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A comparison of comprehension in reading following four methods of presentation in grade two.

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Thesis

A COMPARISON OF COMPREHENSION IN READING
FOLLOWING FOUR METHODS OF PRESENTATION IN GRADE TWO

Submitted by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It was the main purpose of this thesis to determine from which of four reading presentation methods second grade children derive the greatest comprehension from printed material. The four methods are: first, oral reading; second, silent followed by oral reading; third, oral followed by silent; and fourth, silent.

There were several reasons for these choices. Silent followed by oral reading is the method most often suggested in basal reading series. Children are instructed to read everything silently before reading out loud. Oral followed by silent reading is the method that Dolch and his proponents favor. They claim that it gives the best results as far as comprehension is concerned. When the classroom teacher is pressed for time, these two methods are often shortened to silent reading alone or oral reading alone.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH AND LITERATURE

This chapter is divided into three main parts: first, oral reading; second, silent reading; and third, comprehension.

The early 1900's exhibited an oral reading decline, as a movement away from the earlier stress placed upon it. The period from 1930 to 1945 was typified by a new interest in oral reading. Educators were becoming aware of its social usefulness and need for instruction. The shift from pronouncing accurately orally to silent reading stress was seen throughout the period from 1915 to 1945. Non-oral was as good as oral reading instruction technique. Oral reading should be taught by itself, said some. Others viewed the child's oral language as of primary importance and therefore stressed the emphasis of oral reading in first grade. As the child matures, silent reading will receive more attention.1/

"The interpretation of oral reading has changed from the early appreciation of being able to sound out words without consideration of any meaning attached to the printed symbols to the modern interpretation of attaching meaning to the printed symbols and interpreting the author's thoughts and feelings so that we may read aloud to inform or entertain others and convey to the audience the author's mood and intent."

1. Oral Reading

"Effective silent reading is thinking following the thought of the writer, thinking with the writer, evaluating, organizing. Oral reading, from the standpoint of the major mental and physical processes involved is simply a more comprehensive experience. It is silent reading plus oral expression."

Gray describes three aspects of today's oral reading. He sees it as an instructional and diagnostic instrument; as a communicative art; and as an aesthetic art.

Patterson sees oral reading as a form of physical response rather than a thought-getting process. Therefore, special lessons are required to produce satisfactory results. Oral rendition often enhances interpretation.

1/Helen B. Knipp, op. cit., p. 179.


Silent reading is a thought getting activity basic to expressive oral reading.

Darby\(^1\) enumerates some of the values of oral reading. Some are: promotes acquaintance with words; adoption of good language forms; increased appreciation of literary selections; personality qualities; the child's natural interest and pleasure is in oral reading; helps promote mastery of basic vocabulary; adequate phrasing; meaningfulness; teacher can detect certain weaknesses in faulty silent reading; good speech; expression interpretation; and appreciation. He goes on to say that oral reading should be preceded by silent. Each child is given material to read silently concurrent with his abilities and needs. Then he reads his selection to the class, while they listen and evaluate his reading according to oral reading standards.

Evens\(^2\) elaborates on the values of reading aloud between parents and children. Some are: creates a family togetherness; brings the child closer to the printed word; increases knowledge and appreciation; and provides an intimate exchange of ideas between parent and child.

\(^1\)O. N. Darby, *op. cit.*

Dolch questions the common practice of reading silently first to read better orally. He points out the importance of oral reading before silent reading. "The method is to prepare the children for silent reading through oral reading, and then give them much practice in true silent reading, which is our aim in the whole program."  

The data obtained from Gilbert's experimental study indicates that on a high school level students who do a great deal of oral reading improve in silent reading skill just as much as students who do not. Oral reading does not hinder silent reading progress. There are many other benefits to be derived from oral reading, such as, personality development, social adjustment, speech skill and literary appreciation.

Dearborn, Johnston and Carmichael have carried on experimental studies concerning oral peak stress. Oral peak stress is defined as, "those words which the author or


competent judges stress when they read the material aloud.\textsuperscript{1} They conclude that oral peak stress increases comprehension. They suggest that the ability to select oral peak words is useful as an objective measure of comprehension.

A study by Hanitchak\textsuperscript{2} refutes many of the conclusions of the afore-mentioned investigation. Some of his findings are: oral peak stress cannot be determined by the words considered important, as they are dependent upon individual selection; oral peak stress does not influence comprehension; the speed of comprehension is not affected by oral peak stress in print; and a change of format alone would not be instrumental in increasing comprehension.

Knipp\textsuperscript{3} feels that comprehension must be the basis of effective modern oral reading. Neither must oral reading be confined to just the reading period. She continues that oral and silent reading present different aspects to be learned, and different purposes for being taught.

\textsuperscript{1}Ibid., p. 404.
\textsuperscript{3}Helen B. Knipp, op. cit., pg. 179.
It was concluded from studies carried out by Clark and Monahan\(^1\) that there is little oral reading transfer at the pre-primer level to basal texts other than the one taught.

2. Silent Reading

McDade\(^2\) started the research program in the silent reading area. His underlying philosophy stresses a separation of reading from oral speech and making it a new-thought language rather than speech language.

"Reading enters, not as a new skill toward which the earlier activities were pointed, but as an added mode of communication at once deepening and widening the scope of older experiences and opening the door to new and wonderful fields where vivid and satisfying meanings come to the pupils rapidly through the eye only. Reading thus functions from the very first and is never mere drill."\(^2\)

He points out that beginning reading is taught as an eye language quite apart from an ear language. The teacher uses the speech-hearing language and the print-reading language, but she keeps them apart. In the non-oral reading lesson, all response is by acting, writing, dramatization or answering in sentence form. Oral reading is excluded.


\(^3\)Ibid., p. 367.
"Reading is a process of understanding symbols seen, not a process of naming them."\(^1\)

Buswell\(^2\) proposes that the non-oral reading method is as good as or superior to the contrasting oral reading method. However, he continues:

"Oral language is so important in its own right that there should be no fear of its displacement by a program which emphasizes silent reading as an art in itself which must be separated from vocalization to accomplish its purpose."\(^2\)

Pressey and Pressey\(^4\) discovered that ability in silent reading depends much on the passage read. A good reader in one type may be poor in another. Some factors affecting silent reading are: freedom from oral reading habits; reading vocabulary and background of information; interest to motivate reading; and habits of attention.

---

\(^1\) James McDade, *op cit.*, p. 367.


From an experimental study conducted with fourth graders, Mulder and Curtin\(^1\) found that poor readers have difficulty in synthesizing phonic elements of words. This may be because of the lack of training in auditory discrimination or phonics. Good readers can synthesize phonic elements into words.

McCoard and LeCount\(^2\) concluded from their study with University of California students that the better silent readers read better orally, in terms of the broader aspects of speech.

Jones\(^3\) research with first and second graders has evidenced a positive relationship between speech training and silent reading achievement.

Reynolds\(^4\) worked on the relationship between auditory characteristics, such as auditory memory span and pitch discrimination ability, and silent reading abilities.


\(^3\)Morris V. Jones, "The Effect of Speech Training on Silent Reading Achievement," Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders (September, 1951), 16:258-63.

The findings were preponderantly negative with regard to hearing-reading relationships. There was an indication, however, that success in certain reading skills, such as, word recognition and learning sound values for common word elements, may be highly predictable by auditory measures under some circumstances.

3. Comprehension

Definitions and descriptions. "The comprehension abilities are the most important of all the reading abilities to be developed. . . . Comprehension then, implies the understanding of a word, phrase, or sentence beyond mere recognition."1/ "The ability to comprehend is basic to all reading and should be a major goal in all reading instruction."2/ Thornsberg3/ states that comprehension is closely related to intelligence, experience, and word and concept understanding. Comprehension may be developed through an activity program and practice in basic reading skills. The activity program includes: listening, reading, interpretation of pictures, drawing, experience charts, and reading to answer written questions. The skills program includes reading to follow


2/Ibid., p. 46.

and understand directions, to recognize sequence, to skim, to get general significance, to get the main thought, to evaluate, and for appreciation. In general, comprehension may be improved by: interesting and challenging material; special interest material; different types of reading material; discussion and reports on information from reading; supplementary reading; and organizing the basal reader into topical units.

Gray supports a similar idea:

"The fact is widely recognized that reading can make its largest contribution to personal development and social progress only as children and youth acquire a high level of efficiency in understanding what is read. The responsibility for the needed stimulus and help rests heavily upon the teachers in both elementary and secondary schools." 1/

O'Mallie, again reiterates the importance of comprehension. "Without comprehension there can be no real reading." 2/ She goes on to enumerate the factors determining comprehension. They are: word recognition, experience background, interest and purpose. The purposes of the primary grade child in silent reading are to organize, to follow directions, to predict outcomes, to recall details, to generalize, to find specific items, to prove or clarify


2/Kathrine O'Mallie, "Improving Comprehension and Developing Appropriate Reading Rates," Corrective Reading in Classroom and Clinic, Proceedings, December, 1953, Number 6, Monograph, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 15:149.
something, reading to get the main idea, reading critically, and reading to form sensory impressions. The reading rate depends upon the difficulty of the passage and the purpose.\footnote{1}

"Whatever the motivation, whatever the purpose, reading implies comprehension. An individual must understand what he is reading if he is to accomplish any purpose except to waste time."\footnote{2} Johnson\footnote{3} goes on to explain that comprehension is not a skill but a complex function involving many skills. All intrinsic and extrinsic factors influencing reading are interrelated. All skills in comprehension are not subject to direct teaching. Reading in specialized areas demands specialized vocabulary. Current reading ability tests do not necessarily measure all components. Reading abilities that need emphasis are: seeing relationships between words and ideas; evaluating author's statements; drawing inferences; and identifying a problem; and adjusting the type of reading to fulfill the purpose.

David\footnote{4} comments upon the importance of reading comprehension in later life. In reading newspaper editorials it

\footnote{1}{Ibid. pp. 149-152}
\footnote{2}{Marjorie S. Johnson, "Factors in Reading Comprehension," \textit{Educational Administration and Supervision} (November, 1949), 35:391.}
\footnote{3}{Ibid., pp. 385-406.}
\footnote{4}{Frederick B. David, "Comprehension in Reading," \textit{Baltimore Bulletin of Education} (January, 1951) 28:16-24.}
is not enough to understand what the words say. One must understand why the writer wants to say them. It is only under such circumstances that we obtain an informed electorate.

"In a world situation so delicate that the slightest misstep may lead to disaster we have to do every little bit we can to get people to understand more thoroughly the things that they read so that they can make the wisest possible decisions."¹/²

David²/cites the measurable skills in comprehension as:

"1. Word knowledge.
2. Ability to select the appropriate meaning for a word or phrase in the light of contextural setting.
3. Ability to follow the organization of a passage and identify the antecedents and references in it.
4. Ability to select the main thought of a passage.
5. Ability to answer questions that are explicitly answered in a passage.
6. Ability to answer questions that are answered in a passage, but not in the words the question was asked.
7. Ability to draw inferences from a passage about its content.
8. Ability to recognize the literary devices used in a passage and to identify its tone or mood.
9. Ability to determine a writer's purpose, intent or point of view."

There are two general measurable abilities in reading comprehension. They are memory for word meaning and reasoning in reading.

²/Ibid., p. 20.
Experimental studies. Cullinan and Miller carried on studies concerning the relationship of listening and silent reading. Cullinan concluded that in the comparison of oral and written recall in silent reading and listening, oral recall was more favorable. The difference found in comparing oral recall from reading and listening was insignificant. Written recall from listening was superior to written recall from reading. The difference found in comparing oral and written recall from listening was insignificant. Oral recall from reading was superior to written recall.

Miller in a study with third and fourth graders discovered that hearing comprehension was better than reading comprehension; vocabulary comprehension was superior to paragraph comprehension; children with higher mental ages were superior in hearing and reading comprehension; and boys were superior to girls.


Gilchrist, Steeves, and Galliher all carried out studies concerning the relationship of illustrations and comprehension. Steeves and Gilchrist, dealing with first and second grades, stated that illustrations are relatively neutral in effect upon comprehension. Children, however, preferred the illustrated copies. Gilchrist went on to say that the slow reader was handicapped by illustrations, tending to make up a story to fit the illustration, and the good reader paid little attention to the illustrations. Galliher, in her observations with more scientific and detailed illustrations on the fifth and sixth grade level, concluded that the illustrations had a great effect on comprehension scores, but made little difference in the retention scores.

Shoulberg designed a test to measure the relation of comprehension and mental imagery of children between the ages


3/Margaret M. Galliher, An Evaluation of the Effect of Illustrations on Comprehension in the Fifth and Sixth Grades, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1946.

4/Loc. cit.

of eight and ten. She related that there was no significant correlation between comprehension and imagery.

Halpin\(^1\) reports that with children in fifth grade sentence structures tested in statement form do not necessarily offer the same comprehension difficulty as when tested in paragraph form. There was no relationship between frequency of sentence structure and comprehension difficulty.

Munsil's\(^2\) study seems to indicate that children of normal intelligence and fourth grade reading ability, especially boys, find general directions of less aid to comprehension than more definite directions. The effectiveness of directions varies with individual differences.

Doherty\(^3\) attempted to devise a series of supplementary reading units based on community life to stimulate interest and increase comprehension of second graders. The units were illustrated with photographs taken in the community. She stated that this device was helpful in stimulating interest and improving comprehension.


2/ Marjorie Munsil, The Relative Order of Difficulty of Three Types of Directions for Comprehension in Study-Type Reading at a Fourth Grade Level, Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1947.

3/ Mary C. Doherty, Supplementary Reading Exercises to Improve Comprehension in Grade Two Based on the Community, Service Paper, Boston University, 1949, Copyright 1949.
Hayes\(^1\) reveals a slight gain found in comprehension found in showing a film after a reading unit, and a smaller gain shown in delayed recall than in immediate recall. All differences were not statistically significant.

Click\(^2\) used humor to measure reading comprehension. He presented humorous material that called for some outward expression of satisfaction on completion of reading from the student. By this means it is obvious which members comprehend the jokes. Good listeners are produced. Students listen because they want to be included in the humor. Joke reading has value with the retarded students. It is also a springboard for discussion with the more intelligent.

"It is entirely possible that a silent reading test could be constructed utilizing sense of humor as a test of comprehension. . . . Logically, it seems as feasible to measure a student's reaction to a joke as it does to ask him to fill in blanks regarding orators."\(^3\)

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\(^1\)Maryclare Hayes, An Experimental Evaluation of Showing a Film Before Versus After a Reading Unit, Unpublished Master's Thesis, Boston University, 1952.


\(^3\)Ibid., p. 41.
Preston and Botel, Witty, and Smith and Tate were concerned with reading rate and comprehension. Preston and Botel asserted that the rapid reader does not understand his reading better than does the slow reader. Inaccurate conclusions had been drawn previously because the measures in comprehension had been taken under timed conditions, making no adjustment for the slow reader who is accurate. These results, Preston and Botel warn, should not disparage rapid reading value. Nor do they say an individual can't improve reading comprehension through learning to read faster.

According to Witty, although comprehension and rapid reading rate are not closely correlated, we can teach some skills to improve both.


3/Henry P. Smith and Theodore R. Tate, "Improvements in Reading Rate and Comprehension of Subjects Training with the Tachistoscope," *The Journal of Educational Psychology* (March, 1953), 44:176-84.
"Despite the relatively low correlations cited above and the limitations of teaching methods in some studies, it is clear that most people can improve greatly their rate in reading as well as their understanding of various kinds of materials."\(^1\)

"There will be, of course, attention to rate of reading, but the aim will not be to develop a general rapid reading rate. Instead, it will be to help children read more rapidly and effectively different kinds of materials."\(^2\)

Smith and Tate\(^3\) conducted a study concerning comprehension and the tachistoscope on a college level. Their results indicated a significant gain in rate without significant loss in comprehension. However, they caution:

"The results of this and other experiments indicate that as yet too little is known concerning the effect of such equipment on the reading ability of persons of various ages, degrees of intelligence and varying types of personality patterns to warrant general use of the equipment in remedial reading programs."\(^4\)

\(^1\)Paul Witty, *op. cit.* p. 264.

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 267.

\(^3\)Henry P. Smith and Theodore R. Tate, *op. cit.*

\(^4\)Ibid., p. 184.
CHAPTER III

PLAN OF STUDY

In order to conduct this study it was necessary to (1) develop materials, (2) secure a population, and (3) conduct a testing program.

1. Materials

When trying to ascertain which reading method brings greatest comprehension the first consideration is the material to be used. There are several requirements that the material to be read must meet. They are as follows: First, the stories should be unfamiliar to the child, so that it can be assumed that comprehension, as measured, is due to method of presentation. Second, the vocabulary should not be beyond grade two and should be representative of several different basal systems. Third, there must be four different stories, as there are four methods of reading. Fourth, each story must be long enough to provide adequate material for comprehension questions and short enough to maintain the children's interest. And fifth, the stories must be interesting, lively and close to the children's experience so as to assure attention.
Four stories, one about a dog, one about a bear, one about a hulla hoop, and one about a scarecrow were written.

The vocabulary was checked against these sources: the Boston University Primary List of Words Common to Four Basal Texts, the Scott, Foresman Combined Word List for the New Basic Readers,¹ the Rinsland Reading Vocabulary for Elementary Grades,² and the Gates Reading Vocabulary for Primary Grades.³ In each story there were some words not on these lists which were to be presented previous to the reading. The first story had three words—cocker spaniel, police and kitchen; the second had four—Muncher, cotton, allowance and invent; the third had four—hulla hoop, Sparkle, angel and heaven; the fourth, one—problem.

Comprehension was measured by group tests of multiple choice items. Each item presented five possible answers from which the child selected the correct one. There were ten questions for each story written in easy form so that as far as possible the measure of comprehension would not be affected by reading difficulty. These stories with the comprehension questions follow.


Honey was a little cocker spaniel. She was called Honey because her fur was honey colored.

Honey lived in a big white house on First Street. Honey lived with Bill, Jill, Mother and Father.

One fine sunny day, Father painted the floor of the back porch. Mother said, "Father, you have done a grand job. The floor looks beautiful."

"I think it looks beautiful, too," said Bill.

"Me, too," said Jill.

"Bow-wow," said Honey.

"To keep it beautiful we must not walk on it until it is dry," said Father.

He put a sign on the door. The sign said, "Wet Paint."

"When will we be able to walk on the porch?" asked Jill.

"Oh, I think by tomorrow the paint will be dry," said Father.

After supper Jill got ready to go to bed. She called Honey. Honey slept in a box under Jill's bed. Honey did not come. She called and called, but still Honey did not come. Jill ran to Mother and cried, "Honey is lost."

"Don't worry, Jill, you go off to bed. Bill and Father will find Honey."
Bill and Father looked all over the neighborhood, but could not find Honey. Soon, it was very late. "There is only one thing left to do," said Father, "call the police. Maybe they can help."

Long after everyone was asleep, Jill's eyes were still open. She was worrying about Honey. Suddenly she heard a thump on the back porch. She ran downstairs and turned on the porch light. What do you think she saw? Yes, it was Honey right in the middle of the wet porch paint. "Oh, Honey didn't you read the sign, 'Wet Paint'!" asked Jill.

Jill picked Honey up in her arms and set her down on the kitchen floor. Plop, plop, plop went Honey's feet across the kitchen floor. Plop, plop, plop went the wet paint.

By this time the whole family was awake. They ran downstairs. They looked at the porch floor. And what did they see--little girl's footprints and long honey colored hairs. They looked at the kitchen floor. And what did they see--a little girl's footprints and long honey colored hairs.

"What a beautiful job you have done Jill and Honey," laughed Father.

"I think so, too," laughed Mother.

"Me, too," laughed Jill.

"Bow-wow," said Honey.
QUESTIONS FOR STORY NO. I

DIRECTIONS: Draw a line under the right answer.

QUESTIONS:

1. Honey was a--
   a. little girl
   b. a kitten
   c. a dog

2. One sunny day Father--
   a. drove the car
   b. went to school with Bill
   c. painted the porch floor

3. Father put a sign on the porch that said--
   a. keep off
   b. wet paint
   c. come in

4. Honey slept--
   a. outdoors
   b. under Jill's bed in a box
   c. in the kitchen

5. Who looked for Honey?
   a. Jill and Mother
   b. Father and Bill
   c. Jill
6. Who stayed awake after everyone else was sleeping?
   a. Bill
   b. Jill
   c. Mother

7. Where did Jill find Honey?
   a. under a tree
   b. in the car
   c. on the porch floor

8. What did Jill do with Honey when she found her?
   a. picked her up and put her down on the kitchen floor
   b. put her outdoors
   c. put her in her box

9. What did the family see on the kitchen floor?
   a. Jill's and Honey's footprints and honey-colored hairs
   b. Bill's and Father's footprints and long black hairs
   c. A honey colored kitten

10. A good name for this story is--
    a. Honey and the Wet Paint
    b. Bill Finds Honey
    c. Father Can Paint
STORY II

Not so very long ago there was a very small bear named Muncher. Muncher was seven years old and in the second grade at bear school. But he was so small that most everyone who saw him thought he was only in the first grade of bear school.

Why do you think Muncher was so small? It was because he didn't like to eat. He didn't like breakfast. He didn't like lunch. And he didn't like supper.

"Try to eat a little something, dear," Mother Bear would say.

"Eat!" Father Bear would roar and bang his paw on the table.

"Some day Muncher's going to blow away," little sister bear would sing.

Muncher wasn't much interested in food. There were always more exciting things to do at meal time. He would say, "I wish someone would invent a pill you could take instead of eating food."

Then one day a circus came to town. Father and Mother Bear took Little Bear and Sister Bear. Little Bear's eyes grew wide when he saw all the pink cotton candy, the popcorn, the hot dogs, the ice cream and the candy apples.
Oh, how good they all looked and smelled. Little Bear had saved his allowance money for three weeks for this big day.

First he bought a hot dog. "Hum-m-m, that was good. Think I'll have another."

Next he bought a bag of popcorn. After that he bought two candy apples and some cotton candy. He had just enough money left to buy an ice cream.

That night Mother asked Little Bear how he had liked the circus.

"Well," said Little Bear, "I didn't have enough money left to see the show. And right now I don't feel so good. I ate too much. I guess eating too much is just as bad as eating too little."

"You know," said Mother, "you have just learned something, Little Bear, that it takes some people a long time to find out."
QUESTIONS FOR STORY II

DIRECTIONS: Draw a line under the right answer.

QUESTIONS:

1. Little Bear was in
   a. first grade
   b. second grade
   c. third grade

2. At the beginning of this story Little Bear
   a. liked to eat
   b. did not like to eat
   c. liked to eat only at supper

3. One day a __________ came to town
   a. circus
   b. movie
   c. horse show

4. At the circus Little Bear bought
   a. some food
   b. a show ticket
   c. a toy

5. Little Bear got his money
   a. from Sister Bear
   b. from Mother Bear
   c. from his allowance
6. After the circus Little Bear said
   a. that he felt good
   b. that the circus was no good
   c. that he had eaten too much

7. Do you think Little Bear
   a. learned his lesson
   b. did not learn his lesson
   c. will never go to a circus again

8. Little Bear did not see the circus show because
   a. he did not want to
   b. there was no circus show
   c. he did not have any money left for a ticket

9. What could you see Little Bear doing at the circus?
   a. eating
   b. sleeping
   c. watching the circus show

10. What is the best name for this story?
    a. Little Bear Learns a Lesson
    b. The Circus
    c. The Three Bears
"Father, tell me a story." Every night just before bedtime Father told Jill a story. Usually they were make-believe stories.

"What would you like the story to be about tonight?" asked Father.

"Tell me a story about where Hulla Hoops came from," said Jill.

"All right," said Father. And this is the story Father told.

Sparkle was the newest angel in Heaven. He was so new that he didn't even have a halo. You know, a halo is that ring that goes around an angel's head. Every day the angels in Heaven dust the stars. Dusting stars is happy work. The angels like to dust the stars. But while Sparkle was dusting, there were big tears in his eyes. "What is the trouble, Sparkle?" asked the other angels.

"Well," said Sparkle, "all the angels have halos except me."

The other angels took Sparkle by the hand. "Come with us. You must give your order to the halo maker."

The halo maker told Sparkle his halo would be ready the next day.
Then Sparkle was the most happy angel in Heaven. He began to dance and jump from star to star.

The next day he went to the halo maker to get his halo.

The halo maker placed the halo ever so carefully over Sparkle's head. And what do you think happened! The halo slipped right over his head and fell down at his feet.

"Oh dear," cried Sparkle. "What am I to do now? This halo is too big."

"Don't worry little Sparkle," said the halo maker. "I'll have another one just your size tomorrow."

"But what will I do with this one?" asked Sparkle.

"Whatever you want," said the halo maker.

Sparkle ran out of the halo maker's shop with the too-big halo to tell his friends what had happened. On the way he fell on a bit of star dust. The halo fell out of his hand. Down, down it fell to earth. A little boy found it. He ran to his friends.

"Look what I have found--a golden hoop."

And that was how Hulla Hoops began.
QUESTIONS FOR STORY III

DIRECTIONS: Draw a line under the right answer.

QUESTIONS:

1. Who told the story about Hulla Hoops?
   a. Jill
   b. Sparkle
   c. Father

2. Sparkle was
   a. a little girl
   b. an angel
   c. a kitten

3. Every day the angels
   a. played with Hulla Hoops
   b. dusted stars
   c. went to the halo maker

4. Sparkle was unhappy because
   a. he was the newest angel in Heaven
   b. he didn't have any friends
   c. he didn't have a halo

5. Where did the angels take Sparkle?
   a. to the halo maker
   b. to a big star
   c. to a star dust store
6. The halo maker gave Sparkle a halo that was
   a. too big
   b. too small
   c. just right

7. What did the halo maker tell Sparkle to do with the halo?
   a. throw it away
   b. do whatever he liked with it
   c. give it to a friend

8. When the halo did not fit Sparkle the halo maker said
   a. Sparkle would have to do without
   b. He would have another one the next day
   c. He would have another one the next week

9. When Sparkle fell
   a. he broke the halo
   b. he dropped the halo and it fell to earth
   c. he dropped the halo and another angel caught it

10. The best name for this story is
    a. How Hulla Hoops Came To Be
    b. Tell Me a Story
    c. The Work Angels Do
Mr. Brown had a problem. He had a very big garden, but it wasn't doing him much good. The birds were eating all his vegetables. What to do, thought Mr. Brown. Suddenly an idea came to him. "I shall make a very big scarecrow to scare all the birds away from my very big garden," he said.

Mr. Brown worked and worked and worked. Finally he was finished. Oh, what a beautiful scarecrow! I shall call him Johnny, he thought. I'm sure Johnny is the best scarecrow in all the world. Now I won't have any more trouble with birds.

Mr. Brown placed Johnny in the middle of the garden. Johnny tried very hard to be a good scarecrow. But when night came, he was afraid. He was afraid of the night noises. He was afraid of the shadows.

When the sun came up the next day, the birds came to the garden. Johnny tried to be scary, but it was just no use. He looked over the garden fence to the park next door. He could see children playing there. I'm sure I could do a good job at making them happy, he thought.

The children could see Johnny over the fence, too. "What a beautiful scarecrow," they said. "Wouldn't it be
fun to have him here in the park."

When Mr. Brown came out to see his garden he found the
birds eating his vegetables. "Well, Johnny," he said
"I guess you just weren't meant to be a scarecrow. I shall
put you in the park where you can be with the children."
And that is just what he did.
QUESTIONS FOR STORY IV

DIRECTIONS: Draw a line under the right answer.

QUESTIONS:

1. What was Mr. Brown's problem?
   a. his garden was too big
   b. the birds were eating his vegetables
   c. he didn't like vegetables

2. Johnny was
   a. a child
   b. scarecrow
   c. bird

3. Mr. Brown made
   a. a jack-o-lantern
   b. a scarecrow
   c. a bird house

4. Mr. Brown thought Johnny was
   a. the most beautiful scarecrow in the world
   b. a silly scarecrow
   c. a happy scarecrow

5. Johnny was
   a. very brave
   b. afraid of the night noises
   c. afraid of the children
6. First Mr. Brown put Johnny
   a. in the house
   b. in the park
   c. in the garden

7. When Johnny was in the garden
   a. the birds went away
   b. the birds ate the vegetables
   c. the children ran in the garden

8. When Mr. Brown found that Johnny had not kept the birds out of the garden
   a. he was angry with Johnny
   b. he was angry with the birds
   c. he took Johnny out of the garden

9. At the end of the story we could see Johnny
   a. in the park
   b. in the garden
   c. in the house

10. The best name for this story is
    a. When Johnny Comes Marching Home
    b. Johnny, The Scarecrow
    c. Mr. Brown
2. Population

One hundred eight children in four second grade classrooms in a suburban community were included.

Table I shows the distribution of chronological ages and intelligence quotients for the entire population.

**TABLE I**

**CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHRONOLOGICAL AGE IN MONTHS OF THE ENTIRE GROUP OF STUDENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CA</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>IQ</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>104-106</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>156-160</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-103</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>151-155</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98-100</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>146-150</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95-97</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>141-145</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>92-94</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>136-140</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89-91</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>131-135</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-88</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>126-130</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-85</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>121-125</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-83</td>
<td>108</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean age for the entire group was 91.93 months, with a range of 81-106 months and a standard deviation of 4.24.

Table II shows the mean intelligence quotients for the entire population.
TABLE II
MEAN INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENTS* OF THE ENTIRE GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>108</td>
<td>116.06</td>
<td>13.85</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>84-159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The intelligence quotients are from the Kuhlman-Anderson Intelligence Test.

As the table indicates, the mean intelligence quotient is 116.06, which is well above average. The range is 84-159 with a standard deviation of 13.85.

3. Conducting the Testing Program

A rotating system of testing was used. The rotating system necessitated involving four second grade classrooms. The tests were carried on under the direction of the classroom teacher and scored by the writer.

To cancel out comprehension scores, due to variant story difficulty, a rotation system was worked out. Each story was read in all four ways. Each class had opportunity to read all four ways. No class ever read the same story twice. For the sake of clarity in explanation the classrooms will be called A, B, C, and D. The stories will be called one, two, three and four. The entire testing was
done in four consecutive days. This was to avoid additional learning during the testing.

On the first day all four classrooms read silently, followed by oral reading--classroom A reading story four; classroom B reading story three; classroom C reading story one; and classroom D reading story two.

On the second day all four classrooms read orally followed by silent reading--classroom A reading story one; classroom B reading story four; classroom C reading story two; and classroom D reading story three.

On the third day all four classrooms read the stories silently--classroom A reading story two; classroom B reading story one; classroom C reading story three; and classroom D reading story four.

On the fourth, and last day, all classes read orally--classroom A reading story three; classroom B reading story two; classroom C reading story four; and classroom D reading story one.

Table III illustrates the working of the rotation system.

Regardless of how a story was to be read there were several principles adhered to. First, the new words were presented in a sentence and written on the board before a story was read. Next a child was told immediately any word he came across in the story or question sheet that he did not know. The stories were collected before the
TABLE III

THE ROTATION SYSTEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>METHOD OF READING</th>
<th>STORY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Silent Oral</td>
<td>Story 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Story 4</td>
<td>Story 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oral Silent</td>
<td>Story 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Story 3</td>
<td>Story 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Silent</td>
<td>Story 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Story 1</td>
<td>Story 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oral</td>
<td>Story 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Story 2</td>
<td>Story 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Silent</td>
<td>Story 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
question sheet was passed out, to eliminate looking back in the story to find the answer.

The procedure for silent reading followed by oral reading is as follows: after the new words are presented, the teacher instructs the class as a whole to read the whole story to themselves silently. When every member of the class is through, the story is read out loud. Of course, not every child in the entire class gets a chance to read out loud. Six or seven children are chosen to read orally while the rest listen. The stories are then collected and the question sheets handed out. The oral followed by silent reading method is just the opposite of this. Stories are passed out to the entire class, then six or seven children are instructed by the teacher to read a few paragraphs each orally, while the rest of the class follows along. Then the whole class reads the story silently. The third method is silent reading. The whole class is instructed to read the story to themselves. The fourth method is oral reading. Six or seven children are chosen to read a few paragraphs each until the story is completed, while the rest of the class follows along.

To account for absentees each child put his initials at the top of his question sheet. At the end of the four days each teacher gave the writer a list of the initials of any absentees during the four days. Their papers were then
plucked from the rest of the group. In this way, the number taking the test remained constant throughout the four days and facilitated computation.
CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data were analyzed to compare the amount of comprehension of second grade children in four different reading situations: (1) silent reading followed by oral; (2) oral reading followed by silent; (3) silent reading alone; and (4) oral reading alone.

Table IV shows the comparison of mean scores when silent reading was followed by oral reading and when oral reading was followed by silent reading.

TABLE IV
COMPARISON OF MEANS OF SILENT-ORAL WITH ORAL-SILENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>SEM</th>
<th>Diff</th>
<th>SE diff</th>
<th>CR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S-O</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>38.44</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O-S</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>38.84</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>1.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean for oral followed by silent reading was 38.84 answers compared with 38.44 for the silent followed by oral. The critical ratio of 1.42 shows the difference was not statistically significant. There are 84 chances in 100 that this is a true difference in favor of oral followed by silent reading.
Table V shows the comparison of mean scores when silent reading was followed by oral reading and when silent reading was not followed by another method.

**TABLE V**

**COMPARISON OF MEANS OF SILENT-ORAL WITH ORAL ALONE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>SEM</th>
<th>Diff</th>
<th>SE diff</th>
<th>CR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S-0</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>38.44</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>38.55</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.31</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The mean for silent followed by oral reading was 38.44 answers compared with 38.55 for the silent alone. The critical ratio of .31 shows the difference was not statistically significant. There are 24 chances in 100 that this is a true difference in favor of the silent followed by oral.

Table VI shows the comparison of mean scores when silent reading was followed by oral and when oral reading was not followed by another method.

**TABLE VI**

**COMPARISON OF MEANS OF SILENT FOLLOWED BY ORAL WITH ORAL ALONE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>SEM</th>
<th>Diff</th>
<th>SE diff</th>
<th>CR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S-0</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>38.44</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>38.45</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The mean for silent followed by oral was 38.44 answers, compared with 38.45 for the silent alone. The critical ratio of .03 shows the difference was not statistically significant. There are 2 chances in 100 that this is a true difference in favor of silent followed by oral reading.

Table VII shows the comparison of mean scores when oral reading was followed by silent reading and when silent reading was not followed by another method.

**TABLE VII**

**COMPARISON OF MEANS OF SILENT-ORAL WITH SILENT ALONE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>SEM</th>
<th>Diff</th>
<th>SE diff</th>
<th>CR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O-S</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>38.64</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>38.55</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean for oral followed by silent was 38.84 answers, compared with 38.55 for the silent alone. The critical ratio of 1.07 shows the difference was not statistically significant. There are 70 chances in 100 that this is a true difference in favor of oral followed by silent reading.

Table VIII shows the comparison of mean scores when oral reading was followed by silent reading and when oral reading was not followed by another method.
TABLE VIII
COMPARISON OF MEANS OF ORAL-SILENT WITH ORAL ALONE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>SEM</th>
<th>Diff</th>
<th>SE diff</th>
<th>CR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-S</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>38.84</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>38.45</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean for oral followed by silent was 38.84 answers compared with 38.45 answers for the oral alone. The critical ratio of 1.67 shows the difference was not statistically significant. There are 90 chances in 100 that this is a true difference in favor of oral followed by silent reading.

Table IX shows the comparison of mean scores when silent reading was not followed by another method and when oral reading was not followed by another method.

TABLE IX
COMPARISON OF MEANS OF SILENT ALONE WITH ORAL ALONE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>SEM</th>
<th>Diff</th>
<th>SE diff</th>
<th>CR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>38.55</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>38.45</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean for silent alone was 38.55 answers compared with 38.45 answers for oral alone. The critical ratio of .35 shows the difference was not statistically significant.
There are 26 chances in 100 that this is a real difference in favor of silent reading alone.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this thesis was to determine from which of four reading methods the reading comprehension of second grade children was greatest.

The four reading methods were: (1) silent reading followed by oral reading; (2) oral reading followed by silent reading; (3) silent reading alone; and (4) oral reading alone.

Four original stories were written by the writer in connection with this study.

The one limitation of this study is that the children used were of superior mental ability having a mean intelligence quotient of 116.06.

The writer drew two conclusions from the results of the study.

First, there were no significant differences in mean scores between any two methods.

The greatest differences were between oral followed by silent compared with oral alone; silent followed by oral compared with oral followed by silent; and oral
followed by silent compared with silent alone. The critical ratios were 1.67, 1.42, and 1.07 respectively.

Second, the mean scores were quite comparable and were in this order: oral followed by silent, 38.84; silent alone, 38.55; oral alone, 38.45; and silent followed by oral, 38.44.

Most manuals suggest silent followed by oral as the best procedure. In this study it was the lowest.
CHAPTER VI

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The suggestions for further research are: (1) that the same study be carried on with a much larger population; and (2) that the data be further analyzed according to the scores by children of intelligence quotients below and above average.
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