialist, Tahoe Elementary School, Sacramento City Unified School District; and former member, Curriculum Development and Supplemental Materials Commission

Far West Laboratory's Regional Service Program, directed by Lynn Jenks, rewrote and reorganized the first draft of the document under an agreement with the California State Department of Education, with funding from the National Institute of Education. The editing of that draft was done by Julia Cheever of the Far West Laboratory.

During its development the manuscript was reviewed by the California Reading Framework Committee, and special thanks go

2—79120

Acknowledgments – continued

to Marian Schilling, Barbara Schmidt, and Barbara Valdez of that committee.

Considerable assistance was provided by the following individuals in the development the final draft of this handbook: Marilyn Hanf Buckley, University of California, Berkeley; Jayne De Lawter, Sonoma State College; Jerome Harste, University of Indiana; and Margaret Lindberg, Wayne State University.

This Handbook for Planning an Effective Reading Program *was designed to help any group attempting to assess and improve a reading program, especially those groups that have adopted or are planning to adopt a school improvement program.*

Introduction

This handbook, which presents the major components of a high-quality reading program, was designed to help teachers, school administrators, parents, and other interested people focus on the critical areas in a reading program that may need improvement or reinforcement. To help persons identify the strengths and weaknesses of existing or proposed reading programs and to help them select strategies for change, the discussion of each of the components of a high-quality reading program includes a series of questions. By answering the questions, a person can determine whether adequate emphasis or attention is being given to each of the critical components of a reading program. The questions are followed by examples of suggested activities that should be of further assistance in clarifying each component.

This *Handbook for Planning an Effective Reading Program* was designed to help any group attempting to assess and improve a reading program, especially those groups that have adopted or are planning to adopt a school improvement program under the provisions of Assembly Bill 65 or a staff development program, as provided for in Assembly Bill 551. Specifically, this is a planning guide, not a teaching guide.

Educational planners will probably find it helpful to use this document in conjunction with the California State Department of Education's *Handbook for Assessing an Elementary School Program* and *Handbook for Assessing a Secondary School Program* (see page 47 for full bibliographic data on these handbooks). These handbooks were prepared to help persons assess the results of their program development efforts, determine the impact their program is having on students, and identify opportunities for further improvement. The two handbooks address curriculum issues in general terms, and this document provides the means for an in-depth examination of the one particular curriculum area: reading.

Several teachers, school administrators, and some of the state's leading reading experts selected the major components of high-quality reading programs, and they are presented in this document. The selections were made on the basis of the philosophy expressed in the *Framework in Reading for the Elementary and Secondary Schools of California*, findings of investigations into the present state of reading instruction in California, current knowledge about learning to read, and the judgments of the teachers, administrators, and reading experts, who are identified in the acknowledgments.

Those who have studied reading have found that reading programs are often ineffective because they lack breadth rather than depth. The instructors of such programs usually overemphasize one or two components and neglect other important areas of reading instruction. As a result, students in these programs do not benefit from the interaction and reinforcement of all the

Have students spend, on a regular basis, a sufficient amount of time on reading.

instructional components necessary for high levels of success in reading. For example, teachers may concentrate on improving their teaching methodologies or instituting a management system but fail to produce the desired results, because they are using a narrow definition of reading curriculum. Conversely, teachers may emphasize curriculum development but fail to raise student achievement, because they neglect problems of classroom organization or because they do not have enough time to carry out their professional tasks.

Critical Tasks

The authors and contributors of this handbook identified the following tasks as crucial in establishing reading programs that lead to improved student achievement:

1. Providing sufficient instruction and activities that are directed at the development of comprehension skills
2. Having students spend, on a regular basis, a substantial amount of time on reading
3. Placing appropriate emphasis on decoding skills (Sometimes, this means less emphasis than was being given.)
4. Integrating decoding instruction with instruction in other areas, such as vocabulary development, use of syntax, concept development, and comprehension
5. Designing instruction and activities to increase reading fluency and flexibility
6. Recognizing the importance of motivation as a prerequisite to the development of reading skills
7. Developing students' oral language abilities on a continuing basis
8. Utilizing and extending students' experiential backgrounds
9. Integrating reading into a total language program (listening, speaking, reading, writing)
10. Encouraging teachers to look beyond reading as a tool and to examine what students read; e.g., recreational reading materials, literature
11. Establishing at all grade levels a well-defined reading program that provides appropriate instruction for each student
12. Providing for continuity of reading instruction
13. Challenging students who already read well to achieve greater proficiency and to use reading on a broader basis than they have been
14. Integrating reading into the school's total instructional program and involving all staff members in the program

Keeping these 14 tasks in mind, the authors of this handbook related each of the tasks to the key components of a high-quality reading program. The purpose of the components is to provide a guide that can be used in identifying areas of strength and weakness in a reading program.

Integration of the Language Arts

It will probably be obvious in every section of this handbook that reading is learned and reinforced through the use of the other language skills: listening, speaking, and writing. Because these skills are actually used in an integrated way, this overlap is a natural and positive occurrence. For example, a student listens to directions for a task, reads a passage, then talks or writes to give evidence of having read with understanding. A total, well-balanced reading program must recognize and encourage the overlap among the four language skills. For more extensive information required for planning a well-balanced program, refer to both the *Framework in Reading for the Elementary and Secondary Schools of California* and the *English Language Framework for California Public Schools.*

Students bring two significant aspects of their backgrounds to the act of reading: their knowledge of the world and their oral language. In order for the text on a page to be meaningful to students, the material must (1) be relevant to the students' own experiences in some way; and (2) be expressed in language the students would understand if it were presented orally. Since these two factors influence the effectiveness of all components of a reading program, their importance will be reflected throughout this document.

Important implications follow from the preceding statements. Students frequently benefit from real or vicarious experiences and discussions prior to reading; although the experiences and discussions are important, they do not negate the need for students to read the material. Secondly, these notions call for the acceptance, appreciation, and encouragement of both specific and divergent responses. In general, students are able to respond in some way to most printed matter with which they are faced. Differences in background and a variety of factors result in a multitude of responses. If these are respected and encouraged, learners can learn from each other and continue to extend their knowledge base.

Reading is learned and reinforced through the use of the other language skills: listening, speaking, and writing.

Organization of Document

The key components of a high-quality reading program are presented in two major sections of this handbook: Section 1, Key Instructional Components of Effective Reading Programs, and Section 2, Key Issues for Implementing a High-Quality Reading Program. The first section focuses on the essential components of a total, well-balanced curriculum designed to help students from kindergarten through grade twelve become proficient and motivated readers. The components are skill development, motivation, and application, and they interact to comprise a strong reading program. The discussion of each component includes the following:

1. A definition and description of specific skills and knowledge areas that might be included in the program objective
2. Suggested questions to pose in planning or assessing a school's reading program to fulfill that objective

3. Examples of instructional activities that promote the fulfillment of that objective. (The examples are not necessarily intended for exact use. They are offered to clarify the assessment questions and represent the kinds and variety of activities that would fulfill that objective.)

The second section of the handbook addresses the key issues for implementing a high-quality program at the classroom and school levels. These issues range from considerations for organizing a classroom to making policy decisions on the responsibilities of the school for establishing academic requirements and standards.

Following the two main sections of the handbook are a checklist of questions and a list of selected references. The checklist contains all the questions presented in sections 1 and 2 for easy reference and use. The selected references contain bibliographic data on recommended additional reading.

In an effective program, skill development, motivation, and application interact with and reinforce one another.

Key Instructional Components of Effective Reading Programs

In examining a reading program, it is most important to remember the overall objective of reading instructions: *to develop motivated readers who are able to process written language efficiently and, thus, to derive meaning from what they read.* An effective reading program that is broad enough to incorporate all aspects of this objective includes these three components:

- *Skill development.* The skills of comprehension and language processing, as well as fluency and flexibility in using these skills
- *Motivation.* Student motivation, including interest, a sense of competence, and a desire and need for reading
- *Application.* Proficiency in a range of reading tasks, such as reading for recreational and practical purposes, reading and responding to literature, reading in the content areas, and studying

This section of the handbook contains descriptions of not only the three major instructional components but also their subcomponents, as outlined below:

1. Skill Development
   a. Comprehension
   b. Language Processing
   c. Fluency and Flexibility
2. Motivation
3. Application
   a. Reading and Responding to Literature
   b. Reading in the Content Areas
   c. Recreational Reading
   d. Study Skills
   e. Practical Uses of Reading

In an effective program, skill development, motivation, and application interact with and reinforce one another. No component is treated without regard for the whole process of developing reading ability. Although the components and subcomponents of a high-quality reading program, which are outlined above, can be considered separately for the purposes of program assessment, during an instructional session components are usually combined. For example, in teaching any one skill, the instructor must keep in focus at all times student *motivation* and the immediate *application* of the skills of reading. As a more specific example, a student's interest in and knowledge about horses can

determine the selection of content for activities directed at increasing vocabulary, developing the ability to analyze material for accuracy, or using contextual and phonic clues to decode words in a story.

In this document, comprehension and language processing, which are two of the subcomponents of skill development, and motivation are regarded as the foundation for the other components and subcomponents of an effective reading program. Therefore, most of the discussion and questions that apply to comprehension, language processing, and motivation also apply to the subcomponents of application; however, the information is not repeated. For example, the basic planning questions pertaining to comprehension (on pages 9 and 10 of this handbook) would also be appropriate for a subcomponent, such as reading in the content areas (page 25). Consequently, persons who are examining a school's program plan as it relates to reading in the content areas would need to address all the questions suggested under comprehension, language processing, and motivation as well as those found in the discussion of reading in content areas.

These labels are not presented as absolutes. Other terms might serve to name essential components of reading instruction. What is important is that each reading program be examined closely to see that it spans the breadth described herein and addresses all the areas that affect success in reading.

In a high-quality reading program, students spend a considerable amount of time reading. On the other hand, students in ineffective programs often spend too much time on skill development (for example, learning rules of decoding, syllabication, and so forth) and too little time reading and discussing what was read. Therefore, the two following major instructional strategies are recommended:

1. Provision of regular opportunities for students to read material of interest for extended periods of time. This strategy:
   a. Gives students experience in practicing the various skills of reading.
   b. Works to legitimize reading as a valued, natural activity.
   c. Provides a protected time for students to achieve sufficient involvement in reading for enjoyment or information.
2. Provision of specific activities designed for students to learn reading skills in a meaningful context. Planned activities can promote effective reading when:
   a. The context is familiar to the students.
   b. The skill is important to their present needs.

A balance between these two types of activities can provide sufficient instruction to result in effective reading. Daily opportunities to read, even for beginners, provide the necessary practice for the specific activities to make sense and to help them develop proficiency in reading. The activities suggested for each component embrace these two types of instructional strategies.

In this document, comprehension, language processing, and motivation are regarded as the foundation for the other components and subcomponents of an effective reading program.

Skill Development

Several related sets of skills contribute to a reader's ability to obtain meaning effectively from written language. The authors of this document have identified the components of skill development as *comprehension, language processing,* and *fluency and flexibility.* However, the ability to comprehend and the ability to process language encompass all the skills. In actual practice, language processing is inseparable from comprehending; that is, decoding symbols without deriving meaning is an empty process. Classroom activities pertaining to language processing would automatically include comprehension of ideas conveyed by language. Comprehension and language processing are separated here for discussion purposes only to ensure that sufficient attention is given to each in the design of a reading program.

Comprehension involves the ability to understand the meaning and significance of ideas and concepts. Reading comprehension depends on such factors as the range of language processing strategies; the ability to process, interpret, and analyze information and ideas; prior knowledge brought to the subject matter; and amount of practice in reading for meaning.

Comprehension is the central goal of reading. To read without understanding a message would be pointless.

Language processing involves the use of the three systems of language—symbolic, syntactic, and semantic—that, when used together, enable symbols to be used to transmit thought. The ability to process written language requires skills in recognizing and using printed symbols, understanding the way words and sentences are structured, and becoming familiar with the meaning of words and ideas.

Following the discussions of comprehension and language processing is a discussion of the third component of skill development: fluency and flexibility. Fluency is the smooth and efficient synchronizing of the skills of reading, and flexibility is the ability to adapt reading rate and style to the immediate purpose. Comprehension and language processing skills are taught and practiced with a constant focus on fluency and flexibility. Rather than being taught in a sequence, the three components of skill development work in concert to produce an effective reading program.

Comprehension

Comprehension is the central goal of reading. To read without understanding a message would be pointless. Therefore, this component of a reading program is designed to accomplish two principal objectives:

1. To help students establish a habit of expecting and getting meaning from written language
2. To help students develop the ability to comprehend information at a range of levels (literal and beyond)

To promote a high level of comprehension, written material should be (1) presented at a level that would be understood by students if they received the material orally; or (2) preceded and accompanied by instructional activities that build the concepts and vocabulary students need to understand the material.

Students should be encouraged always to seek meaning when they are reading.

Students should be encouraged always to seek meaning when they are reading. Current research reveals that poor readers tend to pay too much attention to the mechanics of reading and, thus, fail to focus on deriving meaning or understanding ideas. Therefore, instructors should avoid overemphasizing decoding and isolated skills to the neglect of comprehension; rather, they should ensure that students develop the habit and skill of reading for meaning from their first reading experiences. Many poor readers simply do not know that reading should make sense in the same way that listening does. When learners are trained from the beginning to read for meaning, they can keep the mechanics of reading in perspective and use them efficiently.

The second objective, helping students develop a range of levels of comprehension, is important because students must have more than just a literal translation of what they read. Several schemas and category systems have been developed to describe various levels of understanding. The terms literal, interpretive, applicative, and critical are used here, but the intent, regardless of terms, is to convey the notion that readers need to be able to receive and integrate information in a variety of ways. The four levels of comprehension are generally defined as follows:

1. *Literal.* Recalling or restating information explicitly stated in the text
2. *Interpretive.* Formulating ideas or opinions that are based on the material read but not stated explicitly in the text
3. *Applicative.* Connecting and integrating the information, ideas, and values with one's own experience or applying that in other contexts
4. *Critical.* Analyzing or evaluating the ideas or presentation on such grounds as accuracy, significance, generalizability, and distortion by omission; in general, developing effective problem-solving techniques

It is necessary to acknowledge that even at the literal level an element of interpretive thinking must occur. For example, the word *jumper* can mean very different things, depending on how it is used; yet, readers can usually determine what the author means. This kind of interpretation frequently occurs during reading and often goes unnoticed.

Much instruction has been dominated by emphasis on the literal level of comprehension. It is, therefore, important to give particular attention to other levels of comprehension. Specific reading tasks can be designed to highlight the various levels while maintaining a focus on the whole. Also, the reading that students choose for themselves can be accompanied by oral or written questions at all levels of comprehension, and the questions should be designed for use both before and after reading.

The key here is that the use of various levels of comprehension is a product of a person seeking to answer questions, solve problems, predict outcomes, form generalizations, support inferences, provide elaboration, and so forth. Helpful instructors focus on the search, question, or issue to induce many kinds of comprehending in natural ways, rather than focusing artificially on one kind of comprehension. Comprehension is not a product of

reading; rather, it establishes a setting where language processing can take place.

Experiential background and comprehension. It is vitally important that teachers who want to improve their students' comprehension skills give due consideration to the experiential backgrounds of their students and the notions they have already formed about the world. As a reader, a student will bring the sum of his or her experiences, knowledge, values, and feelings to bear upon the message of an author. The broader and deeper this experience base, the greater is the reader's access to a range of written materials. This relationship results in two important implications for instruction:

1. Attention should be given to reinforcing, extending, and developing concepts in relation to the material students are being asked to read.
2. Students should be able to make a connection between material read and their general knowledge and experience.

When materials contain topics or issues that are familiar or of concern to the students, it is possible to guide them always to expect meaning from written language and to become skilled at inferring and generalizing beyond what is stated on the page. With content that is unfamiliar, teachers must help students connect the material to their own knowledge and experiences.

Oral language and comprehension. Students' comprehension of oral language can serve as the primary avenue to the development of reading comprehension. Teachers can first develop or reinforce the two basic objectives of reading comprehension within the oral form of language, paving the way for their use in the written form. That is, students should first make a habit of expecting and getting meaning from oral language, and they should have experience in discussing ideas at levels ranging from literal to critical. They can then be guided to recognize that just as they demand sense and clarity from a speaker, they should expect the same from an author.

By converting their own familiar, predictable language to print, students can experience from the outset a connection between the ideas they have and the print on a page. Appropriate reading content for readers who are not yet independent cannot be expressed in language that is any more difficult than language the students could understand orally. Confident readers, on the other hand, can expand their language base through an exposure to more complex language structures and more sophisticated and technical vocabulary.

Helping students develop a range of levels of comprehension is important because students must have more than just a literal translation of what they read.

QUESTIONS for determining whether or not you give adequate emphasis to comprehension in your reading program

How does your program provide for:

1. Experiences that help students recognize comprehension as the overall goal of reading?
2. Daily opportunities for students to read with understanding materials, including complete texts, they have selected themselves or are required to read?

3. Sufficient, instruction to help students achieve various levels of comprehension, including small-group instruction based on reading the same teacher-selected text (from multiple copies or basal tests):
   a. Literal: grasping information explicitly stated in the text?
   b. Interpretive: formulating ideas or opinions that are based upon the material read but not stated in the text?
   c. Applicative: connecting and integrating information, ideas, concepts, values, and feelings with one's own experience?
   d. Critical: synthesizing, analyzing, or evaluating the material read?
4. Using and extending students' oral comprehension as the basis for reading comprehension?
5. Instruction and practice in using reading to answer questions or to find out information?
6. A range of reading materials, including materials that are appropriate to a variety of interests and reading levels and sufficiently challenging to produce growth?

EXAMPLES of Activities

1. Provide frequent opportunities for the silent reading of materials that students select for themselves from a wide choice of kinds of texts (e.g., magazines, books, newspapers, guides) presented at different levels of difficulty.
2. Provide frequent opportunities for the silent reading of materials selected by the teacher from multiple copies or basal texts; the reading will be used as the basis for small-group comprehension development activities.
3. Use classroom or school required reading lists; or require the students to read a specific number of books.
4. Develop prereading activities (oral and/or written) in which students:
   a. Formulate questions, prior to reading the text, from predictions they have made from examining the title, contents page, illustrations, and other clues.
   b. Discuss the topic or relate personal experiences about the topic.
   c. Assess what they already know about the topic, describe what they expect or want to learn, and formulate questions about the topic.
   d. Survey the text and predict (1) a summary of the scope of the story or article; (2) the scope of the story or article; and (3) questions to be answered after reading.
5. Focus on comprehension during reading by:
   a. Limiting oral reading to specific purposes, such as encouraging students to use effective meaning-getting strategies (e.g., using context clues to identify unfamiliar words).
   b. Pausing to allow students to hear their own reading and encouraging them to make sense from the text without the teacher's supplying words or making judgments.

c. Pausing to encourage predictions of upcoming events, lines, or words in the materials being read.

6. Develop post-reading activities (oral and/or written) in which students:
   a. Retell the story in their own words.
   b. Answer factual and inferential questions about the text.
   c. Write a story sequel.
   d. Convert a story to a play.
   e. Compare the film version of a story with the print version.
   f. Read part of a story and write their own ending.
7. Encourage teacher and peer questioning and discussion among students at all comprehension levels in either oral or written form.
8. Provide relevant direct or vicarious experiences (e.g., film simulations, drama) appropriate to the age level before students read required texts on unfamiliar topics.
9. Have students locate and read two or three books or articles expressing differing points of view on a controversial issue and analyze the various texts for accuracy, logic, or techniques of persuasion.
10. Have students use a problem focus to develop a hypothesis; then have them experiment, and verify and apply the results with or without written materials.

Are you providing in your program sufficient instruction and activities that are directed at the development of comprehension skills?

Language Processing

Language processing refers to the various types of cues used by listeners and readers to recognize the language transmitted by speakers and authors. Listening and reading involve the interaction of the three systems of language: the symbolic system (oral or written words), semantic system (word meanings), and syntactic system (word order and inflections). In oral language, the symbols are spoken; thus, effective listening consists of constructing meaning from an auditory message. In printed language, the symbols are written. Therefore, effective reading involves constructing meaning from a graphic message.

In an effective reading program, the instructors should make deliberate and regular use of the abilities and experiences students bring to reading. One important asset a student can draw on in reading is his or her listening ability (oral language processing ability).

In the discussion which follows, the elements of language processing are reviewed and tied directly to the central goal of reading comprehension.

Using the three kinds of linguistic information. Written language is composed of symbols arranged in a particular order to represent ideas and concepts. To read, a student must use three kinds of linguistic information simultaneously to construct a message. These types of information are often called cueing systems and are described as follows:

1. *Symbolic*– the graphic symbols of the alphabet. Processing skills include sound-symbol knowledge, word recognition, phonetic analysis, and structural analysis.

A high-quality reading program provides for allowing all language systems to work together and using to advantage the skills a student already possesses.

2. *Semantic*—the meaning associated with words and phrases. Processing skills include knowledge of vocabulary and concepts, use of context clues, knowledge of idiomatic expressions, and use of metaphors.
3. *Syntactic*—the structure of the language. Processing skills include knowledge of grammatical functions, ordering of words, and sentence patterns.

Using selected cues from the three systems cited above is essential in deciphering a written message. Proficient readers sample the three types of linguistic information simultaneously and use only as much information as they need to gain meaning in accordance with their immediate purpose for reading a particular text. When the material being read includes familiar topics and predictable language, this procedure used by proficient readers enables them to process language in relatively large pieces. Beginning readers and poor readers tend to process smaller units of language, because they believe that precise identification is necessary for success. Such emphasis on small units tends to make those readers depend on one system of language at the expense of the other two. These readers need to experience how it feels to combine the three systems simultaneously. Any deficiency in the ability to utilize language cues—e.g., unfamiliarity with the vocabulary or the grammatical structure—may hamper or block this translation process.

The principal objectives of the language processing component of a reading program are:

1. To help students use efficiently the three kinds of linguistic information in combination to obtain meaning from written language
2. To reinforce and expand the students' facility with each type of linguistic information
3. To help students expand their abilities for processing the elements unique to written language

Considerable evidence suggests that some instructors define reading too narrowly and give disproportionate attention to the decoding of symbols at the expense of attention to the other systems of language. One outcome is readers who can decode but do not comprehend or understand the particular vocabulary used. Another is a loss of motivation on the part of students who cannot find sense or success in repeated practice of some of the steps in the reading process.

A high-quality reading program provides for (1) allowing all language systems to work together; and (2) using to advantage the skills a student already possesses. As a speaker, a student already uses all the language systems. Only the symbol changes markedly in reading—from oral to written form. Therefore, the use of material with familiar meanings and syntactic structures gives a student the opportunity to use problem-solving strategies to make the connection between oral language and its written form. If it is to offer students such opportunities, the reading text must consist of whole units of language (sentences, paragraphs) rather than isolated words or letters. From a learning viewpoint, this approach

merely ensures that reading is taught and practiced in exactly the same way that it is actually used: in context with a purpose.

Reading instruction cannot be restricted to known topics and highly predictable language even though it begins there. What are commonly referred to as reading problems could often more accurately be regarded as misconceptions, over-generalizations, or incomplete information about language use in general. When students have had enough successful experiences to become convinced that they can read and that reading is a desirable activity, they need to be encouraged to extend their abilities in each of the three language systems in preparation for managing a wide range of printed matter. This extension includes such tasks as building a broader vocabulary, increasing one's ability to interpret more complex sentence patterns, and developing recognition of a wider variety of phonetic associations. It takes place in concert with the broadening of a student's experiences.

Examining the features unique to written and oral language. When reading instruction has been confined to a definition of reading as "talk written down," many students have not gained access to the larger world of print. To be able to predict or recognize the language and style of a variety of authors, students need exposure to the features unique to written language. These features include such elements as sentence patterns common to stories (e.g., "once upon a time"), conventions for presenting dialogue (e.g., "said" or "exclaimed"), knowledge about how printed English is presented (e.g., reading left to right, top to bottom), the language of reading instruction (e.g., page, sentence, title), and so forth. Students who have been read to a great deal usually acquire this knowledge naturally, often with no conscious realization of the principles involved. Teachers need to recognize this and build upon it.

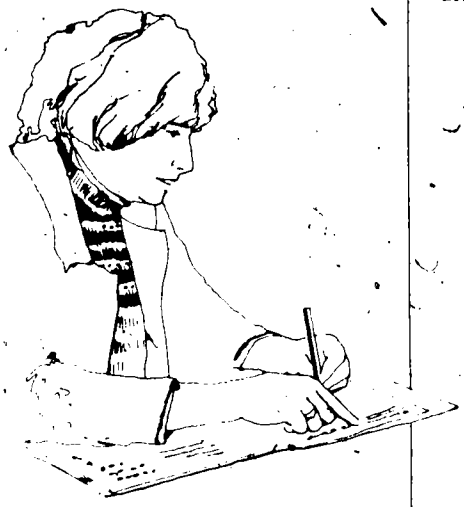
The importance of students' oral language abilities has been emphasized throughout this section. The greater the students' store of oral language skills, from vocabulary choice to varieties of dialects and complexity of sentence forms, the greater are the students' chances of recognizing language in print. This principle points to the value of having teachers give considerable attention to oral language development, both in early childhood and throughout the school years. A well-balanced reading program may be "heard" much of the time; that is, a high percentage of listening and speaking accompany reading experiences in the well-balanced program.

Especially at the beginning stages of learning, skill development in oral and written language processing should be closely coordinated with students' gradually broadening knowledge and beliefs about the world. Some students who appear to process written language may be unable to comprehend it. If their instructors have overemphasized decoding, the students may not recognize this lack of comprehension as a problem. To prevent such an imbalance, instructors should ensure that the students' in-school and out-of-school experiences are:

1. Accompanied by ever-expanding and increasingly advanced forms of language

The greater the students' store of oral language skills, the greater are the students' chances of recognizing language in print.

Does your program provide for frequent opportunities for students to use and extend their oral language skills?



2. Considered in the selection and interpretation of written language materials

Beginners need very familiar content as they learn to read. Later, as the students focus on reading to learn, they can be introduced to extensions and variations of the language and be given new directions in their reading.

***QUESTIONS** for determining whether or not you are giving adequate attention to language processing in your reading program*

How does your program provide for:

1. Frequent opportunities for students to use and extend their oral language skills as the basis for development of reading skills?
2. Daily opportunities for students to use the three cue systems of written language (symbolic, semantic, syntactic) in combination to obtain meaning?
3. Instruction in reading and opportunities for practice that are designed to help students increase their abilities to use in context:
   a. Symbolic information: sound-letter relationships, phonetic analysis, word recognition, structural analysis, and so forth?
   b. Semantic information: vocabulary development, concept development, use of context clues, idiomatic expressions, use of metaphor and similes, annotative/denotative meanings, synonyms, antonyms, and so forth?
   c. Syntactic information: grammatical functions, word order, sentence patterns, and so forth?
4. Experiences designed to help students gain familiarity with features unique to written language and knowledge necessary for interpreting written language?
5. Frequent opportunities for students to hear the oral reading of written language, both live and recorded, and to respond to it in a variety of ways?

***EXAMPLES** of Activities*

1. Use familiar content (song, short story, poem) to teach sound-letter skills, phonetic analysis (e.g., examine a song for rhyming, similar initial consonants, or verb endings).
2. Read regularly to students of all ages; select worthwhile and varied literature; reread favorites many times; elicit responses to literature that give rise to the use of new vocabulary, language forms, and patterns in context.
3. Record stories, poems, plays, or chapters on tape for voluntary repeated listening; use selections with rhymes, repeated verses or other forms of highly predictable language for a gradual transition from being read *to*, to reading *with*, to assuming independence.
4. Take verbatim, dictation of students' own language; this can then be used when the students read by themselves or read to the teacher or to peers.

5. Demonstrate and provide opportunities for students to decode words by practicing letter-sound relationships.
6. Provide opportunities for repeated practice in using words grouped according to particular categories to promote the rapid recognition of such words.
7. Provide frequent opportunities for students to read silently.
8. Provide frequent opportunities for informal choral reading of brief but complete predictable forms of the language (such as songs, poems, jingles, plays).
9. Demonstrate and then provide opportunities for students to use root words, prefixes, suffixes, and context in identifying words.
10. Offer word games in which students try to supply synonyms or antonyms to words appearing in a specified context.
11. Construct exercises in which students read stories and provide synonyms for underlined words; also, encourage students to make logical substitutions for unknown words they encounter in their reading.
12. Encourage students to work on crossword puzzles and compile personal dictionaries.
13. Encourage students to keep personal journals, diaries, and logs and write endings to open-ended stories.
14. Provide written activities designed for practice and reinforcement of specific skills.
15. Plan frequent experiences that will introduce new vocabulary in context and provide opportunities to use those words.

Fluency and Flexibility

To help students integrate the skills of comprehension and language processing and become effective readers, teachers must also help students achieve fluency and flexibility in their reading. Like the other language processes, reading is a tool of communication, not an end in itself. Therefore, a reader must observe the same guidelines that a listener follows to receive and process information effectively. A successful reader or listener is able (1) to process language efficiently (achieve fluency); and (2) adapt behavior to conform to the immediate needs, purpose, or content of the reading task (achieve flexibility).

While instruction and practice in comprehension and language processing contribute to fluency and flexibility, a complete program plan should contain specific instruction in this area. This component of skill development in reading is frequently overlooked or delayed. It should be made a part of the instructional program from the start, not after language processing and comprehension are mastered. All of the components work together to produce an effective reading program.

Achieving fluency in reading. Since meaningful language occurs in units, such as phrases, sentences, and paragraphs, readers must be able to process these units of language in a rhythm similar to that used in oral communication. That is, reading must "flow" just as talking flows. Instruction should contain exercises to encourage

A successful reader is able to process language efficiently and to adapt behavior to conform to the immediate needs, purpose, or content of the reading task.

Proficient readers vary their rate and type of reading to meet such purposes as reading for accuracy, previewing, or reviewing.

the processing of these larger units of language. However, this relationship of oral and written language flow does not indicate that oral reading leads to improved fluency in silent reading. Quite the contrary is true.

Reading is a silent act; therefore, teachers of high-quality reading programs tend to use oral reading sparingly. However, oral reading can serve as a means of securing information about a student's reading ability and capabilities in making drama and poetry presentations. Fluency can also be documented by a student's ability to read a story silently in a reasonable length of time and then retell it or discuss it in terms that demonstrate that the student has read the story.

Teachers can also assist students in achieving fluency by encouraging them to have confidence in using their existing problem-solving strategies to:

1. Supply logical substitutions (e.g., synonyms, a different proper name) for unknown words.
2. Guess at the pronunciation of a word as long as they are able to retain meaning.
3. Guess at the meaning of a word and read on to verify or correct the guess.
4. Attempt to keep reading instead of bogging down too long on one word or phrase.

Students may also need direction in realizing that words can vary in importance. They will need to determine which words and concepts are crucial to meaning and determine which are redundant or trivial in a given selection.

Thus, instruction in fluency is concerned with the identification and removal of any barriers that hinder smooth movement through print. Some of this instruction can be accomplished through discussions about reading, but fluency is fostered most by offering opportunities and encouragement for students to take risks and to begin to develop confidence in their ability to read independently. The use of appropriate content is an integral part of this process, of course.

Achieving flexibility in reading. Flexibility involves adapting the reading process to suit the immediate situation. Proficient readers vary their rate and type of reading to meet such purposes as reading for accuracy (as in reading a recipe or directions for constructing a model); previewing (skimming an entire book or chapter or browsing through a newspaper by reading headlines in some cases and entire articles in others); or reviewing key portions in a chapter (studying for a test). Teachers in some reading programs have been found to emphasize only the word-by-word form of reading, which resulted in the students developing a narrow and not fully practical application of reading.

To gain skills in flexibility, students need to have learning experiences that call for reading for a variety of purposes. Students might read for major ideas of a selection, read for certain important details, skim to gain a quick overview of a section of a document or a whole book, scan to locate particular facts or ideas, or read to experience a particular mood. Flexibility is fostered by

having purposes for reading that compel readers to read in certain ways. Therefore, flexibility results from a search for meaning.

The various purposes for reading call for different rates at which one reads. While rapid reading is not appropriate for all purposes, it is useful in many situations. Students need to realize that their purpose and the material itself determine the rate at which they read. Also, a certain speed is usually necessary for reading to take place.

The basic objective of teaching fluency and flexibility in a reading program is to help students adapt their reading to the immediate purpose. Older students can be further helped to realize that they have considerable control over their skill in reading and can put it to work in a variety of ways.

***QUESTIONS** for determining whether or not you have given adequate emphasis to fluency and flexibility in your reading program*

How does your program provide for:

1. Frequent activities that require students to focus on reading fluency?
2. Opportunities for students to monitor their own fluency?
3. A higher percentage of silent reading activities than of oral reading?
4. Frequent activities that require students to focus on flexibility by:
   a. Requiring them to use various rates of reading?
   b. Requiring them to adapt their reading to meet different purposes and kinds of reading materials?

EXAMPLES of Activities

1. Provide a variety of timed reading activities designed to help students learn how to use various reading rates according to purpose or material.
2. Play tape recordings of stories and poetry:
   a. For students to listen to, then read along with, and then read independently.
   b. That were taped by students themselves so that they can listen to and assess their own reading skills.
3. Develop prereading tasks in which students:
   a. Skim to get the general idea or an overview of a written document.
   b. Scan to learn the setting and characters of a story.
   c. Skim; then formulate predictions about the story.
4. Develop post-reading tasks in which students:
   a. Practice and read a favorite selection orally to others.
   b. Enact a story as a play, with selected students reading the dialogue as it occurs (after having time to practice reading the dialogue).
5. Use plays, TV scripts, or other scripts as reading materials, allowing several practice sessions before students present the material before a group.

How does your program provide for frequent activities that require students to focus on reading fluency?

6. Provide readings of prose and poetry to expose students to ever increasing amounts and varieties of written language.
7. Encourage choral reading of songs, rhymes, poems, speeches, and so forth.
8. Have students, with partners or in small groups, read a one-page story and underline words of greatest importance and bracket words of least importance.
9. When students encounter unknown words, encourage them to:
   a. Try other words that make sense.
   b. Read on for contextual clues, guess, check a guess, or go back and define the words.
10. Create imaginary but plausible situations that demand different kinds of reading; e.g., "Pretend that you are taking a timed exam. With only ten minutes left, you discover that you had failed to see the last section of the test, which requires reading a short story and answering questions. In the next ten minutes, do exactly what you would do in this situation."
11. To develop appropriate phrasing ability for the purpose of reading to an audience, have students listen to tapes of their own oral reading and to one another to assess whether they need more practice to make their oral reading sound more natural and understandable to a listener.

Provide frequent opportunities for students to interact and share reading experiences.

Motivation

In a well-balanced reading program, substantial attention is given to the role that motivation plays in the development of reading skills. Reading tasks make sense to students when they perceive reading as being personally and socially attainable, useful, enjoyable, and desirable. A climate that supports the development of these perceptions promotes efficient and stimulating use of instructional time.

Ways of Enhancing Motivation

At the core of motivation is a student's perception that reading is necessary and possible. For students not yet "hooked on books," developing this perception requires their having experiences in which reading helps them accomplish or learn things they consider important and in which the attainment of success gives them the confidence to continue efforts to improve their reading ability. Five important ways of providing such experiences are:

1. Knowing and using information about students and providing opportunities for success in reading tasks
2. Making appropriate and varied materials available
3. Modeling reading and writing as useful and desirable activities
4. Providing substantial and frequent opportunities for students to read materials they have selected for themselves
5. Providing frequent opportunities for students to interact with one another in connection with reading and to share reading experiences

Knowing and using information about students and providing opportunities for success in reading tasks. The effectiveness of reading instruction is likely to be enhanced when teachers design activities and select materials on the basis of students' achievement levels, interests, experience (both in school and outside of school), knowledge, and culture. Teachers that draw on these kinds of information can increase a student's desire to read. Moreover, proceeding from the familiar to the new tends to enhance the student's enjoyment of reading and chances of experiencing success.

Another important kind of knowledge about a student is the student's view of reading and the student's perception of himself or herself as a present or potential reader. In addition to influencing curriculum planning, this information affects the teacher's and student's expectations concerning the student's rate of progress.

Making appropriate and varied materials available. Matching reading materials to students' interests and abilities requires a wide variety of reading materials, ranging from informal (e.g., newspapers, television guides, and menus) to more formal (e.g., short stories, poetry, plays, and reference materials).

Modeling reading as a useful and desirable activity. Students' motivation is likely to increase when the students believe that reading is an ordinary but important part of daily life. One important way they can develop this view is to see the adults in their lives regularly use and enjoy reading materials in a variety of ways. Such instances can range from incidental consultation of a newspaper for the weather forecast to a sharing of thoughts and feelings about a novel. When students see adults respond to print with laughter or disagreement, they gain an image of reading as an interaction between a reader and an author rather than an abstract activity.

Providing substantial and frequent opportunities for students to read materials they have selected for themselves. Reading frequently does more to further motivation than talking about reading. Once a student has established an understanding of the full scope of what is being sought, the path is smoothed for the acquisition of useful reading skills and habits. When they have opportunities to read personally selected materials without interruption, former nonreaders come to see that reading is much easier than they previously believed. This activity also enhances motivation, because it places primary responsibility on the learner.

Providing frequent opportunities for students to interact and share reading experiences. Peer interaction about what is being read can contribute significantly to student motivation. A sharing of interest in a story or other material can help students dispel past fears or misconceptions about reading. In such situations, the focus is taken off the act of reading itself, and reading is shown to be a tool for gaining access to desired material, such as mysteries, old favorite stories, and verses to new, popular songs.

Substantial discussion periods before and after reading can prove highly productive for creating enthusiasm about reading.

Reading tasks make sense to students when they perceive reading as being personally and socially attainable, useful, enjoyable, and desirable.

Peer-to-peer interaction about reading not only gives status to reading but also provides opportunities for the students to reflect on what they have read.

Through the five avenues cited for helping students perceive that reading is necessary and possible, students can be helped to: (1) perceive of themselves as readers; (2) regard reading as necessary to their daily lives; (3) find pleasure in reading experiences; and (4) want to develop more effective reading skills and habits.

***QUESTIONS** for determining whether or not you are giving adequate emphasis to motivation in your reading program*

How does your program provide for:

1. Knowing and using information about students and providing opportunities for success in reading tasks?
2. Making appropriate and varied materials available?
3. Modeling reading and writing as useful and desirable activities?
4. Providing substantial and frequent opportunities for students to read materials they have selected for themselves?
5. Providing frequent opportunities for students to interact with one another in connection with reading and to share reading experiences?

***EXAMPLES** of Activities*

1. Emphasize positive models. Students need to see adults:
   a. Use reading daily as a necessary, practical tool.
   b. Enjoy reading.
   c. Respond to fiction (e.g., with liking or disliking, laughter or sadness) and nonfiction (e.g., by forming opinions, making judgments, or creating something new).
2. Provide students with opportunities for success:
   a. Use already memorized language as reading material (e.g., songs, television commercials, poetry, jingles).
   b. Provide a variety of high-interest materials at appropriate reading levels (e.g., magazines, books, newspapers, television guides).
   c. Encourage students to help one another read together.
   d. Have students listen to taped stories or chapters and read along with the tapes until they gain confidence in reading alone.
   e. Encourage frequent sharing of experiences and information about materials read.
3. Create a need to read through certain types of materials that are used everyday, such as the following (selected for appropriateness to age level): cafeteria menus, food labels, application forms, popular songs, joke books, recipes, and directions for model building.
4. Help students develop the desire to read in these ways:
   a. Read to students regularly.
   b. Introduce favorite books by reading a portion of the beginning or one of the chapters. Have multiple copies of

Have students listen to taped stories or chapters and read along with the tapes until they gain confidence in reading alone.

the books available so the students can read the book on their own.
   c. Have students prepare a classroom best sellers list; display these books.
   d. Have students write their own play and perform it in class.
5. Provide frequent opportunities for independent reading, especially with student-selected materials, and provide for uninterrupted periods of reading.
6. Vary instructional techniques, grouping, and the classroom environment to promote interest, creativity, and growth:
   a. Display books, posters, maps, and students' work.
   b. Use pairs, teams, whole-class instruction, audiovisual materials, guest speakers, parent aides, and learning centers when it is appropriate.

Application

In keeping with the foregoing discussion that reading is most productively viewed as a tool and not an end in itself, teachers in a high-quality reading program give an important place to the application of skills from the first day of instruction. While the concepts discussed in this section rely upon the information presented earlier about comprehension, language processing, and motivation as the bases for instruction, the sequence of these sections is not intended to imply that skill development and motivation precede application. All of the components work together. For some students, wanting to read about a hobby or a goal, such as learning to drive, would produce enough motivation to become a good reader. For others, trying to read materials about a familiar topic, such as cooking or baseball, can help students discover that they are better readers than they thought they were. This view reemphasizes the notion that the most effective instructional strategy in reading is to have students read from a variety of materials on a regular basis.

The most effective instructional strategy in reading is to have students read from a variety of materials on a regular basis.

Reading to satisfy one's own interests or gain desired information gives meaning and practice in (1) reading to understand; (2) integrating and using language processing skills; and (3) reading fluently for various purposes. In some reading programs that have been ineffective in producing desired results, it has been found that the instructors offered too few opportunities for students to have meaningful reading experiences and, often, they offered those few opportunities after extensive isolated skill instruction. An analogy could be described in tennis instruction in which an effective instructor would not only have students practice serves, ground shots, and overhead shots but also give them a chance to play the game from the very beginning of the instruction. Similarly, reading students benefit from practicing reading in a variety of situations from the beginning of the instruction.

In addition, the goal of reading instruction should encompass more than the development of proficient readers who can comprehend written language. The content of what they read is also important. Reading instruction should increase the information, ideas, and concepts that students have about the world,

culture, and society. Reading programs should expose students to some of the best and deepest thoughts of the culture in which they live, introduce them to different points of view, and show individual and cultural values in operation.

While not exhaustive, the following subcomponents of application in the reading process represent several uses a person might have for reading, both as a student and as an adult. Whether or not these particular labels are used, a complete reading program should address:

1. Reading and responding to literature
2. Reading in the content areas
3. Recreational reading
4. Study skills
5. Practical uses of reading

Reading and Responding to Literature

Helping students learn to read is only part of the final goal of reading instruction. Teachers of reading should also seek to stimulate students to become lifelong readers, help them appreciate fine literature, and enable them to refine their personal values through interaction with literature in a variety of forms.

A strong literature program will encourage students to regard books as an interesting, productive way to learn more about life and the world. Literature can be viewed as another avenue for gaining knowledge about oneself, one's culture, and others and extending one's existing knowledge with new information and ideas.

In addition to the major purpose of helping students to know the potential contribution of literature to their lives, a literature program offers advantages for the development of reading abilities. Interesting, well-written materials are excellent vehicles for generating student excitement about reading. Students who are absorbed in literature will voluntarily practice, master, and extend their reading skills. To gain these benefits, students need to become aware of an array of literature, be helped to develop means of personal selection, and be encouraged to appreciate different interpretations of a single work. Therefore, it is essential that teachers of literature be familiar with the best literature available for the age group they teach. In addition, care should be taken to introduce students to a variety of literature that represents a broad spectrum of cultural experiences.

Literature instructors can help students become aware of the values and beliefs of their own and other cultures. They can also use literature to help students develop personal and social responsibility and respect for others. Adults can be powerful models through the types of literature they select and read.

***QUESTIONS** for determining whether or not you are giving adequate attention to literature in your reading program*

How does your literature program provide for:

1. Frequent opportunities for students to read for personal pleasure and to relate others' ideas to their own ideas?

2. A number of opportunities or requirements to read or listen to a variety of high-quality literature?
3. Exposure to a range of reading materials from which students can learn to make independent selections:
   a. Through courses on the study of various forms of literature?
   b. As a regular part of the reading program?
   c. Through the use of literature from many cultures?

EXAMPLES of Activities

1. Establish regular periods for uninterrupted silent reading.
2. Provide time for browsing in a library, with a priority on exploring other kinds of reading matter than the students have read before.
3. Develop interesting activities to introduce students to various types of recreational reading, such as the following:
   a. Find one magazine you would especially like a subscription to, and tell why you chose it. What magazine would be your second choice?
   b. Locate two or three different Sunday newspapers. Find a section you especially like (such as sports, travel, comics). Compare for similarities and differences.
   c. (To be done over several days.) Look through the various sections of the library listed below to find at least one example of each type that has descriptions of persons who represent your culture, ethnic group, family background, and language. That is, can you find people like yourself in (1) fiction; (2) biography and autobiography; (3) magazines; (4) sports stories; (5) poetry; and (6) plays?
   d. Determine the value of reading the cover flaps on one type of book (such as fiction). In a group of three to five people, each read two or three books and meet to report on the accuracy and ability of writers of cover flaps to present the story fairly.
   e. Conduct interviews with people you know, from your own age to your grandparents' age, to find out about reading habits. Ask such questions as:
      (1) Do you read for your own pleasure?
      (2) If yes, what types of books, magazines, newspapers, and so forth?
      (3) Where do you get your reading materials?
      (4) What book are you now reading?
      (5) How many books, magazines, and newspapers do you think you read in a month?
4. Provide opportunities for students to see evidence that adults read and appreciate fine literature and are willing to share their responses informally or through "book talks."
5. Hold discussions on a number of books on one topic in which students discuss values embodied and debate about characterizations, actions, and motives.
6. Compare and contrast stories on similar themes from different cultures; discuss why and how a particular story reflects the values of that culture.

Provide time for browsing in a library, with a priority on exploring other kinds of reading matter than the students have read before.

7. Read aloud from several kinds of literature.
8. Listen to tapes and records of portions of literary selections.
9. Establish a required reading list.

Reading in the Content Areas

Reading in the content areas of the curriculum requires the same skills of comprehension and language processing as required in other kinds of reading. It also serves as an important means of promoting the development of such skills. A weakness of many reading programs is that they fail to help students transfer what they have learned about reading in general to their efforts in the content areas. Also, some instructors assume that the reading of content area materials requires totally different reading approaches from the reading of other types of materials. Schools that emphasize the teaching of reading in the content areas promote the continuous application and extension of reading skills.

Reading in content areas can be a part of the instructional program at all levels. Elementary school teachers can develop and reinforce reading skills while teaching such subjects as art, social studies, and science. High school teachers can teach study skills specific to their content areas, such as map reading. To carry out this approach, all teachers should have access to materials that vary in complexity of conceptual presentation and language structures, so that students with different abilities can be challenged and yet be successful in their reading activities.

Instruction in any area should bridge the gap between what students know and what they need to know. For reading activities in any content area, the students' existing knowledge and language competence must be used as a basis for the vocabulary and concept development needed for that area. Students' comprehension of content area materials is related to the existing knowledge they bring to bear upon the new materials.

Students' reading comprehension is improved when their reading is preceded by real and vicarious experiences and discussions of ideas related to the content of a selection.

The use of appropriate activities before, during, and after reading of curriculum materials can help students develop strategies to understand what they are studying. Research suggests that students' reading comprehension is improved when their reading is preceded by real and vicarious experiences and discussions of ideas related to the content of a selection and when they are given "guideposts" indicating what to look for while reading. Having students set purposes for reading and encouraging their questioning at various levels of comprehension can help students be more successful while they are reading an assignment. Post-reading activities can be used to reinforce and extend understanding as well as to enhance the reading of the text. Focusing on major ideas requires a different kind of reading from focusing on specific details.

The textbooks used in subject areas are often quite difficult, because of their attempts to cover enormous bodies of information in limited space and their use of technical vocabulary that is often unfamiliar to the reader. Rewriting materials, furnishing study guides, and providing supplementary materials can help students read at their interest and ability levels. Teaching the study skills that apply to each subject area can also aid students in

attaining full comprehension of content material. (A discussion of study skills follows in a separate section.)

***QUESTIONS** for determining whether or not you are giving adequate attention to reading in the content areas in your reading program*

How does your reading program provide for:

1. Opportunities for students to reinforce and develop concepts necessary to new areas of study before they read about them?
2. Instruction in the features most characteristic of each subject area and its written materials?
3. Reinforcement and extension of students' present reading skills through their use of the skills required in the various content areas?

EXAMPLES of Activities

1. Develop prereading activities in which students:
   a. Discuss experiences they have had or things they already know that are related to the content to be covered.
   b. Are exposed to visual materials, such as photographs, films, and slides that set the stage for reading.
   c. Learn new or technical vocabulary through direct experiences and discussions in which the terms are introduced in their natural context.
   d. Hear a talk by someone who is knowledgeable about the subject of the reading or a related subject.
   e. Set purposes for reading; e.g., to get detailed facts to support a point of view, to build a model, to conduct an experiment.
2. Provide enough time for effective reading of content materials:
   a. The teacher reads the first paragraph or page orally to launch the activity.
   b. Students team up to read to each other.
   c. The teacher provides selections of varying difficulty on the same topic.
3. Develop post-reading activities in which students:
   a. In pairs, in small groups, or within a whole-class discussion, answer questions at all levels of comprehension.
   b. Write summary statements about what they have learned from their reading.
   c. Create something from directions given in writing.
   d. Compare the treatment of the topic by different authors.
   e. Discuss how the text differs from others they have read.

Does your reading program provide for instruction in the features most characteristic of each subject area and its written materials?

Recreational Reading

Another important task of the school is to help students experience how reading can play a major role in their daily lives and enable them to perceive reading as a desirable and pleasurable use of one's time. Many students can, but do not, read when they leave school. Such students should be helped before they leave school to reach the point where they find reading to be a possible

means of relaxation, source of pleasure, and a pathway to new areas to explore. To make reading an activity that students value beyond the school reading program requirements, teachers should help students enjoy reading to such a degree that they will select it as a leisure-time activity.

In a well-balanced reading program, time for recreational and voluntary reading is built into the school program, and outside reading activities are promoted and recognized. Recreational reading is included in both elementary and high school programs to build student interests. Such an approach provides a highly effective means of giving students an opportunity to practice, master, and extend their reading skills. It also allows "each student to develop opportunities to pursue educational interests," which is a requirement in the state's school improvement bill (AB 65).

Providing a high-quality recreational reading program requires planning. The new school improvement bill requires that a variety of materials that appeal to students with diverse interests, backgrounds, and abilities must be made available. Teachers must be able to help students select books that capture their interest and are written in language the students understand. Perhaps most importantly, teachers must encourage and motivate students to read and respond to written materials.

QUESTIONS for determining whether or not you are giving adequate attention to recreational reading in your reading program

How does your program provide for:

1. Easy access by students to a variety of books and other printed materials?
2. Courses to stimulate recreational reading?
3. Regularly scheduled periods of silent sustained reading?
4. Materials that stimulate students to explore particular areas of interest?
5. A library program that supports recreational reading?
6. Opportunities for students to learn from one another?
7. Opportunities for students to purchase their own books?
8. Opportunities for self-selected reading?

Teachers should help students enjoy reading to such a degree that they will select it as a leisure-time activity.

EXAMPLES of Activities

1. Establish daily sessions of sustained silent reading.
2. Make sure that libraries and classrooms contain a variety of high-quality and current reading materials.
3. Develop activities that encourage students to share their interests, recommend books to one another, and learn from one another.
4. Make sure that parents, teachers, and other role models show enthusiasm for reading and that they read to students as well as encourage students to read independently.
5. Hold book fairs, young authors' conferences, and other school or regional gatherings related to reading.
6. Develop school assignments that include reading and discussions of reading with family members at home.
7. Integrate the library program with classroom instruction.

Study Skills

The development of independent study skills related to reading enhances a student's ability to learn in all content areas. Since such skills are a means to an end—i.e., acquiring, assimilating, and synthesizing knowledge—they are most effectively learned when they are applied within a meaningful context and when they build on or develop a student's background of information, ideas, and concepts.

A comprehensive reading program would include instruction in independent study methods, such as the survey, question, read, and review system. In such a method, a student surveys material to be read by looking through the entire selection to note its organization or determine its main sections. The student sets purposes for reading, turns major headings into questions, and then reads to answer the questions. After reading, the student recites or recalls what has been read and reviews the selections for further clarification. Adaptations of this and other methods, such as directed reading activities, can be used in all subject areas.

Independent study skills are most effectively learned when they are applied within a meaningful context.

The central element of studying is setting or being clear about the purpose for the study. Maintaining a clear focus on the purpose of an assignment or the proposed use of the reading is vital to efficient study. Consequently, the process of setting and clarifying the purposes deserves specific instruction within a reading program.

When planning instruction in study skills, it is important to bear in mind that such activities make use of reading skills as well. Many activities that are generally classified as study activities also require writing skills (as in outlining, note-taking, and so forth). For example, one reads, then takes notes, and then later reads the notes again to study.

In addition to covering independent study skills, a comprehensive program would equip students to locate and use printed information from a variety of sources, such as the contents or index of a book, the card catalog, the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*, encyclopedias, newspapers, and magazines. Knowing how to read other forms of printed information, such as maps, graphs, charts, and labels, also contributes to a student's learning ability. Often these other skills are taught within the context of content-area instruction.

***QUESTIONS** for determining whether or not you are giving adequate attention to research and study skills in your reading program*

How does your program provide for:

1. Opportunities for students to learn how to set purposes that are consistent with what they want to know?
2. Instruction in learning to locate and use printed information from a variety of sources (e.g., encyclopedias, card catalog)?
3. Instruction in learning to organize information in a variety of ways to suit a particular purpose (e.g., outlining, note-taking, summarizing)?
4. Instruction in learning how to use other forms of printed information (e.g., maps, graphs, charts, tables)?
5. Instruction in learning to use independent study methods?

A comprehensive program would include instruction and reinforcement in such skills as reading signs and labels and locating and using printed information from such sources as newspapers.

EXAMPLES of Activities

1. Provide activities in which students look for information of interest in encyclopedias, newspapers, and magazines and then take notes, make summaries, or outline information in order to share the information with others.
2. Provide activities in which students listen to a short lecture on a topic of interest and write down the main points of the lecture. At the conclusion of the talk, the students can fill in the details and then compare notes with one another's notes and with the lecture text.
3. Have students locate a specific book title card and author card in the card catalog; then direct them to find books on a certain topic of interest by using subject cards.
4. Have students read a single selection three times, each time with a different purpose:
   a. Read for main ideas.
   b. Read for what is similar to their own lives.
   c. Read for what they like or do not like about the author's style.
5. Provide activities in which students exchange outlines or notes, and without having read the corresponding text from which the outlines or text were taken, attempt to reconstruct the article or story read by the peer. If necessary, each student improves his or her outline until the peer can do the task successfully.

Practical Uses of Reading

Since reading is an important practical tool in everyday living, the component called practical uses of reading represents the fifth important application that should be considered in the design of an effective reading program. A comprehensive program would include instruction and reinforcement in such skills as reading signs and labels and locating and using printed information from such sources as newspapers, catalogs, maps, telephone books, television guides, and magazines. Instruction would also cover the use of reading for functional purposes, such as completing job or loan applications, reading election ballots, and taking driver's tests.

Instruction in how to use practical materials can also enhance students' awareness as consumers and their ability to function in everyday situations. Language processing and comprehension skills are practiced and improved through the use of interesting materials the students encounter every day. As in other uses of reading, the purposes of the activity are regarded foremost, and students draw on reading skills within the context of natural use.

QUESTIONS for determining whether or not you are giving adequate attention to the practical uses of reading in your reading program

How does your program provide for:

1. Opportunities for students to learn to use reading to gain basic survival information (reading signs and labels)?
2. Instruction in how to locate and use printed information from a variety of sources (e.g., telephone books, catalogs, newspapers, maps)?

3. Instruction in how to use reading for functional purposes (e.g., completing job or loan applications, reading election ballots, taking driver's tests)?
4. Making students aware of everyday activities that can be enhanced, made easily accomplishable, or made possible through reading?

EXAMPLES of Activities

1. Have students read the labels on cans of food to answer such questions as these: What are the directions for cooking this food? What are its ingredients? What recipes, if any, are listed on the can?
2. Have students compare from two different restaurants the offerings and prices on the menus.
3. Have students read various sections of a newspaper for such purposes as finding a job they would like, locating an editorial with which they agree or disagree, or comparing advertisements for "selling" techniques used.
4. Develop activities in which students follow written directions for such purposes as assembling a model airplane, baking bread, or cleaning a typewriter.
5. Have students use a street map to find the locations of particular buildings, such as their school, a post office, or a television station.
6. Have students use a television guide to find their favorite program for a particular night.
7. Have students identify important sources of current information at the school; e.g., daily schedule, cafeteria menu, directions for tasks, announcements).

Have students identify important sources of current information.

2 Key Issues for Implementing a High-Quality Reading Program

The curriculum issues discussed in the first section of this handbook represent the core of the reading program. However, to enable students to receive the full impact of a well-designed, balanced program, school planners must also address several implementation factors. For the purpose of this handbook, these issues have been divided into two categories: classroom-level issues and school-level issues.

Classroom-level issues have to do with decisions that must be made by a teacher or a team of teachers, either at grade level or department level, to carry out a program with students. These decisions concern such matters as organization of the classroom, teaching methods, and recordkeeping. The discussion in this section provides answers to this question: How will the program be delivered?

School-level issues have to do with decisions that must be made by a school staff or district as a whole. These decisions would range from developing the list of course offerings and academic requirements to formulating a total school philosophy on reading and language instruction. The discussion in this section provides answers to this question: What school policies are necessary for implementation?

Classroom-Level Issues

Classroom decisions translate the general skill development, motivation, and application goals and curricular activities discussed in section 1 of this handbook into the daily and monthly classroom tasks that involve such matters as the following:

1. Classroom climate
2. Classroom organization
3. Personalization of instruction and selection and use of materials
4. Teaching methodology
5. Systems for monitoring student progress and adjusting learning activities

Climate in the Classroom

Classroom climate refers to decisions a teacher makes about how to promote a task-oriented atmosphere and productive relationships among the people in the classroom,

both adults and students. The school improvement program (AB 65) requirements emphasize that efforts must be made in all divisions of the instructional program to make classroom environments conducive to learning. The teacher has primary responsibility for structuring and managing the classroom in a way that minimizes disruptions and maximizes interest, motivation, and cooperation.

Organization of the Classroom

Classroom organization decisions relate to the efficient management of the classroom. The teacher is responsible for utilizing to the fullest extent possible the time he or she spends instructing students, helping students utilize the time they spend on appropriate learning tasks, and bringing about smooth operation of the classroom.

A teacher's time is a valuable resource that should be allocated carefully when the teacher makes such decisions as whether or not large- or small-group instruction is more efficient for a specific learning task. Too much time spent lecturing can leave too little time to work with individual students, but too much time spent with individuals can prevent regular contact with all students. The teacher must make choices as to how his or her time can best be used.

The teacher must also make decisions directed at helping students maximize the time they spend engaged in appropriate learning activities. First, the teacher must select an activity that is responsive to the needs and interests of a given student. Second, the teacher must see that the student spends a productive amount of time in accomplishing the task. Both the selection of the appropriate task and the student's engagement in the task are essential in utilizing the learning time and in promoting continuous progress.

Finally, a teacher must decide how to organize available time, materials, and facilities in a way that promotes a smooth operation. Individual classroom standards, schedules, and procedures can be used as the basis for such decisions.

Personalized Instruction and Utilization of Materials

Personalizing of instruction means responding to the individual needs and performance levels of students. Being responsive to individual needs, strengths, interests, and learning styles does not necessarily require one-to-one instruction, nor does it mean that each student should be engaged in a different task. Rather, the notion of responsiveness emphasizes the effective use of a variety of teaching strategies, materials, and curricula to help each student learn best.

To personalize instruction, a teacher must make decisions about how to determine student needs, how to place students in appropriate learning activities, how to group students for instruction, and how to address student needs in regard to district proficiency standards and overall standards. A responsive environment provides for maximum learner time on productive tasks and continuous student progress.

The use of curriculum materials refers to the decisions a teacher makes as to which materials are best suited for accomplishing

particular tasks and how best to use the materials. These decisions are likely to be beneficial to students when the teacher considers the individual skill needs, cultural characteristics of the students, and the characteristics of the curriculum materials themselves.

Teaching Methodology

Teaching methodology refers to the decisions a teacher makes about how to structure and deliver instruction. The decisions include selecting and teaching to objectives, using appropriate principles of reinforcement and motivation, and scheduling opportunities for practice.

Teaching methodology also includes making choices as to which instructional format (e.g., lecture, small-group discussion, questioning techniques) will best promote learning. Teachers can make better decisions when they are aware of the variety of teaching styles available to them and are open to using appropriate combinations to ensure student progress.

Systems for Monitoring Progress

Systems for monitoring student progress refers to the system a teacher has established for keeping track of student needs and progress. The type of information a teacher collects allows the teacher to constantly adjust instruction to facilitate continuous progress on the part of students. The school improvement program (AB 65) requirements for continuous progress underline the need for a useful monitoring system.

Systems for monitoring progress need not be elaborate or greatly time consuming. Much of the information teachers find valuable and use on a daily basis is informal. For example, some teachers make daily informal written or mental notes regarding student progress. In addition, a teacher needs a simple means of recording essential data. Data can be obtained from a variety of sources to produce as complete a picture as possible. A teacher might use several of the following in combination:

1. Teacher observations and checklists
2. Item analysis of standardized tests for individuals or groups
3. Informal reading inventories
4. Notes on the oral reading of selected paragraphs
5. Notes on the silent reading of selected paragraphs
6. Criterion-referenced tests

Continuums and Management Systems

Reading skill continuums and reading management systems have been widely used in determining which skills to teach and what kinds of activities to use to provide instruction, practice, and reinforcement. If kept in proper perspective and utilized as a segment of a total reading program, some of these continuums and systems may be helpful. All too often, however, they become viewed as the total reading program. The following three characteristics of the process of developing reading abilities show some possible dangers in relying exclusively on reading skill continuums and management systems:

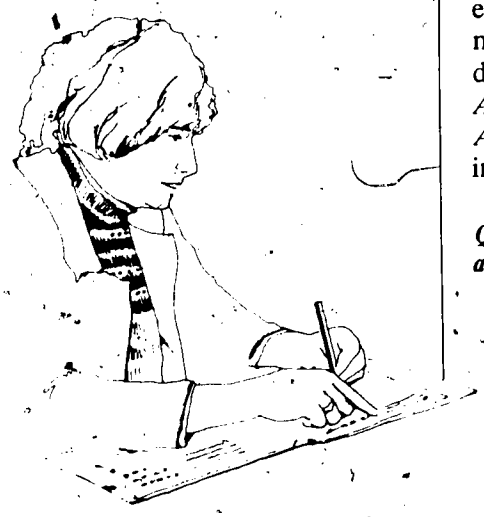
1. *Uneven complexity of skills and time required for acquisition of skills.* Many management systems do not include a proper

The notion of responsiveness emphasizes the effective use of a variety of teaching strategies, materials, and curricula to help each student learn best.

balance of skills from each of the major components discussed in this handbook. Furthermore, some skills cannot be divided into discrete packages and learned at a distinct time as easily as others. While just as important to reading proficiency, these skills tend to be left out of the reading skill continuums or are neglected in instruction based on such systems. For example, extending the ability to use and understand complicated linguistic patterns is crucial to the development of reading ability and requires a substantial foundation of reading, speaking, and listening activities. Improvement may be gradual, and this particular skill does not lend itself to a given date at which it can be marked off as learned. As a result, some of the most powerful language processing, comprehension, and fluency skills are minimized by or excluded from reading programs based upon skill continuums.

2. *Necessity of continued attention and practice to achieve proficiency.* Even skills that appear to have been learned need reinforcement. Instruction in a given skill resembles a continuous upward spiral more than a single step of a staircase.
3. *Lack of absolute scope and sequence in reading skills.* Finally, reading continuums assume skills are learned in a linear fashion; i.e., a student cannot learn a given skill until he or she has mastered the previous one. Research suggests, however, that students learn to read in a much more circuitous way. They tend to use information from a variety of sources to grasp meaning when they read, apparently skipping stages, relying on some cues more than others, and utilizing diverse ways of combining that information. Reading management systems can encourage an overly rigid unfolding of the curriculum and fail to respond adequately to student's needs.

If reading skill continuums and reading management systems are to be used, they must be examined in terms of all of the essential areas of reading instruction. If they contain gaps or specify inappropriate means of assessment, other methods must be employed to produce a satisfactory, complete package. As was mentioned earlier, it is suggested that planners use the present document and the Department of Education's *Handbook for Assessing an Elementary School Program* and the *Handbook for Assessing a Secondary School Program* for assistance in formulating a total, effective educational program



QUESTIONS for determining whether or not you are giving adequate attention to classroom-level decisions in your reading program

How does your program provide for:

1. Effective integration of instruction in skill development, motivation, and application into your daily classroom program?
2. A classroom climate that is conducive to learning and that promotes independent, pleasurable reading activities and interactive language experiences?

3. A classroom organization that maximizes teachers' instructional time and student learning time and that provides for the smooth and efficient operation of the classroom.
4. Instruction and materials that are responsive to students' academic levels?
5. Classroom instruction that reflects effective teaching practices?
6. Effective methods of keeping track of and matching instruction to student progress?

School-Level Issues

School-level program decisions pertain to the way a school is organized to provide a balanced reading program, and they involve such matters as the following:

1. School policies and program philosophy
2. Availability of a variety of programs and courses
3. Student placement
4. Provision for student disabilities
5. Student assessment/evaluation
6. Reports to parents

Even skills that appear to have been learned need reinforcement.

School Policies and Program Philosophy

School policies refer to schoolwide commitments that strengthen and enhance the reading program. A school that considers reading an instructional priority needs a philosophy statement guiding all aspects of the school program pertaining to reading. A policy statement should specify academic or course requirements or standards of quality a school has set; it should promote continuity of instruction. If support personnel and teachers in all departments seek to promote the development of reading abilities, the program will be supported on a schoolwide basis. The policy statement of such a school should address such specific issues as the emphasis to be placed on reading in content-area classes or the role of oral reading and such general issues as the amount of homework, student grading, and response to a student's failure to complete assignments. A policy statement might also specify any standards of quality or academic requirements a school has set.

Proficiency standards are also a school policy matter. The school improvement program (AB 65) regulations state that "in secondary schools there must be a process for students to demonstrate proficiency in any aspect of the curriculum in order to waive course-hour requirements and pursue an elective course of study."

Policy considerations might also include time allotments. Research has shown the amount of teacher time devoted to areas of instruction and the amount of student time spent actively engaged in specific learning tasks are related to the amount of learning that is accomplished. In a well-balanced program, time allotments for learning activities are carefully planned and designed to reflect the program's priorities.

The selection of curriculum materials is also a matter of school policy. In planning its program, a school should seek to match

curriculum materials to program emphasis. A school should also develop enough consistency among school programs to promote continuity among classes and grades. Finally, Assembly Bill 65 requirements stress the selection of reading materials that enhance multicultural awareness and that are responsive to the individual's needs, strengths, interests, and learning styles.

Availability of Programs and Courses

Availability of a variety of programs refers to the provision of a variety of options to meet the individual needs and performance levels of students, ranging from the college-bound student to those who are unable to pass proficiency exams. To be responsive, those in charge of a reading program must provide courses and placements for students that are tailored to the students' needs. Assembly Bill 65 requires that secondary schools establish a range of alternatives in all parts of the instructional program. For example, schools may establish required reading lists, offer literature and advanced reading courses, and give opportunities for college preparatory students to practice for college entrance exams. Schools may also offer reading clinics and basic instruction for students who need to pass proficiency exams; and the schools may offer a special reading program for students with vocational interests.

Student Placement

Student placement refers to the match a program makes between student needs and the instruction provided to meet those needs. Once a wide variety of options is made available, students must be guided or assigned to the appropriate classes and courses.

Student placement should also be responsive to such matters as district proficiency requirements. Proficiency requirements should be analyzed to determine the specific implications for school and classroom activities. Course options should be available to help students complete proficiency requirements. Other options should permit students to go beyond the minimal requirements to comply with the school's academic standards.

Student needs may require different grouping patterns. Grouping patterns should reflect student needs and should facilitate the accomplishments of learning tasks emphasized in the reading program. Grouping patterns should be flexible to meet the changing needs of students and allow for continuous progress. Assembly Bill 65 requires the establishment of a range of options in the size, composition, purposes, and location of learning groups.

Once the student needs have been identified, school planners will need to make the best possible use of the resources available to the school.

Provision for Student Disabilities

Providing for student disabilities refers to school-level organizational alternatives for students with special needs. The school improvement program (AB 65) requires the provision of instructional and auxiliary services to meet special needs. To meet this requirement, schools need a system for evaluating student needs and determining the types of services needed.

Once the student needs have been identified, school planners will need to make the best possible use of the resources available to the school and to provide support for the classroom teacher

who has students whose needs go beyond the options available in the regular classroom.

Resources can include both human and physical resources. Each school should be aware of all the support personnel available to it (e.g., nurses, speech teachers, psychologists). After all available human resources have been identified, a school should have a plan for scheduling the time and using the skills of support personnel to provide maximum assistance to the classroom teacher.

It is also important that each school examine alternative uses of the physical environment. An important source of assistance for students with special needs may be a variety of learning settings other than those provided by the regular classroom.

Assessment and Evaluation

Student assessment/evaluation refers to schoolwide mechanisms for assessing student skills, evaluating student progress, and assigning students to appropriate classes and courses. A primary purpose of such mechanisms is to match instruction to student needs in a way that ensures continuous progress.

In deciding on a schoolwide assessment/evaluation system, school planners should keep in mind the three functions of such a system:

1. Determining what type of data are needed
2. Gathering data
3. Using data to make program decisions

Data on student progress should be collected in a consistent and simple manner throughout the grade levels. The data collection/recordkeeping system should focus on essential data that are used regularly.

Some sources of assessment/evaluation information are:

1. Informal reading inventories
2. Teacher observations and checklists
3. Standardized tests
4. Notes on students' oral and silent reading of selected paragraphs and their retelling of what they have read
5. Criterion-referenced tests

School-level assessment/evaluation systems and practices provide the information necessary to meet AB 65 requirements pertaining to making the instructional program responsive to the individual's academic needs.

Reports to Parents

Reporting to parents refers to the system used to keep parents informed of student progress in developing reading abilities. To develop and maintain satisfactory community relations, schools need to make parents aware of ongoing progress, concerns, and issues. When this is done on a regular basis, problems of overdue concerns or surprises can be prevented. It can help to keep achievement and other standard scores in perspective. It can also enlist a greater range and variety of support service for the student.

In current systems, both formal and informal, a method of periodic reporting is used, especially in the elementary grades.

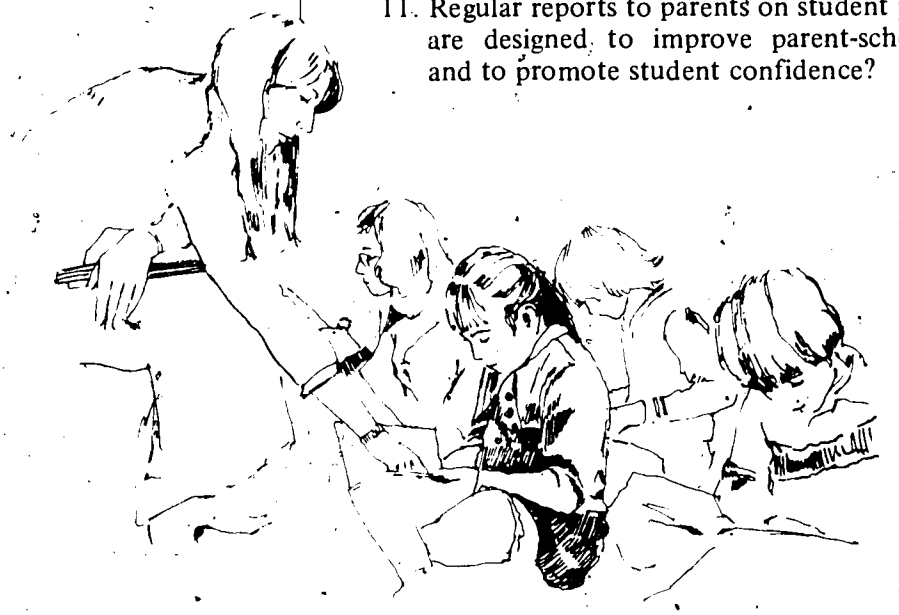
Whether individual notes, a uniform checklist, or other variations are used, teachers frequently assess student progress and make recommendations for the next steps to be taken. Whenever possible it is desirable to include the student in this process, thus making it a coassessment.

***QUESTIONS** for determining whether or not you are giving adequate attention to school-level decisions in your reading program*

How does your program provide for:

1. A schoolwide stated philosophy on reading/language instruction?
2. Schoolwide policies, including academic requirements and standards, adopted to strengthen and integrate the reading program?
3. Time allotments that reflect the program emphasis and provide sufficient time for major learning tasks?
4. Curriculum materials to match the program philosophy, to promote continuity of learning, and to reflect the backgrounds and needs of the specific student population?
5. Measurement and monitoring of student and total program effectiveness to guide maintenance and revision of the program?
6. Placement options and course offerings that reflect program goals and student needs?
7. A relationship to the district's proficiency requirements?
8. A plan that reflects the developmental needs of low, average, and high achieving students?
9. Use of support personnel and physical resources to meet the special needs of students and to provide support to classroom teachers?
10. Communicating the program to the school's constituency (e.g., parents, community, new teachers)?
11. Regular reports to parents on student progress in ways that are designed to improve parent-school communications and to promote student confidence?

A primary purpose of assessment and evaluation is to match instruction to student needs in a way that ensures continuous progress.



Conclusion

The authors of this document presented and described the components of a balanced, effective reading program—one that will produce motivated readers who are able to process written language to arrive at meaning. The authors identified skill development, motivation, and application as the principal components of such a program, but the three components should be used in combination to create effective instruction.

The discussions, questions, and sample activities presented for each component were designed to address the 14 elements of high-impact reading programs that were identified in the introduction to this document. It is hoped that the questions and suggestions will be helpful to planning groups in developing strong, comprehensive reading programs that:

- Engage students directly in reading for understanding and that involve students in this activity on a regular basis.
- Utilize and extend students' other language skills and knowledge as a foundation for the development of reading ability.
- Teach decoding skills in the context of their use in actual reading activities.
- Attend to the quality of reading materials offered to students.
- Include instruction directed at motivation, fluency, and flexibility; and that include programs for high achieving students and advanced readers.

This document may be used not only in initial planning and in the development of a new program but also in the periodic assessment of an ongoing program. It is assumed that those who use this handbook will also seek additional information for planning and decision making. The *Framework in Reading for the Elementary and Secondary Schools of California* and the *English Language Framework for California Public Schools* are suggested as prime resources.

Groups are also advised to use the appropriate handbook for assessing school programs (elementary or secondary) for a general perspective on program assessment, employing this document as a guide for an in-depth examination of their reading program. Using these documents in combination will provide some assurance to any planning or assessment group that it is taking into account the issues that are of principal concern to the California State Department of Education.

This document may be used not only in initial planning and in the development of a new program but also in the periodic assessment of an ongoing program.

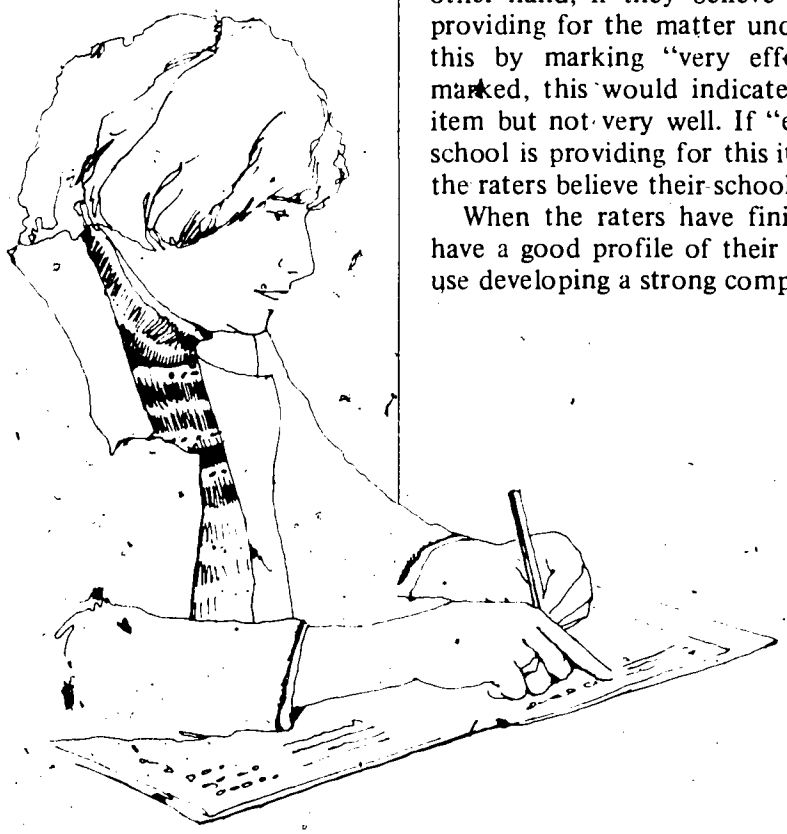
3 Checklist for Components of an Effective Reading Program

When users gain familiarity with the content and purpose of the handbook, they may find it practical to use this checklist separately.

The questions presented throughout this *Handbook for Planning an Effective Reading Program* were designed to help planning groups and others focus on the key issues that must be considered in each of the components of a high-quality reading program. Those questions were compiled here for easy reference and use. When users gain familiarity with the content and purpose of the handbook, they may find it practical to use this checklist separately, but it was not intended that the checklist stand on its own. After using the list of questions, planning groups and others may wish to make additions of their own, or they may wish to make other kinds of revisions so that it will better serve their immediate purposes.

In marking the checklist, the raters have been given a range of responses from "ineffective" to "very effective". If the persons making the ratings do not believe that they are providing for the matter under examination, they should mark their program or school as being "ineffective" in providing for that item. On the other hand, if they believe they are doing an outstanding job in providing for the matter under examination, they should indicate this by marking "very effective." If "somewhat effective" is marked, this would indicate that the school is providing for this item but not very well. If "effective" is marked, this indicates the school is providing for this item in a very satisfactory manner, but the raters believe their school or district could do a better job.

When the raters have finished marking the checklist, they will have a good profile of their reading program—an excellent tool to use developing a strong comprehensive reading program.



Skill Development

	Ineffective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Very effective
Comprehension				
How effective is your program in providing for each of the following:				
1. Experiences that help students recognize comprehension as the overall goal of reading?	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Daily opportunities for students to read with understanding materials that they have selected themselves or are required to read?	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Using and extending students' oral comprehension as the basis for reading comprehension?	☐	☐	☐	☐
4–7. Sufficient instruction to help students achieve various levels of comprehension, including small-group instruction based upon reading the same teacher-selected text (from multiple copies or basal texts):				
4. Literal: grasping information explicitly stated in the text?	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Interpretive: formulating ideas or opinions that are based upon the material read but not stated in the text?				
6. Applicative: connecting or integrating information, ideas, concepts, values, and feelings with one's own experience?	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Critical: synthesizing, analyzing, or evaluating the material read?	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Instruction and practice in using reading to answer questions or to find out information?	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. A range of reading materials, including materials that are appropriate to a variety of reading levels and student interests and that are sufficiently challenging to produce growth?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Language Processing				
How effective is your program in providing for each of the following:				
10. Frequent opportunities for students to use and extend their oral language skills as the basis for development of reading skills?	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. Daily opportunities for students to use the three cue systems of written language (symbolic, semantic, syntactic) in combination to obtain meaning?	☐	☐	☐	☐
12–14. Instruction in reading and opportunities for practice that are designed to help students increase their abilities to use in context:				
12. Symbolic information: sound-letter relationships, phonetic analysis, word recognition, structural analysis, and so forth?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Language Processing *(Continued)* *How effective is your program in providing for each of the following:*	Ineffective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Very effective
13. Semantic information: vocabulary development, concept development, use of context cues, idiomatic expressions, use of metaphors and similes, annotative/denotative meanings, synonyms, antonyms, and so forth?	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. Syntactic information: grammatical functions, word order, sentence patterns, and so forth?	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. Experiences to help students gain familiarity with features unique to written language and knowledge necessary for interpreting written language?	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. Frequent opportunities to hear the oral reading of written language, both live and recorded, and to respond to it in a variety of ways?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fluency and Flexibility *How effective is your program in providing for each of the following:*				
17. Frequent activities that require students to focus on reading fluency?	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. Opportunities for students to monitor their own fluency?	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. A higher percentage of silent reading activities than of oral reading?	☐	☐	☐	☐
20–21. Frequent activities that require students to focus on flexibility by:				
20. Requiring them to use various rates of reading?	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. Requiring them to adapt their reading skills to meet different purposes and kinds of reading materials?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Motivation *How effective is your program in providing for each of the following:*				
22. Knowing and using information about students and providing opportunities for success in reading tasks?	☐	☐	☐	☐
23. Making appropriate and varied materials available?	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. Modeling reading and writing as useful and desirable activities?	☐	☐	☐	☐
25. Providing substantial and frequent opportunities for students to read materials they have selected for themselves?	☐	☐	☐	☐
26. Providing frequent opportunities for students to interact with one another in connection with reading and to share reading experiences?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Motivation *(Continued)*

How effective is your program in providing for each of the following:

		Ineffective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Very effective
27.	Building on and extending students' interests?	☐	☐	☐	☐
28.	Learning how a student assesses his or her own reading proficiency and using that information to plan further experiences?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Application

Reading and Responding to Literature

How effective is your program in providing for each of the following:

29.	Frequent opportunities for students to read for personal pleasure and to relate others' ideas to their own ideas?	☐	☐	☐	☐
30.	A number of opportunities or requirements to read or listen to a variety of high-quality literature?	☐	☐	☐	☐
31-33.	Exposure to a range of reading materials from which students can learn to make independent selections:				
	31. Through courses on the study of various forms of literature?	☐	☐	☐	☐
	32. As a regular part of the reading program?	☐	☐	☐	☐
	33. Through the use of literature from many cultures?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Reading in the Content Areas

How effective is your reading program in providing for each of the following:

34.	Opportunities for students to reinforce and develop concepts necessary to new areas of study before they read about them?	☐	☐	☐	☐
35.	Instruction in the features most characteristic of each subject area and its written materials?	☐	☐	☐	☐
36.	Reinforcement and extension of students' present reading skills through their use of the skills required in the various content areas?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Recreational Reading

How effective is your reading program in providing for each of the following:

37.	Easy access by students to a variety of books and other printed materials?	☐	☐	☐	☐
38.	Courses to stimulate recreational reading?	☐	☐	☐	☐
39.	Regularly scheduled periods of silent sustained reading?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Recreational Reading *(Continued)*

How effective is your reading program in providing for each of the following:

		Ineffective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Very effective
40.	Materials that stimulate students to explore particular areas of interest?	☐	☐	☐	☐
41.	A literary program that supports recreational reading?	☐	☐	☐	☐
42.	Opportunities for students to learn from each other?	☐	☐	☐	☐
43.	Opportunities for students to purchase their own books?	☐	☐	☐	☐
44.	Opportunities for self-selected reading?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Study Skills

How effective is your reading program in providing for each of the following:

45.	Opportunities for students to learn how to set purposes that are consistent with what they want to know?	☐	☐	☐	☐
46.	Instruction in learning to locate and use printed information from a variety of sources (e.g., encyclopedias, card catalog)?	☐	☐	☐	☐
47.	Instruction in learning to organize information in a variety of ways to suit a particular purpose (e.g., outlining, note-taking, summarizing)?	☐	☐	☐	☐
48.	Instruction in learning how to use other forms of printed information (e.g., maps, graphs, charts, tables)?	☐	☐	☐	☐
49.	Instruction in learning to use independent study methods?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Practical Uses of Reading

How effective is your reading program in providing for each of the following:

50.	Opportunities for students to learn to use reading to gain basic survival information (e.g, reading signs and labels)?	☐	☐	☐	☐
51.	Instruction in how to locate and use printed information from a variety of sources (e.g., telephone books, catalogs, newspapers, maps)?	☐	☐	☐	☐
52.	Instruction in how to use reading for functional purposes (e.g., completing job or loan applications, reading election ballots, taking driver's tests)?	☐	☐	☐	☐
53.	Making students aware of everyday activities that can be enhanced, made easily accomplishable, or made possible through reading?	☐	☐	☐	☐

Program Implementation

		Ineffective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Very effective
Classroom-Level Program Decisions					
How effective is your reading program in providing for each of the following:					
54.	Effective integration of instruction in skill development, motivation, and application into your daily classroom program?	☐	☐	☐	☐
55.	A classroom climate that is conducive to learning and that promotes independent, pleasurable reading activities and interactive language experiences?	☐	☐	☐	☐
56.	A classroom organization that maximizes teachers' instructional time and student learning time and that provides for the smooth and efficient operation of the classroom?	☐	☐	☐	☐
57.	Instruction and materials that are responsive to students' academic levels?	☐	☐	☐	☐
58.	Classroom instruction that reflects effective teaching practices?	☐	☐	☐	☐
59.	Effective methods of keeping track of and matching instruction to student progress?	☐	☐	☐	☐
School-Level Program Decisions					
How effective is your reading program in providing for each of the following:					
60.	A schoolwide stated philosophy on reading/language instruction?	☐	☐	☐	☐
61.	Schoolwide policies, including academic requirements or standards, adopted to strengthen and integrate the reading program?	☐	☐	☐	☐
62.	Time allotments that reflect the program emphasis and provide sufficient time for major learning tasks?	☐	☐	☐	☐
63.	Curriculum materials to match the program philosophy, to promote continuity of learning, and to reflect the backgrounds and needs of the specific student population?	☐	☐	☐	☐
64.	Measurement and monitoring of student and total program effectiveness to guide maintenance and revision of the program?	☐	☐	☐	☐
65.	Placement options and course offerings that reflect program goals and student needs?	☐	☐	☐	☐
66.	A relationship to the district's proficiency requirements?	☐	☐	☐	☐

School-Level Program Decisions *(Continued)*

How effective is your reading program in providing for each of the following:

		Ineffective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Very effective
67.	A plan that reflects the developmental needs of low, average, and high achieving students?	☐	☐	☐	☐
68.	Use of support personnel and physical resources to meet the special needs of students and to provide support to classroom teachers?	☐	☐	☐	☐
69.	Communicating the program to the school's constituency (e.g., parents, community, new teachers)?	☐	☐	☐	☐
70.	Regular reports to parents on student progress in ways that are designed to improve parent-school communications and to promote student confidence?	☐	☐	☐	☐

When the raters have finished marking the checklist, they will have a good profile of their reading program.

Other Publications Available from the Department of Education

Handbook for Planning an Effective Reading Program is one of approximately 400 publications that are available from the California State Department of Education. Some of the more recent publications or those most widely used are the following:

An Assessment of the Writing Performance of California High School Seniors (1977)	$ 2.75
Bicycle Rules of the Road in California (1977)	1.50
California Guide to Parent Participation in Driver Education (1978)	3.15
California Guide to Traffic Safety Education (1976)	3.50
California Master Plan for Special Education (1974)	1.00†
California Public School Directory, 1979	11.00
California School Effectiveness Study (1977)	.85
California Teachers Salaries and Salary Schedules, 1977-78 (1978)	10.00
Computers for Learning (1977)	1.25
Discussion Guide for the California School Improvement Program (1978)	1.50*†
District Master Plan for School Improvement (1979)	1.50*
English-Language Framework for California Public Schools (1976)	1.50
Establishing School Site Councils: The California School Improvement Program (1977)	1.50*†
Five Successes: Analysis of Success Factors in Title III Reading Projects (1977)	.85
Framework in Reading for the Elementary and Secondary Schools (1973)	1.25
Genetic Conditions: A Resource Book and Instructional Guide (1977)	1.30
Guide for Multicultural Education: Content and Context (1977)	1.25
Guide for Ongoing Planning (1977)	1.10
Guidelines: Towards Excellence in Reading Programs	1.50
Handbook for Assessing an Elementary School Program (1978)	1.50*
Handbook for Assessing a Secondary School Program (1979)	1.50*
Handbook for Reporting and Using Test Results (1976)	8.50
Health Instruction Framework for California Public Schools (1978)	1.35
Instructional Grouping Practices Related to Students' Special Needs (1979)	1.50
Physical Education for Children, Ages Four Through Nine (1978)	2.50
Planning Handbook (1978)	1.50*†
Procedures for Elementary Program Review Teams (1978)	NC*
Procedures for Secondary Program Review Teams (1979)	NC*
Relating Reading and the School Library Program, Primary Grades (1973)	.85
Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Integrated Educational Programs (1978)	2.60
Science Framework for California Public Schools (1978)	1.65
Social Sciences Education Framework for California Public Schools (1975)	1.10
State Guidelines for School Athletic Programs (1978)	2.20
Students' Rights and Responsibilities Handbook (1978)	1.50†

Orders should be directed to:

California State Department of Education
P.O. Box 271
Sacramento, CA 95802

Remittance or purchase order must accompany order. Purchase orders without checks are accepted only from government agencies in California. Sales tax should be added to all orders from California purchasers.

A complete list of publications available from the Department may be obtained by writing to the address listed above.

†Also available in Spanish, at the price indicated.
*Developed for implementation of AB 65.

79120—300 4-79 20M LDA

78-167 03-0715 4-79 20M