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The construction, utilization, and evaluation of a series of exercises designed to improve the oral language of second grade children

Frumkin, Elinor

Boston University

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Thesis

THE CONSTRUCTION, UTILIZATION, AND EVALUATION
OF A SERIES OF EXERCISES DESIGNED TO IMPROVE
THE ORAL LANGUAGE OF SECOND GRADE CHILDREN

Submitted by

Elinor Frumkin
(B. S. in Ed., Wheelock College, 1952)

Katharine G. Manos
(A. B., Radcliffe College, 1953)

Marie P. Willett
(B. S., Boston College, 1952)

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First Reader: B. Alice Crossley, Associate Professor of Education, Boston University School of Education
Second Reader: Alice K. Nicholson, Assistant Professor of Education, Boston University School of Education
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION
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Research in oral language offers a real challenge to those who are interested in this area because of the wide scope of the field and the scarcity of information available.

Before reading, writing and arithmetic are needed, speech has to be used, and since speaking occurs approximately one hundred times as often as writing, it is important that training in speech be provided.

Oral language is one of our priceless possessions. Through its use individuals can communicate their thoughts and feelings. They can apprehend, and comprehend what other people have said and done. Training in the effective use of oral language, therefore, broadens an individual's point of view and develops his perspective.

Educators, recognizing the importance of oral language instruction, suggest many methods for presenting the varied facets of oral language, but rarely include data to show the efficacy of their methods. The lag of research behind methods in this field has been attributed to the inability of researchers to obtain an accurate record of oral activities. Unlike written language there is no material to be analyzed. With the advent of the electric recording machine as early
as 1931, and progressive perfections of this device, researchers and classroom teachers have been able to preserve specimens of children's oral expression. The future will undoubtedly see an increased use of the tape recorder in the language arts field, and an upward surge of research in oral language.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is an attempt to stimulate and encourage the proper use of oral language in Grade II. A series of exercises were built with this goal in mind.

Justification of the Problem

The absence of originality, color and interest in the oral language of primary grade children provides a challenge to the teachers of these children. Today, the need for effective communication is essential for personal development and fulfillment in a rapidly changing world. The teacher can help prepare the child to meet this challenge.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Content

Research on Value to the Child

"Communication involves the meeting of minds, and man alone can do it through language," states Strickland.¹

The importance of effective communication in today's world cannot be overemphasized. Parke² states the case clearly when she writes:

"Today's children must learn to listen attentively, to analyze the spoken word critically, to question and to accept ideas cautiously. They must learn to think in terms of the good of all and then to plan, to explain, and to convince others to act with them. This means using language to express and clarify what they mean and how they feel. Today's children must develop the habit of meeting controversial issues in family, civic and school circles openmindedly, wisely and with poise. They need to understand and appreciate how the other person thinks and feels and what the words he uses really mean to him."

Language will always be recognized as the basic tool in learning and living. According to McClenaghan:³

"Ideas are gained through intelligent and critical listening and observing. They are shared with others through precise, exact and persuasive speaking. Only through this interactive process of gaining, pooling, and sharing of ideas can democracy function."

Language expresses much of the child's personality and background. Mabie's statement expresses the thought that:

"Language is the communication of ideas but communication is not alone a matter of words. Manner, facial expression, and attitude also convey thoughts. To make someone understand exactly what we mean is a far more subtle process than merely choosing words and arranging sentences logically. The whole person expresses thought."

Language and personality development are closely allied. Baker cites that: "Children reveal themselves through general discussion, thus permitting the teacher to know them, their needs, and their problems far better than they would without such indirect means." Experiences, cultural background, and needs all enter into language development. Strickland writes: "The kind of communicating a child does depends in a number of ways on his experience. If the child's experience has given him meaning for the words he hears, he can react to them with his mind."

Strickland also states that: "The child who has had favorable opportunities and experiences and has developed these elements of personality is ready and eager to express himself and to utilize language as a means to many important ends."


Johnson, too, concurs in this approach to oral language.

"There is no doubt that children possess considerable background and attainments in oral language, varying, of course, for each child. The children have done much talking of a conversational type in their play and in all activities of their daily lives. They have learned something of what kind of people they are and what others conceive them to be and do through responses to their language. They have learned what to say to evoke certain responses."

The seven year old is just learning to express himself verbally. Piaget

2/
says: "The effort to understand other people and to communicate one's thoughts objectively does not appear before the age of seven or seven and one half."

Growth in language is growth as an individual.

3/
Strickland feels that: "A child learns his culture as he learns his language. He builds himself as he builds his communication skills. Just as understanding should precede practice, so should wholesome and clear thinking underlie communication." This growth will aid the child in later life.

4/
McKee states:

"The thinking he does in order to compose his ideas for speech is largely the same as that which he must do later when he composes in writing. If he learns to do this thinking and composing well during early years his later progress in learning to express his ideas well in writing is greatly enhanced."


The school provides many opportunities for creative language growth. From the observations made by Parke, it is concluded that:

"To the extent that the school situation is life-like, opportunities for reciprocal communication through conversation are provided, and the needs of children are detected. Background for good reporting is developed in other language activities. In formal discussion periods they are taught to draw facts from firsthand experiences. They learn to express their own ideas, feelings and values and to differentiate between what they know to be facts and what they think or feel. They grow steadily in ability to differentiate between fact and fancy, fact and opinion."

Conversation has been a more frequent experience than discussion. Johnson has summarized the following:

"Discussion deals with a central topic, discourages digressions, and tends toward a conclusion or solution. The latter will now become a more important part of the language experience of the child in his school life."

The need to communicate in the seven year old is evident. Piaget finds that:

"Finally, between 7 and 8 the desire manifests itself to work with others. Now it is our opinion just at this age the ego-centric talk loses some of its importance, and it is at this age....that we shall place the higher stages of conversation properly so-called as it takes place between children. It is also at this age, that children begin to understand each other in spoken explanations as opposed to explanations in which gestures play as important a part as words."

1/Parke, op. cit., p. 225.
2/Johnson, op. cit., p. 497.
3/Piaget, op. cit., pp. 41-42.
Getting second grade children to talk about interesting topics in an organized manner in front of other people is far different than their usual conversation. Piaget explains that: "The conversation of children may be divided into two large groups - the ego-centric and the socialized. When a child utters phrases belonging to the first group he does not bother to know to whom he is speaking nor whether he is being listened to." The value of skills in oral expression can only be seen in the results, as each child grows within himself and as each child finds his better self.

The importance and need for effective communication skills is evidenced by the mobility of our population, by television, radio and movies, which bring new and stimulating ideas about all of the countries of the world. Mackintosh points out that:

"We no longer depend upon the printed word.... as the chief source of experiences for educating children. Nearly every subject for discussion in classrooms today is supplemented by children themselves with information which comes to them from many other sources."

The school constantly strives to give the child his own heritage, by guiding him to express his thoughts to others.

Research on the Role of the Teacher

The role of the teacher is a very important one. Through language, the teacher can tell much about her students.

1/ Ibid., p. 9.

Strickland tells us that:

"The way an elementary school child uses language tells the teacher a great deal about him - his cultural background, his fund of experiences, and his personal needs. Teachers observe children and listen to them in order to know how to teach them and what they need to learn."

The teacher has a great responsibility. Parke believes that: "Fully aware of pupil abilities, the teacher guides the process so that each child has a chance to contribute in terms of his abilities and needs." Gabel also says that: "It is the job of the teacher to diagnose, observe and use her best judgment in planning...logical and needed steps in the sequence of learning. She plans immediate learning experiences with the children as they are needed." In this way, true learning takes place.

Creativeness in children is one of the responsibilities of the teacher. Strickland explains that: "Creative activities begin with a creative teacher, one who is forever reaching out for personal enrichment. She is interested in trying new things, in knowing and dealing with interesting people." Creativity comes from within and from a way of life.

2/Parke, op. cit., p. 228.
Strickland points out that:

"A child who is developing wholesomely and who lives with creative adults in an environment conducive to creativeness will manifest a very natural desire to explore, to expand, and to create. We stimulate creative activities in the elementary school not for the sake of the activity but for the purpose of developing creative individuals or, more exactly, for helping each individual build a self that is creative."

Skillful teaching is necessary to accomplish effective language development. Mabie says that: "Spontaneous and copious expression will not automatically develop effective and interesting language.... There is no justification for leaving the pupils' language development to chance or to the incompetent judgment of immature minds." Many children do not know their interests, capabilities and aptitudes. It is the responsibility of the primary teacher to understand and encourage the child, as well as guide him. With skillful teaching in the early grades, later errors can be avoided. McKee tells us that:

"This early beginning of definite and skillful teaching of oral expression may help to prevent the birth of many errors, to remove others before they have the opportunity to become fixed, through practice, and to promote desirable growth in oral expression that will serve as a sound foundation for later instruction in written expression."

1/Strickland, loc. cit., p. 147.
2/Mabie, op. cit., p. 11.
Skillful teaching means giving the best of what you have. It means, as Gabel points out, that:

"Constant correction, meaningless drill and a teacher dominated type of classroom climate serve no background for the provision of oral language situations. Research, observation and experiences show that the real teaching of oral expression is stopped when these methods are used."

Strickland summarizes the part that the teacher plays in shaping the development of the child.

"All communication through language is communication of meaning. Teachers are concerned with developing each child’s communication skills to the highest and most effective level he is capable of attaining. But they are deeply concerned with what the child communicates—the content of his mind. Teachers are concerned with the kind and quality of mental pictures a child has stored away and accuracy and wholesomeness of the knowledge he has amassed."

Teaching and learning language skills is like any other academic area. Hildreth points out that: "Individual differences in language skills and the ability to profit from instruction...are as pronounced in this area as in any other."

Age level is one of the differences that the teacher must take into account. Baker says: "Whatever the reason, children in the second grade as far as a general discussion is concerned are still almost entirely individualists."

1/Gabel, op. cit., p. 459.
Effective teaching is rewarding. Effective teaching is needed in this area. Gabel sums it up as follows:

"I have observed teachers who are endowed with both zest for teaching and good technique. With the guidance of such people, children are learning their language by using it - not in chaotic fashion but through a well-disciplined, interesting and challenging classroom which utilizes its learnable experiences."

Teachers cannot let children express their language alone.

Research on Motivation

Strickland stresses the need for good motivation in the development of language skills. She says that:

"Oral language develops rapidly when children have people to talk to whom they care about and with whom they are comfortable and when they have real interests to talk about. Encouragement, guidance and opportunities for enriching experience help to build vocabulary and develop greater maturity of expression."

Hildreth, too, finds that: "Children show in their language usage a tendency to deal with things near at hand, the things they perceive and can experience for themselves rather than abstract concepts or matters remote from their experience."

1/Gabel, pp. 461.
3/Hildreth, pp. 31.
Strickland also states: "Interest in people and their actions provides the basic motivation for developing language skills. Interest and personal need form the starting point for growth and learning."

The children themselves want to contribute orally, as shown by Dawson, who says: "Just as measles is catching, so is the inclination to give best to ideas and feelings through original stories, plays, verse, pictures and melodies." As long as it is within their ability they are naturally interested. This point is cited by Lee, who says: "A child can become interested in an almost unlimited range of subject matter as long as it is within his experience, power, and needs." Dawson describes the language skill program as: "The children's informal, spontaneous, purposeful expression of ideas in connection with all the learning activities of the day." The interest is there and it is now up to the teacher to develop the experience and thoughts of the children into language activities.

1/Strickland, op. cit., p. 6.
The teacher can do this in a variety of ways. According to Strickland:

"Almost every day in a modern classroom involves some planning which calls upon children to put into words their thoughts and potential action. Sharing is recreating one's own experience for others so that they can enter into it. Evaluating with children helps them to gain insight into values that are often abstract and intangible and to express those values in words....

Children need the aid of mature thinking and mature experience to make dreams come clear so that they are gradually made into real experience. There are many opportunities for creative thinking in the field of science....

Social Studies abounds in opportunities to solve problems and find answers through experiences that are creative. Even arithmetic holds many opportunities. As children manipulate semi-concrete materials to work out combinations and processes they are doing what is for them a type of creative thinking.

Applegate goes on to say that: "Mechanics to serve children best, must be taught when they are needed. Children are not interested in isolated skills." Strickland agrees wholeheartedly when she says: "A child does not think of his experiences in terms of adult categories of subject matter nor adult classification of experiences. Life is all of one piece for him until we insist upon its being divided into segments."


2/Mauree Applegate, "To Make Mechanics Serve Ideas," Grade Teacher (June, 1957), 74:38.

3/Strickland, loc. cit., p. 149.
The process of motivating toward better language skills is varied. McKee points out that: "There is a great lack of objective data relative to the grade-placement and specific methods of teaching conversation." Nelson gives us some information.

"Although self-dictated stories (meet) a child's individual need to verbalize home and school experiences, group discussion and collective recording of ideas (meet) another need in human development.

The teacher's job is threefold: (1) to arrange rich experiences in the classroom that would stimulate linguistic expression; (2) to help the children understand the function of a discussion; (3) to develop skill in communicating facts objectively through records, reports, plans, directions and lists."

There are many ways of accomplishing goals. Let the children share in the planning of their curriculum. When ideas and interests originate with them, the teacher can be sure of their outcomes. Discovering what fundamental interests are is the first step. Strickland further suggests that:

"Creativeness flourishes in a creative environment where books, raw materials, and interest centers suggest opportunity for talking, listening and working alone and in a group. Alert, active and interested children are creative children."

1/McKee, op. cit., p. 98.
Children give the clues. Parke summarizes this by saying:

"Children participate in planning what facts they will need and how to get them. As they engage in a variety of experiences such as taking neighborhood trips, giving parties and making gifts, the need for information arises. They decide what they want to know, how to find out, who will do the searching, who will report facts, how they will be reported."

To motivate the child in content is to motivate the child to have something to say. This is brought out by McKee, who says that: "The fundamental purpose is to acquaint the child with the importance of having something to talk about, and the value of various sources of ideas. Emphasis must be placed upon encouraging the child to tell what he knows..." Tidyman and Butterfield also say that:

"Perhaps much of the unresponsiveness of children in language situations is due to a feeling of not having anything to say. This helplessness is commonly caused not by lack of worthy experiences but by failure to identify and recall phases of experience suitable for expression. Suitable material for language activities is found in children's personal experiences in the home and community, as in play and games, trips, pets and hobbies; and in the school, in both curricular and extra-curricular endeavors."

1/Parke, op. cit., p. 228.
Content is an important quality of language and can be found in many places. Tidyman and Butterfield state:

"Content is fundamentally important in all language activities, but the nature of the content naturally varies with the activity. Thus, the content of an announcement, advertisement, or a report is primarily factual; of a story or a poem, imaginative; of a letter, 'newsy'. The teacher should help his pupils to distinguish the nature of the content peculiar to a particular activity or situation."

McKee summarizes general principles that can be applied to motivating children for good content material in the classroom. He states the principles as follows:

"... (1) utilizing only topics that have been experienced by the child; (2) placing emphasis in teaching upon the task of arousing children to tell what they know; (3) consideration by the pupils of the effectiveness of conversation lessons including the establishing and utilization of suitable standards of performance; (4) concentration of emphasis upon one difficulty at a time; (5) the maintenance of complete informality during conversation lessons; and (6) provision for wide and real experiences in connection with all school activities."

Vocabulary

The Importance of Vocabulary

The possession of a wide vocabulary has its advantages in oral expression. It is necessary in the use of language for the communication of meaning. It is helpful also in making a talk more interesting.

1/Ibid., p. 263.
2/McKee, op. cit., p. 105.
By vocabulary some researchers mean all the different words that a child actually uses in speaking.

1/ Makey defines the term "vocabulary" as follows:

"A number of words which are so associated with ideas that the words tend to evoke the ideas and the ideas tend to evoke the words from the depths of the subconscious. A vocabulary is the tool which the mind uses in propounding problems, in making decisions, and in passing judgments. It is a mental counterpart whose units can be combined and recombined at will, subject only to the laws of mental activity."

2/ Traxler states that: "The existence of a relationship between vocabulary and general achievement in school has long been recognized. Every teacher is probably aware that, on the whole, the pupils with the greater knowledge of word meaning do the better school work."

Many teachers of primary school children are aware of the fact that children do not realize the importance of the function of a good vocabulary in oral language.

It is the belief of Salt that:

"Most young children do not care whether they speak correctly until the social pressure of their peer group impels them to correct, modify, or increase their language skills. The child may improve because he sees that he can more effectively communicate with others."


Children do not always have the vocabulary to express the many ideas they have. Herrick and Jacobs\(^1\) state that: "A person who relies upon a few words or phrases, forever repeated, is handicapped in several ways. In speaking, this kind of equipment does not lend itself to convincing speech, to persuasive speech, or to interesting speech."

Without a reasonably adequate vocabulary one cannot speak or converse effectively. A wide speaking vocabulary, which enables a child to recognize quickly the meanings of words and groups of words, is an asset in oral expression. McKee\(^2\) very adequately treats the subject by stating that:

"Persons who possess a meager vocabulary are at times unable to make interesting any topic which they may attempt to discuss. When one's vocabulary is broad and appropriate his conversation usually takes on added interest and appeal. It seems important therefore to develop the speaking vocabulary of children, and to consider this job as part of the program in conversation."

To point out further the importance of this vocabulary development, Tidyman and Butterfield\(^3\) put forth the opinion that: "Because all language is expressive in purpose and because appropriate words and phrases are the medium of expression, all work in language activities is necessarily training in vocabulary."


\(^2\)McKee, op. cit., pp. 302-303.

\(^3\)Tidyman and Butterfield, op. cit., p. 276.
According to Strickland:

"The child's oral vocabulary is of first importance in the elementary school because it forms the basis for the development of the reading and writing vocabularies. Children need guidance to add new words to their vocabularies but also need experience, in quantity, to deepen and enrich the meaning values of the words they have partially learned. The more numerous the experiences the richer will be the meaning values of these words."

Russell recognizes the importance of a rich and meaningful vocabulary when he says in part:

"Teachers have always recognized that knowing words is a great asset in their school work. In ordinary conversation or writing, the ability to use not only the correct word, but occasionally, a vivid and meaningful word adds greatly to the charm and effectiveness of the idea presented. The child's ability to read, to write, to speak and to think, are conditioned by his vocabulary.

Vocabulary development is closely related to general maturation and a stimulating environment. Teachers cannot expect adequate vocabularies in immature or underprivileged children."

A child who has something to say and who expresses himself freely is ready to give some attention to the means of expressing his ideas clearly and vividly. "...vocabulary and sentences are part of the process of getting ideas as well as of expressing them," say Tidyman and Butterfield.


3/Tidyman and Butterfield, op. cit., p. 272.
Kinds of Vocabulary

Estimates concerning the total size of a child's vocabulary at any given age have varied from a few thousand words to figures that are twenty times as large.

Some children may acquire a large meaningful vocabulary by hearing, speaking and reading in and out of school. However, these children are few in number. It is the opinion of Hatchett and Hughes\(^1\) that:

"Children in the elementary school, like all people, have four vocabularies: a listening or auditory vocabulary, a speaking vocabulary, a reading vocabulary, and a writing vocabulary. These differ in size and overlap each other to a great degree. First a child develops a listening vocabulary, next he learns to speak words, then when he goes to school he develops a reading vocabulary and soon after a writing vocabulary."

Herrick and Jacobs\(^2\) list the types of vocabulary in the order in which they develop:

"Hearing vocabulary in which a child learns to understand the meaning of certain words and phrases before he can speak in words.

Speaking vocabulary which includes those words which a child uses or has used in speaking.

Reading vocabulary which has always been considered basic, and it has popularly been assumed that development of it would insure development of all types of vocabulary.

Writing vocabulary, which includes the words we write or could write if the occasion arose.

\(^1\)Ethel L. Hatchett and Donald H. Hughes, Teaching Language Arts in Elementary Schools, The Ronald Press Company, New York, 1956, p. 129.

\(^2\)Herrick and Jacobs, op. cit., pp. 311-312.
Potential vocabulary or marginal vocabulary which is an indeterminate body of words which cannot be listed. It comprises words that we have never seen or heard, but which we would understand simply because of general knowledge or experience with language and the settings in which language is used."

Strickland classifies vocabulary in the following ways:

1. Understanding vocabulary which includes words which are recognized and understood through listening and reading.

2. Speaking vocabulary which includes words used in everyday living and words which can be used when the occasion calls for them.

3. Writing vocabulary which includes words used in personal situations and those used under more formal circumstances.

4. Potential, or marginal vocabulary which includes words which could be interpreted from context or from knowledge of word form or from knowledge of other languages."

Dawson states that: "Before the child enters school, he has already acquired a considerable vocabulary along two lines; his listening vocabulary—words he can understand when he hears them used, and his speaking vocabulary—words he uses in his own speech."

1/ Strickland, loc. cit., p. 185.

Ways in Which Vocabulary May Be Developed

The primary source of vocabulary development is first-hand experience. Children learn new words with amazing rapidity when those words are learned in association with interesting objects or experiences. They should be encouraged to express their feelings in words that are descriptive. According to Hopkins: "In grade two the group experience stories met within grade one are continued throughout the year; for it is during group work that interesting and varied ways of expression are developed."

The experiences of children are so varied that no two children will come to school with the same background. It is the opinion of Dolch that:

"The student brings to school meanings which correspond with his experiences at home, in the community, and in previous years of school. With those meanings he listens to what we say or he reads the books assigned. The symbols he hears or sees arouse his old meanings, but are planned to do something more. In every statement we make, or in every sentence of the book there is supposed to be some 'newness'. This newness is a new 'putting together' of his past experiences. The result, in addition to new ideas and thoughts, is meanings for new words or new meanings for old words. If that is the result, there has been new experience and hence true vocabulary development."


In answer to the question, can a child acquire the vocabulary which he needs, Tyndall writes:

"The development of an adequate speaking and hearing vocabulary can be over-emphasized. Children who speak in monosyllables, or who resort to gesture to express their meaning, need specific training in the use of oral language. Since the meaning of words can probably be learned best by using the word, the teacher should plan many opportunities for discussions, telling, reporting, explaining, listening to stories, and other language arts activities."

Hammerman has many ideas for the development of vocabulary.

"Another technique that is very satisfactory for introducing new words is through informal, or incidental teaching. Such instances crop up innumerable times each day. It might occur during a sharing period first thing in the morning, that a child will use a 'choice word' in the sharing of some information with the rest of his classmates. The teacher may take time immediately to point out the particular word, and explore its various meanings and uses with the class, or better yet, other members of the class may take note of new words as they are spoken.

The development of vocabulary is naturally a continuous project, not just a subject to be dealt with one hour a day, but an ever-expanding search for new words which can vitalize every subject or topic of discussion."

It is the opinion of Schottman that:

"Until one knows all the words a person is using, one can't fully understand what he is saying.

1/Ruth B. Tyndall, "Vocabulary Building in the Primary Grades," The Grade Teacher (February, 1951), 68:102.


The training in skills must be accompanied by an atmosphere which actively encourages the children to appreciate the importance and satisfaction of a large and meaningful vocabulary.

Instruction in word recognition skills must be direct, not indirect. There must be a plan which covers the various aspects of a program in developing independence in word recognition, and which allows for the development of a meaningful vocabulary by providing as many meaningful experiences as possible.

With regard to the development of a rich vocabulary, Dawson states that: "...children must receive encouragement and stimulation in the way of enriching, vivid experiences and frequent opportunities to take the lid off, to let themselves go, in creative expression."

It is the opinion of McKee that: "Vocabulary growth takes place best under conditions in which there is a thought or feeling requiring definition and expression, that is, in connection with natural situations in which there is an immediate need for expression."

The importance of the meanings of words is stressed by Leary. She says: "As a corrective issue we must deliberately develop meanings for words so as to prevent confusion and bewilderment which children experience when they see familiar words in strange settings."

2/McKee, op. cit., p. 304.
First and second-hand experiences provide the necessary backgrounds from whence meanings are derived. Tidyman and Butterfield\(^1\) reiterate this idea with the statement: "Experience continues to be the chief source and means of vocabulary development."

There are many aids which can be utilized in the development of vocabulary. One of these is pictures. According to Weart\(^2\):

"Words become more meaningful and vocabulary mastery mounts many degrees when children associate words with pictures.

In themselves words are intrinsically meaningless. It is only as children associate actions, thoughts, and concepts with recognized groupings of letters that words begin to acquire meaning."

The teacher should use classroom experiences to stimulate vocabulary development, and when possible introduce a vicarious experience to create interest. Meighen\(^3\) lists a variety of activities which will build up the child's vocabulary: "The teacher who gives attention to the following points will build up the vocabulary of the children in her group.

1. Build up a stimulating atmosphere which coincides with the child's interests and challenges his thinking.

\(^1\)Tidyman and Butterfield, op. cit., p. 273.


\(^3\)Mary Meighen, "Vocabulary Building," The Grade Teacher (February, 1954), 71:59.
2. Provide flexible instruction for differentiated groups.
3. Emphasize the meaning of vocabulary through wide reading.
4. Give attention to the following steps in the development of a new word—hearing, seeing, saying, using.
5. Keep reading materials fitted to the child's interests and ability.
6. Call attention to unusual words in poems and stories.
7. Keep lists of new words from nature study and other interests.
8. Dramatization—Encourage the child to use original conversation freely.
9. Make children aware of words which apply to local and world news....
10. Have children report on interesting trips or experiences.
11. Compliment children on the use of interesting new words.
12. Introduce vocabulary games that will challenge children to acquire new words."

Of major importance in the development of a child's vocabulary is that of motivation. Seashore and Morin explain that:

"More neglected than the area of tool skills has been the area of motivation. It is only when a child has attained a keen interest in new words that his vocabulary will begin to increase at any appreciable fraction of capacity rate. There are countless resources that can be used toward this end. Every interest of every child holds possibilities. The teacher should encourage the children to suggest new words to be studied....

The ingenious teacher can ferret out a thousand methods of motivating the child to learn new words. Directed real experience is one of the most perfect procedures of developing vocabulary....

Vicarious experience through reading can open the door to enriched vocabularies, but far too often teachers don't take the time to help their students find books they really want to read."

Pupils can master a vocabulary which is thoroughly taught and put into meaningful context. There are many ways and means of vocabulary development, and Thorpe sums it up in his statement that: "It is through frequent conversations, repetitions of stories, educational games, listening to other children's experiences, and socialized activities that children make constructive contacts with language."

Factors That Influence Growth in Vocabulary

According to Gray and Holmes: "There are four factors which determine to a large extent the growth of a child's vocabulary. These are: (a) his capacity to learn; (b) the


character of his environment; (c) the nature and development of his interests; and (d) the kind of instruction received."

Dawson believes that:

"... one of the factors in determining the character and amount of a child's vocabulary is the type of environment in which he lives. If poverty and ignorance prevail and his experiences are limited, his fund of words will be relatively scanty. On the other hand, the child whose parents provide a wealth of experiences with toys, books, pictures, playmates, trips, and the like will probably acquire a rich vocabulary."

According to Strickland: "The school does not serve as the child's only teacher though it is responsible for both motivation and a good foundation."

As Tidyman and Butterfield depict it:

"Vocabulary growth takes place best under conditions in which there is a thought or feeling requiring definition and expression, that is, in connection with natural situations in which there is an immediate need for expression. It is the task of the teacher to take advantage of the situation for definite guidance.... The danger is that training lessons will be so artificial and so far removed from actual situations that they will make little permanent contributions to the children's thinking and expression.... The value of the training lesson or exercise in vocabulary varies with the degree to which it approximates purposeful expression and stimulates children to think. The training lesson is one in which the immediate purpose is to clarify and enlarge children's ideas and use of words."

2/Strickland, op. cit., p. 186.
Can one point to one factor and state that it is the most important one in vocabulary development? The opinion stated by Falk is that:

"The most significant factor in the increase of vocabulary is intelligence. There seems to be some indication that girls' vocabularies develop more rapidly than boys. Richer home environment also seems to mean better vocabularies especially where adults in the family spend time with their children answering questions, discussing things seen, and conversing about many things. Whatever the specific factors in vocabulary development are, it is evident that children's knowledge and vocabularies grow at approximately the same rate revealing the function of language in acquiring knowledge and the challenge to the school to increase vocabulary by enriching experience."

The building of a vocabulary must be an enjoyable experience in which the teacher must strive to instill within the children an enthusiasm for words. A child may use a word correctly many times but on some occasion reveal his meaning for it was not accurate. Therefore, teachers must constantly challenge the meanings that children are gaining and ask them to question what they do not understand.

Organization

Importance of Instruction in Organization

Language is the instrument which enables man to express his thoughts. A good oral and written language arts program aims at developing the thinking processes by stressing two

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main areas of instruction, content and organization. Tidyman and Butterfield point out that organization and content are closely allied. They go on to say that the primary concern of content instruction is in choosing a topic and material which is of interest to the audience, while the primary concern in organization is the "presentation of the material in such a way as to make it clear and forceful".

Training in organization may be equated with training in clear thinking. McKee in discussing the necessity for developing a child's sentence sense states that failure to hear sentences may result in inability to express ideas well and to understand language, heard or read.

Support of the contention that training in organization is training in the power to think is found in an article by Smith. She states that children show "power to think as they become increasingly able to (1) stick to the subject..., (2) to relate events in simple sequence of time, (3) to order ideas in relationship to a problem or purpose, and (4) to interpret experience, generalize concerning it, or draw inferences from it."

1/Tidyman and Butterfield, op. cit., p. 267.
2/McKee, op. cit., p. 306.
Place of Organizational Skills in Teaching Oral Composition

In speaking of the development of methods for teaching oral composition, Dawson points out that the term "oral composition" has almost been abandoned. In the past, she explains, it referred to stilted talks which were assigned beforehand and planned "in conformity with specified standards of vocabulary choice, sentence construction, and organization". The philosophy at that time, she maintains, was to give the child the "framework of the talk" first; the ideas and communication were secondary. The speaker was told to concentrate on a good beginning sentence and introduction and be less concerned with entertaining or informing. "Such formal compositional lessons," she feels, "are definitely outmoded".

In proposing objectives for the teaching of oral language today, Dawson distinguishes between major and minor objectives. Among the major objectives she places:

1. A spontaneity and a desire to talk
2. A great many socializing experiences where there is give and take of ideas.

Among the minor objectives she places "initial instruction in the organization of thought".

Other authorities in the language arts field echo Dawson's sentiments. Strickland writes that: "The first

1/Dawson, op. cit., p. 152.
2/Ibid., p. 159-159.
3/Strickland, op. cit., p. 93.
goal in language development is to free the child to talk and
express his ideas naturally. It is impossible to improve the
language of a child until there is some language to improve."

Tidyman and Butterfield state that the most important
objective is to inculcate "the desire, the willingness to
express one's self orally in front of a group". Somewhat
later comes "the desire to improve in quality of expression
and the willingness to admit need and seek help in correcting
mistakes".

In referring to oral language, Herrick and Jacobs emphasize that the words of the speaker must match his purpose
of speaking. These words "must be so well organized and
grouped that they tell intent as well as content". But, they
continue, such a great emphasis should not be put on correctness that the child withdraws from speaking.

The place organization should have in the teaching of
oral composition is aptly summarized by McKee. First in
importance, he feels, is meaning, ideas. The mechanics of
expression are secondary.

Organizational Skills in Oral Composition

As the preceding discussion indicates, authorities in the
area of language arts agree that the mechanics, or language

1/Tidyman and Butterfield, op. cit., p. 127.
2/Herrick and Jacobs, "Children's Experiences in Speaking,"
op. cit., p. 125.
3/McKee, op. cit., p. 87.
skills must be made to serve ideas and not become an end in themselves. When it comes to enumerating the organizational and mechanical skills and the grade level at which they should be taught, there is more disagreement.

In her analysis of courses of study in composition in New York State, Smith finds that no two of the forty-six courses of study are alike. There are, however, under the category of Organization of Thought for the elementary grades several areas that are stressed more than others. She finds that "sticking to the point in talking and writing" is emphasized in all grades to some extent. "Learning the habit of outlining of topics and expanding outlines into paragraphs" is stressed in a few of the intermediate grade curriculums. In second and third grade courses of study there are several mentionings of training in organizing thoughts in advance. She finds "little attention to speech and oral language" in most of the courses of study.

In the area of skills or mechanics of composition, she finds more uniformity. Developing sentence sense is cited with high incidence in almost every grade. Elimination of "and-a" and a recognition of sentence unity are emphasized in all grades.

In outlining her own course of study, Dawson\textsuperscript{1} speaks about organization in very general terms. She includes the following skills in her enumeration of "Objectives for Lower Primary Grades:

1. Think straight in the process of assimilating and reporting on (their) fund of ideas.
2. Develop a sense of simple sequence of ideas when giving reports and when telling and acting out stories.
3. Speak or write in complete sentences when the situation naturally demands it.\textsuperscript{2}

Tidyman and Butterfield\textsuperscript{2} translate these objectives into five useful teaching areas. Among their list of objectives for primary grade children they place the following:

1. To stick to the point and to achieve unity
2. To select a topic and limit the scope to a single phase
3. To present material in sequence of time, or in order (recipes)
4. To use good ending sentences
5. To use beginning sentences that catch interest.

\textsuperscript{1}Dawson, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 48.
\textsuperscript{2}Tidyman and Butterfield, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 269.
In addition they stress the early development of these skills. Training may begin as far back as pre-school.

Supporting this thesis, McKee indicates that first graders can learn to follow certain organizational standards. The most important skill in this area in first grade, he feels, is careful preparation of a story or "knowing the story well".

In the later primary and in the intermediate grades more detailed standards can be set up to afford an opportunity for criticism and self-evaluation. McKee would add a few more criteria to Tidyman and Butterfield's list. Among these are:

1. Be sure you know your story well.
2. Be sure you have your story planned.
3. Don't tell all the little details.
4. Use good words that fit your meaning.
5. Tell your story naturally as if you were talking.
6. Try to be enthusiastic in telling your story.
7. Have an interesting beginning....
8. Be sure you can pronounce your words correctly.
9. Don't use too many 'ands'.

Other writers refer to the objectives included in the training of organizational skills in a more general way.

1/McKee, op. cit., p. 249.
2/Ibid., p. 125.
Forshaug, when composing a check list for teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of their oral language program, summarizes these skills under one point as follows: "Emphasis is given to the underlying processes of gathering, organizing and presenting ideas for speaking."

Herrick and Jacobs maintain that: "Good language arts is seriously concerned with the processes of selecting and organizing ideas with a purpose in mind, with the testing, verification, or critical examination of ideas." Thus the skills necessary in speaking and writing are methods for selecting and organizing material methodically and logically.

Methods of Teaching the Organizational Skills

In an article written in 1927, Haig criticizes the methods employed in teaching oral language.

"Teachers fail to get results in oral work, first—because they don't know how to teach children to plan to think through a particular subject, to limit it, to select pertinent detail by which to develop it, and to arrange these details in effective order; second—because they do not measure this particular phase of work apart from mechanics."


Since 1927 educators have tried to remedy the situation. Writings in the language arts area have devoted more space to the teaching of oral language. There is still a paucity of material, however, concerning the teaching of the organizational skills in the primary grades.

Tidyman and Butterfield advise following the same steps as in teaching content areas.

1. Material for discussion should grow out of purposeful activities and from the subject-matter areas of the curriculum.
2. Individual performances should be followed by evaluation.
3. Concentrate on specific difficulties.
4. Evaluate progress.

In "Some Thoughts on Oral Language," Schofield agrees that the characteristics of good language lessons are much the same as lessons in other fields. She states several objectives for a good lesson in this way:

1. Make the children aware of the goal, making certain that the goal is not too remote or multiple.
2. Work on a few mechanics and slowly add to them.
3. Formulate a check list by class discussion to evaluate skills involved.

1/Tidyman and Butterfield, loc. cit., p. 269.

4. Use a textbook or teacher samples for study by children when starting something new.
5. Allow the children time to prepare oral language lessons.
6. Correct oral skills orally through oral language exercises and games.
7. Evaluate the lesson by means of a tape recorder. Record at the beginning of the study and at the end to hear the difference.

McKee sets down a few "rules-of-thumb" to be followed in improving story-telling with young children. When correcting a specific weakness, the teacher should tell the class what point is to be worked on and then have the class criticize individual performances.

It is Dawson's contention that the "silent classroom may be suspected as one in which thought is stifled". Teachers, she maintains, have found that the best way to motivate mastery of language skills "is not to drill on these skills but to emphasize communication". When children have ideas they want to express, they will welcome suggestions for helping in organization.

1/McKee, op. cit., p. 126.
3/Ibid., p. 12.
Dawson, then, approaches the problem of improving language skills by advocating many forms of oral communication in the classroom. Among these informal vehicles of expression she lists:

"1. Telling experiences
2. Using the telephone
3. Planning, carrying out and evaluating language activities
4. Reproducing rhymes and stories
5. Choral speaking
6. Dramatizing
7. Telling original stories."

In addition, she states:

"Expression that takes the form of directions, instructions, or explanations helps to attain the following language instruction: sentence sense, clarity and organization of ideas, attentive listening, and precision of vocabulary."

Sharing time and story-telling provide experiences for young children to employ the language skills. Herrick and Jacobs show that the teacher can lay the groundwork for good language skills at these times by helping children choose good subjects and recalling the correct sequence of events, by providing planning time and by encouraging individuality.

1/ Ibid., p. 160.
2/ Ibid., p. 164.
Several of the writers in the field of oral language give detailed methods for teaching individual skills.  

Ogilvie observes that: "Even children in the first grade can be taught that a speech needs a beginning, a middle and an end." The passage goes on to explain the method one teacher employed to convey this to her class. The teacher used the "analogy of road signs" in the following way:

"The first sign announces that the town is about to appear and is the introduction.... (It) calls attention to the town. The body, or the middle, is the travel through the town. The conclusion, or end, is the sign that says, 'Glad you visited us. You are now leaving Allegany'."

In the early grades, Ogilvie continues, the teacher should encourage children to state the main idea of the story in a sentence or two in preparation for future work in paragraphing. In organizing a story for re-telling, the child should decide upon the main and subordinate ideas, making sure of essential details. Then, the child should plan "to place the details in the correct order and to omit all unnecessary ones".

Preparation for paragraphing is also stressed by Sheridan. He writes that pupils should be trained "to compose a beginning sentence that will lay the essential


2/ Ibid., p. 137.

foundation of the whole paragraph". He feels that children should be encouraged to get to the heart of the subject immediately.

1/ Jones selects four skills of oral expression for detailed consideration. She has built exercises for a second grade class to improve the following organization skills: knowing the story (or planning), telling one whole story, and making a story easy to understand (or relating in sequence). Each lesson includes the use of pictures, artistic devices (such as individual question marks and paper traffic lights) to stimulate interest, and simple exercises. At the beginning of the study, the children were tested informally as to the number of contributions to class discussion and deficiencies in the above areas. The same method of testing was repeated after six weeks of teaching. By pin-pointing her teaching to the above areas, she finds less deficiencies at the end of the six-week teaching period in planning a story, knowing the parts of the story and in sticking to the point. However, she records no improvement in talking in complete sentences or in the number of contributions to the class discussion after the teaching session. Her conclusions indicate that with increased opportunity to speak and complexity of thought the broader organizational skills may be improved, but sentence sense lags.

Sentence Sense

According to Smith: "The term 'sentence sense' implies the ability to recognize completeness in the expression of an idea. Since increasing complexity of ideas is a mark of growth, the problem of 'sentence sense' is a crucial one at every level of instruction from the pre-school to the graduate school." She goes on to say that "telling a brief sequence of happenings or of facts leads to trouble with run-on sentences. The primary child should learn "how many things he has to say," and how to keep "each distinct from the other".

Investigators in the area of child development have uncovered data which enables educators to plan courses of study in sentence sense and structure. As early as 1926, Smith analyzed the conversations of eighty-eight children between the ages of two and five to determine the trend in the development of the sentence. She states that with an increase of age there is an increasing tendency toward the use of longer and more complete sentences. There is a "decrease with age in the proportion of simple sentence to complex and compound, an increase in the number of questions and a decrease with age in exclamatory sentences".


In 1934 Nixon carried on a similar investigation and the report shows that children's sentences become more complex with increased age.

Included in Herrick and Jacobs' book is a study regarding the growth of sentence structure among elementary school children in which the following characteristics are found to occur with an increase of age.

1. An increase in length of sentence
2. An increase in the number of complex and compound sentences and a decrease in simple sentences
3. A decrease in the use of run-on sentences, beyond the fourth grade level
4. A decrease in repetitive use of particular words
5. A decrease in the use of sentences starting with I.

As a result of these studies in the development of children's speech, educators have been able to outline exercises appropriate for each grade level in the area of sentence structure and sentence sense. Courses of study in language are, therefore, more complete and consistent in this area.


Methods of Inculcating Sentence Sense

"Nothing is more important in the early grades than developing the 'sentence sense'," states Sheridan.\(^1\) Run-on sentences joined by "and", "but", and "so" are very common. To remedy this situation, he advocates limiting all oral compositions for a short time to three sentences. This forces every child to think of his sentences, and develop a sentence sense.

In discussing why children have so much trouble deciding what is a complete sentence, Hatfield\(^2\) explains that an adult does not think of where periods come but listens to an "inner speech," putting periods where long pauses come and commas where short pauses come. He agrees with Sheridan's method of developing sentence sense and even goes a step further. Under his system first graders begin by giving three-sentence themes. He finds that this eliminates sentence blunders and "stringy 'and' sentences".

Hatfield\(^3\) admits that there are limitations to this formal system of presenting the "sentence idea". It is used

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\(^1\) Sheridan, op. cit., p. 43.
\(^3\) Ibid., p. 271.
by too many "mechanically-minded teachers". As an alternative he recommends a system of writing sentences which children dictate on the blackboard. Through oral reading of these sentences and observing how the voice rises and falls, the child can see where one idea ends and the other begins.

The limiting of the number of sentences a child should speak in order to develop sentence sense is called "unwise" by Smith. This system makes the sentence more important than the idea to be expressed. Instead, a constant comparison of what a child reads and what he reports to develop the concept of one idea is suggested.

Rasmussen calls attention to the fact that there is a difference in oral and written style. In oral language, sentences are shorter, contractions and slang are accepted, and fragmentary sentences are used. These differences should be pointed out when dealing with each form.

Work on sentence sense can help both the "monosyllabic and garrulous child". Flaherty's work provides ideas and

1/Smith, "Growth in Language Power as Related to Child Development," loc. cit., p. 66.


procedures to help the teacher stimulate work in this area and more adequately supervise all of the children in her class.

A summary of the research on organization in oral language indicates the large gaps in our knowledge. Few investigations to evaluate the effectiveness of current methods for teaching the organizational skills have been reported. Except for the research on sentence structure, little is known about children's natural ability in this area. Perhaps with the increased use of electric recording devices, research in oral language and more particularly organization, will increase.
CHAPTER III

PLAN OF PROCEDEURE
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Introduction

It was the primary purpose of this study to construct, utilize and evaluate a series of exercises which would help to improve the oral language of second grade children. Five units of study were provided in the areas where, in the opinion of the writers, the children were in the greatest need of help. The exercises were planned for a period of six weeks, and were designed to encourage and stimulate the improvement of content, vocabulary, organization, sentence structure and miscellaneous items such as, enthusiasm, posture and poise, clarity, grammar and diction in oral language. These five areas are more precisely defined in the check list which may be found in the appendix p. 65.

Plan for Teaching

The plan for one class was as follows: The first two weeks were devoted to the teaching of content, the third and fourth weeks to vocabulary, and the last two weeks to organization. The other two classes interchanged the units after two week intervals. Incorporated within these three areas were sentence structure and miscellaneous items.

A period of thirty minutes a day was devoted to the actual teaching in the above areas. However, throughout the six week
period all lessons, wherever possible, were directed to the
practice of the skills being taught. Evidence of this is
given under related activities in the lesson plans which may
be found in the appendix pp. 66-111.

A group of eighty-two children from three separate communities were chosen for this experiment. They all came from an
average socio-economic background.

Description of Testing

In order to measure any improvement over the six week period, five testings were made. The tape recorder was used
for this purpose. A preliminary test was given before any
teaching was started. For this initial testing the children
were allowed to pick their own subject. No instruction, other
than on the use of the tape recorder, was given by the teacher.
It was felt, however, that a short period of comment after the
first few speakers would help to relax the more timid children
who were at first reluctant to speak for the tape recorder.

As the children in the study were in the habit of giving
oral talks during sharing periods, news report time, etc., no
difficulty was experienced in getting each child to contribute
at least three or four sentences to the discussions.

General Procedures

The procedure in each lesson was the same. A period of
motivation would precede each lesson. The teacher would dis-
cuss with the children the things for which they were to work.
A list was made of these things either on the blackboard or on newsprint. The materials were then presented. This was followed by a period of discussion and a checking against the list.

At the end of the first two weeks of teaching, a tape recording was made for the second test, in order to note any improvement in the first area tested. The third and fourth weeks were devoted to the teaching of the next unit of work. During this period, a constant review of the previous area was carried on, along with sentence structure and miscellaneous items. A third test was given at the end of the fourth week. The fifth and sixth weeks were conducted in the same way. At the same time a review was being carried on and tape recordings made in the areas already taught. The final test, where the children were once again allowed to pick their own subjects was given at the end of the six week period.

Description of the Check List

A series of twenty-six check list items (a copy of which appears in the appendix p. 65) was formulated in the following manner. First, a great deal of reading of the available literature was done with attention to the various aspects of oral language (content, organization, vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar, diction and poise). Individual check list items were prepared. After a process of adding and discarding items according to the importance placed on them by authorities and
the practicality for scoring, the final list was prepared.

The compositions of each child were scored according to the twenty-six items on the checklist. These were given a numerical value of one to four; one which was never, two which was occasionally, three which was often and four which was always. These scores were totaled at the end of each of the five tests, giving scores from which the means and standard deviations were derived.
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA
It was the purpose of this study to construct, utilize, and evaluate a series of exercises designed to improve oral language in grade two.

Each child was checked in terms of a numerical rating after telling his oral story. The results are analyzed in the following tables.

**TABLE I**

A COMPARISON OF MEANS BETWEEN THE FIRST AND SECOND COMPOSITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Diff.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Diff. S.E.</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>54.44</td>
<td>12.97</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>57.39</td>
<td>14.15</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An examination of Table I shows the difference between the two mean scores to be 2.95 which yields a critical ratio of 1.36. The difference is not statistically significant and indicates little difference between the performance of the two compositions.
TABLE II
A COMPARISON OF MEANS BETWEEN THE SECOND AND THIRD COMPOSITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Diff.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>57.39</td>
<td>14.15</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>62.69</td>
<td>14.93</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An examination of Table II shows a difference of 5.30 between the two means which yields a critical ratio of 2.28. This critical ratio is not statistically significant at the one percent level but is statistically significant at the five percent level and indicates an upward trend after the second lesson.

TABLE III
A COMPARISON OF MEANS BETWEEN THE THIRD AND FOURTH COMPOSITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Diff.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>62.69</td>
<td>14.93</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>62.59</td>
<td>15.94</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference between the two means in the above Table is 5.90 which yields a critical ratio of 2.43. In this instance also the critical ratio is significant at the five percent level only.
TABLE IV
A COMPARISON OF MEANS BETWEEN THE FIRST AND FIFTH COMPOSITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Diff.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Diff.</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>54.44</td>
<td>12.97</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>71.69</td>
<td>15.74</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>7.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table IV is an evaluation of the difference between the first and last compositions. The difference of 17.25 between means yields a critical ratio of 7.60 which is statistically significant and indicates that on the whole the children have made a marked gain in the period of six teaching weeks.

TABLE V
A COMPARISON OF MEANS BETWEEN ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Diff.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Diff.</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>61.42</td>
<td>15.69</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>61.37</td>
<td>15.38</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An examination of Table V shows the difference between the two mean scores to be .45 which yields a critical ratio of .18. The difference is not statistically significant and indicates little difference between the performance of the two compositions.
**TABLE VI**

A COMPARISON OF MEANS BETWEEN CONTENT AND VOCABULARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Diff.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>61.37</td>
<td>15.32</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>1.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>65.72</td>
<td>15.73</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An examination of Table VI shows the difference between the two mean scores to be 3.85 which yields a critical ratio of 1.57. The difference is not statistically significant and indicates little difference between the performance of the two compositions.

**TABLE VII**

A COMPARISON OF MEANS BETWEEN ORGANIZATION AND VOCABULARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Diff.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>61.42</td>
<td>15.69</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>65.72</td>
<td>15.73</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An examination of Table VII shows the difference between the two mean scores to be 4.30 which yields a critical ratio of 1.72. The difference is not statistically significant.

The writers decided to break the total data into classes and determine the progress for each group, following the same statistical pattern.
TABLE VIII
A COMPARISON OF MEANS BETWEEN THE FIRST AND FIFTH COMPOSITIONS
CLASS A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Diff.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>50.71</td>
<td>7.62</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>26.13</td>
<td>10.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>76.84</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>10.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An examination of Table VIII shows a difference between the two mean scores to be 26.13 which yields a critical ratio of 10.84. The difference is statistically significant and indicates a marked difference between performance of the two compositions.

TABLE IX
A COMPARISON OF MEANS BETWEEN THE FIRST AND FIFTH COMPOSITIONS
CLASS B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Diff.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>60.45</td>
<td>15.99</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>12.58</td>
<td>2.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>73.03</td>
<td>16.99</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>2.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An examination of Table IX shows a difference between the two mean scores to be 12.58 which yields a critical ratio of 2.90. The difference is statistically significant at the one per cent level and indicates progress after five weeks of teaching.
TABLE X
A COMPARISON OF MEANS BETWEEN THE FIRST AND FIFTH COMPOSITIONS
CLASS C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Diff.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Diff.</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>50.57</td>
<td>11.97</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>61.75</td>
<td>15.61</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference between the two means in the above Table is 11.18 which yields a critical ratio of 2.56. In this instance the critical ratio misses statistical significance by a very small margin. The difference is high enough to indicate that the material used in the study had value.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It was the purpose of this study to design exercises to improve children's oral composition. After a study of the research the writers concentrated their teaching in the following areas: content, vocabulary, and organization.

Tape recordings were made of the children's stories which were in turn analyzed by a check list which was marked numerically. The results of the check list were analyzed statistically. The following results were found:

Sequential Analysis

1. The difference between the first and second lessons was not statistically significant.
2. The difference between the second and third compositions was statistically significant at better than the five per cent level. The critical ratio was 2.28.
3. The difference between the third and fourth compositions was statistically significant at better than the five per cent level. The critical ratio was 2.43.
4. The difference between the first and fifth compositions was very marked with a critical ratio of 7.60 which is statistically significant.
Comparison of Types of Lessons

1. There was no statistical significance when the means between organization and content were compared.

2. Although the critical ratio for the comparison of content and vocabulary was 1.57 in favor of the vocabulary lesson, it was not statistically significant.

3. The critical ratio of 1.72 between organization and vocabulary was in favor of vocabulary, but it was not statistically significant.

Analysis by Classes

1. In Classes A and B the difference between the first and fifth compositions was statistically significant at the one per cent level.

2. In Class C the critical ratio of 2.56 missed one per cent significance by a narrow margin but was significant at the five per cent level.

Implications for Teachers

The writers feel that a block of lessons carefully planned and executed in accordance with the procedures used in this study can make a marked growth in oral ability.
CHAPTER VI

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH
CHAPTER VI

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. Introduce additional lesson plans in other areas of oral language.

2. Use the same experiment on a larger population.

3. Use many of the items on the check list for written language.

4. Develop more objective testing techniques.

5. Use the same exercises in Grades Three and Four in an effort to improve written language work.

6. Try the same experiment over a longer period of time.

7. Use the same lessons with an experimental and control group.

8. Develop follow-up exercises for written language in Grade Two.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
BIBLIOGRAPHY


# CHECK LIST FOR ORAL LANGUAGE

**Name**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Content</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Chooses an interesting topic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Picks the most interesting aspects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Observes details carefully</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Reports accurately</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Shows originality in picking topic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Shows imagination in constructing the story</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II. Vocabulary</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Uses a variety of words and phrases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Uses vivid words to fit the meaning of the talk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Uses a variety of transitions between sentences and parts of the story</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Avoids over-used words</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>III. Organization</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Uses good beginning sentences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Uses good closing sentences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Chooses interesting sentences for the body of the story</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Relates the story in sequence</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Plans story before telling.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Sticks to the point</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<table>
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<th>2</th>
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<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Uses complete sentences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Uses a variety of kinds of sentences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Uses dialogue</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>V. Miscellaneous</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Speaks enthusiastically and instills enthusiasm in others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Talks naturally</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Looks at audience when speaking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Good poise and posture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Talks clearly (not too loud or fast)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Good pronunciation and diction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Uses good grammar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**KEY**

1 - Never
2 - Occasionally
3 - Often
4 - Always

**T - Test**
CONTENT

Exercise I

Purpose:
To encourage use of imaginative material in constructing a story.
To stimulate careful observation of details and accurate reporting.

Materials:
A silhouette of a girl with hair, scarf and coat blowing, cut out of newsprint, thumbtacked to the bulletin board.

Motivation:
Ask the children to look at the girl, and to remember how they felt when they were pushed along by the wind. Ask questions concerning what is happening; how do the children feel when the wind blows; how they think the girl feels; what words and phrases this silhouette brings to their minds. Set the mood.

Procedure:
Stress the most important aspects of the story that each child will tell. Children should be aware, when talking, of telling all that they see and remember. As the children are telling this story from the picture, stress audience interest in the story; stress knowledge of the story, of all the parts, and
Related Activities:

Music- "My Playful Scarf" by Mary Robison. The Children's Record Guild.

"My Playmate the Wind," a rhythmic participation record. Young People's Record.

Listening Time- Listening for bird calls; listening to and imitating the sound of the wind.

Reading- After the completion of this exercise, use the silhouette permanently in the classroom for listing of child's name after he has learned new reading words. This could also be done for home use.
Exercise II

Purpose: To stimulate careful observation of details and accurate reporting.
To encourage discrimination in finding the most important aspects of the story, and to encourage use of complete sentences in oral expression.

Materials: A large sheet of newsprint, brush pen.

Motivation: Discuss weather; rain, snow, clouds and what causes them; temperatures and their effects; the seasons and how they affect us.

Procedure: Each day, for a week, the children make a contribution concerning the day's weather. A child can read it to the class at the end of each day's discussion. The teacher records the story on a large sheet of newsprint. Direct their attention to picking the most important things about the weather, noticing all about them, any changes; what the weather makes them feel like; what the weather makes them think of. Note all these things on the weather chart.
Exercise III

Purpose:
To stimulate choice of a topic that will interest the audience.
To encourage the speaker to speak enthusiastically and to be aware of his listeners' attention.

Materials:
Two pictures that will stimulate questions and thoughts on the topic of weather and the specific topics that the pictures tell about. The first picture shows a family out at a roadside stand in the Fall, picking produce to take home. The second picture shows a wasp's nest with a freckled-faced boy making sure that his eyes are on it.
A check-list of qualities the children wish to attain.

Motivation:
Discuss weather, the seasons, observations of nature, the signs of the Fall, life among the insects, vegetables and animals; the changes that take place; the changes that the seasons make in the variation and interest in our way of life.
Discuss oral expression standards of
Procedure:

These pictures should be mounted and put on the bulletin board. Have each child study them before discussion. While discussing these pictures, and stimulating thoughts and questions, the class could make up a check list of things that they will want to listen for. Each child should have a chance to give his contribution to the discussion. They can then pick the best discussion of the pictures from their check list of standards.

Related Activities:


Listening-Listening to seasonal sounds.

Imitating such sounds when possible.
Exercise IV

Purpose: To increase creative or original oral expression at the second grade level.

Materials: Mount two large, colorful pictures on colored paper and place them on the bulletin board.

One picture shows a boy playing cowboys as he watches a cowboy program on television.

The other picture shows a group of children playing in a forest with some modern climbing toys.

Motivation: The use of vivid pictures, depicting scenes of common interest serve to instill enthusiasm in the subject.

Procedure: Direct the children to look at the pictures and decide which one they wish to discuss. Direct them to look for all the different things they can see, and then they can tell an interesting story about the one that they have chosen, including their own experiences and those of their imagination.

Related Activities: Arithmetic-Number Games

Have children name nine objects in the
picture. Then put the digits from 0 to 9 in random order around a circle on the board, and write a single digit in the center. Pointing to the digits around the circle, one at a time, the pupils name the sum of this digit, or the difference, and the one in the center. Language—Have the pupils bring in any picture of themselves playing and tell a story about it. This could be done in four or five small groups. The groups could decide on the best story, due to the interest of the audience, interest of the speaker, and these could be given before the entire group.
Exercise V

Purpose:
To introduce music as a media through which the child can express his thoughts and feelings creatively. This music should tell a story as well as give enjoyment, thus giving an opportunity for an imaginative or realistic story.

Materials:
Record "Le Carnaval des Animaux", Angel Records.

Motivation:
Discuss good habits of listening. Set mood for the story that the music has to tell. Remember individual differences in musical experience and sensitivity. Discuss title and what children possibly can expect from listening to this record.

Procedure:
Play the record, then discuss the music centered around the stories and characters heard in the record. Each child can tell what instrument or animal he heard in the record, giving an opportunity for an imaginative story or a realistic one. If necessary, play the record again, and/or play individual parts that the children request. The
children can describe the animals, the instruments, their impressions and feelings.

**Related Activities:**

Art—Children can draw a picture story of the animals presented.

During a repeat playing of this record, the children could make clay animals.

Reading—This could be used as a basis for library work. Children could pick out library books of their choice and read them to the class.

Poetry—A. A. Milne's poetry on animals from "When We Were Very Young" or "Now We Are Six."
Exercise VI

Purpose:
To stimulate and motivate careful observation of details and accurate reporting in a manner of interest to the audience.

Materials:
A large sheet of newsprint.
Class's follow-up check list.

Motivation:
The teacher can stimulate a discussion of a trip, stressing careful observation of the things done, the preparations beforehand, what was seen, what happened, descriptions of persons, places and things encountered. She can then discuss the trip with the children.

Procedure:
Take the children on a walk around the village, encouraging them to notice all the things that they could write a story about; encouraging them to pick the most interesting things, noting color, how it feels, how it looks; what they like about it; what they dislike about it; what they think the audience would like.

When the children return from the walk the teacher can record the stories that
the children tell on newsprint. Each child could then read his own contribution. This can be divided into two days of reporting. The children can use their own follow-up check list, where they can decide if each child includes as much as possible, carefully observes details, reports accurately and in complete sentences.

**Related Activities:**

Reading Games-Supply the rhyming word, Tick took
Goes the __________.
The new school bus
Will come for ______.
Finding the initial sounds in names of things, e.g., church, grocery store, stop light, policeman.
Listening—Listening and noting differences in sounds of trucks and passenger cars without looking. Listening to engine and automobile sounds and imitating them. Listening to sounds of vehicles that are going up hill, on a level, or down hill.
Writing—A class newspaper, using mimeograph machine; using contributions of each child in class. This can be distributed to the entire school.
VOCABULARY

Exercise I

Purpose: To stimulate and encourage the use of a variety of words, phrases and sentences in oral language.

Materials: A large picture which asks the question, "What's wrong with this picture"?

Motivation: Discuss the four seasons of the year; name them. Ask questions such as:
What type of weather do we experience during each season? What are some of the things we do during each season? What type of foliage is on the trees in each season? What types of plants, vegetables and fruits, grow in each season? How do they grow (above the ground, below the ground, on trees, on vines)? What are some of the games we play during the seasons? What are some of the sports played only in certain seasons?

Procedure: Present the picture to the class with the comment that there are many things wrong with it. Tell the children to look at the picture and study it.
carefully. Ask them to tell the class all the things which they can see in the picture that are wrong. Tell them that they are to use as many different words, phrases and sentences to describe just what they see in the picture. Make a chart on newsprint to list the different descriptive words, phrases and sentences used. Make a second chart classifying the descriptive words under the headings of seeing words, hearing words, feeling words, tasting words, smelling words and kind words.

Related Activities:

During morning health lesson make a list of the different kinds of food we should eat to keep healthy. During the phonics lesson have the children give all the words they can think of that begin with the letter "h" to describe their classmates, e.g., happy, healthy, hungry, etc. During the reading lesson have the children pick from the story as many descriptive words as they can. During the arithmetic lesson on inches and feet have the children pick out the "kind" words used in their number work books,
e.g., long, short, towel rack, cereal box, paper napkin, etc. During the spelling lesson have the children pick out the descriptive words in the lesson. During the penmanship lesson have children give a list of hearing words. Have them write these on paper. Have children paint a mural during the art lesson showing the four seasons. Show some activity in each season which can be described with many different words, phrases and sentences.
Exercise II

**Purpose:**
To stimulate and encourage the use of a variety of words, phrases and sentences in oral language.

**Materials:**
Ten sentences to be completed with a variety of descriptive words.

**Motivation:**
Discuss the temperature. Ask some children to tell the class what kind of weather we are having now. Would you say it was cold? Can you think of a word to describe how cold it is? Do you remember how hot it was last summer? Can you think of some words to describe how hot it was? Give the children a minute to think after you present the words, "as cold as" and "as hot as". Tell the children that you are going to give them some sentences in which a word is missing and that you want them to think of as many different words as they can to describe whatever the sentence is talking about.

1. The apple which Sally had in her hand was as red as _____.
2. My kitten's fur is as fluffy as ___.

**Procedure:**
3. The nail file which Mother is using is as rough as _____.

4. The new lawn in front of our house is as green as _____.

5. Bobby has a puppy which is as black as _____.

6. Our new baby sister is as small as _____.

7. The moon and the stars made the night as bright as _____.

8. Mother's satin dress is as smooth as _____.

9. Jane is so pleased with her new doll, that she is as happy as _____.

10. Father was cleaning the garage and he was as busy as _____.

Make a list of the words given on a chart.

Related Activities: During the health lesson have children give a list of words describing some of the things they do to keep clean and healthy, e.g., eat, wash, scrub, comb, etc. During the phonics lesson have children give opposites of the following descriptive words: up, black, tall, thin, night, big, happy, hot, late, north,
near, clean, first, poor, walk, cry, old, dark. During the reading lesson have children pick out as many "kind" words as they can from the day's story. During the spelling lesson have children pick out as many "kind" words as they can from the weekly lesson. During the art lesson have the children take one of the ten sentences and draw a picture of it, e.g., My kitten's fur is as fluffy as a white cloud. Have them picture the descriptions which they give in the sentences.
Exercise III

Purpose:
To stimulate and encourage the use of vivid words, phrases, and sentences in oral language.

Materials:
One film strip on "Tommy Takes A Train Trip".

Motivation:
Ask the children questions such as: How many of you have ever taken a train trip alone? Where did you go? How long did the trip take you? What was the first thing you did after it was decided that you would take the trip? Did you help to pack your bag? Who took you to the station? Did you buy your own ticket? Did someone get on the train with you to see you to your seat? Did you sleep on the train; eat on the train? Did anyone meet you when you got off the train? Tell the children that we are going to see a film which will show us how Tommy took a train ride all by himself. Tell them that before we see the film we will talk about the things we have learned in our study of train transportation, e.g., all the people necessary in the operation
of a railroad; how these different people help us; why we need trains and railroads; the different kinds of cars on a train, and what each is used for. Discuss what we mean by the word "vivid".

Tell the children that while they are watching the film that they are to try to remember everything they can about the way things look. After the discussion tell the children to pretend that they are Tommy and that they are going on this train trip. Show the film with comment on the title only. After viewing the film, ask the children to see how many vivid words, and phrases they can use to describe what they saw in the film. Using the following headings, classify the words and phrases as seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, smelling and kind. Ask the children to try not to use the same words too many times.

**Related Activities:**

During opening exercises have children tell the class all the colorful things they saw on their way to school this morning. List these on the board. During the phonics lesson have children
Give as many vivid words as they can think of that begin with the letter "b."

Think of the plants which we have in our room, e.g., beautiful, brown, bright.

Give as many vivid words as they can think of that begin with the letter "b."

Think of the plants which we have in our room, e.g., beautiful, brown, bright.

Think of the plants which we have in our room, e.g., beautiful, brown, bright.

Give as many vivid words as they can think of that begin with the letter "b."

Think of the plants which we have in our room, e.g., beautiful, brown, bright.

Think of the plants which we have in our room, e.g., beautiful, brown, bright.
Exercise IV

**Purpose:**
To stimulate and encourage the use of vivid words, phrases and sentences in oral language.

**Materials:**
A beginning sentence, "One Sunday last summer, while in church, a little yellow canary flew in and landed on the hat of a lady seated in front of me".

**Motivation:**
Ask the children how they should act when they are in church. Ask them what they would do if they were in church and something very distracting (explain the word distracting) happened right in front of them. Ask them if they think it would be easy to concentrate on the services. Ask them if they have ever had anything unusual happen to them in church. Give them time to discuss anything that might have happened.

**Procedure:**
Tell the children that you are going to give them a sentence and that you want them to build a story from it. Tell them that you want them to describe what happened just as clearly as they can. Have them answer questions such as:
What did the lady's hat look like? How did the bird look? What was the lady wearing? What did she do when she felt the bird on her hat? What did the other people around her do? What did you do and how did you feel? Remind them to use as many vivid words and phrases as they can, and to tell what happened first, what happened next, etc. Write the beginning sentence on the blackboard. Then read it together twice. Give the children a few minutes to think about what they are going to say.

Related Activities: For our health lesson, the teacher will bring in an apple, a pear, an orange, a grapefruit, a banana, a lemon, a nut, a piece of celery, a carrot and a string bean. Display these under our health chart. Have one child hold one of the articles in front of the room. Have him call on other children in the class to give a variety of vivid words to describe the article, e.g., red, long, sour, etc. Repeat this for each of the articles of food. Make a list of the
words given on the board. During the phonics lesson have the children tell what two letters make the sounds they hear at the beginning of the following descriptive words: pretty, blue, bright, green, blowy, smoky, gray, blustery, snowy, clanging, frosty, stormy, trim, thin, starry, cheerful, chirping, creamy, tropical, shiny, black, true, crying, stone, streaming, front, dressed, straight, short, climbing, chilly, choppy, slippery. During the reading lesson have the children look through the story and find all the vivid words and phrases they can. During the spelling lesson have the children pick out any vivid words in the lesson. During the art lesson have the children draw a picture of the canary in church, being sure to put in the colorful details.
Exercise V

Purpose: To stimulate and encourage the use of descriptive words and to discourage the over-use of certain words and phrases in oral language.

Materials: The poem

March

March is windy, March is wild,
Hurries like an eager child;
Puffing mouth and ruddy face,
Rushing in a windy race;
A breath or two he stops,
and then
He's puffing madly off again.
March is windy, March is wild,
A rushing, blowing, puffing child;
And why does March go rushing so?
He's trying to catch Spring,
you know!

Author unknown.

Motivation: Ask the children what kind of weather March brings. It seems that the wind in March blows longer and harder than it does in any other month. Ask them if they have ever wondered why the March wind goes rushing around so. Allow a
few minutes for discussion.
Tell the children that you are going to read them a poem about March. Read it through once, stressing all the descriptive words. Ask the children if they know why March goes "rushing so"? Ask them if they know what March is trying to catch? Read the first stanza again, and ask the children if they can think of a good title for this stanza. Write the titles on a chart. Read the second stanza, and then the entire poem a second time and ask the children why March is like an eager child? Why would he have a puffing mouth? Why would he have a ruddy face? What does the poem say March is always doing? Does March ever stop rushing? Why does he stop? Does he stop for long? What does he do after he has his breath? In having the children answer these questions stress the fact that they should use good sentences and avoid the over use of words and sounds such as "um", "ah", "well", "then", "so", "cause", etc. Make a list of the over-
used words on the board. Have the poem on newsprint. Have the children read it with the teacher, then pick out all the descriptive words and put them on a chart.

**Related Activities:**

During the lesson on safety have the children give a list of words and phrases describing things for which we must use our senses of sight and hearing, e.g., traffic lights, horns, streets, white lines, fire and police sirens, etc.

During phonics or word drill lesson, give the children a list of descriptive words and have them give synonyms for them, e.g., beautiful, pretty, lovely; hurry, rush, run, dash; cold, cool, chilly, etc. During the oral reading lesson have children pick out all the descriptive words and see if they can give synonyms for them. During the arithmetic lesson have children use the words on page 71 of their number work books and give synonyms for them, e.g., big, little, take away, have no, now, etc. During the spelling lesson have
children think of synonyms for as many words as they can in the lesson. During the penmanship lesson have the children write all the over used words which were listed on the board. During the art lesson have the children paint a picture showing a March scene. Ask them to try to picture something mentioned in the poem.
Exercise VI

**Purpose:**
To stimulate and encourage the use of descriptive words and to discourage the over-use of certain words and phrases in oral language.

**Materials:**
A series of eight pictures depicting the story of life on a farm.

**Motivation:**
Ask the children how many of them have ever been to a farm. Ask them about the things they saw at the farm and some of the things they did. Ask them if they saw the cows being milked; the animals being fed; the eggs being gathered up in a basket, etc.

**Procedure:**
Display the series of eight pictures on the board in the front of the room. Discuss each of the pictures, then ask each child to select one of them and make up a story about it. Tell them you want them to use good sentences, as many descriptive words as possible and to try not to use the same words too many times. Give the children a few minutes to select one of the pictures and think of a good story. Have the children come
up to the front of the classroom and give their stories. Make a list of descriptive words used and a list of words which were over-used. After the presentation discuss these words with the class.

Related Activities:
During the health lesson have the children give the names of as many foods as they can which come from farms. During the phonics lesson have the children pick out the words in the following sentences which begin with the same sound. Have them tell the letters which make the sounds.

1. We had **fun** on the **farm**.
2. The *children* fed some *chickens*.
3. We left some *apples* at the house.
4. The *cows* came in for milking.
5. The *children* grew some *tomatoes* for **Grandmother**.
6. The *dog* was *digging* a hole.
7. The *pigs* picked *corn*.
8. The basket was *full* of *feed*.
9. The *fields* were *growing* with *grain*.

During the oral reading lesson have the children pick out as many descriptive
words as they can from the story. In the dialogue wherever the word "said" is used, have the children see if they can think of a more descriptive word to use. During the arithmetic lesson have children pick out all the descriptive words in their number workbooks. Have them pick out all the words which are used many times. During the spelling lesson have the children use all the descriptive words in the lesson in sentences. Then have them use the same sentence but have them find a synonym for the descriptive word. During the penmanship lesson have the children write all the words they can think of that are overused. Put these words on the board and have children copy them on their papers. During the art lesson (this could take several lessons) have the children make a model farm. Make the farm buildings out of empty boxes and milk cartons. Paint them in vivid colors. Make the farm animals out of construction paper, poster paper and oak tag.
Exercise I

Purpose: To show the necessity of using good beginning sentences in story telling and to give practice in originating beginning sentences.

Materials: Three pictures of interesting, active groups of people.

Motivation: Pictures serve to arouse the class' curiosity. One of the pictures will depict an exciting incident, but the focus of the picture will be hidden. Another will show an animated figure extracted from a group picture. The class will try their skill at guessing what might be happening in the picture.

Procedure: First explain that a story must have a good beginning to hold an audience's interest. This may be done by using two different beginning sentences, one of which is dull and one which arouses curiosity. Discuss with the class which is the best sentence and why. Show the pictures one at a time. After each picture have a child explain what...
he thought was happening in the picture. Have the child formulate a good first sentence to introduce a story about the picture. Have other children add to the story. As each beginning sentence is formulated, write these sentences on the blackboard. When all three pictures have been discussed, have the whole class study the sentences on the blackboard. Point out the elements that go to make a good beginning sentence. Discuss similarities and differences between the sentences.

Related Activities: Put five sentences on the blackboard. Discuss each sentence and decide which would make a good beginning sentence.
Exercise II

**Purpose:**
To stimulate an awareness of good beginning and closing sentences and to improve the child's own sentences.

**Materials:**
Six slips of paper containing good beginning sentences and six containing good ending sentences.

**Motivation:**
In a hat place several slips of paper containing good beginning sentences. Such thought provoking sentences as:

1. Yesterday I rode on a candy cane into candy land.
2. Santa Claus sent me an airplane ticket to the North Pole.
3. When I was walking to school today, I found $1,000."

The children will put their hands in the hat, pick one sentence and talk about it. The sillier and more exciting the sentence, the better will be the reaction by the children.

Provide five or six slips of paper containing last sentences. Divide the class into groups and have one member from each group pick the sentence for
his group. Such sentences as:

"1. The old man and his daughter were never poor or hungry again.
2. The owl and the pussy cat never bothered the black bear again."

Here too, as with the beginning sentences, the slips of paper should contain unusual situations that excite the children's imagination.

Review the reasons for using good beginning sentences through class discussion. At this time, a discussion of the need of good ending sentences may also occur or it may wait until the second part of the lesson.

Have ten children one at a time come up to the front of the classroom to pick one of the slips of paper containing beginning sentences from the hat. Have the child read the sentence and make up a short story to go along with it. Then, pick one or two more children to tell different stories using the same sentence. Follow this same procedure with the next sentence and so on until everyone has had some chance to invent a tale.
Following this exercise, a discussion about the importance of ending sentences should be conducted. The class should be made to see the importance of both kinds of sentences in story-telling. Distribute a slip of paper containing an ending sentence to each of the six groups. Allow the groups a short time to meet together and discuss what they will do to dramatize a story that will end with the sentence on the paper. The next day have the skits presented to the class.

During both the beginning sentence stories and ending sentence skits use the tape recorder. The following day, replay the recorder and have the class evaluate their progress in the use of good beginning and closing sentences as well as in the skills presented previously.
Exercise III

Purpose:
To encourage the arranging of details in chronological order and to give practice in arranging in sequence.

Materials:
Two groups of cards which tell a story through pictures.

Motivation:
Assemble five pictures that tell a story. Have one child try to put them in order so as to tell a story. Have other children try their hand at placing them in order.

Use another stack of pictures that tell a story. Put them in the wrong order. Have a child try to tell a story using the pictures as they are then. Pick a child to correct the cards and tell a new story.

Procedure:
Explain to the class that stories must be told in order so that the audience can follow. Use the picture cards and have the class arrange them in order. Call attention to the trouble an audience has in following a story that is badly arranged. Make sure the class sees why it is important to tell a story
in the right order.

**Related Activities:** During the day call attention in the reading circle to the orderly presentation of details. Ask children to see if they can think of any stories which do not go along in order of the time when they happened. At this time call attention to dream stories and stories that tell the ending first and then go back in time as exceptions to this principle.

**Exercises:** Either immediately afterward or the next day have the children do exercises to increase ability to arrange in sequence.

1. Put five sentences from their reading story on the blackboard. Ask them to put them in the right order.

2. Put sentences from a familiar story like the "Three Bears" on the blackboard and have them arrange the sentences in order.

3. Put sentences from an original teacher-made story on the blackboard and have these arranged in the correct order.
Exercise IV

Purpose: To improve the ability to tell one story at a time.

Materials: Suggested toys are a baseball, a doll, an airplane, a toy bear, a game -- suggested school materials might include a ruler, a small blackboard slate, a pad of paper, a pencil, an eraser, a school book, a workbook.

Motivation: Use a group of toys that suggest a unity of subject and a group of school materials that belong together. Leave these objects on a table where the children can see them all day and allow them to speculate about the purpose of them.

Procedure: Put all of the objects unarranged on a table in front of the class. Have a member of the class divide the objects into two groups and tell a story using one group of objects. Have someone else use the other objects to tell a story. Then put two titles on the blackboard: Santa Claus' Workshop and When I am a Teacher. Ask each child to select one of these topics. Using the objects on
the table have them make up a story to go with the title. Divide the class into groups of about eight. Take them over to the tape recorder and have each tell his story. This way every child will have a chance to tell a story about one set of objects. During these stories stress the need of keeping to the topic and telling only one story. Only the objects before them may be used in the stories.

Related Activities:

Exercises: The next day or while one group is giving its talks, these exercises may be followed.

1. Put six sentences on the blackboard and put two titles for stories on the blackboard too. Have the class put the correct sentences under the right title. Examples of titles that may be used are: Going Shopping, At the Beach, Wintertime, Valentine's Day.

2. After the class has finished the above assignment a child may be chosen to tell a story using the sentences placed beneath each title. Sequence should be stressed here too.
Games: Follow the Leader.
Someone picks a title for a story. The next person adds a sentence that follows in order and sticks to the subject.

Composing Riddles.
Have children make up short riddles about themselves or others in the class and have the rest of the children guess who it might be. Call attention to any clues that are incorrect, not to the point or misleading. Have the best riddles written down in a class Riddle Book.
Exercise V

Purpose: To improve the ability to plan a story well, observing all of the skills of organization presented earlier.

Materials: A few pictures of a party in progress as well as a picture or two of children taking a trip.

Motivation: Show the class a picture of children enjoying themselves at a party. Discuss how they might plan a party. What would they do first? What would they do next? If time permits, also discuss planning a trip. Talk about where they might go.

Procedure: Explain that planning a trip and planning a party are very necessary to insure the success of these activities. Lead the class into a discussion about planning a story.

After conducting a class discussion about planning a party and/or planning a trip, have the class recreate the steps that might be advisable in planning a party or a trip. Draw analogies between planning a story and planning anything else.
Next have the class dictate a story entitled "Planning a Party". Stress the fact that they must have a good beginning sentence and a good closing sentence, and details arranged in sequence. Explain to the class that a story must be planned in much the same way as a party or a trip. Certain steps must be followed.

Related Activities: Give a party for another class or for parents. Use the plans drawn up by the class and have the class divided into groups to plan each item.

Conduct a field trip to correlate with social studies (perhaps a transportation unit) or science. Again use the class' plans concerning a trip to guide the arrangements.
Exercise VI

Purpose:
To review all of the skills of organization in oral composition presented previously and give practice in using them. The only materials needed are a blackboard and a tape recorder.

Materials:

Motivation:
Put three sentence beginnings on the blackboard and give examples of a true story or a fairy story for each. Be sure to make the sample stories as interesting or funny as possible in order to arouse interest.

Three suggested beginnings are:

1. When I grow up, I will _________.

2. I shall never forget the time that _________.

3. The best time I ever had was when _________.

Procedure:
Put the three suggested sentence beginnings on the blackboard. Explain that each can be used to start a true or a fairy story. Give the children sample stories to show them what you mean, but caution them to use their own ideas in their stories.
Before the children give their talks, make a list on the blackboard of "Things to Remember" (tell things in the right order, tell one story at a time, use good closing sentences, speak in complete sentences and anything else that the class suggests).

While the children are giving their talks, run the tape recorder. Afterward have each child evaluate himself with the class on the listed points.

Related Activities: After all of the stories have been given orally have the class write them down. Explain about punctuation and capital letters.

As an art lesson, have the children draw a picture to go with their story.