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## **A Study of the Predictive Value of the *Diagnostic Reading Scales* and the *Woodcock Reading Mastery Testes* for Instructional Level Basal Placement**

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*University of Tennessee, Knoxville*

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Sandra Zecchini entitled "A Study of the Predictive Value of the *Diagnostic Reading Scales* and the *Woodcock Reading Mastery Testes* for Instructional Level Basal Placement." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Education.

J. Estill Alexander, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

Alanson Van Fleet, Lester Knight, Michael Logan

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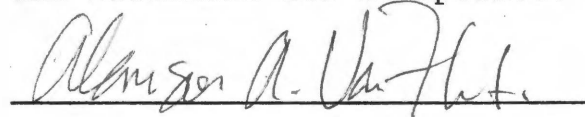
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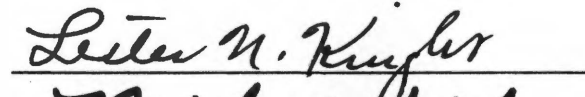
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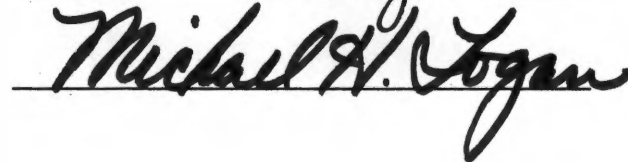
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Major Professor

We have read this dissertation  
and recommend its acceptance:

  
Alvin A. Van Hise

  
Lester N. Kuyler

  
Michael H. Logan

Accepted for the Council:

  
The Graduate School

A STUDY OF THE PREDICTIVE VALUE OF THE  
DIAGNOSTIC READING SCALES AND THE  
WOODCOCK READING MASTERY TESTS  
FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL  
BASAL PLACEMENT

A Dissertation  
Presented for the  
Doctor of Philosophy  
Degree  
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Sandra Zecchini

August 1983



This dissertation is lovingly dedicated to my mother,  
Helen Bengé Zecchini, my father, Anthony Peter Zecchini, and  
to the memory of my aunt, Mae Zecchini.

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## ABSTRACT

The present inquiry assessed the predictive value of the DRS and WRMT in the determination of instructional reading levels for basal placement. The rationale for this study was that teachers who receive clinical reports from reading specialists designating instructional level may place the student in the basal reader corresponding to the report's stated instructional level. This study sought to determine if children placed in basal materials on the instructional grade level(s) diagnosed by the WRMT and DRS would be capable of reading selections from these materials. Comprehension scores of 75% or greater constituted "fit" or correct basal placement by the tests.

The DRS and WRMT were administered to 30 fourth grade students randomly selected from the Knoxville, Tennessee, City School System. Following the tests, the students were placed in basal readers at the instructional level(s) indicated by the tests. Each child read two basal passages per diagnosed instructional level. The first passage was read orally and followed by comprehension questions asked orally. The second passage was read silently and also followed by oral comprehension questions. Students exhibited greater difficulty comprehending materials read silently than materials read orally.

The examiner found that the percentage rate of successful placement for the DRS was 43% for oral reading, and only 23% for silent reading. The WRMT was found to place successfully in 50% of the cases for oral reading and 20% for silent reading.

The results of this analysis suggest that both the DRS and WRMT were limited in their ability to predict instructional reading levels for basal placement. Furthermore, these tests largely ignore the interpersonal relationship between student and examiner, a relationship which can provide useful information for assessing appropriate reading levels.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

| CHAPTER   | PAGE |
|---|------|
| I. BACKGROUND AND ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY . . .                   | 1    |
| Introduction . . . . .  | 1    |
| Statement of the Problem . . . . .                                  | 7    |
| Purpose of the Study . . . . .                                      | 11   |
| Research Questions . . . . .  | 11   |
| Rationale for Research Questions . . . . .                          | 12   |
| Assumptions . . . . .   | 13   |
| Limitations . . . . .   | 14   |
| Significance of the Study . . . . .                                 | 15   |
| Procedures . . . . .  | 16   |
| Definition of Terms . . . . .                                       | 17   |
| Summary . . . . .   | 20   |
| II. SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE . . . . .                              | 22   |
| Introduction . . . . .  | 22   |
| Instructional Level and the Informal<br>Reading Inventory . . . . . | 23   |
| Test Descriptions and Reviews . . . . .                             | 32   |
| Research Related to the DRS and the WRMT . . . . .                  | 50   |
| Summary of the Literature Search . . . . .                          | 59   |
| III. RESEARCH PROCEDURES AND MATERIALS . . . . .                    | 62   |
| Introduction . . . . .  | 62   |
| The Sample . . . . .  | 62   |
| Data Gathering Procedure . . . . .                                  | 63   |
| Materials . . . . .   | 70   |
| Procedure for Analysis of Data . . . . .                            | 75   |
| IV. PRESENTATION OF DATA . . . . .                                  | 77   |
| Summary . . . . .   | 98   |
| V. SUMMARY OF RESEARCH . . . . .                                    | 101  |
| Conclusions . . . . .   | 105  |
| Discussion . . . . .  | 106  |
| Recommendations for Further Research . . . . .                      | 112  |
| LIST OF REFERENCES . . . . .  | 116  |

|  | PAGE |
|--|------|
| APPENDICES . . . . .   | 125  |
| A. STUDENT RECORD SHEETS FOR BASAL READING<br>PASSAGES AND QUESTIONS USED IN THE STUDY . . . | 126  |
| B. PARENT PERMISSION FORM; MASTER STUDENT<br>RECORD SHEET . . . . .                          | 207  |
| C. DATA FOR INDIVIDUAL CASES . . . . .   | 212  |
| VITA . . . . .   | 218  |

## LIST OF TABLES

| TABLE   | PAGE |
|---|------|
| 1. Diagnosed Instructional Reading Levels and Corresponding Basal Reading Levels for Placement . . . . .  | 69   |
| 2. Criteria for Entry Into DRS Oral Reading Passages From Scores Obtained on Word Recognition List 2 . . . . .  | 70   |
| 3. Comparison of Instructional Levels as Diagnosed by the DRS and the WRMT . . . . .  | 81   |
| 4. Individual Cases of Fit and Nonfit Between Diagnosed Instructional Levels on the DRS and the WRMT, and Oral and Silent Reading in Basal Material on Grade Level Matched to Instructional Level . . . . . | 83   |
| 5. Percentages of Cases of Fit Between Diagnosed Instructional Levels and Basal Reading Materials for Oral and Silent Reading of 30 Fourth Grade Students . . . . .   | 85   |
| 6. Cases of Fit and Nonfit in Which the DRS and WRMT Agree on Level of Basal Placement . . . . .  | 88   |
| 7. Cases in Which a Higher WRMT Level Resulted in Cases of Fit . . . . .  | 89   |
| 8. Cases in Which a Higher DRS Level Resulted in Cases of Fit . . . . .   | 89   |
| 9. Cases in Which a Lower WRMT Level Resulted in Cases of Fit . . . . .   | 90   |
| 10. Cases in Which a Lower DRS Level Resulted in Cases of Fit . . . . .   | 90   |
| 11. Number of Cases of Fit in Which Either the DRS or WRMT Predicted More Accurately for Placement at a Lower Basal Level, a Higher Basal Level, and for Total Cases . . . . .                              | 91   |
| 12. Comparison of Cases in Which Basal Comprehension Scores Increased Along with Level of Difficulty of Material . . . . .  | 93   |

| TABLE  | PAGE |
|--|------|
| 13. Comparison of Cases in Which the Research<br>Design Was Altered in Terms of Basal<br>Placement . . . . . | 94   |
| C-1. Data for Individual Cases . . . . .   | 213  |



# LIST OF FIGURES

| FIGURE   | PAGE |
|--|------|
| 1. Differences in Diagnosed Instructional Levels<br>on the DRS and the WRMT for 30 Students in<br>the Fourth Grade . . . . . | 79   |

## CHAPTER I

## BACKGROUND AND ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Introduction

Accurate determination of instructional reading level is crucial to the effective placement and instruction of students in virtually all reading programs. Precise knowledge of a child's instructional reading level will help a teacher in selecting and organizing the reading materials which are appropriate and necessary for optimum learning conditions. If a teacher inadvertently places a child in a program of reading materials that are too difficult, the child may become frustrated and the learning process will deteriorate accordingly. Conversely, if the child is placed in reading materials that are too easy and that lack challenge, he may become bored or he may end up with a false sense of adequacy.

The optimum conditions and materials for learning are those which challenge the student without frustrating him to the point where he gives up or becomes defensive. Thus the accurate determination of instructional reading level very often is the first step a teacher must take in order to decide upon the materials and methods of instruction which will best facilitate the optimum learning conditions for individual students. Beginning at a level at which the

child can experience some success with a moderate degree of challenge is not a new or unique concept in educational theory; rather it is a basic premise of the teaching profession, a premise well supported by psychological learning research and widely accepted by reading authorities:

Our rationale for fitting books to the pupils is based on both psychological and linguistic evidence. From a psychological point of view we have evidence that the most efficient learning takes place where pupils are highly motivated, where their self esteem is enhanced and where they have rather full comprehension of what they are doing. For those who are overplaced in reading, . . . lack of success leads to discouragement, loss of dignity or ego support, withdrawal and often to hostility. At the opposite extreme, to the underplaced the lack of challenge offers inadequate opportunity for involvement and the effect is to dampen the enthusiasm of these able pupils.

From a linguistic point of view we know that pupils who are dysfluent will find it difficult to make the proper connection between the melodies of oral language and the incomplete representation of these language structures in writing. Some of the fundamental meaning of language, . . . is expressed through the intonational structures of stress, pitch and juncture. If we encumber the poor reader with written material which he cannot decode easily from the point of view of word recognition and attack, how can we expect him to provide for himself these missing intonational features? (Botel, 1967, pp. 1-2)

Reading fluency must enable the reader to obtain meaning from symbolic representations on the printed page. The beginning reader, in terms of Botel's (1967) statement, must incorporate intrinsic motivation with linguistic

structures that are already present in order to accomplish this process. Attempts to designate the instructional reading level for students in the process of learning to read have traditionally involved two factors: (1) measures of comprehension to assess the ability to obtain meaning, and (2) measures of word recognition to assess the ability to transform symbols--not only into sound, but into language. The combination of these forms of measurement assumes that when the ability to break the code of sound/symbol correspondence is impaired, the ability to understand will also decrease. This basic assumption permeates the Informal Reading Inventory (IRI), as well as a wide range of individualized diagnostic instruments in reading, including the Spache Diagnostic Reading Scales (DRS), the Gray Oral Reading Test (GORT), and the Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests (WRMT), to name only a few.

Inherent in the concept of instructional level is its point of designation somewhere between the level at which the child can read on his own and the level at which he will become frustrated. This concept of instructional level can be understood most clearly in terms of its early inception as a component of the Informal Reading Inventory:

A major product derived from the use of the IRI is the identification of three distinct reading levels--independent, instructional, and frustration. For instructional purposes, the assumption has been that each literate

individual, regardless of maturity, has three such levels. Supposedly, these would be in hierarchical order in relationship to the difficulty of the materials, with the independent reading level being the lowest, or easiest, of the three. The other two levels, instructional and frustration, following in ascending order as the readability of the material increases. Each reading level is alleged to have specific instructional implications for the classroom teacher. While the existence of three different reading levels for literate persons is a powerful concept, it would have to be considered presently as a functionally useful but unvalidated construct. (Powell, 1970, pp. 3-4)

Validation of the construct of instructional reading level is hampered by several factors. These factors include: (1) lack of a universally accepted criterion for its determination; (2) the format of the diagnosis; (3) inconsistency in examiner decisions; (4) the effects of the interest value on reading selections; and (5) the variation in readability of graded instructional materials. Several of the more cogent factors will subsequently be discussed in greater detail in Chapter II. What is important to bear in mind here is that, although the existence and importance of the instructional reading level is accepted as a valuable construct, how it is to be determined is a question about which no universal agreement has been reached--primarily because of the myriad of complex factors involved in the reading, diagnostic, and learning processes.

Powell (1970) has suggested that it may be more beneficial to view the instructional level in terms of the role of the teacher:

What we are really concerned with is the degree of mastery. The child does not have an instructional level; he has only a performance level. . . . When we speak of instructional level, we are referring to a teacher task; when we speak of performance, we are referring to the learner's behavior, and when we speak of difficulty of material, we are referring to the characteristics of the media. For maximum learning, all three have to match: performance level (child); instructional level (teacher); and passage difficulty (material). The instruction should be provided by the teacher at the performance level of the child that will allow for the exclusion of interfering or disruptive reading behaviors. (Powell, 1970, p. 14)

Powell's observation makes it very clear that what is being explored as a theoretical construct is an intuitive part of instruction that has been going on since the first "teacher" set out to instruct the first "student" in how to read, no matter what the materials available. The growing concern over empirical establishment of a precise level of skill and measurement would seem to be a fairly recent matter of concern to reading educators. Part of the concern stems from the fact that, properly validated or not, the application of the instructional level concept often seems to facilitate instruction. Designating the level by means of an IRI, Dunkeld (1970) reported that second through sixth grade children placed in materials on the basis of the diagnosed instructional level showed significantly more gain

(0.05 level) than did children placed in easier or harder materials. In classroom practice, however, the more precise diagnosis of instructional reading level by IRI or diagnostic test is a practice implemented by the teacher or reading specialist for students already exhibiting moderate difficulty in learning to read, or in severe remedial reading cases.

Perhaps of even greater concern are certain indications that teachers may not be placing children at an appropriate level for maximum learning to take place. Millsap (1962) reported that 30% of the time teachers in grades one through six were unaware of children being placed in basal readers at frustration reading levels. Middle school teachers in a study conducted by Wunderlich and Bradtmueller (1971) exhibited a similar inability to place children at the appropriate instructional level, as did Truher's (1961) sample of second, fourth, and sixth grade teachers:

Authoritative opinion concerning the matching of reading materials to the individual pupil's reading level apparently is not being implemented in the classroom. This may be the case because of problems involved in appraising reading achievement and in estimating difficulty levels of texts. (Truher, 1961, p. 184)

Such evidence suggests that teachers may be placing children in materials inappropriate to their instructional levels, and this problem is compounded by the fact that basal readers constitute the predominant means of classroom instruction in the majority of American elementary schools:

Most teachers appear to use basal readers and workbooks daily, and the Educational Products Information Exchange (EPIE) reported from a 1977 national survey that U.S. teachers use commercial materials for 94% of their reading instruction. (Shannon, 1982, p. 884)

A survey of 539 classroom teachers, 26 reading teachers, and 26 administrators in a large midwestern school district revealed that classroom teachers used basal readers because the administration expected them to. Administrators felt that commercial materials were "based on science," thus having considerable instructional power. All groups believed equally that teachers might not be "involved" in reading instruction and that teachers really believed that the materials could teach children to read (Shannon, 1982).

#### Statement of the Problem

Within the given population of elementary school children being instructed primarily through basal reading materials, there is nearly always a group of children who have failed to read at their respective grade levels or to reach their individual potential. The problem of ascertaining the level at which to instruct the disabled reader thus becomes doubly important and even more complex. The classroom teacher in many cases has the option of referring the student to a reading specialist or special educator who will attempt to determine where the reading process has broken down and on what level materials can be utilized to



remediate the difficulty. At this point, the diagnostic process will include a number of formal and informal tests designed to analyze the child's reading behavior. A crucial component of this diagnostic battery will be an individualized diagnostic reading test, which will be administered after a level of cooperation has been established between examiner and student, and which will provide an estimate of the instructional reading level for the particular child.

Two diagnostic tests widely used by reading clinicians and special educators in the designation of instructional reading level are the Spache Diagnostic Reading Scales (DRS) and the Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests (WRMT). The latter is recommended for general use including "administration of the tests in order to measure individual growth, to detect reading problems, to group students for instruction, to evaluate curriculum and programs, and for accountability" (Woodcock, 1973, p. 8). The DRS-diagnosed instruction level "indicates the approximate grade level of basal or other reading materials in which the student would be placed in the average classroom" (Spache, 1981, p. 37), relevant to oral reading instruction.

Despite the similarities in purpose, the two tests differ greatly in their means of determining the child's reading levels. For example, the DRS format consists of oral reading of a graded word list(s), and the subsequent

oral reading of designated graded passages, followed by comprehension questions read aloud by the examiner and answered orally by the student. The examiner records oral reading errors as the child reads, and the instructional level is determined by a combined view of comprehension and word recognition. The instructional level becomes the highest level at which the child can pass both word recognition and comprehension as judged by DRS criteria.

In contrast, the WRMT designates an instructional range corresponding to the three Betts' (1946) levels discussed earlier (Woodcock, 1973). The Total Reading scores are purported to be the most powerful measurements in the battery. The Total Reading Grade Score is analogous to the instructional reading level and is based upon a mean of the five subtests constituting the test battery. The five subtests include: Letter Identification, Word Identification, Word Attack, Word Comprehension, and Passage Comprehension. The child is presented with connected discourse only on the Passage Comprehension subtest in which reading of phrases, sentences, and short passages is done silently, after which the student orally provides a word to "best fit" a blank space in the stimulus material. This utilization of a modified cloze procedure and an instructional level based on the mean of the subtests represents a marked departure from both the DRS and the traditional means of diagnosing the instructional level (as seen in the IRI).

It is of primary concern to reading diagnosticians and classroom teachers to know if the instructional levels measured by these two tests are similar, and if they truly place children in materials which they are capable of reading--particularly basal materials. This becomes doubly important to the reading specialist as increasing emphasis is placed upon the role of consultant to classroom teachers in the placement of students:

The job of the reading specialist will become much easier if we bury the idea that "every teacher is a teacher of reading." Individuals who have attempted to work with either pre-service or in-service teachers are aware that that approach has done more to hinder than help effective education in the classroom.

Rather, the focus of reading people should be to provide the means by which content area teachers can deal practically with the instructional match between textbook and students. (Dishner and Readence, 1977, p. 37).

The testing methods employed by the DRS and the WRMT do differ in their attempt to predict the instructional reading level of a given student. There are several plausible reasons for this discrepancy. For instance, the discrepancy may possibly arise from differing theoretical viewpoints of the reading process. Frequently, classroom instruction is heavily dependent on the use of basal readers; a teacher who is given a diagnostic report from a reading clinic or reading teacher will often place the student in the basal reader on the basis of the diagnosed instructional level.

Reading specialists need to know how well tests which use different procedures really predict instructional level.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the predictive value of the DRS and WRMT for the instructional level placement of fourth grade students in the 1982 Ginn basal reading series.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to direct the present study:

1. Is there a significant difference in the mean instructional levels of the DRS and the WRMT for 30 fourth grade students?
2. What percentage of the 30 fourth grade students will exhibit fit between the diagnosed instructional reading level(s) on the two tests and subsequent comprehension of basal materials for oral reading matched to the diagnosed level?
3. If placed in basal materials on the instructional level(s) predicted by the respective tests, what percentage of 30 fourth grade students will exhibit fit when reading silently?

### Rationale for Research Questions

The first question was "Is there a significant difference in the mean instructional levels of the DRS and the WRMT for 30 fourth grade students?" It is beneficial for reading specialists to be cognizant of the difference in mean scores for a group of children, particularly if one test indicates a higher mean than the other.

The second question was "What percentage of the 30 fourth grade students will exhibit "fit" between the diagnosed instructional reading level(s) on the two tests and subsequent comprehension of basal materials for oral reading matched to the diagnosed levels?" This question examined the predictive value of both tests for the placement of students in basal readers. This was, of course, the general purpose of the study, but question two also serves a more specific objective. If indeed the DRS and the WRMT are accurate measurements for basal placement, then this knowledge would reinforce or help teachers to feel justified in their widespread use of these testing instruments in elementary schools across the country.

The third question was "If placed in basal materials on the instructional level(s) predicted by the respective tests, what percentage of the 30 fourth grade students exhibit "fit," when reading silently?" This question tried to determine if one test would be more effective or

appropriate than another in matching the teaching strategy of a particular instructor. For example, while most reading teachers incorporate both oral and silent reading in their instruction, some teachers might place more stress on silent than on oral reading. Question three tried to determine which of the two tests would best accommodate the teaching preference of the particular instructor. Since the DRS employs oral reading in the diagnostic test and the WRMT relies on silent reading, research question three attempted to see if this difference in the testing would carry over appropriately into student performance in the basal materials.

### Assumptions

1. The theoretical construct of instructional reading level does in fact exist and can be applied to literate persons at all levels of reading proficiency.

2. Given the results of a diagnostic reading battery administered to a given student, the teacher will place the student in available basal materials, as graded in difficulty by the publisher, on the instructional grade level indicated by the test.

3. A comprehension score of 75% is sufficient to indicate success in basal reading material.

4. The three reading level constructs proposed by Betts (1946) are hierarchical. Therefore, a student scoring 75% in comprehension at a given level should be capable of reading materials at subsequent lower levels with increased ease and should experience increased difficulty at levels greater than the diagnosed instructional level.

5. The DRS and WRMT are both measuring the same theoretical construct, i.e., instructional reading.

#### Limitations

1. The study was confined to a stratified random sample of fourth grade students in the Knoxville area who had the written permission of their parents to participate in the investigation.

2. The size of the sample was held at 30 students because of the length of time required for testing (two hours per student).

3. The study was limited to comparisons made on the basis of two specific diagnostic measures and the 1982 Ginn basal reading series.

4. The study was confined to fourth grade students in a single school system in an urban area.

5. The study is limited in that comprehension alone was used to determine fit in a basal reading series at a given level, whereas many diagnostic tests combine comprehension with word recognition.

6. The study is limited insofar as diagnostic testing and oral/silent basal reading were all done in a single session, thus testing the ability of the student to work on this level at a given point in time. The student's ability or inability to work at a given level in the classroom context over a long period of time was not a consideration of the study.

7. The DRS and WRMT instructional level scores are not graded in equal intervals. WRMT instructional grade levels are reported in monthly gradations (4.0, 4.1, 4.2 . . .). The DRS instructional levels, however, are reported in larger units (1.4, 1.6, 1.8, 2.2, 2.4, 2.8, 3.5, 4.5, 5.5, 6.5, and 7.5).

8. The study is limited to reporting exact numerical measures which may be affected by student fatigue. Percentages, therefore, should not be viewed as precise measures, but as approximations.

#### Significance of the Study

Effective developmental instruction and remediation are particularly dependent upon the appropriate fit of student to suitable instructional level materials. The WRMT and DRS may be of limited value in the accurate prediction of instructional reading level for basal placement. If one measure, growing out of a particular orientation to reading,



is more accurate than others at improving the match, then this information could facilitate the development of individualized reading programs in the classroom and clinic. The DRS and the WRMT may differ in precision when measuring oral versus silent reading in a basal reader. In this instance, the corrective reading program using primarily a silent approach may be enhanced by selecting a different individual diagnostic measure than the program which is oriented toward oral reading.

The relationship between clinician and student may also be a key factor in the individualized diagnostic process. Informal interactions between examiner and students provide cues which facilitate the decisions made by the examiner throughout the testing session. Valuable information about the diagnostic process can be gained by exploring: the accuracy of individualized diagnostic instruments; the compatibility of the diagnosed instructional level with the mode of classroom instruction--oral and/or silent reading; and the nature of the informal interactions between examiner and child in the actual testing sessions. The present study attempted to provide additional information in these areas.

### Procedures

Thirty fourth grade students were randomly selected from six Knoxville city schools. Fourth graders were

selected for two reasons: (1) the fourth grade traditionally constitutes the transitional period between "learning to read" and "reading to learn," and (2) the fourth grade is where reading problems begin to appear in significant proportions.

The DRS and WRMT were administered to each subject after a sufficient level of cooperation was established. The order of administration was alternated to rule out the learning factor. (The "learning factor" refers to the fact that students may learn from the first test, material or skills that will in turn affect their performance on the second test.) Subjects were then placed in reading selections from the 1982 Ginn reading series on the basis of the diagnosed instructional level(s). A basal passage was read orally and followed by comprehension questions which were asked and answered orally. Another basal selection on the same level was then read and also followed by comprehension questions asked and answered orally.

### Definition of Terms

#### Conceptual Definitions

Basal Reader. "A text in a basal reading program or series" (Harris and Hodges, 1981, p. 30). The basal reading program comprises a series of readers, carefully graded in difficulty by readability formulas, and used for primary instruction in reading.

Basal Reading Program. "A comprehensive, integrated set of books, workbooks, teacher's manuals, and other materials for developmental reading instruction, chiefly in the elementary and middle school grades" (Harris and Hodges, 1981, pp. 30-31).

Comprehension. The acquisition of meaning and its subsequent integration with background of experience, that is, long term memory.

Instructional Reading Level.

The readability or grade level of materials that is challenging, but not frustrating for the student to read successfully with normal classroom instruction and support. At the instructional reading level, the number of new words and the demands upon comprehension stimulate rather than block reading progress. (Harris and Hodges, 1981, p. 158)

Oral Reading. The process of reading aloud for the purpose of diagnosis.

Reading. "Reading is a process of translating signs and symbols into meanings and incorporating the new meanings into existing cognitive and affective systems" (Robeck and Wilson, 1974, p. 41).

Reading Difficulty Level.

A judgment, estimate, or prediction of the degree to which reading material will be difficult to understand, usually expressed as a grade level; comprehensibility; readability. (Harris and Hodges, 1981, p. 267)

### Operational Terms

Comprehension. Scoring 75% or greater on questions asked after oral or silent reading.

Fit. Indication that a subject exhibited a score of 75% or greater in comprehension when a grade level basal passage was administered that matched the diagnosed instructional level. For example, a subject whose diagnosed reading level on the DRS was 4.2 would be matched to a basal reading passage leveled 4<sup>1</sup> or first part of fourth grade. After reading the basal passage, if the subject was able to answer comprehension questions with a success rate of 75% or greater, this was designated a case of "fit" between diagnosed instructional level and basal material.

Match. The assignment of a basal reading passage to a subject on a level compatible with the instructional level(s) diagnosed by the DRS and/or the WRMT.

Nonfit. The inability of the child to score 75% or greater in comprehension after reading a basal passage on the diagnosed instructional level.

Reading Scores. (1) Instructional reading levels were expressed in terms of grade level; (2) comprehension scores on questions following the oral or silent reading of basal passages were expressed in percentages, and (3) word recognition scores were also expressed in terms of percentages.

### Word Recognition Formula.

$$\text{Percentage of Word Rec.} = \frac{\text{total \# words in passage} - \text{oral reading errors}}{\text{total \# of words in passage}}$$

### Summary

Successful determination of an individual's instructional reading level is, theoretically, essential if optimum learning is to take place. This is particularly relevant in beginning reading instruction where frustration with materials which are too difficult may prevent a child from succeeding in any of the other subject areas. Determination of the instructional reading level has been attempted in a variety of different diagnostic formats, particularly through use of the Informal Reading Inventory and individualized diagnostic reading tests.

The study compared the DRS and the WRMT in their assessment of the instructional reading level. Because of the wide use of basal reading series in the classroom, the study also examined the ability of the child to comprehend when placed in selections from a basal reading series on the instructional reading levels diagnosed by the DRS and the WRMT. Further comparisons attempted to determine if oral or silent reading in basal material was more conducive to a match between the test administered and the placement level of the child.

Four major conclusions were based upon the data gathered for the present investigation. First, the DRS and WRMT may not be effective predictors of instructional reading level for basal placement. Second, silent reading in a basal reader appears to be more difficult for fourth grade students than oral reading in the same level when comprehension percentages are used as the basis for evaluation. Third, the three reading levels--independent, instructional, and frustration--may not be hierarchical. Fourth, and finally, the informal interaction between clinician and student is equally as important to the diagnostic process as the validity of formal empirical measures.

A review of the literature relating to instructional reading level and to the diagnostic tests utilized in the present study is presented in Chapter II. A detailed explanation of the design, procedures, and materials used in the investigation appears in Chapter III. Chapter IV contains the results of the inquiry. Conclusions, discussion, and recommendations for further research, as well as a summary of the present analysis, are presented in Chapter V.

## CHAPTER II

## SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The question of how effectively the DRS and WRMT diagnose instructional reading levels for student placement in a basal reading series is not addressed in the literature currently available. Memory, Powell, and Callaway (1980) reported a "dearth" of information in this area in their comparisons of the DRS and WRMT. Three areas are particularly related, however, to an investigation of the predictive value of the two tests for instructional reading level basal placement. First, the development of the instructional reading level as a component of the Informal Reading Inventory (IRI) is cogent to the present discussion because a lack of empirical validation for a set of criteria to determine the level can be traced to its original application in the IRI. Second, the DRS and the WRMT differ in the methods they use to designate instructional reading level. They employ different sets of criteria and different techniques in their diagnostic procedures. A detailed examination of the tests and critical reviews is necessary to clarify these differences. Third, it is essential to examine the few studies which do attempt to compare the

diagnostic properties of the DRS and the WRMT. These studies were done with clinical reading populations and comprise the only available literature directly related to the purpose of the present study. The following review of the literature will examine each of these three related areas in greater detail.

### Instructional Level and the Informal Reading Inventory

An early concept of an "instructional reading level" was defined by Betts (1946) for the development of the informal reading inventory technique by which he proposed to assess a child's reading needs. Since teachers were being admonished to "begin where the learner is," Betts established four reading levels to facilitate individual child placement for instruction. Betts referred to the basal level as the highest grade level material at which a child would be able to read and still comprehend fully without additional aid. Supplementary and independent reading materials at this level should enable the child to read at home or school without aid. The materials should have high interest value and present no reading difficulties (Betts, 1946, p. 448). Assuming that maximum learning could only take place if a child was challenged, but not to the point of anxiety, Betts defined the instructional level as the "teaching level" (Betts, 1946, p. 448). Betts further



proposed that for a teacher to be fully cognizant of a child's instructional needs, two additional levels should be established. At the frustration level the child would not understand the difficult material and would become frustrated (Betts, 1946, p. 448). The capacity level provided an indication of a hearing level, or the highest level at which a child was able to understand when read to by a teacher. The child had to understand the selection and be able to express his related backgrounds of experiences accurately (Betts, 1946, p. 448).

Betts designated the criteria by which the four reading levels might be established. The basic format for collecting data for the levels required the child to read or to listen to graded passages selected from materials in which he would be placed for instructional purposes. Each reading or listening activity was followed by comprehension questions asked orally. Betts placed the four levels in a hierarchical order. At the basal level (or independent level) the child would comprehend 90% of what he read with word recognition at 99% or better. The child would exhibit no head movements, no vocalization, and would demonstrate good phrasing. The less stringent requirements for the instructional level were a comprehension score of 75% and a word recognition score of 95% (one error in 20 running words). The child would exhibit no symptoms of anxiety such

as head movements or finger pointing and would use good phrasing and conversational tone. At the frustration level the comprehension fell to 50% or below and word recognition decreased to 90% or below. The child exhibited any combination of anxiety indicators including head movements, finger pointing, withdrawal, slow word-by-word reading, vocalization in silent reading, substitutions, repetitions, insertions, omissions and a variety of other frustration level oral reading factors. The child's capacity level reflected his ability to listen and understand what was being read to him. The teacher looked for precise use of words to describe facts or experiences and to determine if the child could answer questions in language similar to the selection read to him.

Betts' original proposal for the administration of the IRI instructed the examiner or teacher to have the child read the selections silently prior to reading them orally. Killgallon (1942) used a similar procedure to finalize his 95% word recognition criterion for predicting instructional level. More recent common diagnostic practices required the child to read the selections orally at sight. The DRS, used in the present study, closely resembles the Betts individual reading inventory technique. The DRS format required the child to read orally at sight; however, the criterion percentages established by Betts have been altered by Spache (1981).

The instructional reading level concept found its first application in wide usage of the IRI. The Betts criteria remained in tact while the testing format in many cases changed to oral reading at sight. The influence of Betts' work on a wide variety of materials and situations encountered by the teacher was immeasurable. However, as the technique became more widely used, questions arose as to the validity of the criterion for instructional reading level, and a variety of sets were proposed.

William Powell (1970) investigated the validity of the criteria for word recognition at the instructional level. His initial investigation of the literature revealed 10 sets of criteria utilized to designate the instructional level, excluding the set he proposed as a result of his study. Seven of the ten sets Powell examined recommended 95% word recognition at instructional level. In this group of sets only Betts and Killgallon recommended silent reading prior to oral reading. Four sets recommended oral reading at sight (Johnson and Kress, 1965; Wheeler and Smith, 1957; McCracken, 1963; and Harris, 1961). One set (Cooper, 1952) proposed 98% word recognition at the primary level and 96% at the intermediate level. Two authorities recommended word recognition percentages somewhat lower than Betts. Nila Banton Smith (1959) recommended 80% plus word recognition for grades one through three, and 80% plus for grades four

through six. Burns and Ridgeway (1965) established 85% to 90% word recognition at all levels.

Powell also found variability in the types of oral reading behaviors counted as errors. Betts and Killgallon counted repetitions as errors, whereas the 10 sets reflected inconsistency in their scoring of the child's reading.

There is no clear consensus among test designers on the types of oral reading errors which are significant in diagnostic testing. Some reading authorities contend that substitutions which preserve the semantic rhythm of the text are not particularly detrimental to the reading process (Goodman and Burke, 1972).

Kender's review of research (1968) described the problem in setting a valid list of criteria for the instructional level:

When one analyzes the criteria used to score informal reading tests, there is even more conflicting data. There is disagreement, for example, over whether or not to include certain types of errors such as repetitions when calculating percentages of accuracy in oral reading. There is disagreement over whether all oral reading errors should be counted or whether only significant errors, that is, those that alter the meaning of the sentence or passage, should be counted. There is disagreement over whether or not vocalizing during silent reading is a detriment to the reader and whether it should be considered in ascertaining instructional levels. Some feel that understanding of 90 percent of the material is necessary at the instructional level; others feel that 75 percent is adequate; while others content that only 60 percent is sufficient --and on it goes.

Perhaps some of the disagreement results from the dearth of research related to the subject. This writer found only three experimental studies devoted to the topic, and these have obvious shortcomings. (Kender, 1968, p. 338)

Kender referred to such studies as Killgallon (1942), Cooper (1952), and McCracken (1964). Killgallon's research served as the basis for the original word recognition criterion proposed by Betts for the instructional level. As an adjunct to his major research project, Killgallon administered an IRI to 41 fourth grade students to establish criterion. He set up an a priori criterion for the establishment of instructional levels, then tested his subjects, analyzed the performance of the subjects at the instructional level on the basis of his a priori criterion, and derived a new criterion. He found that the most suitable percentage of accuracy for acceptable pronunciation at the instructional level was 95%. Despite the unorthodox manner by which this "criterion score" was derived, Kender noted that Killgallon was quoted widely in the literature (Kender, 1968, p. 339).

Cooper's (1952) basic hypothesis was that there was a direct relationship between the ratio of word perception errors and gains in reading. He tested his theory by administering an IRI to 1,000 children from the Boston area in grades one through six. Cooper divided his children into five groups on the basis of word perception ability, varying

from least to most word perception errors. He compared the scores of the five groups on standardized reading tests given at the beginning and the end of the investigation. The group exhibiting fewer word perception errors gained most in reading achievement and the group making the most errors showed the least gain. Cooper analyzed the performance of his children in order to obtain criteria for the IRI. He recommended for the primary grades 89% to 100% word recognition and 70% comprehension, and for the intermediate grades 95% to 100% word recognition and 60% comprehension. Kender (1968) pointed out several caveats in generalizing Cooper's criteria. Kender claimed that the population was relatively small, limited in geographic and socioeconomic distribution, and that the materials were taken only from a few texts. Kender thought that the same results might not have been obtained had different materials been utilized in the study.

Kender considered McCracken's 1964 research a great improvement over Cooper's (1952) and Killgallon's (1942). McCracken attempted to validate his research by using the vocabulary of three basal readers and subjecting his passages to verification by widely used readability formulas. His children included 664 first through sixth grade pupils. McCracken used the ratings of 25 nationally known reading authorities in his work. Kender criticized McCracken's work

on the basis that standards for levels were based on the Betts criteria.

Given the apparent discrepancies in the research, Kender maintained that he could not recommend a set of criteria for the IRI on the basis of the experimental evidence in the literature. He further questioned the advisability of basing instructional levels on any informal measure that was not based on the actual materials that would be used for instruction:

Passages used in a test aimed at determining placement of pupils for instructional purposes should be taken from reading materials in which the pupil is going to be instructed. Obviously, placement of pupils in instructional materials is extremely important and must be as accurate as possible for all children. It is conceivable that the difference of even one-half<sup>1</sup> of a level<sup>2</sup> (the differences, say, between a 2<sup>1</sup> and a 2<sup>2</sup> basal text) could mean the difference between success or frustration in reading for some pupils. Therefore, using an informal reading test constructed from one set of materials to place pupils in other materials would result in inaccuracies that would be detrimental to the progress of these pupils. Undoubtedly, these inaccuracies would be greater if narrative materials were used to predict placement in another basal series. If materials other than those to be used for instruction are employed, the results must be regarded as only highly tentative. (Kender, 1968, pp. 340-341)

The Betts/Killgallon criteria appear to have dominated the literature. Reportedly, however, their research designs did contain methodological problems. Powell (1968) hypothesized, for example, that the word recognition criterion set by Betts and Killgallon was too high. He attempted to

determine lower percentages which would not hamper reading comprehension. Three examiners tested the 140 children who attended grades one through six. Holding an acceptable comprehension level constant at 70% or better, the researcher scanned the data to locate the lowest word recognition scores. Powell (1968, pp. 12-13) proposed that if the child's comprehension percent remained continuously at an acceptable level, then the fluctuation in word pronunciation errors would be tolerable to the reader. This rationale supported the study's hypothesis that children could tolerate lower word recognition scores and still maintain acceptable comprehension scores. When examining the data in terms of the Betts model, Powell found that slightly over one-half of the cases would not have met the 95% word recognition criterion. In a further attempt to validate his results, Powell examined 12 cases on each grade level from the files housed at the Center for Reading Research and Instruction. The atypical population presented data which were consistent with the results of the major study; therefore, Powell concluded that the Betts criteria were suspect.

The interest in research related to the instructional level for reading instruction suggested little disagreement about its existence or possible use in placement of a child for instruction. The means and criteria used for determining the instructional level posed many questions.



Individualized diagnostic tests such as the DRS and the WRMT have attempted to provide a means to determine an instructional level by way of method, criterion, and format, which are quite different from Betts' IRI. The DRS attempted to standardize the IRI, and the use of the cloze procedure in the WRMT had a practical base in earlier research which stemmed from Betts/Killgallon.

### Test Descriptions and Reviews

The descriptions of the DRS and WRMT were limited to the parts of each test administered in this present study for the identification of instructional reading level. The examiner administered all five subtests of the WRMT to each child. Only the oral reading paragraphs of the DRS provided the basis for determining the instructional level.

### Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests

The Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests (WRMT) consisted of five individually administered reading subtests designed for use with readers from kindergarten through grade twelve. The battery of five subtests were Letter Identification, Word Identification, Word Attack, Word Comprehension, and Passage Comprehension. The Letter Identification test consisted of 45 items which included upper-case Roman letters, lower-case Roman letters, upper-case Sans Serif letters, lower-case Sans Serif letters, upper and lower case

cursive letters, and upper and lower case specialty type-faces.. The examiner was required to ask the child to name the letters. The manual stated that by the end of fourth grade most children should get a perfect, or nearly perfect, score on this subtest.

The Word Identification subtest consisted of a 150 word list which the child was asked to read. The easier words in the list (words for grade three or below) were selected "mainly from an analysis of the vocabulary introduced in seven basal reading programs from the first preprimer through the third grade" (Woodcock, 1971). "The more difficult items were drawn from several sources but mainly utilized the Thorndike-Lorge list" (Thorndike and Lorge, 1944; Woodcock, 1973, p. 3).

The Word Attack subtest was designed to measure the child's proficiency at phonics and structural analysis. The child was asked to read a list of fifty nonsense words arranged in order of difficulty. At the lower end of the test the nonsense words were simple consonant-vowel or consonant-vowel-consonant combinations such as "dee" and "lat." Multisyllabic words such as "ipdan" and "depronlel" were presented at the upper end of the test. Represented within the set of nonsense words were most consonant and vowel sounds, common prefixes and suffixes, and frequently appearing irregular spellings of vowels and consonants.

The child's task on the subtest of Word Comprehension was to complete an analogy. The child was given four examples in which to learn the format: A is to B, as C is to \_\_\_\_; and the examples were completed orally. In the actual testing situation, the subject was asked to read the first three words silently and then tell the examiner a good word to go in the blank space. The lower level of the test included analogies such as: bird--fly/fish--\_\_\_\_. The more difficult analogies included items such as: gregarious --unsociable/amicable--\_\_\_\_\_ (Woodcock, 1973, p. 4).

The final subtest in the Woodcock battery was a test of Passage Comprehension presented in a modified cloze format, with the total number of items equaling 85. The child was presented with the task of reading silently and telling the examiner a good word to go in the blank space. Woodcock thus described this task:

Passages for the easier items often consist of a phrase or short sentence accompanied by a picture. In order to provide an appropriate word for the blank space in the passage, the subject must make use of information contained in the picture as well as the passage itself. Above this level of the test most passages consist of two sentences which were drawn from textbooks, newspapers, magazines, and other sources of reading material. These passages range in difficulty from first grade to college level. To supply the missing word in a passage the reader must draw upon a wide array of comprehension, word attack, and word-meaning skills. In this sense, the Passage Comprehension Test can be considered an omnibus test of reading skills. (Woodcock, 1973, p. 4)

The WRMT was recommended for general school use, teacher training, clinical diagnosis and research purposes. The manual specifically stated that the tests were appropriate for grouping measures and placement:

The tests are particularly useful in regard to grouping for instruction since the Mastery Scale indicates the success potential of a pupil on a reading task of some given difficulty. Therefore it is possible to group subjects according to their success potential for what is to be taught rather than less relevantly on the basis of grade scores, percentile ranks, etc. . . . (Woodcock, 1973, p. 8)

Completed scoring of the WRMT provided the diagnostician with a wide variety of numerical information. Each raw subtest score was converted into a mastery score which was transformed via additional tables in the manual into an Easy Reading Level (relative mastery 96%), a Reading Grade Score (relative mastery 90%), and a Failure Reading Level (relative mastery 75%). The 90% relative mastery at Reading Grade Score was set arbitrarily by Woodcock in the process of designing the test.

For the purposes of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests it was decided to compare an individual's performance with tasks at a reference level of 90 percent mastery. This was an arbitrary decision and done in the interest of providing a set of reference statements that are more in line with current thinking about a level of proficiency which typifies mastery. (Woodcock, 1973, pp. 53-54)

In addition to the scores mentioned above, the WRMT also provided a Mastery Score at Grade Level and an achievement

index indicating whether the child's performance was + or - in relation to grade. A Relative Mastery at Grade Level score and a Percentile Rank were also provided. The percent study concentrated upon the concepts of Easy Reading Level, Reading Grade Scores, and Failure Reading Level since these were the scores analogous to Betts' Independent Level, Instructional Level, and Frustration Level:

An interesting comparison can be made between the probability of success across the instructional range as defined for interpreting the Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests and the range between the "frustration level" and "easy reading level" as defined by Betts (1957) for the informal reading inventory. . . . Thus, it is seen that there is virtually an identical relationship between the instructional ranges for word identification and for passage comprehension on the Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests and the performance level criterion for these two areas in an informal reading inventory. This suggests that the Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests can provide some of the same interpretive information obtained from informal reading inventories, but with the added benefits of a standardized presentation and more precise measurements. (Woodcock, 1973, p. 54)

Although the above comparisons emphasized the relationship between the Word Identification subtest, the Passage Comprehension subtest, and the IRI levels, Woodcock maintained throughout the manual that the most precise measurement of a reader's performance was the Total Reading Score. Like the subtests, the Total Reading Score was translated into an Easy Reading Level, Reading Grade Level, and Failure Reading Level range. In order to translate the

score to reading level, the raw scores for each subtest were converted to mastery scores, and a mean of the mastery scores was then converted into the three levels previously listed. The Total Reading-Reading Grade Score came from a mean of all subtests. The Total Reading-Reading Grade Score was chosen for comparison in the present study because of Woodcock's emphasis upon the precision of the score.

Results from the five tests in the battery can be combined to provide a composite index or overall reading skill. This index, since it is based upon a very large number of items (400), provides the single most precise and reliable measure of reading achievement available from the battery. (Woodcock, 1973, p. 5)

The WRMT was normed over a period of two years, a process involving approximately 1,000 individuals. Children from kindergarten through seventh grade were tested in May 1971. A year later, 4,000 students from kindergarten level through grade twelve were tested. These children came from 50 different school districts. A stratified random sample was obtained throughout the United States, representing socioeconomic factors as well as geographic variables.

Whenever possible, these schools were selected randomly. If for some reason the school district could not cooperate on a completely random selection plan, the schools to be used were selected after a careful evaluation of the socioeconomic status factors of the community. Then two schools at each level were selected which appeared to be representative of those factors. (Woodcock, 1973, p. 48)

Split-half reliabilities for the test ranged .90-.99 with subtest reliabilities of .02-.99 (the alternate form extending from .16 to .94).

Content validity for the test was determined in the following manner: "In each case the items represent actual tasks drawn from the domain of reading in that there are tasks of identification, tasks of word attack, and tasks of comprehension" (Woodcock, 1973, p. 61). Simply interpreted, the content was similar to that encountered in other reading materials. No other specific sources were named in the manual, however.

Critics of the WRMT varied widely in their opinions of the test battery. Dwyer concluded:

The Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests are an interesting and ambitious effort but seriously flawed. They make claims to innovation and technical quality that are, upon close examination, not supported by data, and will thus be disappointing to many measurement and reading specialists. (Dwyer, 1978, p. 779)

In marked contrast to Dwyer, another critic wrote,

The WRMT stands as a tribute to the current cutting edge of test development theory. . . . The legitimate embodiment of both CRM and NRM should make the WRMT a useful addition to almost anyone's battery of clinical reading instruments. (Proger, 1975, pp. 443-444)

Proger's favorable reaction to the WRMT was somewhat predictable in light of his admitted bias for criterion referenced testing. In his opinion, the provision for assessing the child's degree of mastery as well as his

predicted degrees of mastery on easier and harder material made the test unique and a valuable addition to clinical reading diagnosis.

Major criticisms of the test tended to concentrate on several specific problems. The Letter Identification Test was viewed as a measure of reading readiness more so than a measure of reading achievement, and its inclusion in the battery was questioned (Laffey and Kelly, 1979) along with the inclusion of differing type faces. Laffey and Kelly viewed the inclusion of a variety of type faces as an artificial measure designed to increase the difficulty of the test. They also pointed out that a raw score of 44 on this subtest converted to a grade level score of 6.2, while a raw score of 45 converted to a grade level score of 12.9. This became particularly difficult to interpret when the mean of subtests was translated into Total Reading Scores. Tuinman pointed out that a fourth grader scoring 4.9 on all other tests except Letter Identification would have an inflated overall score by about 0.3 grade months; Tuinman considered the Letter Identification subtest "unusual and the most useless" test in the battery (Tuinman, 1978, p. 1306).

The analogy format of the Word Comprehension subtest was also criticized. Laffey and Kelly maintained that the task may be a totally new experience for many children.



Remembering "\_\_\_\_\_ is to \_\_\_\_\_ as \_\_\_\_\_ is to \_\_\_\_\_" presents an awesome task for the young reader. This test measures a student's reasoning ability and vocabulary. The results would have very limited use because the diagnostician would not know whether poor performance was due to 1) inadequate word identification skills; 2) lack of word meaning; or 3) inability to recognize the relationships embodied in the analogy. (Laffey and Kelly, 1979, p. 336)

Houck and Harris (1978) noted a problem in the modified cloze format of the Passage Comprehension subtest. They stated that:

A reference to Bormuth (1969) for procedural documentation is not convincing in as much as the test items do not appear to meet Bormuth's criterion of "using a set of mechanically objective and pre-specified rules" for determining the location of the deletions. In fact, the items resemble a completion test where deletions are made using subjective concepts such as key words. (Houck and Harris, 1978, p. 779)

The reading authorities (Houck and Harris, 1978; Tuinman, 1978; Laffey and Kelly, 1979) seem to question the arbitrary level set for "master," and the joint norm-referenced/criterion-referenced scale:

One seemingly over-rated component is the joint norm-referenced criterion-referenced scale. The degree to which the developed reference scales represent a "developmental summary of reading task mastery" is open to question. The assumptions made regarding the grade level at which certain skills will be mastered are questionable. First, the instructional program used with a child will obviously have a marked effect on the sequence of skills he has been exposed to. The sequence assumed by the author of this test will not apply equally well to children in various instructional programs. Second, despite the use of "mastery" in the label

given to the test, it is plainly norm-based. Furthermore, without performance objectives for each item, the requirements for a criterion-referenced test are not met. . . . (Houck and Harris, 1978, p. 779)

The reliability measures on the test seemed to be generally acceptable (Tuinman, 1978); however, the content validity of the test was repeatedly questioned in the reviews and remained a concern for a number of the critics: Laffey and Kelly (1979), Tuinman (1978), Dwyer (1978), and Houck and Harris (1978).

In summary, many researchers criticized the WRMT subtests of Letter Identification, Word Comprehension and Passage Comprehension primarily on the bases of their norm-referenced/criterion-referenced nature and their content validity. Some authorities, however, did not give credence to those criticisms. Instead, they rated the test highly in most aspects and considered it a significant addition to the field of reading diagnosis (Proger, 1975; Allington, 1978; Bannatyne, 1978). The variance among critics in regard to the flaws in the test seemed to indicate that there was valid concern as to its effectiveness as a reading diagnostic measure and that it should be interpreted with caution. According to some criticisms the findings of this study could have been affected by the inclusion of the Letter Identification subtest; i.e., it could have inflated the Total Reading Grade Score, possibly

resulting in the distortion of the instructional grade placement level.

### Spache Diagnostic Reading Scales

The Spache Diagnostic Reading Scales (DRS) was an individually administered battery of tests consisting of three word recognition lists, two sets of 11 graded reading selections, and 12 supplementary tests for the measurement of word analysis and phonics abilities. The test was designed to evaluate oral reading for instructional level and silent reading for independent level as well as listening comprehension. Unlike the WRMT, one did not have to administer the entire battery of tests to obtain an instructional reading level.

The diagnosis of instructional level with the DRS began by having the child read the word recognition list designated for his particular grade level. Word list 1 was recommended for nonreaders and children functioning at the first grade level, word list 2 was for children at the second and third grade levels; and word list 3 was for children at the fourth and fifth grade levels. Each word list was graded in difficulty and provided a starting point for the child's entry into the graded passages for oral reading. The word lists provided the diagnostician with an indication of the child's sight vocabulary and allowed the

examiner to observe the child's method of decoding words in isolation.

The child's instructional level was determined, primarily, by his oral reading proficiency in the series of graded passages. Once the entry level had been obtained by the student's performance on the word recognition lists, he was placed in the appropriate passage and given the following specific directions:

Now let's try something else. Read this aloud to me as well as you can. Just take your time and read it like you ordinarily would, trying to remember what you read. If you see some words you don't know, try to read them and then go on. I'm not going to tell you any words because I want to hear how well you read by yourself. I'll ask some questions about the story when you finish. (Spache, 1981, p. 23)

As the child was reading the selection orally, the following word recognition errors were recorded by the examiner: omissions, additions, substitutions, repetitions of two or more words, reversals, and self corrections. In scoring, one error was counted for each omission, addition and substitution; one error was counted the first time a word was misread, and one error was counted for each instance in which two or more words were repeated. Hesitations, self-corrections, and dialectical pronunciations were not counted as errors. Comprehension questions were asked upon completion of each passage read orally, correct responses were indicated in the student record book; and

criteria for a pass or failure in a particular passage was indicated for the examiner. For example, a given passage included at the top of the record booklet the following information:

ORAL \_\_\_\_\_  
(maximum 10)

COMP \_\_\_\_\_  
(maximum 5)

(Spache, 1981, p. 40)

Both criteria had to be passed before a more difficult passage was administered. The child could make no more than nine word recognition errors while reading the passage orally and had to answer at least four of the comprehension questions successfully in order to pass. The instructional reading level was accordingly the highest level at which the child could read orally while maintaining an acceptable percentage of word recognition and comprehension as defined by Spache in the test design:

The oral standards for each reading selection represent the mean number of errors plus one standard deviation made by students in the standardization population. The minimum standard for comprehension is 60% for all reading selections.

The DRS instructional level is the level at which the student reads orally and comprehends as well as 60% of the standardization population at that level. The term was deliberately chosen to imply that the student's instructional level is the level and quality of reading that the average classroom teacher would be likely to find acceptable for group or classroom reading practice. (Spache, 1981, p. 37)

Spache pointed out that although the DRS minimum comprehension standard was 60%, most children would be capable of comprehending 80% of what they read at instructional level. The combined criteria (word recognition and comprehension) resulted in the tendency for a child's comprehension to decrease when he reached the upper limit of word comprehension power oral reading:

The 60% comprehension standard is indeed lower than the level of comprehension that readers who pass a DRS level usually evidence, but some minimum standard was essential in establishing actual reading levels. The 60% standard was established by repeated analysis of the standardization data and the criteria of grade scores on other oral reading tests, teacher judgment, and students reading abilities as related to calculations of "mental age." Standards of 70% and 80% were abandoned after yielding underestimates of reading ability. (Spache, 1981, p. 39)

Word recognition criteria on the DRS varied over the graded passages. The criteria per passage of the DRS reading selections were set by subtracting the maximum number of errors from the total number of words in the passage and then dividing by the total number of words in the passage:

$$\text{WORD RECOGNITION CRITERIA} = \frac{\text{Total \# of words} - \text{Errors}}{\text{Total \# of words}}$$

The resulting passage criteria for the DRS were as follows:

| <u>Passage Level</u> | <u>Word Recognition</u> | <u>Passage Level</u> | <u>Word Recognition</u> |
|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1.4                  | 70%                     | 3.5                  | 93%                     |
| 1.6                  | 80                      | 4.5                  | 93                      |
| 1.8                  | 90                      | 5.5                  | 92                      |
| 2.2                  | 90                      | 6.5                  | 93                      |
| 2.4                  | 90                      | 7.6                  | 94                      |
| 2.8                  | 92                      |                      |                         |

The above estimates were rounded to the first place and were simply indications of the standards represented on the test. The word recognition criteria employed by Spache in the DRS seemed to be somewhat lower than the criteria for the Informal Reading Inventory discussed previously. Combined with the lower comprehension requirement of 60%, it appeared that the instructional levels determined by the DRS were somewhat inflated, according to the more recent IRI standards. Spache's marked departure from the traditional standards was not surprising in light of the severe criticism he has leveled at the IRI for many of the reasons discussed earlier, reasons also pointed out by other authorities:

We have introduced some evidence showing that the diagnostic information teachers obtain by using the IRI is most likely to be false and misleading. An instrument that has no statistical evidence of validity or reliability; that uses standards established by an administration entirely different from those currently employed; that demands standards of performance in oral reading differing from every large-scale study of

actual pupil performances available; and that employs testing material of unknown difficulty cannot be expected to yield accurate information.

In our opinion, what probably happens as a result of use of the IRI is that teachers underestimate the level of appropriate instructional materials, as well as the levels of recreational and supplementary materials that pupils could read with adequate comprehension. As a result, pupils do make good progress in the assigned materials that are too easy, and their performances thus appear to confirm the indications of the IRI. Placed in this fashion in very easy materials, pupils readily do the almost perfect word-calling that most teachers tend to equate with good oral reading ability. (Spache, 1976, p. 314)

Spache attempted to address and solve these problems in the development of the DRS, especially his 1981 revision. He sought to grade carefully the passages and to address suggestions stemming from author and publisher analyses of previous editions and from a questionnaire sent to 250 DRS users. The greatest strengths of the test were viewed as its ease of administration, the three reading levels yielded by the test, and the supplemental phonics battery. Criticism implied that the DRS did seem to overestimate reading levels as compared with other standardized reading tests. Several revisions were made on the basis of these recommendations; 10 new grade levels were assigned to reading passages, and 20 new standards were set for the word recognition list performance. Twelve new and revised tests of phonics and word analysis were included, and minor changes were made in the text of certain reading selections in an attempt to eliminate sex bias.



Spache adjusted passage levels downward from the 1972 edition to the 1981 edition in the following manner: 1.6 to 1.4; 1.8 to 1.6; 2.3 to 1.8; 2.8 to 2.2; 3.3 to 2.4; 3.8 to 2.8; 4.5 to 3.5; 5.5 to 4.5; 6.5 to 5.5; 7.5 to 6.5; and 8.5 to 7.5. The rationale for this change was that "Since classroom reading materials are more difficult today than in 1972--particularly for the primary grades--the DRS selection levels were lowered to reflect this change" (Spache, 1981, p. 36). The examiner's manual gave no evidence of the increased difficulty in classroom materials.

The DRS tended to measure somewhat higher than other standardized tests because in Spache's opinion, standardized achievement tests measured different abilities than did the DRS. Group administration in which a child was reading silently and had access to the selection after it had been read enabled the child to review both questions and possible responses. The support given in a one-on-one diagnosis, such as the DRS format, was missing in a standardized test diagnosis. The child did not have the encouraging attitude of the diagnostician to aid him in the testing process. The two processes were further differentiated in that the standardized tests reflected how the average student performed on test items.

Spache continually emphasized that the minimum score of 60% for comprehension was based on a comparative analysis of

scores from the Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children (1949 edition), teacher judgment, and results from other oral reading tests, as opposed to a comparison of average student performance. He repeatedly maintained that actual comprehension percentages were much higher than 60% (usually 80%) at instructional level. He warned that we should "Take careful note that the DRS instructional level is relevant only to the use of oral reading material in the classroom, not to silent reading as group test scores are" (Spache, 1981, p. 35).

Reliability, validity and consistency of the DRS were explored in three major studies: (1) the DRS standardization process, (2) the consistency study and correlation study for the 1972 edition, and (3) the nationwide study for the 1981 revision. Standardization took place over eight years prior to the 1963 publication of the test. The sample population consisted of 2081 children in rural and urban schools in Florida, Georgia, New York, and Rhode Island. The parallelism of the alternate reading selections, the grade scale of the reading selections, and the validity of the scores yielded by the test were established. Oral reading standards were based on the performances of the 2081 children taking part in the standardization process, and the oral comprehension standards were based on this sample. Five hundred and thirty-four children in grades one through

eight were included in the study for the 1981 edition and provided the basis for assigning difficulty levels to the reading selections. The study was conducted in winter and spring of 1980.

To summarize, the 1981 Spache DRS was the most current revision of such a test originally published in 1963. In format, the DRS followed the oral reading at sight pattern of the IRI with modifications in scoring oral reading errors and the criteria for determination of instructional level. The 1981 edition of the test lowered the grade level designation of the readings to reflect increased difficulty in teaching materials. Critical reviews of the DRS by reading authorities were unavailable at the time this present study was conducted.

#### Research Related to the DRS and the WRMT

A review of the literature revealed very few attempts to study the effectiveness of the DRS or WRMT in establishing the instructional reading level. None attempted to investigate the ability of the tests to establish an instructional reading level for basal reading placement. The reviewed studies in this area were conducted in reading clinics, learning centers, or with learning disabled children. These children constituted atypical populations.

A comparative study carried out at the University of Georgia Reading Clinic attempted to correlate scores from four instruments: (1) Form A of the WRMT; (2) the IRI developed at the Georgia Reading Clinic; (3) the Spache DRS; and (4) the Slosson Oral Reading Test. The IRI used in this study was scored using Betts' criteria (75% comprehension and 95% word recognition) for the instructional level determination; the investigators also altered the Spache DRS criteria to conform to Betts (Memory, Powell, and Callaway, 1980). The research team noted that as of 1980, there appeared to be no other research available on the WRMT in the literature.

The comparative study was conducted in the winter and spring of 1978. The sample included 62 children representing a cross-section of urban and rural, black and white, and male and female students. The children came from grades one through ten: grade one = 7; grade two = 16; grade three = 12; grade four = 8; grade five = 5; grade six = 7; grade seven = 1; grade eight = 5; grade nine = 0; and grade ten = 1. An adjustment was made in the comparison of subtests. The Word Identification subtest and the Passage Comprehension subtest scores were compared with the lower of the two scores being finally utilized.

Results indicated that when compared to the Georgia Reading Clinic IRI, the WRMT was correlated positively

(Pearson Product Moment) with the IRI. The WRMT "competency score" came closest to the IRI instructional level. The Passage Comprehension score corresponded closest to the IRI comprehension with the difference averaging less than one month.

The comparison of the WRMT and the DRS suggested that the mean DRS levels were higher than the corresponding WRMT levels, although the DRS correlated more highly with the WRMT than with the IRI. On the basis of this study, the authors reached the following conclusions:

- (1) The Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests seem to be a valid instrument for assessing the reading levels of students. Based upon a comparison between the performance of 62 children on two sets of graded passages using the Betts instructional level criteria and their performance on the Woodcock, this battery of tests appears to be an accurate alternative for assessing the abilities measured by an Informal Reading Inventory.
- (2) If the Woodcock is used for estimating a child's instructional level, the scores that are most likely to correspond to results on an IRI are the "competency score" described above, the Word Identification Test reading grade score, and the reading grade score for Total Reading.
- (3) To use the Woodcock in assessing the comprehension level of a student in terms of the Betts criterion of 75% the best estimate, as would be anticipated, is likely to be the reading grade score on the Passage Comprehension Test.
- (4) The reading grade scores yielded by the Word Identification Test of the Woodcock are on the average up to one year lower than grade equivalent scores obtained on two commonly used tests of sight vocabulary--the Spache Word Lists and the Slosson Oral Reading Test. (Memory, Powell, and Callaway, 1980, p. 52)

The "competency score" referred to the score obtained when the reading grade score on the Passage Comprehension subtest of the WRMT was compared with the Word Identification subtest of the WRMT. The lower of the two scores was designated by the authors as the "competency score."

This particular study had more problems than its atypical population. The adjustment of the DRS criteria in the experiment allowed a comparison of WRMT results in terms of Betts' criteria but ruled out any real means of comparison to the Spache designated instructional level. Not all of the children in the study were administered all the tests listed. The authors did not clarify what children at what level receive what tests. Neither did they indicate who did the testing. A rationale for the "competency score" was left to the reader to identify. The study seemed to imply some support for the Woodcock claim that his range of reading levels did indeed compare to the Betts reading levels.

Further research conducted at the University of Georgia Reading Clinic by Powell (1981) studied the relationship of the Woodcock Word Comprehension Test with other measures of reading achievement and measures of verbal intelligence. The prime concern seemed to be that the child may have been capable of reading and understanding the words presented, but he might have been unable to complete the analogy; thus

he was penalized for faulty reasoning rather than for a lack of ability to read and understand words in isolation.

To study the utility of the analogy format, Powell collected data from 194 children attending the University of Georgia Reading Clinic from 1978 to 1979. Seventy percent of the population was male. A wide SES range was purportedly represented. The ages ranged from 6 to 16 years with 55% of the children being 7 to 9 years old. The children completed the following battery of tests: The WRMT Word Identification, Word Comprehension, and Passage Comprehension subtests (reading grade scores on these tests were used for comparison), the Slosson Oral Reading Test, the IRI used at the Georgia Clinic, the WISC-R, the PPVT, and the SIT. Powell concluded from the study that "These results indicate that performance on the Woodcock Word Comprehension Test is more a function of reading performance than of some general verbal factor" (Powell, 1981, p. 26). Powell based his conclusions upon the report that the Woodcock Word Comprehension subtest correlated with measures of sight vocabulary ( $r = .437$  to  $r = .733$ ) and correlated with measures of passage comprehension ( $r = .654$  to  $r = .895$ ). Five of the six verbal measures presented orally were non-significant, although the "PPVT demonstrated a very slight statistical significance correlation ( $r = .145$ ,  $p < .05$ )" (Powell, 1981, p. 26). Powell stated:

There is little doubt that forming verbal analogies is a complex process involving linguistic and cognitive capacities (Esper, 1973). This test apparently measures abilities related strictly to the reading process, also. Therefore, the examiner who interprets the results of the Woodcock Word Comprehension Test from the viewpoint that it is assessing only a general verbal ability separate from reading ability may be making an incorrect interpretation. (Powell, 1981, p. 26)

In order to accept Powell's conclusions, one had to agree that the means of determining validity of a measure that required silent reading and subsequent analogy completion was to compare it to measures which were oral in nature and heavily loaded with general knowledge. The Slosson Intelligence Test had a large component of questions geared to general knowledge, as did the WISC-R. The PPVT was a measure of receptive vocabulary and did not involve the ability to complete analogies. Although the SIT, WISC-R, and PPVT were measures of verbal ability, at least in part, a correlational study between them and the WRMT Word Comprehension subtest would not seem to indicate parallel skills or processes being tapped by the different measures. The study's basic assumption appeared to be that what is operational in terms of verbal ability and reading for children who were experiencing reading difficulty and were referrals to a reading clinic would also be operational with a normal reading population, such as the population upon which the WRMT was normed. This seemed to be a questionable assumption.



Research which had more potential relevance to the present study was conducted at the University of Texas Learning Abilities Center. Coleman and Harmer (1982) attempted to compare selected subtests of commonly used standardized reading tests with one another and with the instructional levels designated by tutors. Thirty-two children (22 males and 10 females) in grades one through three were participating in a summer tutoring program after having been referred to the Center by their parents. The children were given the WRMT, the DRS, and the WRAT (Wide Range Achievement Test). The investigators had three basic questions in mind: (1) Did the reading measures chosen yield significant differences in results for the same individuals? (2) Was the trend of performance on the selected reading measures similar for all students across grade levels? and (3) Which of the standardized test scores compared most closely with the instructional level designated by the tutors? (Coleman and Harmer, 1982).

The testing took place in June 1980, after the school year was completed and prior to summer tutoring in reading. Children were tested in individual sessions by three examiners. The subtests chosen for comparison were the independent and instructional level designations of the Spache DRS, the reading subtest of the WRST, and the Word Identification and Passage Comprehension subtests of the

WRMT. Tutor placement of children was carried out by three methods commonly used by teachers to designate instructional reading level: (1) an IRI based on the Harper Row basal series with monitoring; (2) the Burns and Roe IRI (Burns and Roe, 1980) without monitoring; and (3) a self-select procedure plus monitoring and adjustment. The monitoring referred to the tutor's assessment of the children's accuracy, fluency, and comprehension in selected basal materials. The self-select procedure indicated the children's own unaided selections of a book from a basal series.

Analysis of variance and analysis of covariance with repeated measures were used to analyze data. Dependent variables were the six reading scores in grade equivalents, and the independent variable was grade level. Scheffe's test, a multiple comparison procedure, was used to follow up differences between means of specific measures.

Results of the study indicated that the reading measures did not yield significantly different results. The highest grade level score seemed to be the Spache independent level, followed by the WRAT, the Spache instructional level, both tests of the WRMT, and then tutor placement. The Spache independent level was highest across the three grade levels, the WRAT second highest, and tutor placement the lowest. The follow-up comparisons showed the WRAT and

both levels of the Spache to be significantly higher than the tutor placed instructional level. In general, the authors interpreted their results and indications that the Spache DRS and the WRAT both tended to place the children at levels that were too high and that the WRMT was a good, and quick diagnostic tool:

. . . of these selected reading measures, only the Word Identification and Passage Comprehension subtests of WRMT approximate instructional levels of students as defined by tutor placement. Thus, one explanation might be that the WRMT serves as an accurate alternative for IRI's. A second possibility is that the tutors placed students in materials that were too easy; due to the monitoring procedures built into the majority of tutor placements, this second explanation seems less plausible. (Coleman and Harmer, 1982, p. 398)

The study seemed to validate the WRMT claim that the reading levels diagnosed by the test were compatible with the Betts reading levels, the usual basis of the IRI. However, several variables in the study seemed too difficult to control to satisfy the assumptions usually required by statistical measures of correlation and tests of significance. For instance, how many tutors were involved in the process, and how much did "monitoring" vary among the various individual programs? The process of diagnostic teaching tended to involve fluctuating instructional levels depending upon the interest level of the child, the purpose of the specific reading activity being remediated, and the amount of guidance the teacher was planning to provide for a

given activity. The study may have been an indication of how the tests could have behaved in an instructional setting; however, the individualized nature of the reading clinic practices left the results open to speculation.

Research related directly to the WRMT and the DRS seemed to conclude that the WRMT was a valid measure of the instructional reading level and indicated that the Spache instructional level may have been somewhat inflated. The research was permeated with design and population problems and lack of controls. It could have been said that these trends have been true for atypical clinical populations which used a similar diagnostic model.

#### Summary of the Literature Search

The literature review revealed that the first attempts to diagnose the instructional reading level were through the Informal Reading Inventory proposed by Betts in 1946. Killgallon's word recognition percentages provided the criterion for Betts' inventory. This inventory was used widely with apparent concern over its comprehension and word recognition percentages (75% comprehension and 95% word recognition) being derived from fourth grade children reading the same passage silently and orally before answering the comprehension questions. Although subsequent research with the IRI attempted to establish a valid set of

criteria for the determination of the instructional level, there was no universal agreement over the quantitative standards for the instructional level.

Research comparing the DRS and the WRMT could be described as inconclusive. The few available studies were conducted with clinical reading populations and were beset with methodological problems. Did either test determine a more accurate instructional level? How would a student's scores vary from one test to another? These questions were not answered definitively.

The review of the literature provided a look at the instructional level from its inception by Betts in 1946. It was obvious that the criteria for establishment of the level were never fully validated. What began as a theoretical construct with high potential for classroom use quickly found its way into the realm of "conventional wisdom." Research on the instructional level began a validation cycle.

Spache (1981) attempted to retain the format suggested by Betts, albeit adjusting for oral reading at sight, while radically changing the criteria. Woodcock (1973) deviated from the format but purported that the reading range diagnosed by his test was analogous to the three levels proposed by Betts. Given the differences in the tests as described earlier, it was difficult to see how both Spache

and Woodcock could be correct about the same basic construct, the instructional reading level. The literature failed to legitimize either approach for diagnosis. No set of criteria employed in the determination of instructional reading level seemed to have been sufficiently validated experimentally.

## CHAPTER III

## RESEARCH PROCEDURES AND MATERIALS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the predictive value of the Diagnostic Reading Scales (DRS) and Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests (WRMT) for the instructional level placement of fourth grade students in the 1982 Ginn basal reading series. A single group of students received both diagnostic measures, as well as oral and silent passages from basal readers--followed by oral comprehension questions.

The Sample

Fourth grade students from six elementary schools were selected for this study. Fourth graders are beginning to read in the content areas, making the transition from "learning to read," to "reading to learn." A great number of students are also referred for remedial reading in the fourth grade and the DRS and the WRMT were developed for diagnosis of disabled readers. Proper placement in materials would seem to be particularly crucial at this time.

Six schools were chosen from the Knoxville City School System to participate in the research project. Following

the selection of the six schools, principals were contacted for permission to work in their respective schools, and letters of explanation with parent permission forms (see Appendix B) were sent to the parents. Parents then returned the forms to the teachers. A total of 121 permission slips were returned for the six schools. The scheduling of tests was established at the initial meeting with teachers and principals. As the appointed testing dates arrived, the parental permission forms were retrieved from the fourth grade teachers, numbered, and five children and two alternates were then randomly selected from this group. The same procedure was followed at all six schools. Therefore, the sample was limited to the children of parents who agreed to participate in the study. Thirty children were randomly selected from the six schools and were subsequently tested to provide data for this study. The random sample was drawn from a total of 121 returned parental permission forms.

#### Data Gathering Procedure

All testing of students was conducted in the morning between 8:30 and 11:30. No session was over two hours long. However, the exact times varied between 8:30 and 11:30 depending upon the teachers' classroom routine. The author interviewed each child individually prior to testing. In these interviews the author explained the purpose of the



study and tried to establish a cooperative, nonthreatening atmosphere in which to conduct the tests.

The brief explanation of the study consisted of informally telling the child that the purpose of the study was to find out what tests helped to find the best books a student could use in reading class. The students were then each assured that only their first names were to go on any testing materials; no grades would be revealed to parents, teachers, or principals, and the tests would not affect their grades in school in any way. The students would merely be helping in a school project that the author/examiner was involved in as a student at the University of Tennessee. To further establish rapport, the children were told that at certain times throughout the morning the examiner would take a break to write and count or examine what had been done. At those time, the children would be free to read comic books provided by the examiner, and choose one to take home at the end of the morning's work. This was then followed by a brief discussion of the individual's favorite super heroes, and the testing process was begun shortly thereafter. All 30 children cooperated in the testing sessions and expressed their willingness to help with the project by doing their best. The examiner felt that a level of cooperation was sufficiently established with all children for valid diagnostic testing to take place.

The determination of whether or not a sufficiently relaxed atmosphere of cooperation has been established between examiner and student is a purely subjective decision on the part of the clinician. A relationship must exist between examiner and student which enables the student to perform to potential. A good working relationship between diagnostician and student is crucial to the validity of scores on both the DRS and the WRMT, because both tests assume that the student is sufficiently relaxed to perform at optimum level.

Guidelines for the establishment of a level of cooperation for testing are suggested in the DRS and the WRMT manuals. This usually involves an explanation of the purpose of the test, a clear presentation of what each task involves as the tasks are introduced, and informal conversations between student and examiner.

This informal conversation with the student is the most crucial element in the establishment of a level of cooperation, in the opinion of this author. A student who feels free to talk about the latest Star Wars feature, summer camp, or the best place to play video games, exhibits a willingness to open up and communicate which would probably not take place if the atmosphere was threatening, or totally unknown and confusing.

A sufficient level of understanding must exist between examiner and student prior to the beginning of formal testing. However, the examiner is responsible for maintaining and improving upon this relationship as the session progresses. Break times, transitions from one task to another, and relaxation time after testing are crucial points in the testing process if the student is to work to ability throughout the session. It is also important to bear in mind that valuable insights into the student's interests and attitude toward reading can be gained during informal discussion and "fun time." Attitudes and interest can have a marked effect on both reading achievement and self concept (Alexander and Filler, 1976).

The students in the present study were also asked if they were willing to help with the project after the study was explained, and they were told that they would not be required to stay and work with the examiner if they were opposed to reading off and on for two hours. Being given a choice to participate or not seemed to be a novel idea for this sample of fourth grade students. They all agreed to cooperate and appeared to be trying to do their best in the subsequent formal testing session.

The sessions were then broken down into two main phases. The first phase consisted of the administration of the WRMT and the DRS to diagnose instructional reading

levels. The order of test administration was varied so that 15 of the subjects received the WRMT first and the remaining 15 received the DRS first. This varying of test order was to make allowance for the fatigue factor, as well as the possibility that student scores on the second test might be affected by the material learned on the first task. After these two tests were administered, a 10 to 15 minute break was taken. The break was followed by phase two, consisting of the oral and silent reading of basal passages, and subsequently by oral comprehension questions. The completion of the basal readings constituted the final phase of the work session.

Once the instructional reading level(s) had been determined by the DRS and the WRMT, a basal passage was matched to the levels. Basal passages had been selected from the first and second half of grade level basal readers in the Ginn series. A child whose instructional level was diagnosed from 0.0 to 0.5 of a given year was placed in a selection from the first half of the basal reader for that year. If the instructional level was diagnosed to be from 0.6 to 0.9 of a given year, the reading selection was chosen from the final half of the basal reader for that year. In other words, if a student received an instructional level of 4.0 to 4.5 on either test, the child was then matched to basal materials at the 4<sup>1</sup> level, i.e., material chosen from

the first half of the fourth grade basal reader. If student A received a diagnosed instructional level of 4.6 to 4.9, materials were chosen for him from the last half of the basal reader or the 4<sup>2</sup> selection (refer to Table 1).

A selection was read orally at a chosen level, followed by comprehension questions. Next, a selection was read silently and also followed by comprehension questions. All comprehension questions were asked orally by the examiner and answered orally by the student. The students' answers were then noted by the examiner and scored as correct or incorrect before moving on to the next question. The students were informed that many answers had to be written down by the examiner whether they were correct or not so that the writing done by the examiner would not be perceived by the student as an indication of poor test performance.

If a student had discrepant instructional levels as diagnosed by the two tests, the lower of the two basal passages was administered first, followed by the higher level passage. For example, if a fourth grade student received an instructional level of 4.5 on the DRS, and an instructional level of 4.8 on the WRMT, he was matched to basal passages 4<sup>1</sup> and 4<sup>2</sup>, respectively, and the easier passage was read first. This movement from low to high was followed in the administration of all basal reading passages when testing indicated a discrepancy in instructional levels.

Table 1

Diagnosed Instructional Reading Levels and Corresponding  
Basal Reading Levels for Placement

| Diagnosed instructional level | Matched basal reading level |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| .0-.5                         | PP <sup>1</sup>             |
| .6-.9                         | PP <sup>3</sup>             |
| 1.0-1.5                       | 1 <sup>1</sup>              |
| 1.6-1.9                       | 1 <sup>2</sup>              |
| 2.0-2.5                       | 2 <sup>1</sup>              |
| 2.6-2.9                       | 2 <sup>2</sup>              |
| 3.0-3.5                       | 3 <sup>1</sup>              |
| 3.6-3.9                       | 3 <sup>2</sup>              |
| 4.0-4.5                       | 4 <sup>1</sup>              |
| 4.6-4.9                       | 4 <sup>2</sup>              |
| 5.0-5.5                       | 5 <sup>1</sup>              |
| 5.6-5.9                       | 5 <sup>2</sup>              |
| 6.0-6.5                       | 6 <sup>1</sup>              |
| 6.6-6.9                       | 6 <sup>2</sup>              |
| 7.0-7.5                       | 7 <sup>1</sup>              |
| 7.6-7.9                       | 7 <sup>2</sup>              |
| 8.0-8.5                       | 8 <sup>1</sup>              |
| 8.6-8.9                       | 8 <sup>2</sup>              |

Two students appeared to exhibit frustration with the basal reading selections before the instructional level indicated by one of the diagnostic tests was reached. In these instances (cases 12 and 20), the research design was altered. The children were given lower passages to read to confirm the subjective diagnostic decision that they had reached frustration reading level.

### Materials

The Word Recognition Lists (1-3) of the DRS were administered in order to obtain a starting point for entry into graded reading passages. Word Recognition List 2 of the DRS utilizes the following set of criteria for entry level into the graded reading passages (refer to Table 2).

Table 2

Criteria for Entry Into DRS Oral Reading Passages  
From Scores Obtained on Word Recognition List 2

| Number of words<br>recognized | Entry level in<br>graded passages |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 5-13                          | 2.2                               |
| 14-19                         | 2.4                               |
| 20-26                         | 2.8                               |
| 27-35                         | 3.5                               |
| 36-40                         | Administer List 3                 |

Reading in the Word Lists is discontinued if a student misreads, skips, or omits five consecutive words. A student who can only read one of the first five words in List 2 is placed in List 1. Each child began by reading List 2 and moved up or down to List 1 or 3 in compliance with the directives of the test. Diagnostic testing should begin at a point at which the student has a reasonable chance for success, in order to reduce anxiety, and to enhance the student's sense of security through the presentation of familiar tasks. Word Recognition List 2 of the DRS places students in graded passages ranging from 2.2 through 3.5, a range which should allow fourth grade students to be at least moderately successful. The WRMT initial subtest is Letter Identification, a task at which the majority of students should be highly successful. Following the Word Recognition List, the student read orally in the graded passages of the DRS and the instructional level was then determined by the Spache criteria described in Chapter II (in the description of the DRS). In the case of the WRMT, all five subtests were administered in order to find the Total Reading Grade Score (also discussed in Chapter II). These formal measures were followed by oral and silent reading in the basal passages (see Appendix A). A master record sheet for students was then filled out to tabulate all scores for each student (see Appendix B).



Basal reading materials were selected from the 1982 Ginn basal reading series (Clymer and Venezky, 1982). This series was chosen because of its recent publication, and wide use in elementary schools throughout the country.

It was assumed that a teacher who is given a diagnostic reading report designating instructional grade level will not check materials by readability formulas, but will instead match the grade level in the report with the same grade level text as determined by the publisher. Attempting to control for the readability of each story selection would be a marked deviation from classroom practice. The readability of the Ginn passages was, therefore, not examined in this study.

Two selections (one for oral reading and one for silent reading) were chosen from the first half of each grade level of the Ginn series from preprimer through eighth grade, and two selections were chosen from the final half of each level. The preprimer levels of the Ginn series included three levels. For the purpose of this study, the first half of the preprimer level was considered to be Preprimer<sup>1</sup>, and the last half to be Preprimer<sup>3</sup>. Selection of materials resulted in the following range of levels: pp<sup>1</sup>, pp<sup>3</sup>, 1<sup>1</sup>, 1<sup>2</sup>, 2<sup>1</sup>, 2<sup>2</sup>, 3<sup>1</sup>, 3<sup>2</sup>, 4<sup>1</sup>, 4<sup>2</sup>, 5<sup>1</sup>, 5<sup>2</sup>, 6<sup>1</sup>, 6<sup>2</sup>, 7<sup>1</sup>, 7<sup>2</sup>, 8<sup>1</sup>, 8<sup>2</sup>.

The instructional levels determined by the tests were matched to these levels as described earlier on the basis of

months. A grade level score of 0.0 to 0.5 months was matched to the first half of the basal for that year, designated by the exponent<sup>1</sup>, and 0.6 to 0.9 month scores for the year were matched to the last half of the basal level, designated by the exponent<sup>2</sup>. The only exception to this procedure is in the case of the preprimer level where the last half of the preprimer is designated by the exponent<sup>3</sup>.

Passages were selected from each level in the series following two basic guidelines: (1) two selections, one for oral reading and one for silent reading, had to be taken from the first half of the level, and two from the second half; (2) each selection had to be accompanied by at least five questions recommended in the Ginn teacher's manual.

The scoring of comprehension questions was based upon the suggested answers in the teacher's manuals. In order to make the task consistent for each student, 10 comprehension questions per passage were included for each basal passage. When possible, all 10 questions were taken from the manuals. However, when fewer questions were available, supplemental questions were written by the author to complete the sets of 10.

The supplementary questions were written to reflect both literal and inferential knowledge of story elements that were not covered by questions in the Ginn manuals. A literal question was based on information directly stated in

the text, while an inferential question examined information that was implied in the text. Vocabulary questions were written only in the case of words with double meanings. For example, a student may have been asked what the word "level" meant, in a story in which the word "level" indicated a carpenter's tool.

All passages and questions are listed in Appendix A, with asterisks indicating the questions chosen from the teachers' manuals. The data listed in Appendix C include a breakdown of percentages for each child for Ginn questions, as well as supplementary questions written by the author. However, in the analysis of data, only the questions selected from the Ginn teacher's manuals were used to determine the fit or nonfit of the basal materials to the diagnosed instructional level. This was done to more closely approximate the questions that might be used in the classroom. Durkin (1978-79) closely observed comprehension instruction in reading and social studies classes and found that teachers were not so much teaching comprehension as assessing it through questioning alone. No combination of criteria seemed evident. She discovered further (Durkin, 1981) in an extensive analysis of five widely promoted and sold basal series, that teachers manuals seemed overattentive to comprehension assessment, including abundant questions. The procedures used in this study (that of

having the child read and answer questions following the reading), therefore, may not be unlike that which the child will actually experience in classroom instruction. Supplementary questions simply served to provide consistency in the tasks each student was asked to perform in the data gathering process. Approval for supplementary questions was obtained from Dr. J. Estill Alexander, Coordinator of the University of Tennessee Reading Center and chairperson of this research committee.

The study sought to examine whether or not there would be a "fit" between the diagnosed instructional level and the basal reader on that approximate level. In terms of "fit," if a diagnosed instructional level of 4.0 was made for a child on either of the two tests, he then had to score 75% in comprehension of Ginn questions in order for the reading level to be considered a "fit." Comprehension of 75% was employed by both Betts (1946) and Powell (1970) in their discussions of instructional reading level. It has also become part of conventional teaching wisdom; in many cases 75% is considered "passing."

#### Procedure for Analysis of Data

The procedures for analysis involved a two-tailed t-test comparison of mean instructional grade level scores on the DRS and WRMT, and a graphic profile of instructional

level scores. Comparison of percentages of cases of fit was also utilized. These procedures were employed to analyze data and to explore possible answers to the three basic research questions under consideration. A closer examination of these three questions will help to clarify how these analytical tools were applied.

Question I: The difference in mean instructional levels for the DRS and the WRMT was judged to be widely discrepant if the results of a two-tailed t-test reached significance at the 0.01 level. An accompanying graphic representation was added in order to highlight the diversity in instructional levels on the two tests in terms of individual cases.

Question II: The accuracy of the two tests in predicting the instructional level for basal placement (oral reading) was determined by comparison of the percentages of cases of fit. The study attempted to determine if either test predicted accurate placement for a larger percentage of cases.

Question III: Regarding question III, data were examined to determine if a greater percentage of cases of fit was evident for silent than for oral reading.

## CHAPTER IV

## PRESENTATION OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to examine the predictive value of the Diagnostic Reading Scales (DRS) and Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests (WRMT) for the instructional level placement of fourth grade students in the 1982 Ginn basal reading series. Three specific questions were formulated to focus the study:

- I. Is there a difference in the mean instructional level as predicted by the two tests?
- II. Is either the DRS or the WRMT a more accurate predictor of success in a basal reader for oral reading on a given grade level?
- III. When placed in materials on the instructional level predicted by the respective tests, will the reader be more successful reading silently than orally.

Question I: A two tailed t-test for significance of difference between means was conducted to determine whether or not the instructional levels diagnosed by the DRS were widely discrepant from those obtained on the WRMT. The mean instructional reading level for the 30 fourth grade children on the DRS was 4.74, and the mean instructional reading level of the same 30 children on the WRMT was 4.70.

Calculated  $t$  was equal to 0.128; this value did not reach significance at the 0.01 level in comparison to theoretical  $t$  ( $t = 0.01$ , 58 df = 2.664).

No significant difference appeared in the comparison of test means. This was probably due to the fact that while some individual scores varied widely, others remained virtually identical. This can be visualized more clearly in Figure 1. This figure graphically depicts the spread between instructional levels obtained on the two tests for each individual student. The "W" represents the instructional level on the WRMT, and the "S" stands for the instructional level on the DRS.

Further examination of Figure 1 revealed that students who were reading at approximately fourth grade level or above (cases 1, 4, 7, 10, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30) tended to exhibit a much wider variation in the diagnosed instructional levels than the students reading below grade level (students number 3, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15). This is consistent with the purpose of the tests; they are clinical reading measures designed for use with remedial readers.

The DRS and WRMT predicted the same instructional level in only one case; both tests diagnosed the instructional reading level for student number 18 as 7.5. In 13 of the cases, the levels were less than a half year (1-4 months)

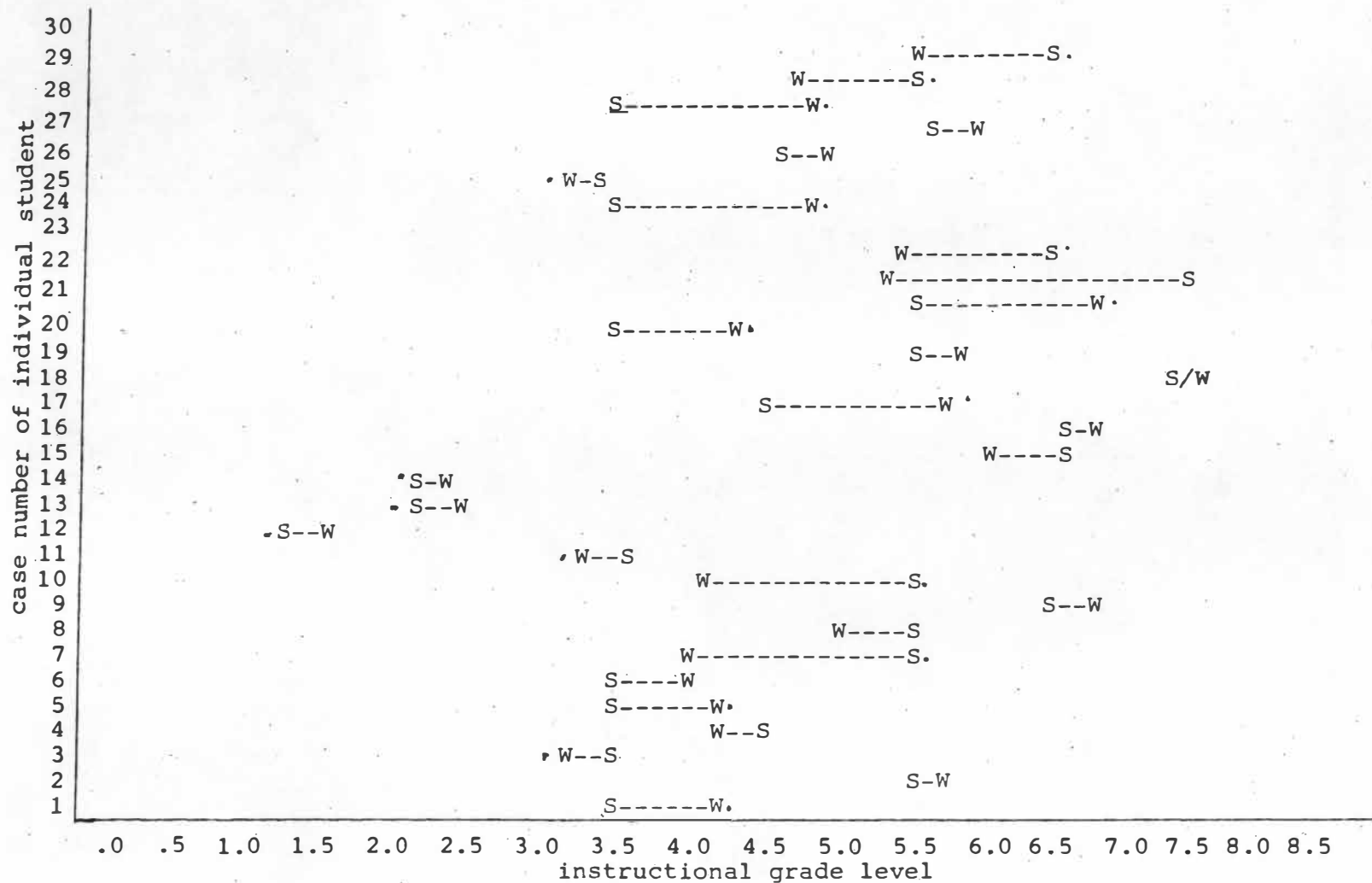


Figure 1. Differences in diagnosed instructional levels on the DRS (S) and the WRMT (W) for 30 students in the fourth grade.



different as predicted by the two tests (see Table 3, cases 2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 19, 25, 26, and 27). The remaining cases, however, were different by one-half year or more, with the greatest discrepancy evident in case number 22, where the WRMT instructional level was 5.1 and the DRS instructional level was 7.5. In 16 out of 30 cases (refer to Table 3, cases 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 15, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, and 30) the DRS and WRMT instructional levels were one-half year apart or greater. Based on the above data, the tests only diagnosed comparable instructional levels in 47% of the cases in which both tests were administered, using closer than 0.5 years as a measure for comparison.

Although the t-test revealed no significant difference between means, graphic representation and an examination of individual cases indicated that roughly half of the sample (13 out of 30 cases) obtained DRS and WRMT instructional levels closer than 0.5 years apart. The extremes in cases (evenly distributed in that approximately half clustered together and half deviated widely) resulted in a balanced mean. The relationship between the two tests does not seem to be as compatible as an examination of means alone reveals.

Question II: The second question in this study dealt with the ability of the two tests to place children

Table 3

Comparison of Instructional Levels as Diagnosed by the DRS and the WRMT

| Instructional level | Student                            |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|                     | Cases Less than 0.5 Years Apart    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|                     | 2                                  | 3   | 4   | 9   | 11  | 12  | 13  | 14  | 16  | 18  | 19  | 25  | 26  | 27  |     |     |
| DRS                 | 5.5                                | 3.5 | 4.5 | 6.5 | 3.5 | 1.4 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 6.5 | 7.5 | 5.5 | 3.5 | 4.5 | 5.5 |     |     |
| WRMT                | 5.2                                | 3.2 | 4.3 | 6.8 | 3.4 | 1.8 | 2.5 | 2.3 | 6.6 | 7.5 | 5.8 | 3.4 | 4.8 | 5.8 |     |     |
| Difference          | 0.3                                | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0   | 0.3 | 0.1 | 0.3 | 0.3 |     |     |
|                     | Cases Greater Than 0.5 Years Apart |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|                     | 1                                  | 5   | 6   | 7   | 8   | 10  | 15  | 17  | 20  | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  | 28  | 29  | 30  |
| DRS                 | 3.5                                | 3.5 | 3.5 | 5.5 | 5.5 | 5.5 | 6.5 | 4.5 | 3.5 | 5.5 | 7.5 | 6.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 5.5 | 6.5 |
| WRMT                | 4.2                                | 4.2 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.9 | 4.1 | 6.0 | 5.6 | 4.3 | 6.6 | 5.1 | 5.4 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 5.4 |
| Difference          | 0.7                                | 0.7 | 0.5 | 1.5 | 0.6 | 1.4 | 0.5 | 1.1 | 0.8 | 1.1 | 2.4 | 1.1 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 0.8 | 1.1 |

successfully in a basal reading series. In order for the instructional level to "fit" the basal reading level, the child had to exhibit 75% comprehension of basal material read orally (see Table 4). After reading orally in basal material from the Ginn series, 13 out of 30 children (43%) were capable of achieving 75% comprehension when matched to basal selections on the basis of a rounded DRS instructional level. When placed in basal selections for oral reading on the basis of the WRMT diagnosed instructional level, 15 out of 30 cases, or 50% of the children, exhibited "fit" (75% comprehension at minimum).

Question III: The final question of the study sought to determine the percentage of cases of fit when children read silently in basal materials on their diagnosed instructional levels. In order to determine "fit" in silent reading materials, the students also had to exhibit 75% comprehension of Ginn questions after the selection was read.

When the children read silently in the basal passages matched to their diagnosed instructional levels, the cases of fit dropped sharply. When matched in silent reading material by DRS instructional levels, only 7 out of 30 cases, or 23% exhibited fit. The WRMT comparisons were similar, with only 6 out of 30 cases, or 20%, of the children reading silently and maintaining a comprehension

Table 4

Individual Cases of Fit and Nonfit Between Diagnosed Instructional Levels on the DRS and the WRMT, and Oral and Silent Reading in Basal Material on Grade Level Matched to Instructional Level

| Student | DRS | Basal level     | Oral reading fit? | Silent reading fit? | WRMT | Basal level    | Oral reading fit? | Silent reading fit? |
|---------|-----|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1       | 3.5 | 3 <sup>1</sup>  | no                | no                  | 4.2  | 4 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 2       | 5.5 | 5 <sup>1</sup>  | no                | no                  | 5.2  | 5 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 3       | 3.5 | 3 <sup>1</sup>  | yes               | yes                 | 3.2  | 3 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | yes                 |
| 4       | 4.5 | 4 <sup>1</sup>  | yes               | no                  | 4.3  | 4 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 5       | 3.5 | 3 <sup>1</sup>  | yes               | no                  | 4.2  | 4 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 6       | 3.5 | 3 <sup>1</sup>  | yes               | no                  | 4.0  | 4 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 7       | 5.5 | 5 <sup>1</sup>  | no                | no                  | 4.0  | 4 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 8       | 5.5 | 5 <sup>1</sup>  | yes               | yes                 | 4.9  | 4 <sup>2</sup> | no                | yes                 |
| 9       | 6.5 | 6 <sup>1</sup>  | no                | no                  | 6.8  | 6 <sup>2</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 10      | 5.5 | 5 <sup>1</sup>  | yes               | no                  | 4.1  | 4 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 11      | 3.5 | 3 <sup>1</sup>  | no                | no                  | 3.4  | 3 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 12      | 1.4 | PP <sup>3</sup> | no                | no                  | 1.8  | 1 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 13      | 2.2 | 2 <sup>1</sup>  | yes               | no                  | 2.5  | 2 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 14      | 2.2 | 2 <sup>1</sup>  | no                | no                  | 2.3  | 2 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 15      | 6.5 | 6 <sup>1</sup>  | no                | no                  | 6.0  | 6 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 16      | 6.5 | 6 <sup>1</sup>  | no                | no                  | 6.6  | 6 <sup>2</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 17      | 4.5 | 4 <sup>1</sup>  | no                | yes                 | 5.6  | 5 <sup>2</sup> | yes               | yes                 |
| 18      | 7.5 | 7 <sup>1</sup>  | yes               | no                  | 7.5  | 7 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 19      | 5.5 | 5 <sup>1</sup>  | no                | no                  | 5.8  | 5 <sup>2</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 20      | 3.5 | 3 <sup>1</sup>  | yes               | no                  | 4.3  | 3 <sup>2</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 21      | 5.5 | 5 <sup>1</sup>  | yes               | no                  | 6.6  | 6 <sup>2</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 22      | 7.5 | 7 <sup>1</sup>  | yes               | no                  | 5.1  | 5 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 23      | 6.5 | 6 <sup>1</sup>  | no                | no                  | 5.4  | 5 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | yes                 |
| 24      | 3.5 | 3 <sup>1</sup>  | no                | yes                 | 4.7  | 4 <sup>2</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 25      | 3.5 | 3 <sup>1</sup>  | no                | no                  | 3.4  | 3 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 26      | 4.5 | 4 <sup>1</sup>  | yes               | yes                 | 4.8  | 4 <sup>2</sup> | no                | yes                 |
| 27      | 5.5 | 5 <sup>1</sup>  | no                | yes                 | 5.8  | 5 <sup>2</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 28      | 3.5 | 3 <sup>1</sup>  | yes               | yes                 | 4.6  | 4 <sup>2</sup> | no                | no                  |

Table 4 (continued)

| Student                       | DRS | Basal level    | Oral reading fit? | Silent reading fit? | WRMT | Basal level    | Oral reading fit? | Silent reading fit? |
|-------------------------------|-----|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 29                            | 5.5 | 5 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  | 4.7  | 4 <sup>2</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 30                            | 6.5 | 6 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  | 5.4  | 5 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | yes                 |
| Total Number of Cases of Fit: |     |                |                   |                     |      |                |                   |                     |
|                               |     |                | 13/30             | 7/30                |      |                | 15/30             | 6/30                |

yes = fit (75% comprehension or greater)

no = nonfit (less than 75% comprehension)

score of 75% or greater. (These figures are presented in Table 5). The marked drop in silent reading fluency as compared to oral reading could be a reflection of the dominant mode of classroom instruction. The children in this sample do not appear to have made the transition from oral to silent reading effectively. It should be noted at this time, that the DRS was not intended to be used as a measure of silent reading ability. The test was specifically developed to place children at instructional reading level for oral reading instruction. However, once the instructional level report is released to the classroom teacher, this specification may not be apparent, and the grade level score may still be misapplied.

Table 5

Percentages of Cases of Fit Between Diagnosed Instructional Levels and Basal Reading Materials for Oral and Silent Reading of 30 Fourth Grade Students

| Diagnostic test | Accuracy in Basal Placement |          |                   |          |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|----------|-------------------|----------|
|                 | Oral reading                |          | Silent reading    |          |
|                 | # of cases of fit           | % of fit | # of cases of fit | % of fit |
| DRS             | 13/30                       | 43%      | 7/30              | 23%      |
| WRMT            | 15/30                       | 50       | 6/30              | 20       |

In terms of questions II and III, the WRMT placed children somewhat better for oral reading in basal materials, with 50% of the children succeeding in basal placement, as opposed to 43% of the children matched successfully by the DRS instructional levels. The DRS placement resulted in slightly better percentages of fit than the WRMT for silent reading--23% of cases of fit as opposed to 20% of cases of fit. However, neither of the tests predicted a great deal better than the other for either oral or silent reading, and the pattern of greater difficulty following silent reading of basal material matched for instructional level was similar for both tests. Neither test matched instructional levels to material levels more than 50% of the time.

Examination of cases of fit and nonfit revealed several interesting factors not specifically addressed in the research questions developed for this study. Nine students obtained instructional level scores on the DRS and WRMT which placed them in the same basal reading level. Five of these nine cases (cases 2, 11, 14, 15, 25) exhibited nonfit in both oral and silent reading of basal materials. Student number 3 was the single example of fit in both oral and silent reading. The remaining three cases (cases 3, 4, 13, 18) demonstrated their ability to fit in the diagnosed basal level when reading orally, but not when reading silently.

This internal pattern repeated the overall trend in the present study of increased difficulty with silent reading for this population of students. The instructional levels on the DRS and WRMT were identical in only one instance, case number 18 (refer to Table 6).

The initial comparison of overall percentages of cases of fit did not indicate that either the DRS or WRMT was observably more accurate at pinpointing instructional levels for basal placement. However, when the two instructional levels were discrepant, there were cases in which one of the test scores fit with the basal level indicated and the other did not. The WRMT diagnosed a higher level that resulted in fit for six out of nine cases (cases 1, 5, 17, 19, 24, 17) (see Table 7). The DRS predicted higher and more accurate levels for only three of the nine cases (cases 8, 10, 22) (see Table 8). The WRMT thus predicted higher scores resulting in fit twice as often as the DRS.

A test may also be more accurate by predicting a lower instructional level resulting in fit, while the test which predicted the higher level resulted in a decrease in comprehension scores below 75%. Eight students in the present study exhibited this pattern. The WRMT seemed to be more precise in three of the eight cases (cases 7, 23, 30) (see Table 9). The DRS reflected a more exact level for the remaining five cases (cases 6, 20, 21, 26, 28, 30). (See Table 10.)



Table 6  
Cases of Fit and Nonfit in Which the DRS and WRMT  
Agree on Level of Basal Placement

| Student | DRS | Basal level    | Oral reading fit? | Silent reading fit? | WRMT | Basal level    | Oral reading fit? | Silent reading fit? |
|---------|-----|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 2       | 5.2 | 5 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  | 5.5  | 5 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 3       | 3.2 | 3 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | yes                 | 3.5  | 3 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | yes                 |
| 4       | 4.3 | 4 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  | 4.5  | 4 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 11      | 3.4 | 3 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  | 3.5  | 3 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 13      | 2.5 | 2 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  | 2.2  | 2 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 14      | 2.3 | 2 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  | 2.2  | 2 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 15      | 6.0 | 6 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  | 6.5  | 6 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 18      | 7.5 | 7 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  | 7.5  | 7 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 25      | 3.4 | 3 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  | 3.5  | 3 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  |

Table 7  
Cases in Which a Higher WRMT Level Resulted in Cases of Fit

| Student | DRS | Basal level    | Oral reading fit? | Silent reading fit? | WRMT | Basal level    | Oral reading fit? | Silent reading fit? |
|---------|-----|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1       | 3.5 | 3 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  | 4.2  | 4 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 5       | 3.5 | 3 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  | 4.2  | 4 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 17      | 4.5 | 4 <sup>1</sup> | no                | yes                 | 5.6  | 5 <sup>2</sup> | yes               | yes                 |
| 19      | 5.5 | 5 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  | 5.8  | 5 <sup>2</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 24      | 3.5 | 3 <sup>1</sup> | no                | yes                 | 4.7  | 4 <sup>2</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 27      | 5.5 | 5 <sup>1</sup> | no                | yes                 | 5.8  | 5 <sup>2</sup> | yes               | no                  |

Table 8  
Cases in Which a Higher DRS Level Resulted in Cases of Fit

| Student | DRS | Basal level    | Oral reading fit? | Silent reading fit? | WRMT | Basal level    | Oral reading fit? | Silent reading fit? |
|---------|-----|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 8       | 5.5 | 5 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | yes                 | 4.9  | 4 <sup>2</sup> | no                | yes                 |
| 10      | 5.5 | 5 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  | 4.1  | 4 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 22      | 7.5 | 7 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  | 5.1  | 5 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  |

Table 9

Cases in Which a Lower WRMT Level Resulted in Cases of Fit

| Student | DRS | Basal level    | Oral reading fit? | Silent reading fit? | WRMT | Basal level    | Oral reading fit? | Silent reading fit? |
|---------|-----|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 7       | 5.5 | 5 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  | 4.0  | 4 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  |
| 23      | 6.5 | 6 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  | 5.4  | 5 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | yes                 |
| 30      | 6.5 | 6 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  | 5.4  | 5 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | yes                 |

Table 10

Cases in Which a Lower DRS Level Resulted in Cases of Fit

| Student | DRS | Basal level    | Oral reading fit? | Silent reading fit? | WRMT | Basal level    | Oral reading fit? | Silent reading fit? |
|---------|-----|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 6       | 3.5 | 3 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  | 4.0  | 4 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 20      | 3.5 | 3 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  | 4.3  | 3 <sup>2</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 21      | 5.5 | 5 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | no                  | 6.6  | 6 <sup>2</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 26      | 4.5 | 4 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | yes                 | 4.8  | 4 <sup>2</sup> | no                | yes                 |
| 28      | 3.5 | 3 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | yes                 | 4.6  | 4 <sup>2</sup> | no                | no                  |
| 30      | 6.5 | 6 <sup>1</sup> | no                | no                  | 5.4  | 5 <sup>1</sup> | yes               | yes                 |

A total of 17 cases are discussed above in the attempt to discover if either the DRS or the WRMT was a more accurate predictor of instructional reading level. A combination of these cases resulted in the DRS diagnosing with more precision in 8 of the 17 cases, and the WRMT in the remaining 9 cases. There appeared to be no appreciable difference in the predictive accuracy of the two instruments (see Table 11).

Table 11

Number of Cases of Fit in Which Either the DRS or WRMT Predicted More Accurately for Placement at a Lower Basal Level, a Higher Basal Level, and for Total Cases

|      | Increased<br>accuracy at<br>a lower basal<br>level | Increased<br>accuracy at<br>a higher basal<br>level | Total<br>accuracy |
|------|--|---|-------------------|
| DRS  | 5 of 8 cases                                       | 3 of 9 cases  | 8 of 17           |
| WRMT | 3 or 8 cases                                       | 6 of 9 cases  | 9 of 17           |

Six of the cases examined in this study proved to be anomalies, particularly in light of Powell's (1970) observation that the proposed reading levels (independent, instructional, and frustration) are supposedly hierarchical in nature. In two cases (cases 17, 22) the students exhibited 75% or greater comprehension scores at a certain level and

their scores lowered as the level decreased. For example, student number 17 was placed in 4<sup>1</sup> basal selections and read orally with 70% comprehension and silently with 83.3% comprehension. After reading the 5<sup>2</sup> basal passages, however, the student scored 80% comprehension after reading orally and 100% comprehension after silent reading. In both cases, the oral reading scores broke the hierarchical pattern for the reading levels, and in the case of student number 17, the hierarchical order was also broken in silent reading.

The remaining four cases (cases 8, 19, 24, 27) consistently showed an increase in oral reading comprehension as the level of difficulty of the basal passage increased. The silent reading comprehension scores decreased, however, as the level of difficulty of the material increased, with the exception of case number 19, in which silent reading comprehension increased also (refer to Table 12).

These cases appear to conflict with the assumption that the three reading levels are hierarchical in nature. The relationships between the independent, instructional, and frustration levels may be in a constant state of adjustment depending possibly upon the interests of the reader, his or her attitude toward reading, and the purpose for reading. For example, what may be interesting and moderately easy reading for an individual could be frustrating if it must be

Table 12  
Comparison of Cases in Which Basal Comprehension Scores  
Increased Along with Level of Difficulty of Material

| Student | Diagnosed instructional level |      | Basal level    | Basal reading scores<br>Ginn comprehension |        |
|---------|-------------------------------|------|----------------|--|--------|
|         | DRS                           | WRMT |                | Oral                                       | Silent |
| 8       | 5.5                           | 4.9  | 4 <sup>2</sup> | 60%  | 91.6%  |
|         |                               |      | 5 <sup>1</sup> | 100%                                       | 83.3%  |
| 17      | 4.5                           | 5.6  | 4 <sup>1</sup> | 70%  | 83.3%  |
|         |                               |      | 5 <sup>2</sup> | 80%  | 100%   |
| 19      | 5.5                           | 5.8  | 5 <sup>1</sup> | 40%  | 66.6%  |
|         |                               |      | 5 <sup>2</sup> | 80%  | 70%    |
| 22      | 7.5                           | 5.1  | 5 <sup>1</sup> | 80%  | 66.6%  |
|         |                               |      | 7 <sup>1</sup> | 100%                                       | 0%     |
| 24      | 3.5                           | 4.7  | 3 <sup>1</sup> | 60%  | 83.3%  |
|         |                               |      | 4 <sup>2</sup> | 100%                                       | 50%    |
| 27      | 5.5                           | 5.8  | 5 <sup>1</sup> | 20%  | 83.3%  |
|         |                               |      | 5 <sup>2</sup> | 100%                                       | 60%    |

read for an exam; what may seem extremely easy reading material may result in little or no comprehension if the reader is totally disinterested in the content, or if the reader has no prior experience with the subject matter.

The research design in the present study was altered when data were being gathered from students 12 and 20. These students appeared to reach the point of frustration while reading basal passages at a level lower than the instructional placement level indicated by the WRMT (see Table 13). Student 12 obtained an instructional level of

Table 13

Comparison of Cases in Which the Research Design Was Altered in Terms of Basal Placement

| Student | DRS | WRMT | Basal level                            | Oral rd. comp. | Sil. rd. comp. |
|---------|-----|------|--|----------------|----------------|
| #12     | 1.4 | 1.8  | pp <sup>3</sup> <sub>1</sub>           | 66.6%<br>35%   | 50%<br>30%     |
| #20     | 3.5 | 4.3  | <sup>1</sup> <sub>3</sub> <sup>2</sup> | 80%<br>42.8%   | 66.6%<br>37.5% |

1.4 on the DRS. When placed in 1<sup>1</sup> level material, however, the resulting oral comprehension score was 35%. The WRMT instructional reading score for this student was 1.8, indicating that passages should also be administered at the 1<sup>2</sup> basal level. However, the comprehension scores of the

child at the 1<sup>1</sup> basal level and the behaviors of the child indicated that this was frustrating material and that testing should be halted. To further substantiate this diagnostic judgment, a lower level passage was administered to student 12. The student's comprehension score was only 66.6%, and the material still appeared to be a struggle. Testing was then discontinued before the child read in a basal passage indicated by the WRMT instructional level. A similar problem arose with student 20. The DRS instructional level was 3.5 and the WRMT instructional level 4.3. When reading orally in a 3<sup>1</sup> basal, this student scored 80% in comprehension, but fell to 66.6% while reading silently. The examiner then administered a 3<sup>2</sup> basal level passage and the comprehension scores obtained were 42.8% and 37.5% for oral and silent reading, respectively. Although the WRMT instructional level was 4.3, indicating placement in a 4<sup>1</sup> basal selection, the intermediate 3<sup>2</sup> level passage was administered. It did not seem advisable to place a child who appeared to be struggling at a 3<sup>1</sup> level into a 4<sup>1</sup> level immediately. The comprehension scores at the 3<sup>2</sup> level (reported above) confirmed this decision. Testing was discontinued at this point and the higher basal levels were classified as cases of nonfit. The examiner had no doubt that these two children would have failed if they had been forced to read more difficult material and answer comprehension questions.



Case 22 also proved to be an enigma in this study. Obviously, a proficient fourth grade reader, student number 22, was reading orally at a 7<sup>1</sup> level with 100% comprehension. When a 7<sup>1</sup> passage was administered for silent reading, comprehension fell to 0%. The student either had little or no interest in the material or simply became tired and stopped trying. It is highly probable that the fatigue factor influenced the performance of case 22, as well as cases 12 and 20.

The decision to discontinue testing with students 12 and 20 was a subjective judgment on the part of the examiner. This decision was based on the students' decreased comprehension scores as well as their observable behavior. It is difficult to determine the exact reactions of the students which lead an examiner or teacher to conclude that a child has gone far enough and that to push him further could be detrimental to his self concept, his attitude toward reading, or his ability to learn to read.

Physical indicators may include head movement, lip movements, squirming in the chair, frequent adjustment of the text position, or repeated inquiries as to exactly when the task will be completed. The problem of when to discontinue testing is compounded when physical clues to frustration are minimal or very subtle. There may come a point where the subjective decision to cease working seems to be based on the look in a child's eye.

There is a distinctive relationship between examiner and child in a clinical relationship, as discussed in Chapter III. The two will work intensively together in a confined space for two or more hours, with little or no distraction from other students or teachers. The clinician must be accurate in the recording of answers, reading errors and other technical information. At the same time, the examiner must also attempt to remember that this child is an individual who needs to be encouraged and gently guided through a long work session. The child is captive. Parents or teachers have recommended testing, and many times the student has no clear idea of why he is doing all this work other than that someone has told him to ("Go here and do this."). The child not only thinks, he feels. It is up to the clinician to find out as much about both in as much time as is available.

In addition to gathering technical data and encouraging the student through the process, the examiner is continuously making a myriad of subjective judgments the whole time the child is present. Many questions arise, such as whether or not the child appears to be trying, whether or not he avoids eye contact, lets fear hamper his performance, or wants to cooperate but seriously dislikes the reading tasks involved. The list of questions could go on and on. The point is that none of them are answered by test scores but by subjective judgments on the part of the examiner.

### Summary

The first question under consideration in this study concerned whether or not there was a significant difference between the mean instructional levels obtained by the sample of 30 fourth grade students on the DRS and the WRMT. Although a test of significance did not reveal a difference between the mean instructional levels as diagnosed for the sample population, an examination of individual cases indicated that in 53% of the cases, the respective levels were discrepant by at least one-half year.

Question II sought to determine if either test was a more accurate predictor of instructional reading level for basal placement. Although the WRMT predicted slightly better in terms of percentages of cases of fit with basal materials for oral reading, neither of the tests resulted in cases of fit more than 50% of the time.

In question III, the purpose was to find whether or not students who were placed in the basal materials on their diagnosed instructional level(s) would be more successful, in terms of cases of fit, after reading silently and answering comprehension questions. The highest percentage of cases of fit following silent reading was 23% for students placed on the instructional level by the DRS; only 20% of the WRMT cases exhibited fit. Generally, children

were successful in their silent reading about one-fifth of the time.

A comparison of the cases of fit for oral reading (that is, neither test predicted cases of fit more than 50% of the time), and silent reading (the DRS predicted slightly better than the WRMT at 23% of the cases) indicates that the subjects in this study did tend to comprehend more of the basal materials after reading orally than they did after reading silently.

Further examination of the data suggested that even in cases where the DRS and WRMT placed students in the same level basal material, the student pattern of greater proficiency in oral reading, as opposed to silent reading, held true. In a review of cases in which one test resulted in fit and the other did not, no definitive pattern emerged to suggest that one test was more accurate in placement than another.

Finally, a subjective decision was made on the part of the examiner that two of the students in the study had reached the frustration point in reading basal material even though the WRMT had indicated that they could be placed in even higher material. Testing was discontinued at that point and the higher levels judged nonfit. This decision was made on the basis of percentage scores and observable behavior. These cases indicate that the informal

interaction between diagnostician and student is equally as important as the tests being administered, if not more so.

## CHAPTER V

## SUMMARY OF RESEARCH

The purpose of this study was to examine the predictive value of the Diagnostic Reading Scales (DRS) and the Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests (WRMT) on the instructional level placement of fourth grade students in the 1982 Ginn basal reading series. Three specific questions were developed to guide the inquiry:

- I. Is there a difference in the mean instructional level as predicted by the two tests on a given grade level?
- II. Is either test a more accurate predictor of oral reading success in a basal reader on a given grade level?
- III. When placed in materials on the instructional level predicted by the respective tests, will the reader be more successful reading silently?

Six schools in the Knoxville City School System were selected to participate in the study. Within these schools, explanation letters and permission forms were distributed to fourth grade students and five students from each school were selected at random from the pool of students receiving parental permission to participate in the study.

Data were gathered on each student in one morning session of approximately two hours. The DRS and the WRMT were administered to the 30 students and instructional reading levels were obtained. On the basis of the diagnosed instructional levels, the students were then given passages selected from the 1982 Ginn Reading series. The students read a selection orally, and orally answered comprehension questions asked by the examiner. The students then read a passage silently, and orally answered comprehension questions. If the instructional levels diagnosed by the DRS and the WRMT were the same, the student read only one oral and one silent passage on a basal level commensurate with that of the diagnosed instructional level. Students who received discrepant instructional level scores on the two tests read an oral and a silent passage to correspond with each diagnosed instructional level.

Comprehension scores in percentages were used as the criterion to determine "fit" or "nonfit" between diagnosed instructional level and basal performance. A comprehension score of 75% or greater on questions selected from the Ginn teachers' manuals indicated a case of "fit." That is, the child could successfully read and understand basal material on that level. Comprehension scores of less than 75% indicated cases of "nonfit," suggesting that the material might be too difficult for the student. Analysis of data

included two-tailed t-test and graphic representation to answer question I, and a comparison of percentages of cases of fit and nonfit was employed to answer questions II and III.

From the present analysis, the following findings became apparent:

1. The DRS instructional level placed fourth grade children in appropriate basal reading materials only 43% of the time for oral reading instruction.

2. The WRMT Total Reading Grade Score placed fourth grade children in suitable basal reading materials only 50% of the time for oral reading instruction.

3. The DRS placed children on an acceptable level in basal reading materials for silent reading instruction 23% of the time.

4. The WRMT Total Reading Grade Score only placed fourth grade children in appropriate basal reading materials for silent reading 20% of the time.

5. A general comparison of means for the two tests did not reveal a significant difference. That is, in approximately 50% of the cases examined the tests varied in their respective determinations of instructional level by 0.5 years of greater.

6. The students who were placed in the same level basal material by both the DRS and the WRMT also demonstrated more cases of fit for oral reading than for silent



reading. Four out of nine cases fit the basal for oral reading, and only one out of nine cases fit reading silently in basal materials.

7. When the diagnosed instructional levels were discrepant (and the lower level resulted in cases of fit whereas the higher level did not), in five out of eight cases the DRS was more accurate than the WRMT. Six out of nine cases were predicted more accurately at a higher level by the WRMT. A combination of high and low accuracy of fit resulted in the DRS predicting cases of fit for 8 out of 17 cases, with 9 out of 17 cases being predicted more accurately by the WRMT.

8. Six of the students in this study obtained oral comprehension scores in basal selections which increased attendantly as the level of difficulty of materials increased. In two of these cases (cases 17, 19), silent reading comprehension also increased as the level of difficulty of material increased.

9. The study found that in some cases the subjective decision of the examiner (on the basis of observable behaviors) overrode the diagnostic information indicated by the test. Testing was discontinued in two cases (cases 12, 20) before a level that matched the diagnosed level on the WRMT was obtained, because the examiner judged that the student had reached frustration level. The subjective

decision of the examiner, based upon observable behavior, overrode the diagnostic information available from the test. The decision to stop testing, and the necessity for establishing a level of cooperation before examination began, suggest that a special relationship exists between clinician and student. (The author felt that the informal interactions which establish this relationship may be just as valuable a source of information as the technical data from the test.)

### Conclusions

Based upon the data examined in the present study, the following conclusions are advanced:

1. The DRS and the WRMT may not be effective predictors of instructional reading level for placement in a basal reading series.
2. Silent reading in a basal reader appears to be more difficult for some fourth grade students than oral reading in the same level when comprehension percentages are used as the basis for evaluation.
3. The three reading levels--independent, instructional, and frustration--may not be hierarchical in nature as assumed at the outset of this study.
4. The informal interaction between clinician and student is equally as important to the diagnostic

process as the validity of formal empirical measures.

### Discussion

The percentages of fit and nonfit found in the present study indicate that the DRS and the WRMT may be highly fallible in their instructional level placement for basal reading series. This leads to serious concerns if we consider the position of the child in the educational process when the decision is made to administer individualized diagnostic reading tests. The child who is referred to a reading specialist has probably tested below grade level in reading on group administered standardized survey tests. Combined with lower scores on a group test, either parental or teacher concerns (or both) about the child's lack of progress in the classroom have resulted in the consultation with a reading specialist. In other words, the instructional program currently in operation has failed the child, and an additional, more complete, diagnostic profile is indicated. Although the diagnostic battery includes a number of measures, the designation of reading levels will be a key part of it.

The assumption inherent in the reading levels is that material which is too difficult will be detrimental to learning. The results of the present study indicate that

the child could easily be placed in an instructional program that is not conducive to learning, and indeed may even be harmful to the reading process. The chances of this occurring are greatly expanded if the teacher trusts the test scores completely, as opposed to viewing them as ballpark figures that may indicate a place to start planning an instructional program.

Grade level scores which place children in materials that seem to make them struggle should be adjusted, and easier materials should be incorporated into the program as soon as the struggle becomes obviously frustrating. Perhaps a point to remember here is this: in the learning process, one of the most crucial factors is simply the human relationship between student and teacher; and this unique relationship does not always lend itself to empirical analysis. Psychologist and hemispheric researcher, Robert Ornstein, in The Mind Field, defined intuition as "knowledge without recourse to inference" (Ornstein, 1978, p. 45) and it is this kind of "intuition" or "informal teacher appraisal" that can complement the use of diagnostic tests as the teacher tries to assess accurately the student's reading level. This viewpoint also has its support among reading authorities:

There is no doubt in my mind that informal teacher appraisal in every subject and in every grade is the ideal approach to the continuous problem of ascertaining instructional levels.  
(Botel, 1967, p. 3)

Alexander (1983) has made a similar point regarding the informal assessment of students' reading attitudes: "Many good teachers assess attitudes informally . . . and at times intuitively and pretty much unconsciously" (Alexander, 1983, p. 361). The teacher's determination of how hard a child is having to struggle is not open to numerical determination. The testing sessions conducted for the present study made it obvious that in the one-on-one testing sessions, the informal interaction occurring between clinician and student was of paramount importance to the diagnostic process. Teachers must be using similar observational cues in the classroom to make the multitude of decisions related to children's educational programs day by day. Exactly what these cues are and how teachers and diagnosticians interpret them is unclear. The present study did not set out to investigate these variables; however, their importance increased as testing and analysis of data cast doubt upon the instructional level scores of the two tests. In retrospect, the author believes that possible cues may have included physical movement patterns, the amount of verbal interaction the child was willing to engage in, intonation or lack of it in oral reading, eye contact, and moments of laughter.

The teacher's perception of such clues need not be conscious in order to be effectively used in the process of

instruction. Indeed, many experienced teachers may unconsciously pick up on these cues and incorporate them into appropriate teaching strategies. However, the effective teacher should be open to the modification of his or her unconscious perception of cues, if these perceptions run counter to test results. In this case, the teacher should examine both subjective perceptions and objective tests for the possibility of bias or error.

The DRS and the WRMT also diagnosed reading instructional levels of 0.5 years apart or greater. As noted by Kender (1968) and discussed in Chapter II, the difference of one-half grade level in placement may be detrimental to some students--particularly students already experiencing difficulty with processing print. However, placement this close should facilitate diagnostic teaching--simply giving the teacher or tutor a closer ballpark figure with which to begin planning. The teacher or tutor incorporating silent reading in the program should consider lowering grade level materials at the outset if planning is based on the DRS or the WRMT.

Although the instructional grade level scores are questionable, as this study indicates, the teacher must have some indication of where to begin placing children, particularly if her prior strategies have failed. The key factor to remember is that these test scores are not etched

in stone, but are best viewed as estimates which might implement the placement of students.

A plausible explanation for the deficiency in predictive value of the two tests may be that the assumption of hierarchical order in the three reading levels is erroneous. Both the DRS and the WRMT assume that the instructional reading level is part of a set relationship, paralleling the frustration and independent levels. Powell has stated, "Supposedly, these would be in hierarchical order in relationship to the difficulty of the materials . . . ." (Powell, 1970, p. 3). A faulty theoretical assumption may permeate the learning theory inherent in the three reading levels, as well as the construction of the tests.

If there is no hierarchical order to the reading levels this factor may indicate the need for an adjustment in the notion of instructional reading level as a theoretical construct. A definition of instructional reading level as the optimum learning point suggests that if learning is taking place, an instructional level has been diagnosed in some manner. The review of the literature and results of this study have suggested the formulation of a diagnostic model proposing three possible ways in which the level is determined: (1) formal empirical diagnosis, (2) informal teacher diagnosis and (3) intrinsic (or self) diagnosis.

The ultimate level of efficiency in the learning process would occur when the fluent reader is capable of directing his own learning and choosing understandable aids to do so. The advantage to self-diagnosis is that a person knows what he wants to learn and (without the aid of testing) can determine the most appropriate materials to help him achieve his purpose. The highest level of this model, i.e., the level of intrinsic (or self) diagnosis, is probably most applicable to the fluent reader.

The child who is learning to read is significantly affected by the remaining two components of the diagnostic process model. An integral part of schooling will be comprised of formal empirical diagnosis and informal teacher diagnosis. The trends in this study indicate that an overreliance on any one component of the diagnostic process can be detrimental to the learning process of the child. Placement in material which is too difficult leads to frustration and inhibits learning.

The widespread use of formal empirical diagnosis is (for good or ill) a fact of life in American culture. All educators may not be enamored with the dependence upon numerical measures, but the harsh reality is that in recent years political accountability and public opinion have increasingly forced more emphasis upon formal empirical diagnosis--as public concern mounts regarding children with reading problems, and functionally illiterate adults.



The empirical diagnostic process is not devoid of value. Careful and openminded test interpretation can be a valuable part of a child's educational program. Group standardized test scores largely ignore the significance of teacher judgment, observable student behavior, or student cooperation. The DRS and the WRMT are at least administered individually, and some human contact is present between diagnostician and student. However, in the opinion of this author, effective diagnosis is hampered, if not rendered impossible, when the balance between formal empirical diagnosis and informal teacher diagnosis is not preserved. The instruments that we have surely need improving, and we also need to explore new ways of assessing the reading abilities of children.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

The review of literature and results of the present study have indicated several possible directions for further research in this area. First, similar research on the WRMT and the DRS might be valuable if repeated with larger samples of children, carried over a range of grade levels and utilizing a variety of different basal reading series. Given the rapid developmental changes that children undergo in elementary school, a pattern that is evident for fourth grade students may vary, given the diversity in published

materials, and the structure of different basal reading series.

Second, upon determination of the instructional reading level of a child by either the DRS or the WRMT, a child should be placed in the matching basal level and his performance in that material should be observed over time. Detailed case studies of a number of children at various grade levels should provide valuable guidance for both test validation and the diagnostic interpretations of individualized test batteries.

Third, further research with children should explore the amount of gain obtained by children at various percentage levels of comprehension. Does the child who understands 75% of the material read really progress with more efficiency than the child who only understands 60%, or the child who maintains comprehension scores of 80% or better? Results of the present study have implied that the three reading levels may not be hierarchical. Longitudinal classroom studies of the various comprehension percentage levels in grade level materials could help to improve the empirical criteria employed in formal diagnostic measures.

Fourth, less numerically dependent diagnostic frameworks for instructional level interpretation need to be developed and researched. Other than the initial establishment of rapport, the attitude, interest, and affective

factors relating to the child are conspicuously absent from standardized testing instruments, even individualized diagnostic instruments. The present study has suggested that valuable information can be gained in a testing session by other than empirical means. For example, the present study has concluded that informal interaction between clinician and student is equally as important to the diagnostic process as the product of formal empirical measures. Future research needs to concentrate on the relationship between clinician and child in diagnostic testing. Several specific variables should be examined, including physical setting, body language, eye contact, verbal interaction, and pacing of session. Initial research should also examine the effects of these variables on time spent administering formal tests, length of breaks during a diagnostic procedure, transition from task to task, and degree of cooperation between student and examiner.

Fifth, a study should be designed to compare the formal diagnostic instructional levels determined by testing instruments to the instructional levels obtained by subtle behavioral cues perceived by the teacher. It would be interesting to see which levels proved to be more valuable over three to four weeks of instruction. The review of literature has suggested that teacher placement of children is often inaccurate. An inherent question in this study is

whether teachers can place children more accurately (50% of the time for oral reading instruction and 20% of the time for silent reading instruction) than the DRS and the WRMT.

Sixth, long range observation of classroom instructional practices in the use of oral and silent reading is needed in an attempt to explain the markedly fewer cases in the present study of fit for oral than for silent reading. The dominant mode of classroom instruction may account for the lack of silent reading proficiency. Children in the fourth grade may not have transferred their reading skills to material read silently.

Hopefully, the present research, though limited in scope, has illuminated some of the limitations of the DRS and the WRMT. If so, then accurate diagnosis of children's instructional reading levels can be enhanced by less dependence upon grade level scores which are numerical estimates at best. Formal empirical measures should complement the instructional program of the child--not dictate it.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### STUDENT RECORD SHEETS FOR BASAL READING PASSAGES AND QUESTIONS USED IN THE STUDY

NOTE: Asterisks (\*) in Appendix A indicate questions selected from the Ginn Reading Series teachers manuals. Other questions were supplemental questions written by the author. For purposes of analyzing data, only the starred questions were used.

Clymer, Theodore, and Venezky, Richard L. The Ginn Reading Program.  
Lexington, Mass.: Ginn and Company, 1982.

| <u>LEVEL OF TEXT</u>              | <u>TITLE OF TEXT</u>                               |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Kindergarten                      | <u>Animal Crackers, or<br/>Animal Crackers Kit</u> |
| Level 1--Readiness                | <u>One Potato, Two</u>                             |
| Level 2--Preprimer 1              | <u>Little Dog Laughed</u>                          |
| Level 3--Preprimer 2              | <u>Fish and Not Fish</u>                           |
| Level 4--Preprimer 3              | <u>Inside My Hat</u>                               |
| Level 5--Primer of 1 <sup>1</sup> | <u>Birds Fly, Bears Don't</u>                      |
| Level 6--1 <sup>2</sup>           | <u>Across the Fence</u>                            |
| Level 7--2 <sup>1</sup>           | <u>Glad to Meet You</u>                            |
| Level 8--2 <sup>2</sup>           | <u>Give Me a Clue</u>                              |
| Level 9--3 <sup>1</sup>           | <u>Mystery Sneaker</u>                             |
| Level 10--3 <sup>2</sup>          | <u>Ten Times Round</u>                             |
| Level 11--4                       | <u>Barefoot Island</u>                             |
| Level 12--5                       | <u>Ride the Sunrise</u>                            |
| Level 13--6                       | <u>Flights of Color</u>                            |
| Level 14--7                       | <u>Green Salad Seasons</u>                         |
| Level 15--8                       | <u>Chains of Light</u>                             |



Clymer, Theodore, and Richard L. Venezky. The Ginn Reading Program.  
Lexington: Ginn and Company, 1982.

| <u>TITLE OF TEXT</u>          | <u>AUTHOR AND STORY TITLE</u>   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <u>Little Dog Laughed</u>     | "The Play Van," pp. 24-27.<br>"A Bell for the Cat," pp. 41-45.  |
| <u>Fish and Not Fish</u>      | "Ana and the Whale," pp. 10-13.<br>"Bread to Eat," pp. 49-51.   |
| <u>Inside My Hat</u>          | "The Bone in the Water," pp. 21-23.<br>"Race Day," pp. 39-41.   |
| <u>Birds Fly, Bears Don't</u> | Stephen Elliot, "A Fish Out of Water,"<br>pp. 8-11.<br>Miriam Cohen, "Finders Keepers," pp. 26-27.  |
| <u>Across the Fence</u>       | Arnold Lobel, "A New House," pp. 68-71.<br>Elaine Marcell, "Hello Is Something You Can<br>show," pp. 100-102.   |
| <u>Glad to Meet You</u>       | Betty Baker, "Helping," pp. 170-172.<br>Bernice Myers, "Not This Bear!," pp. 184-186.   |
| <u>Give Me a Clue</u>         | Aesop Fable, retold, "The Vain Bird and the<br>Peacock Feathers," pp. 129-131.<br>Ailiki, "Corn Is Maize," pp. 157-159.   |
| <u>Mystery Sneaker</u>        | John H. Noble, "Alvin's Masterpiece," pp. 224-<br>226.<br>Jane F. Benoist, "A Special Pocket," pp. 264-<br>266.   |
| <u>Ten Times Round</u>        | David R. Collins, "Linda Richards," pp. 227-<br>229.<br>Martha Goldberg, "The Clay Horse," pp. 187-188.   |
| <u>Barefoot Island</u>        | James Kruss, "The Story of Pepe the Clown,"<br>pp. 72-74.<br>Elizabeth Witheridge, "Dead End Bluff," pp. 10-<br>12.<br>James Baldwin, "How the Spider Came to Be,"<br>pp. 298-300.<br>Astrid Lindgren, "Pippi Finds a Spink,"<br>pp. 328-330. |

Ride the Sunrise

- Helen Sattler, "Weather Wisdom," pp. 137-138.  
 Jean Craighead George, "Coyote in the City,"  
 pp. 148-150.  
 Ruth Manning-Sanders, "Oona Outwits the Giant,"  
 pp. 398-401.  
 Bruce Lewis, "8-4-2-1," pp. 418-419.

Flights of Color

- Richard B. Lyttle, "The Remarkable Education of  
 Laura Bridgman," pp. 76-78.  
 Harriet Quimby, "An American Woman's Daring  
 Exploit," pp. 47-48.  
 Sid Fleischman, "How to Become a Magician,"  
 pp. 360-362.  
 Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler, "Photographing  
 History," pp. 432-434.

Green Salad Seasons

- David Sumner, "River Madness," p. 92.  
 Edward Rager, "Crying Willow," pp. 145-146.  
 Mona Gardner, "The Dinner Party," pp. 390-391.  
 Heywood Broun, "The Fifty-First Dragon,"  
 p. 373.

Chains of Light

- Jean Craighead George, "Return of a Vanishing  
 American," pp. 115-116.  
 Joan Aiken, "All You've Ever Wanted," pp. 185-  
 186.  
 Louise Engdahl, "The Light," p. 388.  
 Jean McCord, "Where the Aurochs Lingered,"  
 pp. 428-429.

GINN KEY TO QUESTION CLASSIFICATIONS

L = Literal

I = Inferential

E = Experiential

D = Details

SD = Supporting Details

MI = Main Idea

S = Sequence

CE = Cause/Effect

CM = Comparison

R = Referents

PO = Predicting Outcomes

DC = Drawing Conclusions

CH = Character

RF = Reality/Fantasy

AP = Authors Purpose

FO = Fact/Opinion

FL = Figurative Language

Literal meanings are explicitly stated in the text, and the question-answer relationship is cued directly by the text.

Inferential meanings are available in the text, but the question-answer relationship is not cued directly by the text. These require text-based inferences.

Experiential meanings must be generated by the reader. They are based on the reader's prior knowledge or opinion.

Teachers Manual: Little Dog Laughed. Lexington, Mass.: Ginn Reading Program, Ginn and Co., 1982.

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - pp<sup>1</sup>  
 "The Play Van"  
 by Theodore Clymer  
 and Richard L. Venezky  
 pp. 24-27

Motivation: Do you know what a play van is? Read the story to find out about the play van.

"Here's the van!

Here's the play van!"

"She is good!

And he is good.

He is good with the ball."

"Look!

Here's a ball.

Come and get it.

Can you play with the ball?"

"She is good.

And he is good.

Look at Ken!

He can not play with the ball."

Comprehension:

1. What has just arrived at the beginning of the story? (I; the play van)
- \*2. What do you think will happen now that the play van has arrived? (I-DC, PO; The clown will put on a show of some kind)

- \*3. Do you think it will be a serious show or one for fun? (I, E-DC; one for fun)
- \*4. What does the clown mean when he says, "Come and get it?" (I-DC; take the ball)
- \*5. What is meant by the word it? (I-DC, R; the ball)
- \*6. What does the clown want Ken to do? (I-DC; take the ball and try to balance it)
- 7. The story says that someone can not play with the ball. Who can not play with the ball? (L; Ken)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - PP<sup>1</sup>  
 "A Bell for the Cat"  
 pp. 41-45

Motivation: Do you have a cat? There is a cat in this story. Read the story to learn about the cat and the mice.

"Look! It is good."

"Look!  
 The cat is in here!  
 She can get us!  
 Run!"

"The cat can get us.  
 We can not play.  
 We can not work.  
 We run and run."

"Can we get the cat to run?"

"We can not get the cat to run.  
 The cat can get us to run!"

"Can we get a bell for the cat?"

"Good!  
 A bell for the cat is good.  
 A cat with a bell can not get us!"

Comprehension:

- \*1. What was the mouse talking about when it said, "It is good?" (I-D, DC, R; the food)
- \*2. What do you think the mice are going to do? (I-PO; eat the food)
3. What makes the mice run? (I; the cat)
- \*4. What might happen to the mice if they don't run? (I-CE; The cat might catch and eat them)
- \*5. What two things does the cat prevent the mice from doing? (L-D; playing and working)

6. Did the mice try to get the cat to run? How do you know? (L; No. The story says "We can not get the cat to run. The cat can get us to run!")
7. What did the mice decide to do about the cat? (I; Get the cat a bell)
- \*8. Why wouldn't a cat with a bell be able to catch the mice? (I-DC, CE; The mice would hear the bell ringing whenever the cat was around, and they could run and hide)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - PP<sup>2</sup>  
"Ana and the Whale"  
pp. 10-13

Motivation: There are some parks where you can go to see really big fish in tanks. Read this story to find out about Beth and Sara's visit to the park.

"I can see," said Sara.

Beth, can you see?"

"I can see the whale," said Beth.

Look at the whale, Sara!

See the man on the whale!"

"Look at the big fish!" said Jim.

"It is not a fish!" said Ken.

"It is a whale.

Look at the big whale eat the fish."

"Look at the whale!" said Beth.

"Will the big whale get Ana?

Will it eat Ana?"

"The whale will not eat Ana," said Sara.

"It will eat a fish."

### Comprehension

- \*1. What could Sara See? (I-D, DC; the tank with the whale in it)



- \*2. What did Sara ask Beth? (L-D; "Beth, can you see?")
- \*3. Besides the whale, what did Beth see? (L-D; a man)
- \*4. What was the man doing? (L-D; riding on the whale)
- \*5. What word did Jim use to name the animal in the water? (L-D; fish)
- \*6. What did Ken say to correct Jim? (L-D; "it is not a fish!")
- \*7. Was Sara as worried about Ana as Beth was? (I-DC; no)
- \*8. What did she say that helped you know this? (L-D; "the whale will not eat Ana")

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - PP<sup>2</sup>  
"Bread to Eat"  
pp. 49-51

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Motivation: Have you ever been to a bakery? These children and their teacher are going to a bakery. Read this story to find out about their trip to the bakery.

"We have come to see your work," she said.  
We have come to see you make bread."

"Come in," the man said.

"Here is where we make the dough,"  
said the man.

"We mix and mix to make the dough."

"Do you need water in the dough?"  
said Ken.

"We do," said the man.

"What is the dough here for," said Beth.

"It has to get big now," said the man.  
"The dough will make a big ball."

Comprehension:

- \*1. Who is speaking? (I-DC; the teacher)
- \*2. Whom is she [the teacher] speaking to? (I-DC; the baker)
- \*3. Why have the children come with their teacher to the bakery? (I-D, DC, MI; to see how bread is made)
4. What must the baker do to make the dough? (L; mix and mix)
5. What did Ken ask the baker? (L; "Do you need water in the dough?")
6. What else do you think the baker puts into the dough? (I-E; flour, salt)

- \*7. Why, do you think, did Beth want to know what was happening to the dough? (I-DC; She was curious; she wanted to learn as much as she could.)
- \*8. Do the workers make the bread before or after the dough gets big? (I-S; after)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - PP<sup>2</sup>  
"The Bone in the Water"  
pp. 21-23

Motivation: Sometimes, if you just keep your eyes open, you'll find something nice. Read this story to find out about the dog and his walk.

"I will go out," the dog thought.

"I will see what I can see."

What will the dog see?

What do you see here?

"What a good bone!" the dog thought.

"This is some bone!

I'll get this big bone."

And he did.

"What is this?" thought the dog.

"I see a dog with a big, big bone.

This little bone I have is not good.

I'll drop it.

Then I'll get the bone in the water."

Comprehension:

1. Why did the dog think he would go out? (I; to see what he could see)
- \*2. What words does the dog use to describe the bone? (L-D; good, big, "some bone")

3. What did the dog mean when he thought "This is some bone!" (I; a really good bone)
- \*4. Do you think the dog was happy when it saw the bone? (I-DC; yes)
5. What did the dog see in the water? (L; a dog with a big bone)
- \*6. Did the dog realize it was looking at its reflection? (I-DC; No, it thought it was seeing a real dog in the water.)
- \*7. Which bone did the dog like better, the one in its mouth or the one in the water? (I-DC; the one in the water)
- \*8. What did the dog decide to do when it saw the bone in the water? (K-MI; drop its own bone and get the one in the water)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - PP<sup>3</sup>  
"Race Day"  
pp. 39-41

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Motivation: A special day is coming up for Ana and her Dad. Read the story to find out about Ana and the special day.

"Can you read that, Ana?" asked Dad.

"I can read it," said Ana.

"There is a race!

Can we go to the race?"

"We'll go to the race," Dad said.

"What a day for a race!" said Jim.

"It looks like a good race day.

I call this a day for wheels.

What are you going to race on?

"I have a bike," said Ken.

"I'll race in the bike race.

Do you see where I have to go?"

Comprehension:

1. What did Ana's Dad ask her? (L; if she could read something)
2. What did Ana read? (L; a sign that said RACE DAY TODAY) [must include the idea of a race]
- \*3. How do you think Ana felt when she read the poster? (I-DC; excited)
- \*4. What tells you that Ana was excited? (L-D; the exclamation mark at the end of the sentence; the fact that she wanted to go to the race)
- \*5. Do you think Jim was excited about the races? (I-DC; yes)
- \*6. What do you think Jim meant when he said, "I call this a day for wheels"? (I-MI; a good day to ride a bike or other wheeled things)

7. Who was going to ride in the race? (L; Ken)
8. What was Ken going to ride in the race? (L; his bike)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - P(1<sup>1</sup>)  
 "A Fish Out of Water"  
 by Stephen Elliot  
 pp. 8-11

Motivation: How would a fish out of water feel? Read the story to find out about one particular fish out of water.

What do you like to do on a beautiful day? I like to go swimming. I am good at swimming. Dad and Mom say I look like a fish in the water.

Yesterday was not a beautiful day. Yesterday was not a good day for swimming.

"You are like a fish out of water," said Dad. "What are you going to do?"

"You will see," I said.

"Dad, you can come in now," I said. I made some fish. This is a cat fish. I made another fish. It is a dog fish. Here is another fish. This is a pig fish."

"I see," said Dad. "You made some fish out of water. I will make another fish."

"Dad, what fish will you make?" I asked.

"You will see," said Dad.

Yesterday was a beautiful day for this fish out of water.

Comprehension:

- \*1. What does the girl like to do on a beautiful day?  
(I-D; go swimming)
- \*2. Is she a good swimmer? (I-D; yes)
- \*3. What do you think her mother and father mean when they say that she looks like a fish in the water?  
(I,E-DC; She can swim as well as a fish)
- \*4. What problem does the girl have? (I-MI; She can't go swimming.)



- \*5. Why can't she go swimming? (I-D, CE; The weather is not good for swimming.)
- \*6. What does the girl's father mean when he says that she looks like "a fish out of water?" (I,E-DC; She doesn't look happy to be out of the water.)
- \*7. What do you think the girl is going to do? (I,E-PO; Answers will vary, but should include the idea that she will find something to do indoors because the weather is bad.)
- \*8. What did the girl do when she realized she could not go swimming? (L, I-D, DC; She made pictures of make-believe, or silly, fish.)
- \*9. What three kinds of fish did the girl make? (K-D; a cat fish, a dog fish, and a pig fish)
- \*10. What did the girl say about her day out of the water? (L-D; it was a beautiful day)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - P(1<sup>1</sup>)  
"Finders Keepers"  
by Miriam Cohen  
pp. 26-27

Motivation: Finding something can be very exciting, but it can also lead to trouble. Read this story to find out about Sammy and Carlos and the trouble they had over a ball.

"Look what I found!" Carlos said. "I found this big beautiful ball!"

Jeff said, "Look what Carlos found!"

Sammy said, "Carlos, that is not your ball. It is my ball. I lost it yesterday."

"I found this ball," said Carlos. "It is my ball now!"

"Finders Keepers," said Carlos.

"My dad gave that ball to me," said Sammy. "I want it back!"

"Maybe you lost another ball," Carlos said.

Jeff said to Sammy, "Finders Keepers. Losers Weepers." Sammy was crying.

"Sammy, is this your ball?" asked Julia.

"Yes!" said Sammy.

"Carlos, is this your ball?" asked Julia.

"Yes!" said Carlos.

Carlos said, "My grandma gave me a ball. It looked like this ball. I lost the ball at my grandma's house. Maybe my ball rolled here from my grandma's house!"

Carlos said, "My dog can find the way home. She can find the way home from my grandma's house."

"Yes, she can." Julia said. "But a ball is not a dog. Can a ball find the way home?"

### Comprehension:

- \*1. What does Sammy say about the ball that Carlos finds? (L-D; that it is his ball)
- \*2. Why does Carlos think that the ball should be his? (I-CE; because he found it)
- \*3. Why does Sammy think that the ball should be his? (I-CE; because he had it before Carlos)
- \*4. What does "Finders Keepers, Losers Weepers" mean? (I, E-DC; The person who finds something can keep it. The person who loses something is out of luck.)
- \*5. Who do you think would agree with "Finders Keepers, Losers Weepers"? (I, E-DC; Carlos)
- \*6. Why? (I, E-CE, DC; because he wants to keep the ball)
- \*7. Who do you think would not agree with "Finders Keepers, Losers Weepers"? (I, E-DC; Sammy)
- \*8. What reason does Carlos give for thinking that the ball is his? (L-D; His grandmother gave him a ball like this one. He lost it at her house. It may have rolled to the schoolyard from her house.)
- \*9. What does Julia ask Carlos? (I-D; Can a ball find the way home?)
- \*10. Why doesn't Carlos's story make sense? (I-CE; A ball could not find its way to Carlos.)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - 1<sup>2</sup>  
 "A New House"  
 by Arnold Lobel  
 pp. 68-71

Motivation: Grasshopper and Worm are having troubles. Read this story to find out about the trouble they're having.

The road went up a steep hill. Grasshopper climbed to the top. He found a big apple lying on the ground. "I will have my lunch," said Grasshopper. He ate a big bite of the apple.

"Look what you did!" said a worm, who lived in the apple. "You have made a hole in my roof!"

"It is not nice to eat a person's house," said the worm.

"I am sorry," said Grasshopper.

Just then the apple began to roll down the road.

"Stop me! Catch me!" cried the worm. The apple was rolling faster and faster.

"Help, my head is bumping on the walls! My dishes are falling!" cried the worm.

Grasshopper ran after the apple.

"Everything is a mess in here!" cried the worm. "My bathtub is in the living room. My bed is in the kitchen!"

Comprehension:

- \*1. What four things does Grasshopper do? (L-D; He climbs to the top of the road, finds an apple, decides to have the apple for lunch, and takes a bite out of it.) [accept any two of the four]
- \*2. How do you think the worm was probably feeling? (I, E-DC; surprised, angry)
- \*3. What does the worm want Grasshopper to do? (I-D; stop the apple from rolling and catch him)
- \*4. Does the apple stop rolling? (L-D; No, it rolls and rolls.)
- \*5. What is happening to the worm inside the apple? (L-D; He is bumping his head on the walls, and his dishes are falling.)

- \*6. Where is the worm's bathtub? (L-D; in the living room)
- \*7. Where should it have been? (I, E-D; in the bathroom)
- \*8. Where is the worm's bed? (L-D; in the kitchen)
- \*9. Where should the bed have been? (I, E-D; in the bedroom)
- \*10. Which sentence tells you what the worm's home is like? (I; "It is a mess in here!")

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - 1<sup>2</sup>

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

"Hello Is Something You Can Show"  
by Elaine Marcell  
pp. 100-102

Motivation: Lee's mother and father have her wondering about something a whole lot. Read the story about Lee and what she's curious about.

Lee's mom told her she would get a surprise tomorrow.

"I don't know if I want a surprise," said Lee. "It's so hard to wait for one."

"Maybe you can guess what it is," said Dad.

Lee thought hard. Then she asked, "Will grandma come to stay for a while?"

"No," said Dad. "Guess again."

"Is it a new toy for the yard?" asked Lee.

"No," said Mom. "It's not a toy."

"I know," said Lee. "It's a frog. Tomorrow we'll go into the woods to find one."

Dad and mom said, "No!"

Tomorrow came. Lee ran into the kitchen. She looked everywhere. "Where is my surprise?" she asked.

Mom told Lee to look out the window.

"Someone is walking across the yard with Dad," said Lee.

"That's Lucia," said Mom.

### Comprehension:

- \*1. What will Lee get? (L-D; a surprise)
- \*2. When will Lee get her surprise? (L-D; tomorrow)
- \*3. Why doesn't Lee know if she wants a surprise? (I-CE; It is hard to wait.)
- \*4. What is the first thing that Lee thinks the surprise might be? (L-S; Grandma coming to visit)
- \*5. Is that the surprise? (L-D; no)
- \*6. How do you know? (L-D; Dad says so)

- \*7. What are Lee's other guesses? (L-D; a toy and a frog)
- \*8. Is either of these guesses correct? (L-D; no)
- \*9. Where is Lee's surprise? (I-DC; outside in the yard)
- \*10. Who tells Lee where the surprise is? (L-D; Mom)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - 2<sup>1</sup>  
"Helping"by Betty Baker  
pp. 170-172

Motivation: Can a coyote and a badger be partners? Read this story to find out about the partnership between Badger and Coyote.

Long ago when the world was new, Badger was putting stars in the sky. The bag of stars was big and lumpy. The ladder was long, but Badger was very strong. He was neat. He put out the stars in the right order.

Coyote was singing to the new moon. Badger went by, pulling the bag and the long ladder. Coyote said, "Is there something to eat in that bag?"

"No!" said Badger. "I am not going to eat now. There will be a dance when I am finished. I will eat then."

"I will go to the dance with you," said Coyote.

Badger said, "Only those who help will go to the dance."

Coyote did not want to help, but he wanted to go to the dance. "We are partners," he said to Badger. "You need a partner to move the ladder and hold it for you."

"I can do that myself," said Badger.

"Yes," said Coyote, "but if I do it, you can just think about the stars and how to put them."

"All right," said Badger. "You can help me."

Badger took some stars and went up the ladder. He put out the stars, one by one. Then he can down.

"It's very pretty," said Coyote, "but make it bigger."

He moved the ladder. Up went Badger. Up went the stars, one by one.

"This is bigger," said Coyote, "but use more stars."

Comprehension:

- \*1. What was Badger doing? (L-MI; putting stars into the sky)



- \*2. How was Badger placing the stars? (I-D; very carefully and neatly, in order)
- \*3. What was Coyote interested in when he first saw Badger? (I-D, MI, S, DC; Possible answers: He wanted something to eat. He wanted to sing to the moon.)
- \*4. What was Badger going to do after he finished? (I-D, S, DC; He was going to dance and eat.)
- \*5. What did Coyote have to do to be invited to the dance? (I-MI, DC; He had to help.)
- \*6. Why did Coyote offer to help Badger put up the stars? (I-MI, CE, DC; because he wanted to go to the dance. Only those who helped could go to the dance.)
- \*7. What did Coyote say to convince Badger to let him help? (L, I-D, MI, CE, DC; He said he would move and hold the ladder so Badger could just think about putting up the stars.)
- \*8. Do you think Coyote will be a good helper? (I-PO; Answers will vary from negative to positive.)
- \*9. How did Badger put up the stars? (L-D, MI, S; He climbed up a long ladder and put them out one by one.)
- \*10. What changes did Coyote ask Badger to make as he was putting up the stars? (L, I-D, MI, DC; Coyote wanted it made bigger, he wanted more stars.)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - 2<sup>1</sup>  
 "Not This Bear!"  
 by Bernice Myers  
 pp. 184-186

Motivation: Has anyone ever confused you with someone else?  
 Read this story to find out how Herman gets all  
 confused with someone else.

Little Herman was on his way to see his aunt. It was very cold. To keep warm, Herman pulled himself down inside his long furry coat. He pulled his big furry hat down over his eyes. He looked just like a bear. And that is just what a passing bear thought.

"You must be my Cousin Julius!" said the bear. Grabbing Herman by the hand, the bear ran with him to her cave.

"Look who I found in the woods!" the bear shouted.

All the bears ran over and hugged Herman. "Cousin Julius, Cousin Julius!" they shouted.

"My name is Herman," said Herman. But no one even heard. They were so happy.

"I'm not a bear . . .," Herman said. Again no one heard him. They were getting ready to eat.

Everyone had soup. All the bears lapped it up. Herman didn't. He used a spoon just as he had learned to do. He happened to have it with him. What a surprise for the bears!

"My, my!" Big Brown Bear looked at Herman. "How smart you are to learn a trick like that!"

All the bears clapped.

Poor Herman. He wasn't a bear. He was a little boy. He was sure of it. The bears were just as sure that Herman was their Cousin Julius.

"So," thought Herman, "I'll just show them I'm really a boy!" He began to sing. He tied his shoes. Then he stood on his head. He did all the things boys and girls learn how to do.

The bears still thought Herman was a bear.

### Comprehension:

- \*1. Why did the bear think Herman was a bear? (L, I-D, MI, CE, DC; because he had on a long, furry coat and a furry hat that pulled down over his eyes; he looked like a bear)

- \*2. What did the bear do with Herman? (L-D, MI; brought him home)
- \*3. Who did the bears think Herman was? (L, I-D, DC; Cousin Julius)
- \*4. What did Herman say when they called him Cousin Julius? (L-D; "My name is Herman. I'm not a bear.")
- \*5. Why didn't the bears hear what Herman said? (I-D, S, CE, DC; First, they were too happy. Then they were getting ready to eat.)
- \*6. How did the bears eat their soup and why? (L, I, E-D, MI, DC, RF; They lapped it up because that is how animals eat.)
- \*7. How did Herman eat his soup and why? (L, I, E-D, MI, DC, RF; with a spoon because that is how people eat soup)
- \*8. Did using a spoon make the bears realize Herman was really a boy? (I-MI, CE, DC; no)
- \*9. What did the bears think about Herman's using a spoon? (I-MI, CE, DC; They thought that Herman was a very smart bear who had learned a trick.)
- \*10. What things did Herman do to try to prove he was a boy and not a bear? (L, I-D, CE, DC; He sang, tied his shoes, and stood on his head.)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - 2<sup>2</sup>

"The Vain Bird and the  
Peacock Feathers"  
by Aesop Fable, retold  
pp. 129-131

Motivation: There always seems to be something about ourselves that doesn't satisfy us. Read this story to find out about a very dissatisfied crow.

There was once a vain crow. One day the crow walked by a pond. He looked into the pond and saw himself in the water. "Oh, my," he cried. "I had no idea I looked so plain. I knew what other crows looked like. But I didn't know I looked the same."

This made the crow very sad. "More than anything," he said, "I wish I were beautiful."

The vain crow went to his friends to ask them for help. All of his friends just laughed at him. "You are not ugly," his friends said. "You are a fine-looking crow. You are no different from any other bird."

"My feathers are all the same color. I don't like being plain," answered the vain crow. He looked at the ground and slowly walked away.

"Of course his feathers are all the same color," said one bird when the vain crow had gone. "That's how crows are supposed to look!"

The vain crow thought and thought, "How can I make myself beautiful?"

Just then he spied some peacock feathers on the ground. The peacock feathers were beautiful. "What find feathers! These are just what I need," cried the crow. He quickly stuck the peacock feathers in among his own. "Now I will be as beautiful as a peacock. I will no longer be plain and ugly," he said.

That very afternoon, the vain crow went to visit the other birds again. He wanted to show off his new feathers. The vain crow strutted by his friends.

### Comprehension:

1. What did the crow look into to see himself? (L-D; water, a pond)

2. How did the crow feel when he saw himself? (L-D; very sad)
- \*3. What did the vain bird want more than anything? (L-D, MI; He wanted to be beautiful.)
- \*4. Why was the crow so unhappy when he looked into the pond and saw himself? (L, I-CE, CM, DC; Possible answers: He knew what other crows looked like, but he didn't know he looked the same. He didn't know he looked so plain until he saw himself. He wanted to be beautiful and thought he was too plain.)
- \*5. What did the other birds say when the vain bird asked for help? (L-D; Possible answers: that he wasn't ugly, that he was fine-looking, that he was no different from other birds)
- \*6. What do you think the other birds thought about the vain bird? (I-MI, CE, DC; They probably thought he was silly and too worried about his looks, especially because he looked the way crows are supposed to look.)
7. What did the crow think made him especially plain? (I; his feathers were all the same color)
- \*8. What did the vain bird do with the peacock feathers? (L-MI; He put them in among his own feathers.)
- \*9. Why did the vain bird put the peacock feathers in among his own? (L-MI, CE, DC; He thought he would be as beautiful as a peacock.)
- \*10. Why did he go to visit the other birds? (L, I-CE, DC; to show off his new feathers)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - 2<sup>2</sup>  
 "Corn Is Maize"  
 by Aliki  
 pp. 157-159

Motivation: I'll bet you've eaten corn a lot of times without ever really thinking about how it grows. Read this story to find out about how corn grows.

This is a kernel of corn.

It is a corn seed.

Kernels of corn are planted in a small hill of good earth. The sun shines down on them. Spring rains water the earth. The hard seeds grow soft and sprout.

A leaf sprouts, and a stalk begins to grow. More leaves come out. A corn stalk shoots up fast.

Now it is the middle of the summer. The corn plant is taller than a farmer. Husks have started to sprout. A husk is a bunch of leaves. The husk is tightly wrapped around strands of silk. A kernel of corn will grow at the end of each strand.

As the corn grows, the silk changes color. The silk turns from a light yellow to dark red to brown.

Just before the silk turns brown, it is time to pick the corn from the stalk. The corn is unwrapped. The husks and the silk are pulled away. The sweet ear of corn is ready to cook and eat.

Thousands of years ago, the people of America learned how to grow corn. When Columbus landed in America, he saw that the first Americans were good farmers. Corn was one of their main crops. Columbus called these people "Indians."

The first Americans ate corn many ways. Some of it they ate fresh. They ate corn on the cob. They cooked baby corn in the husks. They ate the ears whole.

### Comprehension:

- \*1. What is the first thing that happens to the corn seeds when they begin to grow? (L-D, S; The hard seeds grow soft and sprout leaves.)

- \*2. What helps the corn seed begin to grow? (I, E-CE; the sun and the spring rains)
- \*3. What begins to grow after the first leaves sprout? (L-D, S; a stalk)
- \*4. After the corn stalk has grown tall, what happens? (L-D, MI, S; Husks begin to sprout on the stalk.)
- \*5. What is beneath the husks? (I-D; strands of silk)
- \*6. What does the silk do as the corn grows? (L-D, CE; changes color)
- \*7. When is it time to pick the corn? (L-D, S; just before the silk turns brown)
- \*8. What is done to the corn before it is eaten? (I, E-D, S; Possible answers: It is picked from the stalk; it is unwrapped; the husks and the silk are pulled away; sometimes it is cooked.)
- \*9. What was one of the first Americans' main crops? (L, I-D, MI; corn)
- \*10. Who called these people Indians? (L-D; Columbus)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - 3<sup>1</sup>  
 "Alvin's Masterpiece"  
 by John H. Noble  
 pp. 224-226

Motivation: There are all kinds of painters, but none quite like Alvin. Read this story to find out all about Alvin, a very unusual painter.

Alvin Artwork just loved to paint. I suppose it had to do with his last name. He had a strange way of painting, though. Splat! The paint would fly onto his art paper. Splosh! The paint would fly onto his shirt. Splish! The paint would splatter all over his pants. Squish! By mistake he'd sit down on his purple paint dish.

One day Alvin was working on his masterpiece. The paint was everywhere! Somehow, he managed to keep the paint inside his studio. It was just about everywhere else, though. But oh, what a painting he was painting! Every now and then he stepped back and took a long look at what he had done so far. "Oh," he said. "Ah," he sighed. "My oh my! This is my best," he said, patting himself on the back.

Alvin kept painting for the rest of the morning. But the more he painted, the more he worried. The painting wasn't getting any better. It had been much better before, when he had said, "oh," "ah," and "my oh my." He was very discouraged. What could he do? It would be very hard to take paint off the paper. "Hmmm," he said to himself. He walked around the room, stroking his chin with his painty fingers.

He happened to pass his large boy-sized mirror as he was pacing about. He was still deep in thought about what to do. He gave an off-hand look into the mirror. Suddenly his face lit up!

"I have it!" he cried. "The masterpiece is right in front of me. It's fantastic! I'm beautiful!"

Comprehension:

1. What did Alvin really love to do? (L-D; paint)



- \*2. How would you describe the way Alvin painted?  
(I-DC, MI; He was a very sloppy painter)
- 3. What does the story tell us Alvin was working on one day? (L-D; his masterpiece)
- 4. What does the story mean when it says Alvin was "patting himself on the back"? (I-FL; he was pleased with himself; liked the work he was doing)
- \*5. What did Alvin think of his painting at first?  
(I-SD, DC; He thought it was his best)
- \*6. What happened to Alvin's painting as he continued to work? (L-SD; It got worse and worse)
- 7. Alvin knew that it would be very hard to do something. What would it be very hard to do?  
(L-D; to take paint off the paper.)
- \*8. What turned out to be his real masterpiece? (L-MI; himself)
- \*9. How did he get to be the masterpiece? (I-DC, MI; Alvin looked wonderful with the paint he spilled on himself and his clothes.)
- 10. How do you think Alvin felt when he saw himself in the mirror? Why? (I; happy, excited . . . because he looked so beautiful with paint all over him)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - 3<sup>1</sup>

"A Special Pocket"  
by Jane F. Benoist  
pp. 264-266

Motivation: When you share some things you end up getting even more of them back. Read this story to find out about Manuel, his Uncle Carlos, and sharing.

"Uncle Carlos," said Manuel one evening, "what do you do with all those pockets?" Uncle Carlos was sitting with Manuel on the steps outside his house.

Uncle Carlos slid his large, rough hands into the side pockets of his overalls. He wore overalls every workday. "Why, I carry many things in them, nino," he said. "When I'm up on a ladder, building a house, I keep my hammer in this loop. I carry nails in this pocket and a level in this one."

"What goes in the long, skinny pocket in the middle?" Manuel asked.

Uncle Carlos patted the deep pocket next to his heart. "I keep some special things in this one," he said. "It is never empty."

"Some special things?"

"Yes," said Uncle Carlos with a grin. "Would you like to see?"

Manuel nodded excitedly, but Uncle Carlos held up his hand. "I will show you what I keep here. But you must promise me something. If I share them with you, you must then share them with everyone you meet. Can you do that?"

Manuel thought a moment. "May I share them with Rosita?" he asked.

Uncle Carlos laughed. "Yes, share them with your sister and your friends, too," he said. "The more you share these, the more you will find in your pocket to give away."

"I promise to share them," Manuel said.

Uncle Carlos leaned closer. "All right. Watch closely, chico." He reached into the narrow space. Then he pulled out his hand and covered his mouth with it. When he took away his hand, there was nothing there . . . except a big, wide grin.

Manuel looked puzzled. Then he began to smile, too. "I know! You carry your smiles in that pocket."

Comprehension:

1. What did Uncle Carlos wear to work every day?  
(L-D; overalls)
- \*2. What type of work did Uncle Carlos do? (I-SD; He was a carpenter.)
- \*3. What did he keep in his pockets? (L-D; a hammer, nails, and a level)
4. What does the word "level" mean in the story?  
(VOCAB; a tool used by a carpenter)
5. Where was the pocket that Uncle Carlos kept his smiles in? (I; next to his heart)
- \*6. What did Manuel promise? (L-MI; He promised he would share the things Uncle Carlos had in his special pocket.)
7. Who did Manuel especially want to share the contents of the special pocket with? (L-D; his sister Rosita)
- \*8. What did Uncle Carlos keep in his special pocket?  
(I-MI; a smile)
- \*9. Why did he want Manuel to share the smiles? (I-SD, MI; to make people happy)
- \*10. Why do you think it was called a special pocket?  
(I, from "Discussion the selection"; It had something unusual and especially nice in it)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - 3<sup>2</sup>

"Linda Richards"  
by David R. Collins  
pp. 227-229

Motivation: Some people know what they want to be in life when they're very young. Read this story to find out about Linda and what she always wanted to do in her life.

Linda Richards was the first nurse who was trained in America. When Linda was quite young, her father died. Then her mother got very sick. Doc Currier, the family's doctor, watched Linda tend to her mother. He saw that she was very good at making her mother comfortable.

After Linda's mother died, Linda moved in with Grandma and Grandpa Sinclair. Her greatest wish was to learn how to care for the sick.

Linda liked to help Grandpa with the farm animals. Soon all the animals seemed like friends to her. Linda talked to them and called them by name. When she gathered the eggs, the hens clucked to her. Her pet rooster followed her all over the farm.

Grandpa always knew where to find Linda. One corner of the barn was special to her. There she cared for her animal "patients."

"If I get sick, will you take good care of me like that?" Grandpa teased her as he watched Linda spoon-feed a baby rabbit.

Doc Currier stopped by when he could. He liked to watch Linda work with the animals. "You've got a good barnyard hospital here," he laughed. "I wouldn't mind being a sick cow on this farm."

"You're just like Grandpa," Linda said. "I'm glad my animal patients don't tease me all the time."

Other people heard about Linda's barnyard hospital. Soon she was caring for pet dogs, pet cats, and even a pet goat.

Then, on her thirteenth birthday, Linda got a surprise present. Doc Currier asked her to go with him on some sick calls. Doc had remembered her wish!

Comprehension:

1. What was Linda Richards first at? (L-D; she was the first nurse who was trained in America)
- \*2. What was Linda Richard's first nursing experience? (I-SD; She took care of her sick mother)
3. Where did Linda go to live when her parents died? (L-D; with her grandparents on their farm)
- \*4. What was Linda's greatest wish? (L-MI; to learn how to care for the sick)
5. Where did her grandfather know that he could always find Linda? (I; in her special corner of the barn where she took care of sick animals.)
- \*6. How did Linda practice nursing at her grandparents farm? (L, I-SD; She cared for sick animals)
- \*7. What tells you that Linda would probably make a good nurse? (I-SD, DC, CH; Doc Currier thought that Linda tended her mother well and that she had a good barnyard hospital. Linda's grandfather asked if she would take care of him when he was sick. People brought their sick animals to her.) [Any one of the above answers is acceptable]
- \*8. When she was thirteen, what did Doc Currier ask Linda to do? (L-SD; to go with him on some sick calls)
- \*9. How do you think Linda felt about going with Doc Currier on his rounds? (I-CH; she was happy)
- \*10. Why do you think she was happy? (I-CH; because she wanted very much to learn nursing.)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - 3<sup>2</sup>  
 "The Clay Horse"  
 by Martha Goldberg  
 pp. 187-188

Motivation: It is very difficult to create something beautiful. Read the story to find out about the beautiful things that Mateo and his family work to create.

One morning, just as the sun came up, Mateo brought the firewood down from the mountain.

The houses of Mateo's village were far below. Each family in the village made the black pottery that was famous over all of Mexico.

Mateo's mother was one of the finest potters in the village. Today she would fire the ollas--the large water jars. So Mateo hurried with the wood.

He also wanted to see Panchita, the beautiful brown horse. Panchita belonged to Big Pablo.

Mateo had often stopped to watch this beautiful horse. Then he had gone home and tried to make a horse from clay. His clay horses never looked like Panchita. Mateo wanted to see her again.

Mateo was sure that he could make a good clay horse. But that was a secret that no one knew, not even his sister, Concha.

When Mateo reached home his father called out, "Mama is waiting for the wood. Where have you been so long?"

"I stopped at Big Pablo's," Mateo answered.

"You stopped while we waited for you?" his father asked.

"Si," Mateo said, all in a rush. "I stopped to see Panchita. Big Pablo told me he is selling her. Please, Papa, can we buy Panchita?"

"My son, don't be foolish! We are potters; we do not own horses. And today we have a lot of work to do. Let me hear no more about horses!"

### Comprehension:

- \*1. What did the people in Mateo's town do? (L-SD; made the famous black pottery)

- \*2. Why was Mateo getting wood? (I-SD, DC; so that his mother could fire the water jars)
- \*3. What else did Mateo want to see? (L-SD, CH; Panchita; the beautiful brown horse)
- \*4. Why did he want to see it [the horse]? (L-SD, CH; Mateo wanted to make a clay horse like Panchita)
- 5. What was Mateo's secret, which he did not even tell his sister Concha? (L-SD; That he was sure he could make a good clay horse.)
- \*6. What news did Mateo hear from Big Pablo? (L-CE; Big Pablo was going to sell Panchita.)
- \*7. What did Mateo want to do about it [Big Pablo selling the horse]? (L-CE; Mateo wanted to buy the horse)
- 8. What did Mateo's father think he had done wrong when he came back from getting the wood on the mountain? (I-DC; Mateo took too much time and stopped to see the horse--keeping his family waiting for the wood)
- \*9. How did Mateo feel about Panchita? (I; he loved her and wanted to buy her)
- \*10. Why did Mateo want to make a horse from clay? (I; He could not have Panchita and he thought she was beautiful)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - 4<sup>1</sup>

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

"The Story of Pepe the Clown"

by James Krüss

pp. 72-74

Motivation: Have you ever been on a very long trip? It can be exciting. Read this story to find out about Pepe and the trip he is taking.

On a windy October day, a Spanish circus was aboard a ship. The circus was sailing toward the Canary Islands, where it was to give a performance. All the circus people were in a good mood except Pepe, the clown. For the four days since they had left Barcelona, Pepe had not been feeling well. No one, except the other circus people, suspected that this old man was a clown.

There was a steady west wind to keep the boat sailing smoothly. Pepe's illness couldn't have come from rough waters. Pepe kept to himself. For four days the corners of his mouth pointed downward.

On the fifth day of the trip the wind changed. The sky darkened from minute to minute and the waves became higher and higher. Soon everyone knew that a storm was approaching. Rain was in the air, and the ship began to sway. It was lifted up high and then fell swiftly into the valley of the waves. Suddenly, with a crash of a wave, the ship lost its rudder.

The clown Pepe, who could not stand to be inside, hung to the wooden railing of the deck. He was soaked from head to toe. Then he heard the mate holler through the megaphone. "Captain, the steering wheel no longer works." The words were so frightening that Pepe broke into an ice-cold sweat. The captain shouted at Pepe, "Go down into the cabin, sir. I can't have anyone fall overboard!" The captain guided the old clown to the room on the bridge where the mate stood. The mate was trying to steer the ship.

Comprehension:

- \*1. Where does this story take place? (L-D; on board a ship bound for the Canary Islands)



- \*2. Who was Pepe? (I-MI; a clown of a Spanish circus)
3. Why wasn't Pepe in a good mood? (I; He had not felt well for four days; he was sick)
- \*4. What happened to the weather on the fifth day of the trip? (L-SD, S; The wind changed, the sky darkened, the waves became higher and higher, and a storm approached.)
- \*5. What happened to the ship? (L; When a storm came up, the steering mechanism of the ship was shattered and no longer worked.)
6. Why was Pepe outside on deck during the storm? (I; he couldn't stand to be inside)
7. What did the mate holler to the Captain through the megaphone? (L-D; "Captain, the steering wheel no longer works.")
- \*8. How did Pepe feel when he heard the mate say that the steering wheel no longer worked? (L-SD, CH; Pepe was so frightened that he broke into an ice-cold sweat.)
9. Why did the Captain tell Pepe to go down into the cabin? (I; He was afraid Pepe might be swept overboard in the storm.)
10. Who was trying to steer the boat in the storm? (L-D; the mate)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - 4<sup>1</sup>

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

"Dead End Bluff"  
by Elizabeth Witheridge  
pp. 10-12

Motivation: Have you ever been on a picnic? Read this story to find out about Quig, Tommy and the picnic.

Quig loved to fish where the small river cut its channel out into the big one. This evening his family was having a picnic with some friends. Quig caught several plump sunfish and thought of the night in June when he cast and came up with his dog, Storm, on his hook.

"Luckiest accident I ever had," Quig said, feeling around for the dog. Storm always tried to keep at a safe distance from his rod now, but he did enjoy being close to Quig.

Tommy, Quig's younger brother, was dredging along the edge of the river with a minnow net. He was collecting frogs. He kept the frogs in an old dishpan in the back yard. They were mostly little green speckled things, but Tommy hoped one day to catch the "big old bullfrog" that lived below Dead End Bluff. He made lots of trips to the bottom of the bluff in the daytime, but never saw the bullfrog. "Quig's right. I'll have to go at night, I guess," said Tommy. "That's when we always hear him. I guess I'll go tonight."

"Oh, no, you won't go down to Dead End tonight or any other night!" exclaimed his mother.

"Imagine going down there in the dark!" said Quig's friend Peggy.

Quig smiled to himself and thought that it would be just as easy for him to go down the bluff at night as it would in the daytime. Even though Quig was blind he still had a sense of humor.

The night after the picnic, Quig's parents went with the Munsons and the Bradfords to have dinner in Green Valley. Quig and Peggy had been elected to sit with the three younger children and the dogs.

### Comprehension:

- \*1. The evening of the picnic, what was Quig doing?  
(L-SD; fishing)

- \*2. What was Tommy doing the evening of the picnic?  
(L-SD; collecting frogs)
3. Where did Tommy keep his frog collection? (L-D; in an old dishpan in the backyard)
- \*4. What did Tommy hope to do one day? (I-DC, CH; He hoped he would catch the big old bullfrog that lived below Dead End Bluff.)
5. Had Tommy ever been to the bottom of Dead End Bluff? (L-D; Yes, lots of times in the daytime)
- \*6. When was the best time to catch the bullfrog?  
(L-D, S; at night)
- \*7. Why hadn't Quig ever gone to the bottom of Dead End Bluff? (I; Since Quig was blind, the descent to the bottom might have been dangerous for him.)
8. Why wouldn't Tommy's mother let him go down to Dead End Bluff on any night? (I; It was dangerous; he might get hurt)
9. Why would it be just as easy for Quig to go down Dead End Bluff at night as it was in the daytime?  
(I-DC; he was blind)
- \*10. What job did Peggy and Quig have when their parents went out? (L-SD; watching the younger children)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - 4<sup>2</sup>

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

"How the Spider Came to Be"

by James Baldwin

pp. 298-300

Motivation: People have many different kinds of individual talents. Read this story to find out about Arachne and her work.

There was a young girl in Greece whose name was Arachne. All that she cared to do from morning till noon was to sit in the sun and spin silk and wool and flax. All that she cared to do from noon till night was to sit in the shade and weave.

Fine and fair were the things that she wove on her loom! Flax, wool, silk--she worked with them all. When they came from her hands, the cloth which she had made of them was so thin and soft and bright that people came from all parts of the world to see it. The people said that such beautiful cloth could not be made of flax, or wool, or silk. They said that the warp must be the rays of sunlight and the woof must be threads of gold.

Then one day Arachne said: "In all the world there is no yarn as fine as mine, and in all the world there is no cloth as soft and smooth, nor silk as bright."

"Who taught you to spin and weave so well?" someone asked.

"No one taught me," she said. "I learned how to do it as I sat in the sun and the shade. No one showed me."

"But it may be that Athena, the queen of the air, taught you and you did not know it."

"Athena, the queen of the air?" said Arachne. "How could she teach me? Can she spin such skeins of yarn as these? Can she weave goods like mine? I should like to see her try. I can teach her a thing or two."

### Comprehension:

- \*1. Who was Arachne? (L-MI, CH; Arachne was a Greek girl)

- \*2. What did she [Arachne] like to do? (L-MI, CH; weave)
- \*3. Describe the cloth she wove. (L-SD; thin, soft, and bright)
4. What did Arachne weave her cloth from? (L-DS; wool, flax, or silk) [any one answer acceptable]
5. Why did people think the cloth was made from sunlight and gold? (I; It was so beautiful it couldn't be ordinary wool, silk, or flax)
6. Who taught Arachne to spin and weave so well? (L; no one)
7. How do we know that Arachne was very proud of her spinning and weaving? (I; she brags in the story about how fine her cloth is)
- \*8. What was Athena's title? (L-MI; the queen of the air)
- \*9. How did Arachne feel about Athena's weaving? (I-DC, CH; Arachne believed that Athena could not possibly weave cloth as beautiful as her own.)
10. What did Arachne mean when she said, "I can teach her a thing or two?" (I; She thought she knew more and was a better weaver than the queen of the air)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - 4<sup>2</sup>

"Pippi Finds a Spink"  
by Astrid Lindgren  
pp. 328-330

Motivation: Some people just can't help discovering things. Read the story to find out about Pippi and her discovery.

One morning Tommy and Annika came skipping into Pippi's kitchen as usual, shouting good morning. But there was no answer. Pippi was sitting in the middle of the kitchen table with Mr. Nilsson, the little monkey, in her arms and a happy smile on her face.

"Good morning," said Tommy and Annika again.

"Just think," said Pippi dreamily, "just think that I have discovered it--I and no one else!"

"What have you discovered?" Tommy and Annika wondered. They weren't in the least bit surprised that Pippi had discovered something because she was always doing that, but they did want to know what it was.

"What did you discover, anyway, Pippi?"

"A new word," said Pippi and looked at Tommy and Annika as if she had just this minute noticed them. "A brand-new word."

"What kind of word?" said Tommy.

"A wonderful word," said Pippi. "One of the best I've ever heard."

"Say it then," said Annika.

"Spink," said Pippi. "The only thing I know is that it doesn't mean vacuum cleaner."

Tommy and Annika thought for a while.

Finally Annika said, "But if you don't know what it means, then it can't be of any use."

"That's what bothers me," said Pippi.

"Who really decided in the beginning what all the words should mean?" Tommy wondered.

"Probably some professors," said Pippi.

### Comprehension:

- \*1. At the beginning of the story who came to visit Pippi? (L-D; Tommy and Annika)

- \*2. Who was Pippi's animal friend? (L-D; Mr. Nilsson, a monkey)
- \*3. Why did Pippi have a happy smile on her face? (I-MI, CE, DC, CH; She had discovered something and was proud of it)
- 4. Why weren't Tommy and Annika surprised that Pippi had discovered something? (L; she was always doing that)
- \*5. What was it that Pippi had discovered? (L-SD; a new word)
- \*6. What new word had Pippi discovered? (L-SD; spink)
- \*7. What was the problem with Pippi's discovery? (I-MI; Pippi did not know the meaning of her new word)
- 8. What did Pippi know that "spink" did not mean? (L; vacuum cleaner)
- 9. Why did Annika think Pippi's new word wasn't of any use? (I; it had no meaning)
- 10. What does Pippi's new word make Tommy wonder about? (I; who decided in the beginning what all the words mean?)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - 5<sup>1</sup>  
 "Weather Widsom"  
 by Helen Sattler  
 pp. 137-138

Motivation: Modern machines help us do so many things that sometimes we forget what we ever did without them. Read the story to find out about some of the people who lived before there were machines.

A long time ago people lived mostly out-of-doors. They noticed that plants, animals, insects, and birds sensed the coming of a storm sooner than people did. All living things try to save their own lives, so they look for shelter just before a storm. When the people of long ago saw animals seeking shelter, they did, too.

The things that make up weather--the air pressure, the amount of water in the air, the temperature, and the wind--are felt by plants and animals. What they do gives clues to weather changes. The people of long ago called these "weather signs." Those who knew how to read the signs were often as good as weather services, where predicting is done with modern instruments.

During fair weather the air usually has very little water in it. Just before a rain the air becomes damp. It has more humidity. Humidity is the amount of water in the air.

Weather services use instruments to measure humidity. In earlier times, people looked for signs to tell them when the air was getting more water in it. Spiders show one of the best signs of humidity.

Usually, spiders spin their webs between six and seven in the evening. During calm, clear weather they don't bother to make large webs or to take them in. But when there is high humidity and a drop in air pressure, spiders build more and larger nets.

Comprehension:

- \*1. How did people of long ago live differently from most people today? (I-MI, CM; they lived mostly out-of-doors)



- \*2. What did these people notice? (L-SD; that plants and animals sensed an approaching storm before they did)
3. Why did the people of long ago seek shelter when they saw the animals doing so? (I; because living things try to save their lives and it's a sign a storm may be coming)
- \*4. What exactly do plants and animals sense? (L-SD; air pressure, temperature, wind, and the amount of water in the air) [answer any two answers]
- \*5. What are "weather signs"? (L-MI; Weather signs are activities of living things that give clues about the weather.)
6. Why did people try to predict the weather by watching the animals? (I; because they didn't have modern instruments)
7. What happens to the air just before a rain? (L-D; it becomes more damp; has more humidity)
8. What is humidity? (L; the amount of water in the air)
9. What did the people look at long ago to tell them when the air was getting more water in it? (L; the spiders)
- \*10. How do spiders give weather signs? (L-MI, CE; When there is high humidity and a drop in air pressure spiders build more and larger webs. Before a heavy rain they take the webs in.)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - 5<sup>1</sup>

"Coyote in the City"

by Jean Craighead George  
pp. 148-150

Motivation: Moving to a new place to live can be very difficult for people. Read this story to see how much of a change moving can be for an animal.

Tako had been born on the hot dry plains of Texas. Like all coyote pups, he used his senses and curiosity to learn about his world. But curiosity led him to a steel trap, and soon Tako found himself on a boat bound for New York City. When the boat docked in Manhattan, Tako escaped and, in the manner of all young animals, began seeking a territory of his own.

Tako loped up the stairs and rounded a corner. At the top of the next stairs the silver skyline of the city was framed in the square subway entrance. Down the street stood the Museum of Natural History. There, unknown to him, was an exhibit of coyotes on the main floor. The card under the stuffed animals read: "Coyote (Brush wolf) *Canis latrans*. The coyote seeks irregular land with open fields, bushy hedges and woodland. It is at home in the deserts and mountains. Curiosity is one of its traits. It is quite intelligent, and is faster than a dog when running. On its home territory of several hundred acres, the coyote often passes up food near its den and hunts far afield."

The card went on: "The coyote has moved to the East and is now living in the Adirondack and Catskill Mountains. It is highly adaptable and lives in western cities. None, however, is in New York City. This is fortunate, for coyotes often bring in disease."

Tako was listening to sparrows. He followed their voices around the subway entrance to a newsstand. The birds were louder here. He looked up. Grass, newspaper, pins, and tin-foil stuffed in the corners of the building and an odor of oily dust told him he had nests on this part of his territory. He could not see the birds.

Comprehension

- \*1. Where did Tako live before coming to New York City? (I-SD, S; Texas)
2. What did Tako use to learn about his world? (L; his senses and curiosity)
- \*3. How did he get to his new home? (I-DC; He was trapped and taken on a boat.)
4. What did Tako do when the boat docked in New York? (L; he escaped)
5. Where was the exhibit of coyotes in New York? (L-D; the Museum of Natural History)
- \*6. What kind of land makes a good home for the coyote? (L-SD; irregular land with open fields, bushy hedges, and woodland)
7. Does the coyote live only in the West? (L-D; no, they have also moved into the Eastern mountain ranges) How do you know?
- \*8. Why might people in New York be unhappy to have a coyote in their city? (I-SD, CE; Coyotes can bring diseases.)
- \*9. Name a few of the things Tako noticed about his surroundings. (L-SD; birds, litter, lack of flowers, hard earth)
- \*10. What words might you use to describe Tako? (I-CH; observant, curious, intelligent)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - 5<sup>2</sup>

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

"Oona Outwits the Giant".  
by Ruth Manning-Sanders  
pp. 398-401

Motivation: Many times it is a good idea to avoid trouble when you see it coming. Read the story to find out about Fin M'Coul and his effort to avoid trouble.

Some giants are stronger than others, and of all the giants that ever lived in Ireland, the giant Cucullin was the strongest. By one blow of his fist he could flatten a thunderbolt into a pancake, and he walked about the country with one such pancake in his pocket to scare the other giants. He did scare them too.

But there was one giant whom Cucullin hadn't yet managed to scare, and that was Fin M'Coul. And the reason for that was that Fin kept out of his way so carefully that Cucullin had never yet set eyes on him. It was through fear of Cucullin that Fin lived on the top of a windy mountain, so that he could see a long way all around him. And if Cucullin were no more than a speck in the distance, Fin would be off and hiding himself in some place or another.

Fin was only putting off the evil hour, however, for Cucullin had sworn that he would never rest by day or by night till he had met with Fin. And Fin knew they must meet. He knew it by touching his thumb to a special tooth, which made things come plain to him.

Well now, Fin was one day taking the air outside his house on the top of the windy mountain, when he chanced to put his thumb to his tooth. Then, shivering and shaking he rushed indoors to his wife, Oona.

Comprehension:

- \*1. Who was the strongest giant in Ireland? (I-MI, CE; Cucullin)
- \*2. How did he scare all the other giants? (I-MI, CE; By carrying in his pocket a thunderbolt he had flattened to prove his great strength)

- \*3. Who was Fin M'Coul? ([L] another Irish giant)
4. Who couldn't Cucullin scare? (L; Fin M'Coul)
- \*5. How did Fin M'Coul avoid meeting Cucullin? (I-MI, CE; By living on top of a mountain, Fin could see when Cucullin was coming and run off to hide.)
6. What had Cucullin sworn? (L; that he would never rest until he had met with Fin)
- \*7. Why did Fin touch his thumb to one of his teeth? (I-CE, R; to learn of things he would otherwise not know)
8. Do you think Fin and Cucullin are real or make believe? (I; make believe)
9. Who was Oona? (L; Fin's wife)
10. How did Fin know that he and Cucullin must meet someday? (L; by touching his thumb to a special tooth)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - 5<sup>2</sup>  
"8-4-2-1"by Bruce Lewis  
pp. 418-419

Motivation: Machines can do many things to help people. Read this story to find out about one very special kind of machine and how it helps people.

A computer is a machine that works with numbers. It is run by electricity and filled with wires, connectors, switches, and other electronic devices. It uses these to add, subtract, multiply, and divide. It works so quickly that each step may take only a billionth of a second!

But, because it is only a machine, a computer cannot think. In science-fiction books you may find electronic "brains" that think and talk. But they do not really exist. There are computers that seem to talk. But you could not carry on a conversation with them. There is even a computer-like machine that "reads" to people who are unable to see. Using lights and lenses, the machine examines words in a book. Then it uses electronics to put together the right sounds for each word. It is a wonderful machine that will help many sightless people. But it cannot talk or think the way you do.

A computer is an electronic servant. It is like a washing machine or a dishwasher. It must be given something to work on. It will follow instructions and solve problems. But first people must tell it what to do. People communicate with computers through a computer language. The machine then translates that language into a special number code.

To understand this code, think of a light bulb. The light bulb has a switch. You use it to turn the bulb on or off. You can look at the bulb and see which way it is--on or off.

Suppose we give the light bulb a number. Let's call it "1" when it is on. When it is off, it stands for nothing, or zero.

Comprehension

- \*1. What is a computer? (L-MI; a machine that works with numbers)
2. What does a computer run by? (L; electricity)
- \*3. What are some things a computer can do? (I-SD; A computer can add, subtract, multiply, divide, "speak," and "read" books)
- \*4. What is it unable to do? (I-SD; It cannot talk or think in the way people do)
5. How quickly does a computer do a single step when it works? (L; a billionth of a second)
6. Why is a computer an "electronic servant"? (I; it must be given work to do like any other machine . . . washing machine or dish washer)
- \*7. How do people communicate with computers? ([L]; through a computer language)
8. What does the computer translate the language into? (L; a special number code)
9. Why couldn't you carry on a conversation with a computer? (I; a computer cannot think)
- \*10. How do you make a light bulb counter show the number "1"? (L-MI; by switching it on)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL 6<sup>1</sup>

"The Remarkable Education  
of Laura Bridgman"  
by Richard B. Lyttle  
pp. 76-78

Motivation: There are many different kinds of school.  
Read this story to find out about a very  
special school that a girl named Laura goes  
to.

With her fingertips the little girl explored the room. There was no other way, for the new arrival at the Perkins Institution in Boston was both deaf and blind. She could not speak. She had little sense of taste or smell. It was October 4, 1837. Laura Bridgman was seven years old.

For several days the strange surroundings, the teachers, and the other pupils at the institution confused her. Some of her schoolmates were deaf. Some were blind. None were quite like Laura . . .

Laura liked the man who had brought her to the new place. He came to her room every day. After Laura had been at the new place two weeks, the man began to play a game with her. It was a strange game, and it seemed to have no purpose.

The man sat beside her and put objects into her hands. Each object had a card tied to it with a string, and on each card were pasted strange shapes. Some of the shapes were curved. Others were straight as sticks.

Although the raised shapes on the cards were strange to Laura, all the objects were familiar. There was a thin, metal object that was flat at each end. She had felt her mother use it to unlock doors. As Laura touched the key, she thought of home. But the man took her fingers and brushed them over the raised shapes on the card. Laura frowned. She could not understand. These shapes were different. She could tell that, but still the game made no sense . . .

Eventually, the man changed the game. He would hand her a card. By this time, the shapes on the cards were not so strange to Laura, and she could understand that she was to find the object that went with each particular card.



Comprehension:

- \*1. Where was the room that Laura Bridgman was exploring? (L-SD; at the Perkins Institution in Boston)
- \*2. How was Laura Bridgman different from her classmates at the Perkins Institution? (I-MI, CM; she was both deaf and blind, while the others were deaf or blind.)
3. How long had Laura been at the Institution before the man began to play the game with her? (L-SD; two weeks)
- \*4. Describe the game that Laura played with the man at school? (L-MI; He handed her objects to which cards were attached. Raised shapes were pasted on the cards.)
- \*5. When the man handed Laura a card, what was she supposed to do? (I-CE; find the object that went with the card)
- \*6. What was Dr. Howe trying to teach Laura? (I; that symbols stand for words and that words stand for objects.)
- \*7. What objects did he use to teach her? (L; letter shapes and familiar things, such as keys)
8. Did Laura learn the game right away? (L; No, she did not understand at first and the game made no sense.)
9. How did Laura feel about the man who played the game with her? (L; she liked him)
10. The key reminded Laura of something, what was it? (L; home. She had felt her mother use a key to unlock doors.)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - 6<sup>1</sup>

"An American Woman's  
Daring Exploit"  
by Harriet Quimby  
pp. 47-48

Motivation: Sometimes people do things just because they have never been done before. Read this story to see what one lady becomes "first" at.

The Editor of Leslie's asked me to write "the thrilling story" of my crossing of the English Channel. I am afraid I shall not be able to make it a "thrilling story." There were, of course, some doubtful moments. The heavy banks of fog rising from the channel are treacherous. In fact, the thick fog was responsible for the extra sweep of thirty or forty miles that I took. I also had to overcome gusty winds, a blinding mist, and my inexperience in the use of a compass. If that gives you a "thrilling story," you have the facts to thank and not this author.

While I was flying in Mexico last December, the ambition to fly the English Channel by myself first entered my mind. The more I thought of it, the less difficult the feat seemed to be. Finally I reached the resolve that I would be the first woman to cross the English Channel alone.

On the seventh of March I sailed for London on the liner America. In London I disclosed my project to the editor of the London Mirror. He was delighted with the idea and pressed me to make the trip as the Mirror's representative. The next thing was to get a monoplane. To that end I visited the Bleriot factory in Paris and placed an order for a seventy-horse-power machine.

It seemed wise to try out the machine before attempting to cross the channel. For one thing, its controls were different from those of other planes I had flown. I arranged to have the monoplane shipped to Hardelot, a French seacoast village where Mr. Bleriot had a hanger.

Unfortunately, persistent harsh winds at Hardelot would not permit me to try out the machine. Time was flying--even if I was not. I had promised the Mirror editor to be at Dover promptly. So I arranged to have the monoplane

shipped across to Dover at once. Nothing should be known of my projected journey. I wished to surprise the world. The machine was shipped secretly to the aerodrome on Dover heights, about three miles back from the channel.

Comprehension:

1. Why did Harriet Quimby write about her adventure? (L-CE; because the editors of LESLIE'S WEEKLY asked her to)
2. Name two of the difficulties Harriet had to overcome in her flight. (L; fog, gusty winds, blinding mist, her own inexperience in the use of a compass)
- \*3. While flying in Mexico, what did Harriet Quimby decide to do? (L-MI; to be the first woman to fly alone across the English Channel)
- \*4. Why did Harriet Quimby have the monoplane shipped to Hardelot? (I-CE; to convince the editor to sponsor her trip)
5. Where was the factory that made Harriet's machine? (L; Paris)
- \*6. Why did Harriet Quimby have the monoplane shipped to Hardelot? (I-CE; to try out the plane)
7. Why did Harriet want to try out the plane? (L; the controls were different than other planes she had flown)
- \*8. Why was her plan unsuccessful? (L-CE; winds)
- \*9. Why did Harriet Quimby have the plane sent secretly to Dover? (L-SD; She did not want anyone to know that her flight would begin there.)
10. Why did the editor of LESLIE'S think Harriet's flight would make a "thrilling story?" (I; it was dangerous; no woman had ever done it before alone)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - 6<sup>2</sup>

"How to Become a Magician"  
by Sid Fleischman  
pp. 360-362

Motivation: Would you like to be a magician? Read this story to see how you would go about being a magician.

# INTRODUCTION OR HOW TO VANISH AN ELEPHANT

Snap your fingers. I'll wait.  
Done?

I'll tell you why in a moment.

Have you ever wondered how magicians become magicians? After all, there are few schools for sorcery in the Yellow Pages.

Magicians teach themselves magic. But then, you have already taught yourself a lot of things: catching a ball, jumping rope, whistling, and maybe wiggling your ears.

You may start with a simple trick and someday vanish an elephant.

Magicians come in all shapes and ages. There have been famous magicians with short, plump fingers. Many are left-handed. And there are wondrous wizards no older than seven or eight.

I was ten when I first became interested in hokery-pokery. After learning a few tricks from a book I discovered the biggest secret of all. Unless I rehearsed in private I fumbled the trick in public.

A school play would be a shambles if the actors did not first rehearse their parts. And a magician is a kind of actor playing the role of a wizard.

A wizard makes mystic passes with his hands. He utters magic words. He appears to be in command of uncanny powers. It is all pretense, of course, but that is part of the fun. Most of all, a wizard creates an atmosphere of things mysterious and surprising.

There is a kind of suspense in watching a magic trick unfold. What is going to happen? And then--behold! It happens.

That is why a magician never tells you exactly what he is going to do before he does it. It would be like telling the end of a joke first.

Comprehension:

1. What are some things that you might have taught yourself? (L; catching a ball, jumping rope, whistling, wiggling your ears)--accept any one.
- \*2. What do you think the author wants you to believe about performing magic? (E-DC, AP; You can teach yourself to perform magic.)
3. If you start with simple tricks, what might you be able to do someday? (L; vanish an elephant)
4. How old was the author when he first became interested in magic? (L; 10 years old)
5. What does "hokery-pokery" mean in the story? (L; magic)
- \*6. How is a magician like a performer in a school play? (L-CM; both must rehearse)
- \*7. How does a magician create an atmosphere for magic? (I-CE, DC; by making hand motions, saying magic words, pretending to control magic powers)--accept any one.
- \*8. Why does the magician try to create an atmosphere for magic? (I-CE, DC; to make the audience believe in the trick)
9. Why is there a kind of suspense in watching a magic trick? (I; because you don't know exactly what is going to happen)
- \*10. How is a joke like a magic trick? (I-MI, CM, DC; Knowing what a trick will be before it happens is like knowing the end of a joke.)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - 6<sup>2</sup>

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

"Photographing History"  
by Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler  
pp. 432-434

Motivation: A long time ago, having your picture taken was a very special occasion. Read this story to see how one photographer helped us to remember people.

On February 27, 1860, a strange-looking figure appeared at the studios of Mathew Brady in New York City. The man who came to have his picture taken was a giant of a man. One of the men who met him that day described him as "half alligator, half horse." His plain black suit was of cheap broadcloth and terribly wrinkled from being packed in a suitcase on a long trip. A plain black ribbon, carelessly wound about his neck, served as a tie. Yet this was Abraham Lincoln of Illinois, whose reputation as a compelling speaker had brought him an invitation to speak in New York City.

Mathew Brady was at the door of the gallery to welcome Lincoln. Brady showed Lincoln to the gallery of portraits that he had taken.

The walls were lined with pictures of America's famous men and women. Lincoln saw portraits of Andrew Jackson and Dolly Madison; the writers Edgar Allan Poe and Washington Irving; and Samuel F. B. Morse, the famous inventor. The faces of the Presidents were here. Brady had taken the picture of almost every President since John Quincy Adams.

Lincoln's face wasn't as famous as those that graced Brady's wall, but there might be a place for him there yet. People said he was rising quickly in the political world. He had debated Stephen Douglas on the issue of slavery. The debates had gained a name for Lincoln in Illinois. Brady had taken Douglas's picture several times. He didn't want to miss anyone who might become a great American. He took pictures of almost everyone in politics as well as of actors, writers, painters, inventors.

Most of them were happy to sit for Brady's camera. Having Brady take your picture was a mark of success and status.

Comprehension:

1. Who was the "giant of a man" the story describes? (I; Abraham Lincoln)
- \*2. Why had Lincoln come to New York City? (L-SD; to give a speech)
- \*3. What else would he do while he was there? (I-MI; have his picture taken)
4. Who was going to take Abraham Lincoln's picture? (L; Mathew Brady)
- \*5. What kinds of people did Mathew Brady photograph? (I-SD, MI, CE; famous men and women of America)
- \*6. Why did Mathew Brady photograph these people? (I-SD, MI, CE; because these people would be important in history)
7. Name two of the people photographed by Mathew Brady besides Abraham Lincoln. (L; the presidents since John Quincy Adams; Dolly Madison; Edgar Allan Poe; Washington Irving; Samuel Morse)
8. What helped to make a great name for Lincoln in Illinois? (L; the slavery debates)
9. Who did Lincoln debate with over the slavery issue? (L; Stephen Douglas)
- \*10. Why were people happy to sit for Mathew Brady? (I-CE, CH; By having the famous photographer Brady take their pictures, people showed that they were important.)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - 7<sup>1</sup>  
 "River Madness"  
 by David Summer  
 p. 92

**Motivation:** Some trips turn out to be real adventures. Read this story to find out about one person's very exciting trip.

A dusty road runs beside the main stem of Idaho's legendary Salmon River for 46 miles west of the tiny mountain town of North Fork. As I drove along that winding route one clear summer day, I had an overpowering sense of my surroundings. Above me, the dark canyon walls angled up sharply to block out the sun. Below me, the wide river surged and tossed between jagged banks of granite boulders. I strained for a better look at the water, and my hands tensed on the wheel. I was about to raft through the wildest stretch of the Salmon. It would be my first real test at running such rough rapids and I was worried.

When I met up with the other nine members of my party at the end of the road, our leader, Verne Huser, allayed my doubts. A 20-year veteran of western rafting, Huser had six Salmon trips behind him, and he liked the way the river looked now. It was high, and Verne said that would make our passage easier by covering many of the large boulders and other obstacles. Early the next morning, we inflated our 13½-foot rubber rafts, loaded up and agreed on a plan. Verne's raft would move out first and mine would follow a safe distance behind. When necessary, he would hand signal back to me. Before we hit the major rapids, we would pull ashore and scout them out.

**Comprehension:**

1. What state was the Salmon River located in? (L; Idaho)
2. Why did the narrator have what he called "an overwhelming sense of my surroundings" as he drove by the river? (I; because of the high canyon walls blocking the sun and the wild river)



3. What kind of trip was the narrator about to take? (L; a raft trip on the wildest stretch of the Salmon River)
- \*4. How did the narrator feel as he approached the start of the trip? (L-CH; He felt tense and worried.)
- \*5. What training did the narrator have before this trip? ([I]; this was his first real test at running such rough rapids)
6. Who helped put the author's fears to rest? (L; Verne Huser)
- \*7. Who was Verne Huser? (L-SD; the leader for the trip)
- \*8. What training made Verne Huser a qualified leader for the trip? ([I]; Verne Huser was a 20 year veteran of western rafting and had six Salmon trips behind him.)
9. Why did Verne use hand signals to communicate with the men in the other raft? (I; the sound of the river would keep the men from hearing him)
- \*10. What is the purpose of scouting rapids on foot before rafting through them? ([I]; by scouting the rapids on foot ahead of time, the leaders can determine the best approach for navigating difficult rapids)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - 7<sup>1</sup>  
"Crying Willow"  
by Edward Rager  
pp. 145-146

Motivation: Plants are very important to people. Read this story to find out more about what people are doing for plants.

When I tell people I head a plant protection agency they usually figure I'm in industrial security. The truth is I'm with LEAF, the League to Eliminate the Abuse of Flora. The agency is charged with seeing that our green friends aren't wantonly destroyed or abused. We take on any job which seems to fall within our jurisdiction, including regulating and setting standards for the use of herbicides, coordinating the activities of forest rangers, and setting and enforcing laws against picking flowers.

Our newest, and strangest, operative is a different breed altogether. His name's Herb Greene and he's trying to communicate with plants both electronically and psychically. There's no need to tell you what I think about his psychic hogwash, but I must admit that some of his electronic equipment is certainly impressive. He attaches lie detector probes to the leaves to measure a plant's psychogalvanic reflexes--whatever they are. Says changes in the lines on the chart correspond to the plant's reactions to thoughts and actions from the outside. He's trying to use this to verify his attempts at communication. He's even got kids believing they're making beans grow faster by thinking good thoughts about them.

He must be some kind of a crackpot, but I'm stuck with him. The regional director told me to give him a free hand. Anyway, he gets us a lot of publicity and the visitors all go away impressed. I'll have to take the time someday to find out exactly what he's doing.

Comprehension:

- \*1. What organization did the narrator head? (I-SD, R; the narrator was head of a plant protection agency called LEAF)
- \*2. What did LEAF stand for? (L; League to Eliminate the Abuse of Flora)
- \*3. What was the purpose of the organization [LEAF]? (I-SD, R; to prevent the wanton destruction or abuse of green plants)
4. What did people usually think when the narrator told them he headed a plant protection agency? (L; that he was in industrial security)
5. What are some of the jobs that the agency does? (L; regulates and sets the standards for the use of herbicides; co-ordinates the activities of forest rangers; enforces laws against picking flowers) [accept any one]
- \*6. Who was Herb Greene? (I-R, CH; LEAF's newest operative)
7. What was Herb Greene trying to do? (L; to communicate with plants by electronic and psychic means)
8. What kind of equipment did Herb Greene attach to plant leaves? (L; lie detector probes)
9. What did Herb Greene have kids believing? (L; that they were making beans grow faster by thinking good thoughts about them)
- \*10. How did the narrator feel about Herb Greene? (I-CH; He was impressed by the electronic equipment that Greene used, but he thought the psychic part of Greene's experiments was "hogwash." He thought of Greene as "some kind of crackpot" and that he was "stuck with him." Greene was new and strange.)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - 7<sup>2</sup>  
 "The Dinner Party"  
 by Mona Gardner  
 pp. 390-391

Motivation: Sometimes people just can't seem to agree about things. Read to find out about the opinions these people have.

The country is India. A colonial official and his wife are giving a large dinner party. They are seated with their guests--army officers and government attachés and their wives, and a visiting naturalist--in their spacious dining room, which has a bare marble floor, open rafters, and wide glass doors opening onto a veranda.

A spirited discussion springs up between a young girl who insists that women have outgrown the jumping-on-a-chair-at-the-sight-of-a-mouse era and a colonel who says that they haven't.

"A woman's unfailing reaction in any crisis," the colonel says, "is to scream. And while a man may feel like it, he has that ounce more of nerve control than a woman has. And that last ounce is what counts."

The American does not join in the argument but watches the other guests. As he looks, he sees a strange expression come over the face of the hostess. She is staring straight ahead, her muscles contracting slightly. With a slight gesture she summons the servant standing behind her chair and whispers to him. The servant's eyes widen, and he quickly leaves the room.

Of the guests, none except the American notices this or sees the servant place a bowl of milk on the veranda just outside the open doors.

The American comes to with a start. In India, milk in a bowl means only one thing--bait for a snake. He realizes there must be a cobra in the room.

Comprehension:

- \*1. What was the setting of this story? ([I]; the story was set in India)

- \*2. How was the setting important to the plot? ([I]; it is important to the plot because the style of the house and the presence of the snake are believable in this setting)
3. What were the people in the story doing? (L; having dinner)
4. Who was having a "spirited discussion?" (L; the colonel and a young girl)
- \*5. What topic was being discussed at the dinner party? (I-MI; Whether or not men have more control in a crisis than women do.)
6. What did the colonel say that women always do in a crisis? (L; scream)
- \*7. How did the American behave while the argument was going on? (L-SD, CH; He sat silently and watched the other guests.)
- \*8. What did the American first observe about the hostess? (L-SD; "He saw a strange expression come over the face of the hostess. She [was] staring straight ahead, her muscles contracting slightly.")
- \*9. What happened as a result of the hostess whispering to the servant? (I-CE; The servant's eyes widened, then he left the room and returned with a bowl of milk, which he placed on the veranda.)
10. When the American saw the servant with the bowl of milk, what did he realize? (L; that there must be a cobra in the room)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - 7<sup>2</sup>

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

"The Fifty-First Dragon"  
by Heywood Broun  
p. 373

Motivation: Everyone has trouble with school at some time or another. Read this story to find out about a boy named Gawaine le Coeur-Hardy and his problems with school.

Of all the pupils at the knight school Gawaine le Coeur-Hardy was among the least promising. He was tall and sturdy but his instructors soon discovered that he lacked spirit. He would hide in the woods when the jousting class was called although his companions and members of the faculty sought to appeal to his better nature by shouting to him to come out and break his neck like a man. Even when they told him that the lances were padded, the horses no more than ponies, and the field unusually soft for late autumn, Gawaine refused to grow enthusiastic. The Headmaster and Assistant Professor of Pleasance were discussing the case one spring afternoon, and the Assistant Professor could see no remedy but expulsion.

"No," said the Headmaster, as he looked out at the purple hills which ringed the school, "I think I'll train him to slay dragons."

"He might be killed," objected the Assistant Professor.

"So he might," replied the Headmaster brightly, but he added more soberly, "We must consider the greater good. We are responsible for the formation of this lad's character."

"Are the dragons particularly bad this year?" interrupted the Assistant Professor. This was characteristic. He always seemed restive when the head of the school began to talk ethics and the ideals of the institution.

"I've never known them worse," replied the Headmaster. "Up in the hills last week they killed some peasants, two cows, and a prize pig. And if this dry spell holds, there's no telling when they may start a forest fire simply by breathing around indiscriminately."

"Would any refund on the tuition fee be necessary in case of an accident to young Coeur-Hardy?"

Comprehension:

- \*1. When did this story take place? ([I-S]; The story was set in the Middle Ages but combined the lore of that period with the manners and language of the twentieth century.)
- \*2. What details suggested the time period of its setting? ([I-S]; the details of the Middle Ages included jousting, knights, dragons, magic)
3. What made Gawaine de Coeur-Hardy the least promising pupil in the school: (I; he lacked spirit)
- \*4. What example did the narrator give of Gawaine le Coeur-Hardy's lack of spirit? (I-SD; "He would hide in the woods when the jousting class was called . . . [even when his companions and members of the faculty] told him that the lances were padded, the horses no more than ponies, and the field unusually soft for late autumn . . .")
5. Who was the Headmaster discussing Gawaine with one spring afternoon? (L; the Assistant Professor)
6. What was the only remedy for the situation that the Assistant Professor could see? (L; expulsion)
- \*7. What did the Headmaster want to do about Gawaine? (I-MI, CH; The Headmaster wanted to train Gawaine to slay dragons.)
- \*8. What objections did the Assistant Professor raise to the Headmaster's idea? (I-S, CE; The Assistant Professor objected that Gawaine might be killed; was concerned about whether the school would have to refund part of the tuition fee in case of an accident to Gawaine.)
9. What had the dragons done to make the Headmaster think they were particularly bad that year? (L; killed some peasants, two cows, and a prize pig)
10. What was the Headmaster afraid the dragons might do if the dry spell continued? (I; start a forest fire by breathing around indiscriminately)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - 8<sup>1</sup>

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

"Return of a Vanishing American"  
by Jean Craighead George  
pp. 115-116

Motivation: Many things that people do are very dangerous to wild animals. Read this story to see how one particular bird almost became extinct.

It was in the spring of 1966 that Congress declared the American bald eagle, our national emblem, to be a vanishing species. The reality of the announcement struck me hard, for I had grown up watching a pair of magnificent eagles that nested on the banks of the Potomac near George Washington's home in Mount Vernon, Virginia. Eagles had lived there as far back as any person could remember. This lineage of stunning birds, with their white heads and tails, and striking six-to-eight-foot wing spread, was a living symbol of the country's strength and vitality.

But the symbol was fading, and I could see it happening. That spring, the nesting season came and went and no eagles graced the sky. That year I had read a ten-year study of the status of the southern bald eagle, a smaller race than the northern bird. In 1948, 80 percent of the nests had failed to produce young, and more than half were deserted. In 1957, a count of migrating eagles passing Hawk Mountain, Pennsylvania, revealed that but one eaglet existed for 32 adults as compared to a normal 14.

The cause? There were several, perhaps the worst of which was DDT. Sprayed by the ton across the mosquito-infested marshes and waterways that are the ancestral homeland of the fish-eating bald eagles, and ingested through the food chain, DDT caused disruption of the reproductive systems, the thinning of egg shells that smashed on incubation, and eventually sterility. This, plus the hunting and killing of eagles, the collecting of eagle eggs, and the loss of the great bird's wildlands to development, brought our national bird to the brink of extinction.



Comprehension:

1. What is America's national emblem? (L; the American bald eagle)
- \*2. What happened in the spring of 1966? (L-SD; Congress declared that the American bald eagle was a vanishing species)
- \*3. Explain the author's reaction to this news. (I-CE, CH; The author was upset by the news because of what the news represented. . . . The author thought of the bald eagle as a "living symbol of the country's strength and vitality.")
4. Where did the author first see American bald eagles? (I; she had grown up watching eagles near her home, near Mount Vernon, eagles of a lineage "as far back as any person could remember.")
- \*5. What details did the author provide to support her statement that "the symbol was fading, and I could see it happening"? (I-SD; the author noted that no eagles had appeared that spring for the nesting season near her home. The author also quoted data from a ten-year study that revealed the decline in terms of the number of young being produced.)
6. In 1948, how many of the eagle's nests failed to produce young? (L; 80 percent)
7. What is an "eaglet"? (I; a baby, or young eagle)
8. What was the worst of the problems threatening the eagles? (L-SD; DDT)
- \*9. Explain the process by which DDT affected the eagle population. (I-S, CD; DDT was "sprayed by the ton across mosquito-infested marshes and waterways." These waterways were where the bald eagles got their food-fish. The fish ingested the DDT, and the bald eagles did likewise by eating the fish. "DDT caused disruption of the reproductive systems, the thinning of egg shells . . . and eventually sterility.")
- \*10. What other factors led to the decline of the bald eagle? (I-CE; Eagles were hunted and killed; eagle eggs were taken by collectors; wildlands were lost to development.)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - 8<sup>1</sup>

"All You've Ever Wanted"  
by Joan Aiken  
pp. 185-186

Motivation: Have you ever received greeting cards on your birthday? Read the story to find out about one girl and her special birthday cards.

On her seventh birthday, and each one after it, Matilda received a poem from her Aunt Gertie, who had left for foreign parts many years before. The poems always wished her well and were written on pink paper, decorated with silver flowers, and signed, "Gertrude Isabel Jones, to her niece, with much affection." And the terrible disadvantage of the poems, pretty though they were, was that the wishes in them invariably came true. For instance the one on her eighth birthday read:

*Now you are eight Matilda dear  
May shining gifts your place adorn  
And each day through the coming year  
Awake you with a rosy morn.*

The shining gifts were all very well--they consisted of a flashlight, a luminous watch, pins, needles, a steel soapbox and a useful little brooch which said "Matilda" in case she ever forgot her name--but the rosy morns were a great mistake. As you know, a red sky in the morning is the shepherd's warning, and the fatal result of Aunt Gertie's well-meaning verse was that it rained every day for the entire year.

Another one read:

*Each morning make another friend  
Who'll be with you till light doth end,  
Cheery and frolicsome all day,  
To pass the sunny hours away.*

For the rest of her life Matilda was overwhelmed by the number of friends she made in the course of that year--three hundred and sixty-five of them. Every morning she found another of them, anxious to cheer her and frolic with her, and her lessons were being constantly interrupted.

Comprehension:

1. What was the name of the girl in the 'story? (L; Matilda)
2. How old was Matilda when she began to receive birthday cards from her Aunt Gertie? (L-SD; seven)
3. Where did Aunt Gertie live? (L-SD; in foreign parts; outside the country)
- \*4. What was good about the birthday cards Aunt Gertie sent Matilda? (I-DC; They were pretty; they celebrated Matilda's birthdays; they told her her Aunt was thinking of her) [accept any one]
- \*5. What was bad about the birthday cards Aunt Gertie sent Matilda? (I-DC; "the wishes in them invariably came true")
- \*6. What wish did Aunt Gertie send for Matilda's eighth birthday wish? (L-SD; She wished Matilda shining gifts to adorn her place and a rosy morn each day of the coming year.)
7. Name two of the "shining gifts" that were part of Matilda's eighth birthday wish. (L-SD; a luminous watch; pins; needles; a steel soapbox; a silver brooch)
- \*8. Why were the rosy morns a mistake? (L-CE; "A red sky in the morning is the shepherd's warning, and the fatal result of Aunt Gertie's well-meaning verse was that it rained every day for the entire year.")
- \*9. What was the wish in the second card mentioned? (I-CE; The second card wished for Matilda to make a new friend each morning: "Cherry and frolicsome all day./ To pass the sunny hours away.")
- \*10. What was the result of the wish in the second card? (I-CE; In the course of that year Matilda made 365 new friends, who made great demands on her time and whose cheerfulness was often annoying.)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

ORAL - 8<sup>2</sup>  
"The Light"

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

by Sylvia Louise Engdahl  
p. 388

Motivation: Have you ever been given a job to do that seems impossibly hard? Read to find out about Georyn and Terwyn and the impossible job they had to do.

Elana, her father, and Evrek, a friend, have come from another planet. They disguise themselves as "Enchantress," "Starwatcher," and "the Wizard." In this story, they are hoping that the brothers Georyn and Terwyn will prove to be good pupils. They will need to be, to help their world rid itself of invading forces from a hostile planet. The world of Georyn and Terwyn is at a stage of development similar to earth during the Middle Ages.

"You must perform a task for me," said the Starwatcher to the brothers.

"We are ready to try it," said Georyn, "and you do not need to warn us that it will be difficult!"

The Starwatcher smiled. "It may indeed prove so; but I have no doubt that you are equal to it."

"What must we do?" asked Terwyn, in haste to be off.

"Bring me a piece of the Sun, so that in my hut there shall be no darkness, though the fire be cold and night envelops the forest."

"But that is impossible," faltered Georyn. "No one can touch the Sun."

"Nevertheless, you must obtain a piece of it," returned the Starwatcher. "Go, and do not return until you have done so."

So Georyn and Terwyn went into the forest. They were joyful no longer, for they knew that any attempt to reach the Sun itself would be quite useless. And they could scarce believe that a piece of it had ever been imprisoned anywhere upon the earth. Georyn doubted that even the Enchantress could do such a thing.

Yet it was his belief that in her lay their only hope. So the brothers set out for her hut, although already the time drew on to nightfall.

Comprehension:

- \*1. Who were Enchantress, Starwatcher, and the Wizard? (I-CH; They were Elana, her father, and Evrek, a friend)
2. Where did Elana, her father, and Evrek come from? (L; another planet)
- \*3. Why did Elana, her father, and Evrek want Georyn and Terwyn to be good pupils? (I-R; The three were hoping that Georyn and Terwyn would learn enough to be able "to help their world rid itself of invading forces from a hostile planet.")
4. At what stage of development was their home planet? (L; a stage similar to Earth during the Middle Ages.)
- \*5. What did the Starwatcher tell Georyn and Terwyn to do? (L-SD; Starwatcher told the brothers to bring him "a piece of the Sun")
6. Why did the Starwatcher want a piece of the Sun? (I; So that it would never be dark in the hut, even at night when the fire was out)
- \*7. What was the reaction of the brothers when Starwatcher told them what he wanted? (L-SD; they thought it was an impossible request, because no one could touch the Sun.)
8. When could the brothers return home? (L; not until they had obtained a piece of the Sun)
9. Did the brothers try to reach the Sun to get a piece of it? (I; no, they knew it was useless to try and reach the Sun itself)
- \*10. Why did the brothers go to the Enchantress? (I-CE; they believed that she was their only hope of finding a way to accomplish the task set by the Starwatcher.)

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

SILENT - 8<sup>2</sup>

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

"Where the Aurochs Lingered"

by Jean McCord

pp. 428-429

Motivation: People have always had special problems with living, and different ways of doing things. Read this story about one boy and his life in prehistoric times.

Mogi sat at the mouth of his home cave watching the hunters leave without him. An arrow of sorrow wounded his breast, not because he couldn't go with the hunters, he had never been able to do that, but because the last hunting ritual performed for the departing men had been no good. The previous hunt had been totally unsuccessful. The men had drifted back to their cave empty-handed or nearly so; one of them had managed to kill a bear cub which had provided the tribal group with only one small meal. There had been little said about the failure, but everyone knew the blame lay on somebody's head, and Mogi was afraid that the blame was mostly his.

Perhaps he had forgotten some vitally necessary part of the hunt ritual. Perhaps he had neglected some strong spirit. Or maybe it was just his own personal deformity. He was a cripple and according to the taboo of the tribe, he should have been killed at birth.

His grandmother had attended his birth. Perhaps it had been her old eyes in the darkness of the cave or perhaps she was taking advantage of her position. In either case, he had been wrapped in a warm skin and given to his mother.

His grandmother, Ala, was the oldest person in the tribe. She didn't know, actually, how old she was. She knew that there was no one still alive who had been living when she was a child. She possessed great power over the people because she was the chief artist of the tribe; the one who carried the most knowledge of painting and carving on the cave walls within her head. It was she who was teaching Mogi the secrets of her craft.

Comprehension:

1. Where did Mogi live? (L; in a cave)

- \*2. From the first paragraph, what conclusion can you draw about the tribe's situation? (I-DC; there was not enough food)
3. Why had Mogi never been able to go with the hunters? (I; he was crippled)
4. What did one hunter kill to provide the tribe with one small meal? (L; a bear cub)
- \*5. What three reasons did Mogi consider to explain the tribe's plight? (I-SD; He thought he may have forgotten some part of the hunt ritual; he thought he may have neglected some spirit; he thought his deformity might be to blame.)
- \*6. What did these thoughts reveal about the character Mogi? (I-CH; Mogi's thoughts revealed that he was willing to accept blame when things he was supposed to have control over went wrong; that he believed in rituals and spirits; that he had a deformity.) [accept any one]
7. According to the taboo of the tribe, what should have happened to Mogi? (L; he should have been killed)
- \*8. What two reasons did Mogi consider to explain his being allowed to live? (I-SD; He thought either his grandmother's poor eyesight in the dark cave had kept her from seeing his deformity or she had taken advantage of her position in the tribe.)
- \*9. Describe the character Ala. (L-CH; Ala was Mogi's grandmother and the oldest person in the tribe. She had a position of power in the tribe because she was the chief artist, "the one who carried the most knowledge of painting and carving on the cave walls within her head.")
10. What was Mogi's grandmother teaching him? (L; "the secrets of her craft"--her art)

**APPENDIX B**

**PARENT PERMISSION FORM; MASTER**

**STUDENT RECORD SHEET**



September 1982

To Parents,

I am a clinician at the University of Tennessee Reading Center, currently working on a research project in Reading. An important part of a child's reading instruction is placement in the proper grade level material. If the material is too difficult, anxiety and frustration may result in reading problems. Material which is too easy will not challenge the child and promote further learning. Many tests are used which claim to place the child on the proper level for instruction. I would like to determine if two of the most widely used diagnostic tests do predict the level at which children should be placed in a basic reading series.

Thirty fourth-grade children will be chosen at random from the Knoxville City School System to participate in the project. Two reading tests will be administered to each child individually, as well as short reading passages from a basic reading series. The children will be asked to read letters, words, and paragraphs orally and silently and answer comprehension questions asked by the examiner. The children will be tested in one session lasting approximately two hours, with a ten minute break half way through the session.

Only the first names of the children will be placed on testing materials. The results will be grouped with the results of children throughout the Knoxville City Schools, and no comparison of individuals, classrooms, or schools will even be possible.

I hope this project will be of value to children in the elementary grades and I very much appreciate your cooperation and help. If you do grant permission for your child to participate in the project, please sign this form and return it to your child's homeroom teacher. I would be happy to answer any further questions you may have about the project. Feel free to contact me at the UT Reading Center (974-5448).

Thank you again for your help.

Sincerely,

Sandra Zecchini

---

IF my son/daughter \_\_\_\_\_ is selected at random from fourth-grade students in the Knoxville City Schools, I hereby grant permission for him/her to participate in the research project described above.

PARENT SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT RECORD SHEET

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

AGE \_\_\_\_\_ SEX \_\_\_\_\_

GRADE REPEATED? \_\_\_\_\_

ORDER OF ADMINISTRATION: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_SPACHE SCORES:

|                           | <u># correct</u> | <u>grade</u> |
|---------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Word Recognition - List 1 | _____            | _____        |
| Word Recognition - List 2 | _____            | _____        |
| Word Recognition - List 3 | _____            | _____        |

| PASSAGE READ | TIME | WORD RECOGNITION | COMPREHENSION |
|--------------|------|------------------|---------------|
|              |      |                  |               |
|              |      |                  |               |
|              |      |                  |               |
|              |      |                  |               |
|              |      |                  |               |
|              |      |                  |               |
|              |      |                  |               |
|              |      |                  |               |
|              |      |                  |               |

\*INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_

BASAL PLACEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

WOODCOCK SCORES:

| TEST                     | Raw<br>Score | Mastery<br>Score | Easy<br>Reading<br>Level | Reading<br>Grade<br>Score | Failure<br>Reading<br>Level |
|--------------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Letter<br>Identification |              |                  |                          |                           |                             |
| Word<br>Identification   |              |                  |                          |                           |                             |
| Word<br>Attack           |              |                  |                          |                           |                             |
| Word<br>Comprehension    |              |                  |                          |                           |                             |
| Passage<br>Comprehension |              |                  |                          |                           |                             |
| TOTAL<br>READING         |              |                  |                          |                           |                             |

\*INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_

BASAL PLACEMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

GENERAL NOTES:

BASAL READER SCORES--IN PERCENTAGES:

[illegible]

## APPENDIX C

### DATA FOR INDIVIDUAL CASES

Note: Cases in which the research design was deviated from are denoted by asterisks.

Table C-1  
Data for Individual Cases

| Student | Basal reading scores          |      |                  |                |                      |                |                      |
|---------|-------------------------------|------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|
|         | Diagnosed instructional level |      | Basal level read | Comprehension  |                      |                |                      |
|         |                               |      |                  | Oral reading   |                      | Silent reading |                      |
|         | DRS                           | WRMT |                  | Ginn questions | Supplement questions | Ginn questions | Supplement questions |
| 1       | 3.5                           | 4.2  | 3 <sup>1</sup>   | 40%            | 60%                  | 66.6%          | 75%                  |
|         |                               |      | 4 <sup>1</sup>   | 80%            | 40%                  | 66.6%          | 25%                  |
| 2       | 5.5                           | 5.2  | 5 <sup>1</sup>   | 60%            | 70%                  | 58.3%          | 50%                  |
| 3       | 3.5                           | 3.2  | 3 <sup>1</sup>   | 80%            | 100%                 | 83.3%          | 75%                  |
| 4       | 4.5                           | 4.3  | 4 <sup>1</sup>   | 100%           | 40%                  | 66.6%          | 50%                  |
| 5       | 3.5                           | 4.2  | 3 <sup>1</sup>   | 80%            | 80%                  | 33.3%          | 0%                   |
|         |                               |      | 4 <sup>1</sup>   | 80%            | 60%                  | 16.6%          | 12.5%                |
| 6       | 3.5                           | 4.0  | 3 <sup>1</sup>   | 80%            | 80%                  | 66.6%          | 50%                  |
|         |                               |      | 4 <sup>1</sup>   | 50%            | 80%                  | 0%             | 12.5%                |
| 7       | 5.5                           | 4.0  | 4 <sup>1</sup>   | 100%           | 80%                  | 50%            | 50%                  |
|         |                               |      | 5 <sup>1</sup>   | 50%            | 60%                  | 41.6%          | 37.5%                |

Table C-1 (continued)

| Student | Diagnosed instructional level |      | Basal reading scores |                |                      |                |                      |
|---------|-------------------------------|------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|
|         |                               |      | Basal level read     | Comprehension  |                      |                |                      |
|         |                               |      |                      | Oral reading   |                      | Silent reading |                      |
|         | DRS                           | WRMT |                      | Ginn questions | Supplement questions | Ginn questions | Supplement questions |
| 8       | 5.5                           | 4.9  | 4 <sup>2</sup>       | 60%            | 100%                 | 91.6%          | 75%                  |
|         |                               |      | 5 <sup>1</sup>       | 100%           | 80%                  | 83.3%          | 75%                  |
| 9       | 6.5                           | 6.8  | 6 <sup>1</sup>       | 41.6%          | 75%                  | 33.3%          | 25%                  |
|         |                               |      | 6 <sup>2</sup>       | 0%             | 80%                  | 40%            | 20%                  |
| 10      | 5.5                           | 4.1  | 4 <sup>1</sup>       | 100%           | 60%                  | 66.6%          | 75%                  |
|         |                               |      | 5 <sup>1</sup>       | 80%            | 40%                  | 50%            | 37.5%                |
| 11      | 3.5                           | 3.4  | 3 <sup>1</sup>       | 0%             | 60%                  | 33.3%          | 0%                   |
| *12     | 1.4                           | 1.8  | pp <sup>3</sup>      | 66.6%          | 50%                  | 50%            | 25%                  |
|         |                               |      | 1 <sup>1</sup>       | 35%            | *                    | 30%            | *                    |
| 13      | 2.2                           | 2.5  | 2 <sup>1</sup>       | 80%            | *                    | 40%            | *                    |
| 14      | 2.2                           | 2.3  | 2 <sup>1</sup>       | 0%             | *                    | 10%            | *                    |
| 15      | 6.5                           | 6.0  | 6 <sup>1</sup>       | 66.6%          | 100%                 | 16.6%          | 50%                  |

Table C-1 (continued)

| Student | Diagnosed instructional level |      | Basal reading scores |                |                      |                |                      |
|---------|-------------------------------|------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|
|         |                               |      | Basal level read     | Comprehension  |                      |                |                      |
|         |                               |      |                      | Oral reading   |                      | Silent reading |                      |
|         | DRS                           | WRMT |                      | Ginn questions | Supplement questions | Ginn questions | Supplement questions |
| 16      | 6.5                           | 6.6  | 6 <sup>1</sup>       | 58.3%          | 75%                  | 66.6%          | 50%                  |
|         |                               |      | 6 <sup>2</sup>       | 40%            | 100%                 | 60%            | 60%                  |
| 17      | 4.5                           | 5.6  | 4 <sup>1</sup>       | 70%            | 80%                  | 83.3%          | 50%                  |
|         |                               |      | 5 <sup>2</sup>       | 80%            | 100%                 | 100%           | 20%                  |
| 18      | 7.5                           | 7.5  | 7 <sup>1</sup>       | 80%            | 40%                  | 60%            | 40%                  |
| 19      | 5.5                           | 5.8  | 5 <sup>1</sup>       | 40%            | 100%                 | 66.6%          | 50%                  |
|         |                               |      | 5 <sup>2</sup>       | 80%            | 80%                  | 70%            | 20%                  |
| *20     | 3.5                           | 4.3  | 3 <sup>1</sup>       | 80%            | 60%                  | 66.6%          | 50%                  |
|         |                               |      | 3 <sup>2</sup>       | 42.8%          | 66.6%                | 37.5%          | 25%                  |
| 21      | 5.5                           | 6.6  | 5 <sup>1</sup>       | 100%           | 100%                 | 66.6%          | 50%                  |
|         |                               |      | 6 <sup>2</sup>       | 20%            | 60%                  | 40%            | 30%                  |
| 22      | 7.5                           | 5.1  | 5 <sup>1</sup>       | 80%            | 100%                 | 66.6%          | 50%                  |



Table C-1 (continued)

| Student | Diagnosed instructional level |      | Basal reading scores |                |                      |                |                      |
|---------|-------------------------------|------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|
|         |                               |      | Basal level read     | Comprehension  |                      |                |                      |
|         |                               |      |                      | Oral reading   |                      | Silent reading |                      |
|         | DRS                           | WRMT |                      | Ginn questions | Supplement questions | Ginn questions | Supplement questions |
|         |                               |      | 7 <sup>1</sup>       | 100%           | 100%                 | 0%             | 0%                   |
| 23      | 6.5                           | 5.4  | 5 <sup>1</sup>       | 100%           | 80%                  | 83.3%          | 50%                  |
|         |                               |      | 6 <sup>1</sup>       | 20%            | 40%                  | 40%            | 30%                  |
| 24      | 3.5                           | 4.7  | 3 <sup>1</sup>       | 60%            | 100%                 | 83.3%          | 75%                  |
|         |                               |      | 4 <sup>2</sup>       | 100%           | 100%                 | 50%            | 25%                  |
| 25      | 3.5                           | 3.4  | 3 <sup>1</sup>       | 20%            | 40%                  | 0%             | 0%                   |
| 26      | 4.5                           | 4.8  | 4 <sup>1</sup>       | 100%           | 60%                  | 83%            | 50%                  |
|         |                               |      | 4 <sup>2</sup>       | 40%            | 60%                  | 100%           | 75%                  |
| 27      | 5.5                           | 5.8  | 5 <sup>1</sup>       | 20%            | 100%                 | 83.3%          | 30%                  |
|         |                               |      | 5 <sup>2</sup>       | 100%           | 100%                 | 60%            | 60%                  |
| 28      | 3.5                           | 4.6  | 3 <sup>1</sup>       | 100%           | 100%                 | 83.3%          | 50%                  |
|         |                               |      | 4 <sup>2</sup>       | 30%            | 40%                  | 16.6%          | 0%                   |

Table C-1 (continued)

| Student | Diagnosed instructional level |      | Basal reading scores |                |                      |                |                      |
|---------|-------------------------------|------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|
|         |                               |      | Basal level read     | Comprehension  |                      |                |                      |
|         |                               |      |                      | Oral reading   |                      | Silent reading |                      |
|         | DRS                           | WRMT |                      | Ginn questions | Supplement questions | Ginn questions | Supplement questions |
| 29      | 5.5                           | 4.7  | 4 <sup>2</sup>       | 70%            | 40%                  | 58%            | 25%                  |
|         |                               |      | 5 <sup>1</sup>       | 60%            | 80%                  | 8%             | 37.5%                |
| 30      | 6.5                           | 5.4  | 5 <sup>1</sup>       | 100%           | 100%                 | 83.3%          | 75%                  |
|         |                               |      | 6 <sup>1</sup>       | 66.6%          | 100%                 | 66.6%          | 75%                  |

## VITA

Sandra Zecchini, a native of Whistlecreek, Tennessee, has taught remedial reading in East Tennessee and worked throughout her doctoral program as a reading clinician at The University of Tennessee Reading Center. She completed her undergraduate work in Theatre Arts at Saint Louis University in 1975 and received a Masters degree in Elementary Education from Union College in 1978. Ms. Zecchini entered The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, in the summer of 1980 and completed the Doctorate in Philosophy in August of 1983. Her major field was reading, and her collateral areas included anthropology and curriculum and instruction.

Since 1983, she has been employed as an assistant professor at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, in the Cross Cultural Education Development program. She teaches reading methods courses, and implements other university courses as a regional field coordinator.