1952

Characteristics to be incorporated in a United States junior high school history book for the slow reader.

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http://hdl.handle.net/2144/13091

Boston University
CHARACTERISTICS TO BE INCORPORATED IN A UNITED STATES JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL HISTORY BOOK FOR THE SLOW READER

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Education

1952
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1. Significance Of The Textbooks In United States History As a Learning Aid

Beyond the primary grades the textbook continues to be the basis of instruction in the social studies. While it has been criticized and denounced, nevertheless it maintains its status in the American schools. Constantly, those who are able are engaged in the process of rewriting textbooks and improving them. A textbook renders several very important functions, an outstanding one being that it serves as a common basis for the pupil.

In selecting textbooks, the teachers or administrators should have many factors in mind; namely, appearance, length, date, typography, style, vocabulary, maps, pictures, and such learning aids as word lists, projects, questions and references. But above all the selector should be aware of the capacities of the students. This holds true today more than at any other time in the history of education. In the United States at the present time seventy-five per cent to ninety per cent of all pupils that enter our schools in the first grade later enter high school. The United States ranks first among the countries of the world in this respect. Also in recent years the method of

social promotion has been introduced in our schools in leading cities and progressive school systems. In accordance with this principle, every pupil is promoted at the end of the school year, regardless of the achievement he has made or the requirements of his particular grade (provided he has worked to his full capacity). This promotion is predicated on the belief that it is psychologically unwise to retard a child because of the emotional and social effect that it may have upon him. Such a promotion policy results in a tremendous range in individual reading differences in the secondary schools which in turn give rise to serious problems. Furthermore the length of the average textbook is much greater today than one twenty-five years ago and certainly even more than one fifty years ago.

"The size of textbooks has increased markedly in recent years. American History books for senior high schools have doubled in length since 1910. Eight economics texts published in 1920's were found to average 447 pages in length, whereas four books published in the late 1930's averaged 589 pages. Recent books in all five history courses commonly taught in the secondary schools have averaged over 800 pages. These increases in size correspond favorably with research recommendations as to the superior merits of extensive reading, the paucity of library resources, and the expansion of the curriculum, and have met with the approval of teachers. The increase in size of textbooks has meant in some cases an increase in the number of topics treated, rather than a fuller treatment of prevailing topics."

True then, that both the pupils and the teachers of the social studies today face a tremendous task.

Bernice Leary lists some of the reading skills that confront a history student today:

"To read the social sciences understandingly requires a broad meaning vocabulary — technical, mathematical, and general. The student of geography must be familiar with a broad range of technical words: proper names of places, words pertaining to land and water features, names of products and resources, words applying to transportation, to distance and direction, to human occupations, to physical phenomena including climate and weather, and to time, months, and seasons, also adjectives descriptive of terrestrial phenomena or features, and abbreviations of any of the above. In American history, alone, one needs to know the meanings of governmental terms, political terms, economic terms, sociological terms, legal terms, geographic terms, military terms, religious terms, and terms referring to chronology and records.

The student's knowledge of mathematical terms must be similarly varied. In junior high school he needs to be familiar with such terms as area, average, estimate, graph, line, per cent, proportion, rate, scale, and terms in use in the fundamental processes of arithmetic. At higher levels he must know also a large number of terms used in statements of principles, in discussions of mathematics as a method of thinking, etc; as well as geometric terms, statistical concepts, and terms used in finance and business. In economics, he needs mathematical terms used with function graphs, variation, and certain computations peculiar to economics.

A broad general vocabulary is also needed in reading the social studies. In modern European history, the difficulty lies not so much in technical words as in uncommon words that occur too infrequently to allow familiarity. Even American history often uses general terms that prove baffling to high school students."

Obviously these demands cannot be met fully by all the students that attend our schools today. A large number will try laboriously

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to get through and will achieve practically nothing. Children who are naturally slow or physically handicapped often lack the ability to meet this challenge. Some provision must be made for these pupils who constitute a large per cent of a heterogeneous group in a typical eighth grade American history class. It is true that today more than at any other time teachers are aware of and make more provisions for individual differences. But what about the textbook? The general appearance of the textbook leads one to infer that it is intended to provide for pupils of the eighth grade who have an average eighth grade reading ability or better. Consequently textbooks being used today in a typical eighth grade offer insurmountable obstacles to the slow or retarded pupil, create frustration, and are a source of confusion. Hence a textbook now is not often the expedient that it was intended to be. On the junior high school level the gravity of this situation is more apparent. The naturally limited ability of the pupil, further aggravated by the remote and abstract material offered in the text, inevitably causes him to lose interest and to become indifferent in acquiring historical understanding.

To cope with this situation a teacher is apt to resort to one of two alternatives. She may either use a book that is inadequate because of its difficulty or may use one written for pupils in elementary grades.

If she does use the average eighth grade textbook it is very likely that she will give a minimum assignment to the slow reading pupils in comparison with the regular assignment given the other members
of the class. Actually this treatment is not a solution for these pupils because they are being exposed to material that is beyond their comprehension. The book cannot serve their needs; it is better that they should not be allowed to struggle with it. If they cannot read the language, they cannot use it as a learning aid.

If the teacher takes the other alternative she will be requesting slow readers to secure information from books that have been written for pupils of lower grades—very likely, fifth graders—since United States history is usually taught on the fifth grade level in the elementary schools. This procedure is just as psychologically unwise and emotionally disturbing as other discriminating factors that we are trying to avoid in modern education. Furthermore these books are inadequate for eighth graders and very often not only omit details but even highlights in history that the author has assumed the child will get in later history classes. Regardless of how retarded an eighth grader is, he certainly knows the difference when his assignment is given him in a fifth grade history book while his classmate uses the regular textbook. It is not improbable that he may have used the very same book three years ago. He needs a textbook that will provide for him and others like him. It should be written especially for him and not for an average pupil of the fifth grade.

Pupils may be slow readers but they have feelings and personal pride and prestige like adults. A typical class is a replica of society with the dull and the bright, the alert and the listless. Provision must be made for all.
There are indications that the modern textbook, colorful and attractive as it may be, and despite its recent improvements, is still too difficult for a large number of pupils in the grade for which it was intended. For the slow reader it leaves much to be desired.

2. Literature In The Field

An analysis of research and other writings on criteria for selection of textbooks reveals some striking similarities. The following criteria are the ones most frequently mentioned.

1. Literary quality.
2. Concepts within grasp of pupils.
3. Sufficient vocabulary repetition and sentence structure control to promote retention and learning.
4. Serviceable vocabulary.
5. Rich and vital experience should be provided.
7. Promotion of more reading.
8. Material should be well written.
10. Physical format.
11. Illustrations.
14. Clarity of directions.
15. Motivation factors.

The textbook should be flexible and should be supplemented by other materials. The idea of flexibility implies a structure of pattern which allows for variations, a choice of contents, activities and methods.

Closely related to flexibility is the requirement that an organization of material provide for pupils of varying ability. This can be done by indicating minimum essentials and enrichment materials or by providing several levels of difficulty, from which the student can choose the appropriate level. Thus the more capable pupil can carry on numerous activities, while the less capable one can perform

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Based on the following sources:


in proportion to his capacity.

The slow backward pupil is entitled to the same special consideration that the bright versatile pupil receives. Each should be led to achieve up to the level of his capacity; each should have materials which utilize his total ability.

3. Purpose And Scope Of Study

The writer has attempted to determine the extent to which several typical United States history textbooks serve the slow reader. An analysis was made of ten textbooks of fairly recent publication being used on the junior high school level today. The criteria used as a basis for analysis included the twelve listed in the table of contents.

A secondary aspect of this study is concerned with a questionnaire that was administered to a heterogeneous group of approximately one hundred and fifty pupils. The respondents were to reply to a list of questions pertaining to United States history textbooks. The major purpose of the questionnaire was to discover what the pupil considers to be objectionable or favorable features in the textbook with which he is familiar and which he uses in connection with his work.

Finally, the writer has drawn up a list of recommendations that may make textbooks more serviceable and meaningful to the slow reader.

1/See Appendix A for questionnaire.
CHAPTER II

AN ANALYSIS OF TEN SELECTED JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL UNITED STATES HISTORY TEXTBOOKS IN TERMS OF THEIR SUITABILITY FOR SLOW READERS

1. Criteria Used in Analysis

The major purpose of the analysis of selected United States History textbooks was to determine the extent to which these typical books serve the slow reader. One book was the basic textbook in a junior high school and the other nine were supplementary texts used in the same junior high school. The analysis was based on the following criteria:

1. Vocabulary
2. Pages per chapter
3. Length of sentences
4. Important facts in a sentence
5. Maps, charts, diagrams and graphs
6. Proposed activities
7. Typography
8. Pictures
9. Technical terms
10. Clarity of directions
11. Motivation factors
12. Motivation for further reading in United States history.

In determining the readability of the vocabulary the Reading-Ease Calculator was employed. In accordance with this method, one hundred words are counted on a certain number of pages prescribed by the calculator and the number of sentences including these words. Following this, the number of syllables are counted in the one hundred words. The number


of syllables and sentences of the page are then found on the calculator which reveals the grade level of the page. The grade levels of the various pages are used to determine the grade placement.

The average length of the chapters was determined by consulting the table of contents.

The average length of the sentences was found by counting the lines of sentences on certain pages throughout the book. The information was then organized and the average length of the sentences determined.

The important facts in a sentence were determined by exactly the same method used to find the length of sentences, except that in this case the writer sought the facts in a sentence.

Maps, charts, diagrams, and graphs were located in the text, and appraised in terms of their suitability and serviceability as visual devices. In evaluating maps, the shadings, size, signs, characters, colors, lines, key symbols, etc., were considered. Pictorial charts and horizontal bar charts were appraised in terms of their interpretive value and effectiveness in producing information. In the case of diagrams the factors involved in their evaluation were clarity, identification, size, attractiveness, and interest appeal. The line, circle, and bar graphs were examined for their effectiveness to show comparisons.

A list of proposed activities followed after the completion of a chapter or unit. The activities were appraised on the basis of provision for individual and group expression and variety.

The point size type given in Webster's Dictionary was used to determine the size of the typography.
Pictures could be found easily throughout the books and could be appraised as to suitability and helpfulness in the interpretation of the subject matter.

Technical terms were counted on a selected number of pages throughout the textbook to determine frequency of these words. Also the vocabulary and activities lists were scrutinized to determine if any further provision for learning of these terms had been made by the author. Many words pertinent to land and water features, words applying to transportation, to distance and direction, to human occupations, to physical phenomena, terrestrial features, political and economic terms, religious terms, etc., were considered technical terms. Some typical examples are the following: embargo, protocol, meteorology, referendum, impeach, filibuster, etc.

The book was skimmed to locate directions and determine their clarity from the manner presented.

Motivation factors were determined from a study of introductions to chapters and units, overviews, summaries and visual aids.

The motivation for further reading was determined by locating bibliography lists, consulting these lists for the number and types of books and for the manner in which they were presented.

2. Analysis of texts


Vocabulary.— The vocabulary was found to be on a seventh grade
reading level. The book is used by pupils of the seventh and eighth grade and is the basic text.

**Pages per chapter.**-- Chapters vary in length from ten to twenty pages. The book contains thirty-two chapters which have been divided into ten units.

**Length of sentences.**-- Three lines is the average length of the sentences in this book. Some five line sentences occur. However, this book features the two column page, thus making the sentences comparatively short.

**Important facts in a sentence.**-- The average sentence includes two important facts. Only few have more and many have only one important fact.

**Maps, charts, diagrams and graphs.**-- Maps and charts appear in profusion. Also diagrams, timelines and cartoons are included, attempting to aid in the interpretation of the story.

**Proposed activities.**-- At the end of each chapter there is a quiz plus a vocabulary list of ten words used in the chapter. At the end of each unit there is a summary, questions for discussion, and a list of activities in which pupils may participate either in a group or independently.

**Typography.**-- The print is clear and appears readable. Titles and main topics are written in bold face type. A few scattered words or sentences throughout each chapter are written in italics. The type used is the ten point size.

**Pictures.**-- The text is liberally illustrated with well selected
pictures that can be very helpful.

Technical terms. — Technical terms occur in every chapter. Vocabulary lists at the end of each chapter contain many of these words for further drill.

Clarity of directions. — Directions are used in connection with activities and are clearly given in an understandable manner.

Motivation factors. — Careful consideration has been given to motivation factors. The beginning of each unit includes a full page illustration with an interesting legend explaining the illustration although the illustration itself is clear and self explanatory.

Motivation for further reading in United States history. — A bibliography occurs at the completion of every unit recommending books relevant to the material in the unit. A general bibliography is found at the end of the book.


Vocabulary. — The vocabulary was found to be on an eighth to ninth grade level in this text.

Pages per chapter. — The book is organized into thirty-two chapters, divided into nine units, and each chapter varying from ten to twenty-five pages.

Length of sentences. — The sentences are long. Some are very long. The page is not divided into columns and many sentences are more than five lines long. The average sentence is a little more than three
Important facts in a sentence.— At least two important facts occur in each sentence, some have three, and a few have four important facts in a sentence.

Maps, charts, diagrams and graphs.— The book contains an abundance of maps. Colored political maps, pictorial maps and many maps in black and white. Also several colored pictographs are included. Several charts and timelines also are found.

Proposed activities.— Two types of exercises are found at the end of each chapter. One exercise is called the "Study and Review Questions" consisting of questions based on the material of the chapter completed. The other exercise is composed of eight or ten suggested activities providing for group and individual expression.

Typography.— Words and phrases written in italics occur throughout the book. The black bold face type occurs for titles and topics. Most of the content appears to be the eleven point size type. Some sections, including quotations or special material are in the nine point size type.

Pictures.— There are full page color plates and many pictures throughout the book, occurring practically on every page.

Technical terms.— Technical terms are found in the content although no special provision has been made for them. This text does not include vocabulary lists.

Clarity of directions.— The directions in this text also occur at the completion of a chapter or unit and seem to be understandable.
for average eighth graders.

**Motivation factors.**— There is a full page introduction for every unit, concerned with the material which is to follow. Also on this same page are several illustrations pertinent to the unit. Each chapter is preceded by three questions designed to stimulate the pupil's mind and arouse his curiosity.

**Motivation for further reading in United States history.**— There is an appropriate list of suggested bibliography at the end of each chapter. The list includes about ten books pertinent to the subject matter completed in the last chapter.


**Vocabulary.**— The reading grade level was found to be on a seventh grade. This is a supplementary book in one particular junior high school.

**Pages per chapter.**— The book is comprised of twenty-eight chapters which have been divided into nine units. The pages per chapter vary from eighteen to thirty-five pages.

**Length of sentences.**— The page is not divided into two columns. The sentences are practically three or more than three lines long. Some sentences are five lines long.

**Important facts in a sentence.**— The average sentence includes two important facts. Some contain only one and a few contain more than two important facts.
Maps, charts, diagrams and graphs.--- Some maps occur in this book, but not as many as one would find in an average text. Also there are several charts and cartoons.

Proposed activities.--- The question and answer type exercise is found to be dominant. Project suggestions are also provided. There is a wide variety but they are presented in a stilted formal manner.

Typography.--- Although most of the content is the ten point size type, much of the printed material appears small and seems to lack reading appeal. At the end of each chapter bibliographies and references are printed in the nine point size type.

Pictures.--- Many pictures are found throughout the book, both in black and white and in color.

Technical terms.--- Technical terms are found throughout the content. Only at the beginning of each unit has provision been made for further use in vocabulary drills.

Clarity of directions.--- The literary style of the directions seems to be on an adult level. Although they are clear, the manner in which they are presented seems formal.

Motivation factors.--- An introduction much like a summary is the only motivating factor, appearing at the beginning of each unit.

Motivation for further reading in United States history.--- A bibliography occurs at the end of each chapter.

Vocabulary.--- The vocabulary has been found to be on a seventh grade reading level.

Pages per chapter.--- Twenty-eight chapters are divided into eight units. Each chapter is approximately twenty-five pages in length.

Length of sentences.--- Two and one half lines is the average length although many sentences have four or five lines. The page is not divided into two columns.

Important facts in a sentence.--- The average sentence contains one fact although some sentences contain two or more.

Maps, charts, diagrams and graphs.--- Maps appear throughout the book.

Proposed activities.--- At the end of each chapter are review questions. A list of activities designated to provide for group and individual expression is also found at the end of each chapter. At the completion of each unit is a review of the question and answer type dealing almost entirely on the material of the unit completed.

Typography.--- The material appears very clear and readable. The content is printed in the eleven point size type. Questions and activities at the end of each chapter are in the nine point size.

Pictures.--- Throughout the book pictures appear generously. The pictures contain action, are colorful and appear to be meaningful and appealing to children.

Technical terms.--- These terms are found in the content through-
out the book. At the end of each chapter some of these words are used in the activities section. An explanation of the word is requested, or the use of the technical term in a sentence.

Clarity of directions.— The directions seem clear, and within the comprehension of the seventh and eighth grade student.

Motivation factors.— Each unit begins with an overview apparently designed to give the student a preview of the material to follow. A small colorful picture prefaces the overview.

Motivation for further reading in United States history.— A suggested bibliography occurs at the end of each chapter. There are no annotations.


Vocabulary.— The vocabulary reading level of the text was found to be about seventh grade.

Pages per chapter.— Thirty-two chapters are divided into ten units. The average length of each chapter appears to be about twenty pages, although some chapters are about twenty-five pages in length.

Length of sentences.— A little over four lines seems to be the average length of the sentences, although some sentences are longer.

The page is divided into two columns which makes lines short and the
content easier to read.

**Important facts in a sentence.**—Most of the sentences contain more than one fact and some sentences contain several important facts.

**Maps, charts, diagrams and graphs.**—Throughout the book there is a profusion of a variety of maps. Timelines, graphs and charts are also used to aid in the interpretation of the subject matter.

**Proposed activities.**—The exercises and activities are found at the conclusion of each unit. They are varied in requirements supposedly to provide for individual differences. Much provision is made for group work, this type exercise being emphasized more than independent expression.

**Typography.**—The type is dark and outstanding and appears very readable. Titles, headings, and topics are in bold face type, and of varying sizes. The ten point size type is used in printing the content.

**Pictures.**—The book is excellently and profusely illustrated with interesting drawings, some occupying a full page. All drawings should be appealing to the students. They are very appropriately classified as picture stories and seem to do exactly what their name implies.

**Technical terms.**—Technical terms are used throughout the book and are adequately defined. At the end of some chapters questions are asked about some technical term in an effort to make its meaning clearer. At the end of every unit there appears a list of words under the heading A and a list of meanings under the heading B.
The students are asked to match the items in list A with their identifications in List B. Most of these words in the list are technical terms.

Clarity of directions.-- Great care seems to have been taken to facilitate clarity of directions. An average pupil of the eighth grade should have no difficulty in comprehension and interpretation of directions.

Motivation factors.-- The excellent drawings which have replaced photographs in this text can be a motivating factor as well as valuable visual aids. In addition to the drawings, an overview of the material to follow is given at the beginning of each unit.

Motivation for further reading in United States history.-- A very substantial bibliography occurs at the completion of each unit. In addition to the name of the book and author a sentence is given to further recommend or explain the book to the student.


Vocabulary.-- The reading level of this book was high school or tenth grade.

Pages per chapter.-- The book is divided into twenty chapters. The chapters are divided into ten units. Almost every chapter is about forty pages in length. The last chapter is sixty-four pages.

Length of sentences.-- The sentences are three to four lines long. This presents a problem particularly to the slow reader, for
although this book is a very recent publication the page is not divided into columns.

**Important facts in a sentence.**—Most of the sentences contain one or two important facts.

**Maps, charts, diagrams and graphs.**—Maps are very plentiful attempting to make the geography of the history clear. Cartoons are also prevalent.

**Proposed activities.**—At the completion of each chapter are questions pertinent to the subject matter in that particular chapter. At the end of each unit are to be found a chronological list of events treated in the unit, a series of questions, and a group of exercises or projects.

**Typography.**—The print is very readable and clear. All the content is uniform and printed in the eleven point size type. Bold face type is used for titles and topics in varied sizes. A few words occur in italics but are larger than the average italic writing. Only in the Appendix does the eight point size type occur.

**Pictures.**—The book is liberally illustrated with black and white and also colorful pictures, appearing to be very well selected.

**Technical terms.**—Technical terms appear throughout the text. Adequate provision for further drill has not been made except that occasionally a question at the end of some of the chapters asks for an explanation or for the meaning of one of these words.

**Clarity of directions.**—Directions appear at the end of each chapter or unit and are clearly defined and understandable.
Motivation factors. — At the beginning of each chapter is a short but interesting paragraph, preparing the student for what is to follow.

Motivation for further reading in United States history. — This is the only book analyzed that does not contain a bibliography. The only provision for further reading is made in one of the exercises under activities. The exercise recommends that further reading be made in a reference book about specific personalities discussed in the unit.


Vocabulary. — The reading vocabulary is based on a seventh to eighth grade level.

Pages per chapter. — The book is divided into twenty-three chapters approximately twenty pages in length. The chapters are organized into ten units.

Length of sentences. — Most sentences contain only one important fact — a desirable feature of this book. A few sentences contain two facts.

Important facts in each sentence. — Most sentences contain one important fact, some contain two, a desirable feature in this book.

Maps, charts, diagrams and graphs. — A few maps are scattered through the book, there are many charts and diagrams. Some cartoons are also found.

Proposed activities. — At the end of each chapter are review
questions, a word list, projects that are very interesting, providing for interpretation of the subject matter, map exercises and a proposed activity for organization of chapter material. There are activities providing for vocabulary enrichment and projects for individual and group expression at the end of each unit.

**Typography.**—The print is clear and very readable and printed in the ten and one half point size type. Bold face type also occurs in the book.

**Pictures.**—There is a profusion of pictures throughout the book that should certainly help to make the contents more meaningful and interesting. A set of beautiful pictures, covering about twenty full pages appear at the beginning of the book on United States industries, and a two page spread of famous men.

**Technical terms.**—Vocabulary lists occur at the end of every chapter which include many technical words for further drill and use in sentences. Also in some cases they are used in connection with the exercises and activities.

**Clarity of directions.**—Directions are found at the end of chapters and units and are presented in a clear understandable manner.

**Motivation factors.**—An introduction is given at the beginning of each chapter followed by questions designed to arouse interest and curiosity. In this book each chapter is featured rather than each unit.

**Motivation for further reading in United States history.**—
A pertinent bibliography list occurs at the end of each chapter. Provision for individual differences in reading is made here. Titles of books starred (★) are below seventh grade level; the titles of books with the symbol of a dagger (†) are above seventh grade level; the titles of books that are not marked with a symbol are on a seventh grade level and presented supposedly for the average reader.


Vocabulary.— The vocabulary in this textbook was found to be on a ninth grade reading level.

Pages per chapter.— The book is divided into thirty-six chapters. These chapters are divided into eight units. The length of the chapters varies from ten to twenty pages.

Length of sentences.— Each page is divided into two columns. Most sentences are about three lines long, very few are five lines long.

Important facts in a sentence.— One of two facts are found in each sentence. It is very seldom that more than two facts occur in a sentence.

Maps, charts, diagrams and graphs.— Throughout the book many maps, charts, diagrams and tables prevail, and are very helpful in explaining the happening of events.

Proposed activities.— Activities are found at the end of each unit planned for varying interests and abilities, for group and independent participation.

Typography.— Words in italics occur in the book and also words
in bold face type. The general content is printed in the ten point size. The activities section at the end of each unit is the nine point size type.

Pictures.-- There are pictures generously scattered throughout the book, in black and white and also several full page photographs, which should prove to be meaningful and enjoyable.

Technical terms.-- At the completion of each unit a considerably long vocabulary list occurs. Many of these words are technical terms and an explanation or the meaning of the word is required. Also they are of use in connection with the exercises and the activities.

Clarity of directions.-- The directions are clearly and specifically given and occur in connection with the activities.

Motivation factors.-- A timeline is found at the beginning of each chapter. It occupies a full page. Each unit is introduced with an overview of material and a full page beautifully colored picture on the opposite page pertinent to the material.

Motivation for further reading in United States history.-- A list of books, rather small list as compared to the other books analyzed, is found at the end of each chapter.


Vocabulary.-- The reading range of the vocabulary in this text is between eighth and ninth grade level.

Pages per chapter.-- The book is divided into thirty-seven chapters and the chapters are organized into ten units. Most of the
chapters are about fifteen pages long.

Length of sentences. — Most sentences are approximately three lines long. Five line sentences also occur. The page is not divided into two columns, which makes these sentences long, even for average eighth graders.

Important facts in a sentence. — Almost every sentence includes two facts; some have more.

Maps, charts, diagrams and graphs. — Charts, diagrams, timelines and graphs are used skillfully to interpret history to the reader. There is a profusion of them and a very large number of a variety of maps. A two page spread global map at the beginning of the book is colorful and can be very serviceable to students.

Proposed activities. — Activities appear at the end of each unit. In addition to the summary there is a vocabulary drill, an exercise on persons and places studied and suggested projects providing for individual and group expression.

Typography. — The captions or legends of the pictures are in very small size print, the eight point size. The general content is printed in the ten point size. Bold face type occurs, although very infrequently.

Pictures. — The book is liberally illustrated throughout. Black and white and colored pictures should be of great service in understanding many parts of the text.

Technical terms. — A list of words required to be identified
occurs at the completion of each unit. Among the words in the vocabulary list a large proportion are technical terms. Another group of words, of which a large number are technical terms, occur for which further study is proposed.

Clarity of directions.— The directions are given in a simple meaningful manner that should be understandable for the average eighth grader.

Motivation factors.— Each unit is presented with a quotation or excerpt from some famous man or statesman pertinent to the material which is about to follow. Also on every introductory page of the unit is an interesting illustration.

Motivation for further reading in United States history.— A full page bibliography appears at the end of each unit.


Vocabulary.— The vocabulary of the text was found to be between an eighth and ninth grade reading level.

Pages per chapter.— The content of the book is divided into thirty-three chapters. The chapters have been organized into ten units. The chapters vary in length. Practically all of them are approximately fifteen pages in length. A few are twenty pages long.

Length of sentences.— The sentences are three to five lines long, and each page is divided into two columns, a very desirable
feature since it shortens the length of a line.

**Important facts in a sentence.**—Many sentences contain only one fact. Some sentences contain at least two facts, very few sentences contain more than two facts.

**Maps, charts, diagrams and graphs.**—The book is generously illustrated. There are forty-five different maps and twenty-seven charts and graphs. In addition there are diagrams and animated cartoons, apparently carefully selected and designed to make the contents meaningful and interesting.

**Proposed activities.**—At the conclusion of each chapter appears a vocabulary list of words used in the chapter. The meanings of the words are not requested but sentences in connection with some particular topic with which the chapter dealt. Also there is a list of important dates, with a question about each particular date. This is followed by a considerable number of questions on the chapter. At the conclusion of each unit these same activities appear in addition to the unit summary, plus several lists of projects, some specifically designated for group work and others calling for individual expression.

**Typography.**—The general content is printed in the ten point size type. The introduction of each chapter is written in italics. The exercises and activities are in the nine and one half size type. Titles and topics are typed in bold face print.

**Pictures.**—The book has an abundance of pictures. A two page spread introduces each unit. These drawings are fascinating, clever, attractive and should have an unlimited appeal with children. An un-
usual feature is a list of references where pictures can be obtained, pertinent to the material of every unit. This information occurs at the end of each unit.

**Technical terms.** These words are used throughout the book. Provision is made for better learning of the technical terms used in this text. An exercise follows at the end of each chapter that calls for the use of these words in sentences. Furthermore the exercise suggests that the sentences pertain to the subject matter of the chapter. A similar exercise is also found at the end of every unit.

**Clarity of directions.** The directions are given in a clear understandable manner and appear in connection with chapter and unit activities.

**Motivation factors.** The two page spread drawing of every unit is one feature used to motivate learning. The introductory incident of each chapter is another, interesting in itself and usually sufficiently comprehensive to orient the whole chapter. Another unique feature is a one thousand word biography of a man or woman in each of the ten units in the text.

**Motivation for further reading in United States history.** An excellent bibliography occurs at the conclusion of each unit. In addition to this, one of the appendices is entirely devoted to a bibliography and is organized under books, pamphlets, historical novels and biographies. Also a further list of available sources is given for procuring pictures.
3. Details of Analysis

Vocabulary.-- Of the ten textbooks analyzed using the Reading-Ease Calculator, five were found to have a seventh grade reading level, one was on a high school or tenth grade reading level, another was on a seventh to eighth grade level, and two were on an eighth to ninth grade level. The textbook used in answering the questions to the questionnaire was found to be on a seventh grade level.

Pages per chapter.-- The average length of the chapters was found to be twenty to twenty-five pages in the books analyzed.

Length of sentences.-- It was interesting to note that six of the books analyzed featured the two-column page. Four did not. The average two-column sentence was about three and one half lines long. The other books varied from one and one half to two and one half on the average, many sentences being much longer than that.

Important facts in a sentence.-- In most books the sentences contained more than one fact.

Maps, charts, diagrams and graphs.-- All books were well illustrated; however, special praise should be given the most recent publications for their excellent use of visual aids.

Proposed activities.-- The activities in all books except one provided for group and individual expression. All the authors of the other texts realized the importance apparently of activity use as a learning aid. Again the selections in the more recent publications were more varied and outstanding.
Typography.— The typography of most books analyzed was clear and of an average size. The ten point size type seemed to be the one most frequently used. In almost all texts the section at the end of chapters and units providing questions and exercises was in the nine or eight point size.

Pictures.— Pictures were used generously and effectively. In the recent publications they are being replaced by excellent drawings which seem to contribute immensely to the interpretation of the story.

Technical terms.— Technical terms were found in all books and were used more with topics concerning government than any other topic. Almost all books provided for further study or use of technical terms in aid in their interpretation. Some books, usually the ones most recently published, made more adequate provision than others.

Clarity of directions.— Directions in most of the texts analyzed were clearly presented and should offer no problem to the average junior high school student.

Motivation factors.— All books included motivation factors; most of them have an overview at the beginning of the unit pertinent to the subject matter that was to follow. The other important factor was the use of visual aids.

Motivation for further reading in United States history.— All books except one provided a bibliography of reading. Two of the more recent publications presented it a little more interestingly than
it was presented in the other eight texts.

4. Summary

The more recently published books seemed to have many improvements which should be of great value to both the student and the teacher. However, not all books analyzed seem to be written on the grade level for which they were intended. For the slow reader, in spite of their improvements they would not be sufficiently serviceable and meaningful to aid adequately his needs.
CHAPTER III
BASIC TEXTBOOK EVALUATION BY PUPILS
OF A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

1. The Nature and Purpose of Evaluation

A questionnaire was devised to ascertain how pupils felt about the readability, suitability, and serviceability of the basic textbook used daily in social studies. Twenty items were included in the questionnaire based on the criteria used for the analysis of the ten selected textbooks in United States history. The major purpose of the questionnaire was the consideration of the pupils' interests in addition to the discovery of what the students consider helpful features in a text. It is hoped that these pupil opinions serve as helpful factors in the selection of a textbook particularly for the slow reader.

2. Type and Size of Reporting School

The school is located in one of the best residential sections of an industrial city in Massachusetts. The majority of the children attending this school come from the more favored homes with many

1/See Appendix A for questionnaire.

advantages, the results of which show up in some aspects of personality, as compared with other schools in the city where enrollment consists mostly of underprivileged children having restricted socio-economic backgrounds. Two hundred sixty-three students are enrolled in the school. One hundred fifty-four are in the seventh and eighth grades.

3. Administration and Reliability of Data

A questionnaire containing twenty items was prepared by the writer and administered to one hundred forty-three students of the seventh and eighth grades with a range in reading ability from 4.6 to 10.4 in grade placement. This reading ability is based on the Progressive Reading Test - Intermediate - Form C administered to these students September 28, 1951. One questionnaire was presented to each student and he was told to underline one word or group of words for every sentence on the questionnaire. The questionnaire was employed to obtain the opinions and judgments of the students in regard to their history textbook.

The administrator of the scale read the directions which explained to the respondents that they should feel free to answer exactly how they believed, and that the results of the test would have no effect whatsoever on history marks. Because of the reading deficiencies of some students the administrator read every item on the questionnaire aloud, and paused at the conclusion of each sentence to allow the respondents to select and underline the word or group of words they had selected.

No time limit was set and the administrator volunteered to
answer any questions that might help in clarifying any item on the list.

This opinion scale was designed to ascertain how the pupil felt about a particular thing, namely the serviceability of his United States history book in this specific case. In this type of questionnaire one cannot be sure that the pupil answers with sincerity. Regardless of how the teacher endeavors to impress upon a student that the results of the test will have no bearing on marks the student will often respond the way he believes he is expected to respond rather than how he virtually feels. In studying and analyzing the data the writer found this to be particularly true of the slow reader.

4. Analysis of Data

The inadequacy of the data makes it impossible to draw final conclusions at this time. However, there are a number of interesting points that have presented themselves. The results have been tabulated and presented in Table 1, page 42. The table has nine columns the first of which contains the items of the questionnaire. In the second column are the responses of students having a grade level reading ability of 4.0 to 4.9. The responses of the pupils with a reading ability of 5.0 to 5.9 are found in the third column. Similarly in the fourth through the eighth column are listed the responses of pupils with reading levels of 6 through 10th grades.

As previously stated one hundred forty-three students filled out the questionnaire in the seventh and eighth grades. Seventy of
these students are in the eighth grade. Twenty-four of them or 34 per cent are below grade level in reading. Seventy-three are in the seventh grade and twenty-one or approximately 29 per cent are below grade level in reading. Forty-five students from a total of one hundred forty-three were below grade level in reading, or approximately 31 per cent of the population responding was below grade level in reading.

The responses to vocabulary showed that more than 2 per cent considered the words difficult, less than 1 per cent (only one student of the entire group) found the vocabulary very difficult, over 9 per cent found the vocabulary easy and more than 88 per cent agreed that the vocabulary in the text was average or ordinary.

In considering the length of sentences about 14 per cent considered the sentences long, slightly more than 1 per cent thought the sentences were too long, 77 per cent thought the sentences were of average length, and almost 4 per cent considered the sentences in the text short.

Approximately 15 per cent agreed that sentences contain one fact, 67 per cent concluded that they contain more than one fact, more than 18 per cent felt that sentences contained many facts, but no one felt that sentences contained too many facts.

More than 4 per cent thought the chapters in the book were short, 61 per cent thought they were of average length, 31 per cent considered them long, and more than 2 per cent found them to be too
long.

It was interesting to note that no one considered the print to be too small, although more than 3 per cent considered it small, 90 per cent agreed that it was of an average size, and practically 7 per cent considered it large. No one considered the size of the print too large.

Maps were found to be helpful by more than 67 per cent, 30 per cent considered them helpful sometimes, a little over 1 per cent found them seldom helpful, but no one maintained that they were never helpful.

More than 57 per cent considered maps helpful in clarifying land and water areas, more than 40 per cent agreed that land and water areas were made clear by maps sometimes, less than 3 per cent stated that land and water areas very seldom were made clear by maps, but no one contended that land and water areas were never made clear by maps.

A very large number, almost 75 per cent agreed that pictures make stories understandable, less than 24 per cent claimed that pictures helped them to understand the story sometimes, less than 2 per cent claimed that pictures seldom help to understand the story, and no one stated that pictures never help in the comprehension of a story.

More than 26 per cent thought that the pictures were usually colorful and attractive, more than 54 per cent considered them colorful and attractive sometimes, 14 per cent claimed they were seldom colorful and attractive, and more than 4 per cent never considered
them colorful and attractive.

In considering cartoons almost 74 per cent found them to clarify certain facts or ideas, more than 26 per cent considered them to be helpful in clarifying facts sometimes, and no one stated that they were seldom or never helpful.

In considering charts 56 per cent of those tested found them simple to understand, 33 per cent found them simple to understand sometimes, only 9 per cent considered them difficult to understand and less than 2 per cent claimed that they were always difficult to understand.

In considering timelines almost 45 per cent found them to make events clear to them, practically 42 per cent found them to make events clear sometimes, more than 9 per cent very seldom found them to make happenings of events clear, and almost 4 per cent never found them to make events clear.

In the comparison of visual aids over 37 per cent preferred maps, more than 25 per cent showed a preference for pictures, approximately 16 per cent selected cartoons, almost 15 per cent selected charts and about 6 per cent selected timelines.

The response to word lists was very interesting. More than 55 per cent considered word lists helpful. Approximately 43 per cent considered them helpful sometimes, and only a little more than 1 per cent claimed word lists were difficult. No one of the entire population tested considered them very difficult.

More than 3 per cent considered activities very easy, over 68
per cent considered them easy, more than 27 per cent considered them difficult and not one of the entire group participating in the scale considered the activities very difficult.

In response to interesting activities, more than 65 per cent considered activities interesting, more than 25 per cent considered them seldom interesting, more than 7 per cent considered them always interesting, and over 2 per cent claimed they were never interesting.

The questions at the end of each unit were found helpful by more than 72 per cent, 33 per cent considered them helpful sometimes only, more than 2 per cent claimed the questions were seldom helpful, and almost 2 per cent claimed that the questions were never helpful.

The motivating factor aroused the interest of more than 60 per cent, more than 36 per cent found the motivation interesting sometimes, almost 3 per cent thought the motivation seldom aroused their interest and one student or less than 1 per cent considered the motivation never interesting.

An interesting disclosure was the fact that no one ever read all the books suggested at the end of chapters or units, less than 34 per cent read some of them, about 23 per cent read most of them, and 43 per cent read none of them at all.

In reporting words which they did not understand the average number not known per pupil by the group having a reading ability of 4.0 to 4.9 was 4.3. The average number of words not known per pupil by the group with a reading ability 5.0 to 5.9 was five. The average
number of words per pupil not understood was 3.4 by those having a reading ability of 6.0 to 6.9. The pupils having a reading ability of 7.0 to 7.9 disclosed an average number of 1.3 words not known per pupil. The average number not known per pupil by those having a reading ability of 8.0 to 8.9 was 1.2. Those found in the group of reading ability between 9.0 to 9.9 had an average number per pupil of 0.6 of words not known. The average number of words per pupil not known by the group with a reading ability of 10.0 to 10.9 was 0.4. When considering the whole group, composed of one hundred forty-three students, 1.7 was the average number of words not known per pupil.

In summary, the following factors seem to be most significant:

1. Not all items considered received responses in all degrees.
2. Vocabulary exercises are considered "helpful" or "helpful sometimes" by the entire population tested.
3. A large percentage of the respondents considered the sentences to have more than one fact or many facts.
4. A large percentage considered the questions on material read to be "helpful."
5. Six out of seven pupils with the greatest reading ability read none of the books in the bibliography.
6. The typography was considered of average size by almost 90 per cent of the entire population tested.
7. Maps were the most popular visual aid with pictures and
cartoons next in popularity in that order.
### Table 1. Grade Reading Levels of Participating Pupils

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Grade Levels</th>
<th>Number of Pupils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.0 - 4.9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0 - 5.9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0 - 6.9</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0 - 7.9</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.0 - 8.9</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.0 - 9.9</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.0 - 10.9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Table 2.
### Basic Textbook Evaluation by Pupils of a Junior High School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items Considered</th>
<th>Grade Placement</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.0-4.9</td>
<td>5.0-5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) easy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) average or ordinary</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) difficult</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) very difficult</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The sentences are</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) short</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) of average length</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) long</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) too long</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Each sentence contains</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) one fact</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) more than one fact</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) many facts</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) too many facts</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The chapters are</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) short</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) of average length</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) long</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) too long</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued on next page)
Table 2. (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items Considered</th>
<th>Grade Placement</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.0-4.9</td>
<td>5.0-5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The print is</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) too small</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) small</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) of average size</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) large</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) too large</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The maps are</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) helpful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) helpful sometimes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) very seldom helpful</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) never helpful</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The maps make land and water areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) clear to you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) clear to you sometimes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) very seldom make them clear</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) never make them clear to you</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued on next page)
Table 2. (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items Considered</th>
<th>Grade Placement</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.0-4.9</td>
<td>5.0-5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pictures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) help you to understand the story</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) help you sometimes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) very seldom help you</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) never help you</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pictures are</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) usually colorful and attractive</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) sometimes colorful and attractive</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) seldom colorful and attractive</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) never colorful and attractive</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartoons make certain facts or ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) clear to you</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) clear to you sometimes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) very seldom make them clear to you</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) never make them clear to you</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
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(Continued on next page)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items Considered</th>
<th>Grade Placement</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.0-4.9</td>
<td>5.0-5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The charts are</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) simple to understand ........</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) simple to understand</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sometimes ................................</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) difficult to understand..</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) always very difficult</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to understand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timelines ................................</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) make the happenings of events</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clear to you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) make them clear to you</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sometimes ................................</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) very seldom make them</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clear to you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) never make them clear to you</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You prefer ................................</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) maps</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) charts</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) pictures</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) cartoons</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) timelines</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued on next page)
Table 2. (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items Considered</th>
<th>Grade Placement</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.0-4.9</td>
<td>5.0-5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word lists at the end of the chapters are</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) helpful</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) helpful sometimes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) difficult</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) very difficult</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The activities and projects suggested at the end of each unit are</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) very easy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) easy</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) difficult</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) very difficult</td>
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<td>The activities and projects suggested at the end of each unit are</td>
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<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) seldom interesting</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) always interesting</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) never interesting</td>
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Table 2. (Continued)

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<td>5.0-5.9</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(b) helpful sometimes</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) seldom helpful</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>(d) never helpful</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) arouses your interest sometimes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) very seldom arouses your interest</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) never arouses your interest</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of each unit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) only some of them</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) most of them</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) none of them</td>
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<td>1</td>
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</table>

(Concluded on next page)
Table 2. (Concluded)

<table>
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<td>Turn to page (161) in your book</td>
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<td>Skim the page and then write the number of words of which you did not know the meaning. (Do not write the word. Write the number of words)</td>
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<td>Average number of words per pupil in each column</td>
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CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT MAY MAKE TEXTBOOKS IN UNITED STATES HISTORY MORE MEANINGFUL AND SERVICEABLE FOR THE SLOW READER IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

1. Recommendations

The textbook is a very important tool in social studies. If it is to serve as a useful aid for the pupils it must help them to achieve the objectives of the course.

It has been established that a problem most teachers have to meet is caused by the fact that the range of reading ability at any grade is so great that the textbook chosen for the grade proves too difficult for the slow readers. These students not only do not understand it but are bored by it. Sometimes they become disciplinary problems. They should be provided with textbooks suited to their reading ability. Three criteria have been set up by the Committee of Developmental Reading for selection of these books.

1. Their content must be more advanced than their vocabulary and sentence structure.

2. They must have been used successfully with retarded and reluctant readers.

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3. They must be of acceptable literary quality.

On the basis of study, research, analytical work, and an inventory of the opinions of 143 pupils of a junior high school, the writer makes the following suggestions, using as criteria the same items used for an analysis of ten textbooks.

**Vocabulary.**-- The need for simplification of vocabulary is evident, where the slow reader is concerned. The research and analysis of textbooks made by the writer has shown that vocabulary burdens are too great for the slow readers. A simplified vocabulary with sufficient repetition of new words to aid learning and to remove barriers of comprehension is necessary to make language more meaningful for the slow reader. The content should be of an advanced level or grade level but the vocabulary should be of a lower grade level, probably fourth or fifth grade, depending on the reading capacities of the students. The books should be labeled for the grade intended and not on the vocabulary grade level. Provision for vocabulary drills and devices appealing to children and making words more meaningful should be made. These word drills as an aid to slow readers should come at the beginning of each chapter and not at the beginning of each unit, which makes the burden too great for slow readers. It should be noted that practically every respondent to the questionnaire mentioned above answered that vocabulary drills were helpful or helpful sometimes.

**Pages per chapter.**-- More than 31 per cent of the responding pupils considered chapters to be long. The interest span of the slow reader is not as long as that of the average or bright child. Ten to
fifteen pages in each chapter should suffice in a textbook intended for slow readers. Most textbooks analyzed had an average of twenty pages in a chapter.

**Length of sentences.**—Sentences in a book of this type intended for slow readers should be approximately two and one half lines long provided that the page has the two-column formation. If not, one and one half lines should be the length of the average sentence. Some sentences may be longer when necessary; however, consideration must be given to the fact that the eye span of slow readers is limited and length of sentences should be planned accordingly.

**Important facts in a sentence.**—One important fact in a sentence should be sufficient, and is about all that a slow reader can absorb. Occasionally more than one fact may occur, but the average sentence on a page should not contain more than one fact.

**Maps, charts, diagrams and graphs.**—All visual aids are significant where the slow reader is concerned. He is often capable of remembering and interpreting the facts he gains through visual aids. The basic tools for the study of social studies are globes and maps. A textbook cannot provide globes, but global maps, political, relief and special maps, a large variety of them, simplified, with a large enough scale, clear attractive colors, and an adequate key to map symbols can render a great service. Maps were selected as the preferred visual aid in the questionnaire that was administered in connection with this study. Graphs should be included and presented in a variety of ways. They are of special value, since they are used so
extensively in all reading matter and the child will be confronted with them often in life. These too, should be simplified in order to serve the slow reader. Charts too, should be presented in a variety of ways. Meaningful charts are an excellent medium of communication for the pupil. Cartoons are popular with pupils. For the slow reader they can be a source of amusement and understanding if prepared on his level. Diagrams are not easily interpreted although they are sometimes useful. If these are included they should be simplified and made attractive in order to serve their purpose. As a rule they have a very limited appeal to the slow reader, primarily because they cannot be understood.

Proposed activities.— Activities can be the "spark plug" of learning where the slow reader is concerned. A textbook intended for the slow reader should be stocked with as many vital and varied activities as possible. Authors of textbooks realize this. It was very evident, when the textbook analysis was made by the writer, that a great deal of time, effort, and consideration had been contributed by the textbook authors in order to provide activities for group and independent expression. For the slow reader the writer would recommend activities that provided:

Typography.-- A clear twelve point size typography is recommended for a text of this type. Important words or phrases should be preferably written in bold face type rather than in italics. Dividing the printed page in two columns should be a requirement in a book intended for the slow reader.

Pictures.-- For the slow reader, the pictures in a textbook can be invaluable. A seeing-reading development should be incorporated in this type of textbook where subject matter can be so remote from the daily experiences of the pupil. A book for the slow reader should be so generously illustrated, that if a child looked at nothing but the pictures and their legends he could get a useful understanding of the subject matter. Pictures should be colorful, attractive, and contain action when possible. In this way a pupil can observe if he lacks the ability to secure information by reading.

Technical terms.-- These words should be used sparingly in a textbook intended for slow readers. If the material requires their use they should be simplified, explained in the text, repeated to aid retention, used in the vocabulary list, and also related to the activities if possible. This does not apply to technical terms which may be used in daily life, but more so with governmental terms, legal and religious terms, etc.

Clarity of directions.-- It is indeed significant that directions where slow readers are concerned be given in a clear understandable way. When possible, examples should be given to clarify certain points that may appear complicated. Key words in directions may be
written in bold face type.

Motivation factors.— Interest is an important condition of learning. A textbook can develop and deepen interest by providing the materials which explain and expand the elements of the subject matter. Although an introduction to a unit presented interestingly with some illustration may suffice for the average or bright pupil, in a textbook for the slow reader the motivation will have to be more appealing. Colorful attractive pictures (having a full page spread if possible) or some other visual aid simplified and interestingly presented accompanied by a legend, or questions pertinent to the illustration will probably have the most effect in arousing the interest of the slow reader. Another device that may be used is some story or understandable poem in conjunction with the illustration and pertinent to the material. For example, Barbara Frietchie may be used with a picture for the introduction of one unit, or a full page illustration showing the Indian warfare in action and a written article comparing it with the methods of warfare of early Americans as an introduction to another unit.

Motivation for further reading in United States history.— With the competition that reading is receiving from modern media of communication such as radio, television, and movies, it is well to take advantage of every opportunity to stress the importance of books or make books appealing to pupils. For the bibliography in a textbook intended for the slow reader it is recommended that there be quality and not quantity. One of several books presented in an interesting way at the
end of each unit can arouse more interest than just a stereotype bibliography list. Perhaps an anecdote or highlight from the book can be included which will stimulate the interest of the pupil.

In conclusion the writer wishes to state that these recommendations are by no means intended to be infallible. They are the outgrowth of a very limited study of selected textbooks. It is hoped that the suggestions will be helpful to those who are concerned with the problem of slow readers in junior high school American history classes.

The writer also wishes to state that although she is of the opinion that textbooks used today in the grade for which they are intended do not serve all the pupils — particularly the slow reader with whom this thesis is concerned — there has been remarkable improvement in many modern textbooks in matters of illustrations, literary style, physical format, typography, organization, teaching aids and general attractiveness.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY

An analysis and research on the significance of textbooks as a learning aid in the United States history on the junior high school level and particularly where the slow reader is concerned, revealed that the textbook is recognized as an important and essential tool and that it renders an invaluable service in the instruction of the social studies.

Clearly formulated criteria for judging texts do not exist; however, authors agree that in the selection of textbooks the most outstanding consideration should be the capacities of the student. The matters of vocabulary, the length of chapters, the length of sentences, the number of important facts in a sentence, the maps, charts, graphs and diagrams, the activities, typography, pictures, technical terms, clarity of directions, motivation factors, and further motivation for reading are the additional criteria most frequently mentioned. Although the importance of the textbook is recognized, it should be flexible and should be supplemented by other materials. Closely related to flexibility is the requirement that the organization of the material in the text provide for pupils of varying ability. Textbooks in the social studies in recent years have changed in response to
research, and have been better adapted to pupils' abilities. Despite these improvements research has demonstrated that most books are still too difficult for a large portion of the pupils in the grades for which the books are intended and particularly where the slow reader is concerned.

An analysis made by the writer of ten selected junior high school textbooks in United States history disclosed the following information with reference to the criteria mentioned above. The vocabulary of most textbooks, (determined by the Reading-Ease Calculator) was on a seventh and eighth grade level. Most chapters had an average length of twenty to twenty-five pages. The sentences were comparatively long although in recent publications they were of a more desirable length. The average sentence in most books analyzed contained more than one fact. The number of maps, charts, graphs, and diagrams in books had increased and all texts made generous use of visual aids. Investigation showed that activities were provided for both group and independent expression in all books analyzed. The typography appeared clear and readable with the ten or eleven point size found the most prevalent. Activities, bibliographies and exercises were in smaller type varying from the eight to the nine point size in most cases. In almost all books italics were occasionally employed. All books used the bold faced type for titles and main topics. Pictures were generously used, but varied greatly in number, quality and captions. Again recent publications showed a marked improvement, and pictures in these texts were noticeably superior. Technical terms were used in all texts although some of
the books made an effort to make them clearer than others. Directions were presented in a clear understandable manner and dealt chiefly with projects and activities. The motivation factor in all textbooks was an introduction or preface for the unit (in one book featuring chapters, the introduction or overview occurred at the beginning of each chapter.) In most books a visual aid supplemented the introduction. Motivation for further reading was provided by means of a suggested bibliography in all books except one. In summarizing the analysis the writer believes that although these books have been improved and tend to include more concrete content, better visual aids, type size and format, they showed a need for simplification in order to be effective or serviceable to slow readers.

In order to discover the pupils' opinions concerning the reading level appropriateness of their textbook a questionnaire was prepared using the criteria previously mentioned as items for consideration. One hundred forty-three students in a junior high school in the seventh and eighth grades participated in this opinion scale. The reading grade placement of the group varied from 4.6 to 10.4 (these reading scores being determined by the Progressive Reading Test -- Intermediate Form C administered to the group on September 28, 1951). The school which these students attend is located in one of the better districts of an industrial town in Massachusetts, and most of the pupils come from more favored homes. The participants were asked to complete each item considered in the questionnaire by underscoring one word or group of words
that best described how they felt toward the particular items considered. They were assured the scale had no effect on marks and no time limit was set for the completion of the scale. All items were read to the respondents in order to assure that all pupils understood the questionnaire. Table 1 in Chapter III summarizes the opinions of the respondents. Although it is impossible to draw final conclusions from the responses a number of interesting points presented themselves, especially in connection with vocabulary lists, the important facts in a sentence, the questions on the subject matter, the typography, the visual aids, and the extent of further reading as a result of bibliography lists.

Using as criteria the same items used for the analysis of the ten selected junior high school history textbooks the following recommendations (briefly stated) were proposed to aid in making the United States history textbook more serviceable and meaningful to the slow reader:

1. The simplification of vocabulary, with provision for vocabulary drills and adequate repetition for new words. The vocabulary should remain on a lower level than the content.

2. The length of the average chapter should not exceed fifteen pages. The two column page formation should be a requirement and the average sentence should be about two and one half lines in length.

3. One important fact in a sentence should be sufficient.
4. A variety of maps simplified with a large enough scale, and an adequate key to map symbols should be used. Charts, graphs, and timelines simplified to be meaningful to the slow reader should be included. If diagrams are used they should be greatly simplified in order to be useful, since they usually have a limited appeal to the slow reader because of the difficulty of interpretation.

5. Ample activities and projects should be provided for independent and group expression. Activities and projects can be vital contributory factors to learning where textbook reading has not succeeded.

6. A clear twelve point size typography is recommended, with important words or phrases emphasized by bold face type.

7. An abundance of pictures should prevail in colorful and attractive forms aiding in the interpretation of subject matter.

8. Technical terms should be excluded if and when possible. If material requires their use, they should be simplified and used in vocabulary lists and often enough in the content to assure comprehension.

9. Directions should be clearly presented, with examples as often as possible to clarify them even more.

10. Motivation factors are extremely important and great efforts should be made to provide a stimulating kind for the slow reader. Overviews in a simple but interesting form supplemented by a striking colorful visual aid are recommended.
11. For motivation providing for further reading it is suggested that few books should be listed. The books should have a low vocabulary level and presented in the text in an interesting way so as to arouse the curiosity and interest of the slow reader.

12. Finally, the physical format of the book should be appealing and attractive and the content should be more advanced than the vocabulary and sentence structure, although it should be of acceptable literary quality.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX A

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions. On these pages are some statements concerning the history book that you use most of the time in the classroom and in doing your homework. Underline the word or group of words that best answers what you believe. The results of this test will have no effect on your history mark. Feel free to answer exactly how you think. Underline only one group for every sentence.

1. Most of the words in the book are: easy, average or ordinary, difficult, very difficult.

2. The sentences are: short, of average length, long, too long.

3. Each sentence contains: one fact, more than one fact, many facts, too many facts.

4. The chapters in the book appear to you to be: short, of average length, long, too long.

5. The print is: too small, small, of average size, large, too large.

6. The maps are: helpful, helpful sometimes, are very seldom helpful, are never helpful.

7. The maps make land and water areas: clear to you, clear to you sometimes, very seldom make them clear to you,
never make them clear to you.

8. The pictures: help you to understand the story, help you sometimes, very seldom help you, never help you.

9. The pictures are: usually colorful and attractive, sometimes colorful and attractive, seldom colorful and attractive, never colorful and attractive.

10. The cartoons make certain facts or ideas of a story: clear to you, clear to you sometimes, very seldom make them clear to you, never make them clear to you.

11. Charts are: simple to understand, simple to understand sometimes, difficult to understand, always very difficult to understand.

12. Timelines: make the happenings of events clear to you, make them clear to you sometimes, very seldom make them clear to you, never make them clear to you.


14. Word lists at the end of the chapter are: helpful, helpful sometimes, difficult, very difficult.

15. The activities and projects suggested at the end of each unit are: very easy, easy, difficult, very difficult.

16. The activities and projects suggested at the end of each unit are: interesting, seldom interesting, always interesting, never interesting.

17. The questions at the end of each unit are: helpful, helpful
sometimes, seldom helpful, never helpful.

18. The introduction of each unit: arouses your interest, arouses your interest sometimes, very seldom arouses your interest, never arouses your interest.

19. You read: all the books suggested at the end of each unit, only some of them, most of them, none of them.

20. Turn to page _____ in your book. Skim the page and write the number of words of which you did not know the meaning.

(Do not write the words, only the number of the words.)
APPENDIX B
APPENDIX B
USING THE READING-EASE CALCULATOR TO DETERMINE
THE READABILITY OF BOOKS

The following method is prescribed by the Reading-Ease Calculator to determine the grade level of a textbook.

1. Count off the first one hundred words on a page. Count all numbers as one word. Count a, and, and the whenever they appear.
2. Count the number of sentences in the one hundred words, estimating the fraction of the last sentence.
3. Count the number of syllables in the one hundred words. Count all numbers, pronouns, and well known names as one syllable.
4. In testing the reading ease of a book, it is probably sufficient to test the first one hundred words of every tenth page.
5. The dial of the calculator is then set on the number of sentences and the number of syllables is found on the vertical scale of the calculator.
6. The color opposite the scale indicates the reading ease and grade levels.
7. The grade levels of the pages are added and then divided by the number of addends to secure the grade placement.