THE DEVELOPMENT OF A HANDBOOK ON PRIMARY AND ELEMENTARY READING TESTS FOR THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

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BY

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ABSTRACT

This thesis was concerned with the development of a handbook which lists and describes a number of reading tests that can be utilized by primary and elementary teachers to help them diagnose the strengths and/or weaknesses of their students in reading.

As part of a needs assessment, a questionnaire was designed to determine whether teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador were using reading tests, what types were used, e.g., diagnostic or achievement, and the purpose of using them. The questionnaire was sent to a random sampling of 201 teachers working in grades one to six and employed in different schools across the province. This limited survey showed that many teachers were not using published reading tests. In some schools, tests were used, but were not administered by the classroom teachers. Testing was usually done by a guidance counsellor or a consultant from the school board central office staff.

Tests included in the handbook were selected on the basis of their recommendation by reading specialists as gathered from professional literature, and also on the basis of their usability by the classroom teacher who does not necessarily have a background in testing. The

tests are divided into eight categories: Group Diagnostic Tests, Group Survey Tests, Individual Achievement Tests, Individual Diagnostic Reading Tests, Oral Reading Tests, Reading Inventories, Reading Readiness Tests, and Tests of Word Analysis and Phonics Skills. Publication data is given for each test, along with a description of the test, and comments on its strengths and/or weaknesses according to Buros' Mental Measurements Yearbooks.

The resulting "Handbook of Reading Tests for the Classroom Teacher" appears in Appendix C of this thesis. It includes a table of contents, an introduction, a list of references, a glossary, an index and a descriptive list of thirty eight reading tests.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Background of the Study

Most of the reading instruction in today's schools is performed by the classroom teacher who frequently attempts to provide learning opportunities which will foster growth in reading development. Because of the high priority given to reading development, a major emphasis in recent years has been placed on resolving the problem of individual differences in reading (Bond and Tinker, 1973; Durost and Prescott, 1962).

Diagnosis of reading problems is an integral and essential part of reading instruction. Teachers should, therefore, be equipped to do diagnostically-oriented instruction, with emphasis placed on teaching as a continual diagnostic task of children as they learn. The effectiveness of diagnostic teaching is based upon the extent to which the teacher knows each child in the classroom, not only his physical and intellectual characteristics, but also the specifics of his reading development (Bond and Tinker, 1973; Jan-Tausch, 1971).

Diagnostic teaching assumes an understanding of a

child's strengths and weaknesses and attempts to identify growth areas in which children are progressing satisfactorily, and to pinpoint other areas to which greater attention should be given (Karlin, 1973).

Introduction to the Problem

The classroom teacher is constantly involved in the informal diagnosis of children's reading difficulties through observation of the child's everyday work and through teacher-made tests. If this approach is not successful in giving enough information, the teacher may initiate a more systematic examination of the child's reading difficulties by using both standardized and informal reading tests (Bond and Tinker, 1973; Harris and Smith, 1976).

The reasons for administering reading tests are both many and varied. The most common reasons, however, relate to certain of the following points: (1) tests are relatively easy to administer; (2) they are efficient when given to a group of children; (3) the scores resulting from them are easily noted on a child's cumulative record; (4) the scores are precise and, therefore, useful in parent-teacher conferences; (5) they can compare the overall achievement of individuals and groups to that of a general population

(Chall, 1972; Durkin, 1972).

Perhaps the most important value of reading tests is that they define our thinking about a child's achievement by enabling us to speak about reading ability in quantitative terms (Traxler, 1964).

The major overall purpose of testing in reading, as it relates specifically to the classroom teacher, is to provide information that is required for the development of a program to suit the needs of the individual child. This purpose may be achieved in the following ways: (1) by finding a starting point for instruction; (2) by comparing reading standards in the classroom with national norms; (3) by comparing reading standards of children within the class; (4) by measuring progress in reading; (5) by assessing the effectiveness of various approaches to the teaching of reading; and (6) by diagnosing reading difficulties of individuals (Pumfrey, 1976).

Hill (1976) contends that using a standardized test

> ... saves the teacher the effort of test construction and probably gives the added benefit of expert item construction, edited items, comparative scores from other schools, statistical evaluations of the test's performance for a variety of purposes, and perhaps other virtues (p. 95).

He goes on to state that "few teachers have the capabilities required to develop sound diagnostic instruments to analyze students' learning problems" (p.95).

Rationale for the Study

Choosing an appropriate reading test can present problems for the teacher who is not familiar with such tests. For example, a test cannot be selected merely on the basis of its title. Rather, the test must be carefully examined and the instructions provided in the manual scrutinized. If tests are to provide any relevant information, care must be taken to select tests that are appropriate to the content of the reading program (i.e., tests that are actually important in accomplishing the school's objectives) (Brittain, 1973; Glock, 1971).

The testing of reading achievement is a necessary part of the total scope of reading evaluation, rather than being a separate entity. Therefore, a critical criterion by which a reading test must be judged is its ability to contribute useful information not only for the evaluation of individual or group reading abilities, but also for the evaluation of the program responsible for the development (Hill, 1974).

The reading test must be selected in terms of the

information needed for diagnosis. Some tests are designed to measure the progress of groups of students, while others are designed to provide information on individual students. Some tests help teachers to obtain information concerning the reading levels of students, and still others provide information on skill development. Once the teacher has determined what type of information is required, the appropriate test can then be chosen (Wilson, 1977).

Selection of standardized tests suitable for measuring long-term progress must be made with care. According to Tinker (1973), when selecting such a test the following points should be considered:

1. The test chosen should measure skills emphasized in the instructional program, such as, word recognition, vocabulary, and comprehension.
2. The test should cover a range of grades.
3. The reliability of a test should have been established at a satisfactory level.
4. The validity of the test must be adequate (p.71).

Information concerning validity and reliability of a test can be found in the manual of most tests or in Buros' Mental Measurements Yearbook.

Many of the standard text books on reading give some

information on evaluation in reading, and in some instances, review a number of reading tests that are available. Pumfrey (1976), for example, describes a large number of reading and intelligence tests, along with the author's name and the names and addresses of the publishing companies. Other writers, such as Zintz (1977), Spache (1976, 1981), and Farr and Anastasjow (1969), give descriptions of a variety of tests. Many teachers, however, do not have access to these books, nor the time to read through the large number of professional textbooks to find information on tests and testing.

The most reliable and comprehensive work on tests is Buros' Mental Measurements Yearbooks. These books provide information about published tests and present critical reviews by testing and reading specialists. The purpose of these books is to help those who use tests to select the best of what is available and to interpret correctly the results obtained from the use of the tests. Unfortunately, according to Harris and Smith (1976), many teachers do not use the Yearbooks, either because "they do not know of their existence, do not have access to them, or because they do not realize the value of doing so" (p.121).

Statement of the Problem

Diagnosis is an essential and integral part of the teaching of reading. In order to do a thorough job of the diagnosis of instructional reading levels and the mastery of specific reading skills, the teacher must utilize both standardized and informal reading tests.

There are a variety of sources where the classroom teacher can find information on the types of tests that are available. The specific purpose of this thesis, however, is to develop a handbook which lists a number of reading tests, both informal and standardized, along with the date of publication and the names and addresses of the publishing companies where the tests can be obtained. Each test listed is also described in terms of what it tests - (i.e. word recognition, comprehension, spelling, etc.), amount of time required for administration, usability for the classroom teacher, intended grade utilization, and strengths and/or weaknesses according to Buros' Mental Measurements Yearbooks.

Also under investigation are the types of reading tests used in this province, the reasons for using these tests and who has the responsibility for administering such tests. Data pertinent to these concerns have been obtained

from teachers throughout the province from a questionnaire developed by the writer for this purpose.

Significance of the Study

Dobbin (1974) recognizes the problem that teachers in this province are facing in the area of diagnosing and remediating reading problems. In the introduction to her bulletin, she states that many children in our schools lack the skill and interest necessary to read to the limits of their capabilities. She also found that

> Newfoundland educators are striving to remedy the situation. They talk about it with sincere concern at Reading Conferences, and call on the reading consultants for more effective ways of diagnosing reading problems (p. ii).

In one section of her bulletin, she lists a number of reading tests that may be helpful to the classroom teacher in diagnosing reading difficulties.

The writer intends to use the needs of the teachers, as stressed by Dobbin, and as assessed through the questionnaire, as a basis for the development of a handbook that can be utilized by teachers to assist them in the selection of tests to determine reading levels and to diagnose reading problems of children in their classrooms.

Definition of Terms

In any discussion on tests and measurements, there are a number of terms that may be unfamiliar to many teachers. The following terms, based on the most commonly used definitions in the professional literature, are defined below:

Achievement tests: These tests attempt to discover differences in abilities among individuals to discover the areas of reading and mathematics. Some include subtests in spelling, language and reference skills (Smith and Barrett, 1974).

Diagnostic tests: There are two types of diagnostic tests - group and individual. They are designed to break down the total reading performance into specific strengths and weaknesses (Karlin, 1975).

Frustration level: This is the level at which a child's reading skills break down. The child makes many errors in word recognition, is unable to anticipate meanings, is slow, hesitant and shows signs of emotional tension and discomfort. Comprehension at this level is 50% or less (Bond and Tinker, 1973; Zintz, 1977).

Group survey tests: These tests are designed to provide a score that will tell the teacher how well a

class or an individual compares with other children of the same age and grade. They usually contain subtests of vocabulary and comprehension (Stauffer, Abrams and Pikulski, 1978).

Independent reading level: This is the level at which a child can read easily and fluently without assistance. He/she recognizes about 99% of the words. Much of the material the child selects for free reading should be at this level (Zintz, 1977).

Informal reading inventory (IRI): This type of test can be easily constructed by the teacher from materials that are used for instruction. It consists of graded passages for oral and silent reading with questions to test comprehension. It helps the teacher determine the child's frustration, instructional and independent reading levels (Stauffer, et al., 1978).

Instructional reading level: Determined from the informal reading inventory, this level shows the point at which the child can benefit from systematic instruction. The material will present some difficulties, but most of it will be within his grasp. Word recognition at this level is about 95% and comprehension about 75% (Bond and Tinker, 1973).

Reading readiness: This is the stage at which the child is ready to begin a specific reading program because he has reached a certain stage of mental maturity, has a satisfactory emotional adjustment, and has acquired an adequate background of experiences and attitudes (Bond and Tinker, 1973).

Reliability: Reliability is the extent to which a measurement instrument is consistent in the results it yields from one application to the next of the same test or its alternate form (Spache, 1976).

Standardized tests: These are tests whose scoring, norms, and administration have been established as a result of the tests being tried out on a large number of subjects. Manuals contain tables that convert raw scores to grade scores (Jackson, 1969; Salvia and Ysseldyke, 1978).

Validity: This is the extent to which a test measures what it claims to measure (Harris and Smith, 1976).

Limitations of the Study

Since this project is geared towards use by the primary and elementary (i.e. grades one to six) teachers in this province, it was necessary to obtain some information from a cross-section of these teachers regarding the

types of tests, if any, that are used in their classrooms, the purpose of these tests, and whether or not the teachers themselves are involved in the process of testing and diagnosing. In order to gather this information, a questionnaire, developed by the writer for this purpose, was sent to a random sampling of primary and elementary teachers throughout the province. Since this represents a very small sampling of the total population, a limitation must be imposed upon the results in that the conclusions are based on a limited survey.

The number of tests included in the handbook is not to be interpreted as all-inclusive. Attempts were made, however, to include those tests utilized in our schools as determined by the questionnaire. Other tests were selected on the basis of their recommendation by reading specialists as gathered from professional textbooks, and also on the basis of their usability by the classroom teacher. The project will be limited in that it is recognized that these are not the only criteria that should be used in the selection of reading tests. Teachers will be encouraged to use other selection techniques and guidelines to choose the most appropriate test from the handbook.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The review of literature is organized into three main sections. The first section provides an overview of the characteristics and general principles of diagnosis. The second section discusses two types of diagnostic instruments under two headings: (1) Informal Reading Tests; and (2) Standardized Reading Tests. The third section deals with the guidelines that a teacher should follow when selecting the most appropriate diagnostic instrument to use with his/her particular group of children.

Diagnosis

Inability to read is recognized as the most important single cause of school failure. It is also related to other academic and social problems. Children with reading problems may lose their self-confidence, withdraw, or become emotionally disturbed. They suffer severe frustration in school and are usually hindered in all their school subjects (Roswell and Natchez, 1971; Strang, 1964).

Strang (1964) contends that:

> Teachers who become aware of reading difficulties and follow up this awareness with appropriate instruction can often help the child overcome the difficulties and contribute to many aspects of the child's development. This appropriate instruction stems from accurate and pertinent information in line with the broad view of the reading process (p.4).

Teachers can reduce the incidence of reading failure by being aware of children's ability and attitudes towards reading, and by understanding the specific difficulties faced by children learning to read. Good reading instruction depends on the abilities of the teacher to diagnose the child's strengths and weaknesses in reading and to teach him/her on his/her appropriate instructional reading level. Teachers should know what children read, why they read, how they read, how well they read, and what reading difficulties they are having (Smith, 1969; Strang and Lindquist, 1960).

Diagnosis is the process through which a child's strengths and weaknesses in reading are determined. It should lead directly to the improvement of reading through the reinforcement of the strengths and the remediation of the difficulties discovered. Without some diagnostic information, it would not be possible to give individual instruction. Diagnosis is a basic tool in providing for

individual differences. Without the information obtained from diagnosis, the teacher cannot help each child realize his potential reading ability. While most teachers know whether or not a child can read, many cannot state the specific problem with a view to remediation of that problem (Dauzat, 1977; Gusak, 1978; Strang, 1964).

According to Smith (1969):

> Diagnosis should precede action, it should be continuous and interwoven with treatment; the earlier the problems are discovered, the more hope there is for conquering them (p. 15).

Bond and Tinker (1973) contend that "Diagnosis consists of measuring and studying the symptoms and determining the causes in order to understand the nature of the disability" (p. 163). They insist that unless the nature of the disability is understood, it will not be possible to provide appropriate remedial instruction.

> Remedial work that is not based upon a thorough diagnosis is likely to be wasteful of the time and effort of both student and the remedial teacher. Moveover, remedial work undertaken without adequate diagnosis is likely to fail (p. 164).

In order for diagnosis in reading to make a positive contribution for the child, the responsibility for informal diagnosis must be assumed by the classroom teacher. Diagnosis of reading difficulties is an essential part of class-

room instruction, and the better classroom teachers are constantly studying the reading strengths and weaknesses of their children. It is not possible for classroom teachers to conduct an in-depth clinical diagnosis. Neither their time nor their training permits them to do so in a classroom setting. Also, in some instances, the detailed diagnosis and remediation may best be given in special reading centers or clinics. Teachers can, however, identify specific reading skill deficiencies and can direct the child toward a level of proficiency after a period of systematic instruction (Bond and Tinker, 1973); Dauzat, 1977; Smith, 1969; Wilson, 1977).

Diagnosis should begin with describing the reading performance in terms of vocabulary, word recognition, sentence and paragraph comprehension. It is estimated that 90 to 95 percent of children with reading problems have deficiencies in word recognition. This, then, affects the child's ability to obtain the meanings of words, understanding what is read, and the speed of reading (Winkley, 1970).

The major purpose of diagnosis, according to Strang (1965) is to determine:

> ... first, where to begin in overcoming the difficulties; second, what skills and abilities need to be taught; and third, which method is most likely to help the child learn rapidly (p. 4).

The information used in making these assessments is derived primarily from three sources. The first involves the daily studying of the nature of the errors that a pupil makes in his oral and written work. Secondly, the teacher can assess the individual differences in behaviour as the students work on tasks, and interact with the teacher and other students. Thirdly, the teacher can learn to utilize information from standardized tests that measure individual differences as they pertain to the learning process (Rosenberg, 1968; Strang, 1965).

General Principles of Diagnosis

There are certain basic principles that underlie all diagnosis of reading strengths and weaknesses and should be borne in mind by teachers when they are involved with the process of diagnosis and remediation. The following is a discussion of the most common of these principles as promulgated by Bond and Tinker (1973), Dauzat (1977), Potter and Rae (1973), Pumfrey (1976), Strang (1965) and Bertrand and Cebula (1980).

1. Diagnosis is an integral part of effective teaching - - Awareness of the diagnostic areas and resulting identification of skill needs of students should guide instruction. Relatively simple diagnosis should follow every remedial lesson. It furnishes the basis for selecting the procedures to be used as the student makes progress.

2. Diagnosis must start with measurement of more general areas - - Such a diagnosis is used to identify children who are doing relatively poor work in reading as compared with their other achievements. The instructional problems of some of the poor readers may be isolated and corrective measures taken.

3. Diagnosis must be efficient - going as far as and no farther than is necessary - - In some cases the diagnosis of a disabled reader is a lengthy process. In other cases, however, the instructional needs of the child can be isolated fairly easily and quickly. Diagnosis should proceed only until the problem has been isolated and no farther.

4. Whenever possible, standardized test procedures should be used - - However, the teacher needs to be aware of the limitations of available instruments in this field and be willing to use other types of tests, such as criterion-referenced tests and informal reading tests.

5. Diagnostic teaching is the basis for making curriculum decisions - - As the specific reading strengths and weaknesses are diagnosed, the instructional materials, methods, goals, and organizational design should be altered or varied to suit the individual needs of the children.

6. No assumption should be made about the effectiveness of previous instruction of the child's retention of these lessons - - A series of informal tests can easily determine whether or not the child has grasped the material that has been taught or whether re-teaching is necessary.

7. Owing to the fact that our understanding of the reading process is not complete, the diagnosis of a reading difficulty should be based on a pattern of scores ratings, or reading errors - - Bond and Tinker (1973) give a clear example as to why this is necessary.

> ... when a fifth-grade child has only third-grade ability in syllabication the diagnostician may think his lack of ability to break words into syllables is at the root of the difficulty. But when it is noted that the child's general reading ability is only that of a second-grade child, his ability to syllabify becomes a strength, rather than a weakness (p.177).

8. Diagnosis of reading difficulties often requires more than an assessment of cognitive skills as reading difficulties may be more symptomatic of a wide range of causative factors - - Reading disabilities in some children

may be caused by physical, sensory, emotional or environmental factors. These children should be referred to specialists for more intensive diagnosis and remediation.

9. Only by developing and refining diagnostic procedures can our understanding of the reading process and our ability to prevent and alleviate reading difficulties be furthered - - Tests are merely tools and by themselves cannot help meet children's needs. However, when used appropriately and skilfully, they provide important information not only about what children know or do not know, but also about how they learn..

Diagnostic Instruments

Informal Reading Tests

Informal reading tests are defined as non-standardized procedures for gathering specific information on the child. They provide specific information on the skill development of the child at the time the test was administered (Potter and Rae, 1973).

Informal Reading Inventory

The most common type of informal reading test is the informal reading inventory which is composed of a series of paragraphs of increasing readibility difficulty, selected from books that are graded and controlled in terms

of level of difficulty. They can help the teacher establish an estimate of four reading levels - independent reading level, instructional reading level, frustration level, and listening capacity level. The independent reading level is the level at which the child can read with fluency, understanding, accuracy, and enjoyment. He/she recognizes about 99% of the words and can answer at least 90% of the questions without error. Oral reading is characterized by proper phrasing and accurate interpretation of punctuation. The instructional level is the level at which the child can read satisfactorily provided that he/she receives instruction and supervision from the teacher. Word recognition is about 95% and comprehension is about 75%. At this level, silent reading rate exceeds oral reading rate. The frustration level is the level at which a child's reading skills break down. The child makes many errors, fluency disappears, comprehension is faulty and signs of tension and discomfort become evident. Comprehension is 50% or less and word recognition is about 90%. At the listening capacity, the child can comprehend at least 75% of the material read to him/her by the teacher (Bond and Tinker, 1973; Farr and Anastasiow, 1969; May, 1973; Pumfrey, 1976; Zintz, 1977).

The informal reading inventory offers a simple and accurate way of determining specific reading difficulties such as, (1) reading levels; (2) oral reading proficiency;

(3) evaluating children's understanding of material they have read; (4) assessing the functional use of word recognition skills; and (5) observing their ability to relocate information read previously (Miller, 1974; Stauffer, Abrams and Pikulski, 1978).

This type of test is flexible and can easily be adapted to meet a child's particular need. It is easy to administer and check. Apart from determining reading abilities, it can also be used to evaluate new programs, to compare various groups to determine teaching of material effectiveness, to determine skills in a particular activity, to determine which children can best profit from particular instructional plans and to indicate an instructional sequence for an individual child (Karlin, 1975; Potter and Rae, 1973).

While teachers can develop their own informal reading inventories from readers used in the classroom, there are a number of such inventories that have already been developed and published, such as the Botel Reading Inventory (Botel, 1970), the Classroom Reading Inventory (Silvaroli, 1973) and the Reading Placement Inventory (Sucher and Allred, 1973). Some of these inventories are so designed that parts of them can be administered to the class as a whole, thus saving time on the part of the teacher. Karlin (1975) suggests that it

would be desirable to administer the inventory on an individual basis to younger children who have difficulty with writing. For older children, however, he suggests that they could do the silent reading on their own and write out the answers to the questions. After they had finished, they themselves would note the time it took them to read the selections. Then the teacher would have each child read a paragraph or two orally to determine word recognition skills, and reading levels. It is up to the individual teacher, however, to determine whether this method would work with his/her particular class, or whether he/she would get a more accurate indication of reading strengths and weaknesses by administering the whole test on an individual basis.

The questions used to determine the child's comprehension level are also a very important part of the reading inventory. Zintz (1977) contends that the questions should be designed so that they test "factual or memory items; inferential items requiring reading between the lines; vocabulary items for testing concepts; and items for testing ability to use context clues" (p. 61).

Smith and Barrett (1974) claim that when the teacher develops his/her own inventory, it has a very important characteristic in that the evaluation is conducted with the same or similar material that is being used for instructional

purposes. Whereas, according to Karlin (1975), when inventories are prepared from materials different from those used in class, the results will tend to be less accurate.

In conclusion, then, the inventory developed by the teacher from actual materials used in the class tends to give more accurate and reliable results than those prepared formally for publication. However, if the teacher feels he/she does not have enough time or knowledge to design the inventory, he/she could utilize the published tests since they will give a fairly good indication of the strengths and weaknesses of his/her pupils. A number of informal reading inventories will be listed in the handbook to give teachers an indication of what is available in this area.

Cloze Procedure

The cloze procedure is an informal means of estimating the difficulty children will have in reading graded materials and of determining the level of reader most suitable for the individual child. Two or three excerpts are taken from each book in a reading series. Every fifth word is eliminated and the child is expected to read the passage and write in the actual words that have been omitted.

A child who cannot supply about 40 percent of the missing words in a passage taken from a given book fails to comprehend the material well enough to profit from instruction at the level. If the score is significantly below 40

percent, the child should try the next lower level. If the score is well above 40 percent, the child should try the next higher level (Karlin, 1975; Kirk, Kliebhan and Lerner, 1978).

According to Zintz (1977), research has shown that the most valid and reliable cloze test is one which has the following criteria:

1. Every nth word is omitted;
2. Not more than 20 words out of every 100 are deleted;
3. Passage length is at least 250 words;
4. Deletion ratios of 1:10 and 1:12 in longer passages may be valid for certain purposes;
5. At least 50 words are deleted in order to ensure adequate sampling of passages;
6. The exact word deleted is indicated as the most useful and efficient scoring criteria;
7. Other scoring systems (synonym, form class) provide less inter-scorer reliability and require substantially more time;
8. The separate scoring of form classes or content and function words may provide specific information for specialized purposes.

The cloze procedure can easily be used by the classroom teacher as an informal reading test or as a teaching technique.

Reading Miscue Analysis

Reading Miscue Analysis is a method of recording and analyzing oral reading errors or miscues in a systematic fashion. The analysis indicates the reading stragegies children use, as well as their reading strengths and weaknesses. Children read selected passages of a level slightly higher than their actual reading level, so that they will make miscues (Karlin, 1975).

The premise underlying miscue analysis is that oral reading errors provide valuable diagnostic information about the child's reading. The errors provide clues about the child's language, reasoning skills, and reading process. Answers to the following questions are sought:

1. Is the miscue the result of a dialect variation?
2. Is there graphic similarity between the miscue and the actual word?
3. Is there auditory similarity between the miscue and the actual word?
4. Do both the miscue and the actual word have the same grammatical function?
5. Is the miscue a correction?
6. Is the miscue grammatically and semantically acceptable?
7. Does the miscue produce a change in meaning?

The answers to these questions are scored, and judgments are made about the reader's reading strategies and knowledge and use of language (Goodman & Burke, 1972;

Kirk, Kliebhan and Lerner, 1978; Karlin, 1975).

The procedure for analyzing the miscues is thoroughly explained in the Reading Miscue Inventory Manual. However, it is a complicated and lengthy procedure and requires familiarity with the system. Until these procedures are simplified, the inventory will have limited usability for the classroom teacher.

Standardized Reading Tests

Standardized reading tests are often referred to as formal or norm-referenced tests. They are published by test companies and have gone through a rather extensive development program. The standardized test differs from the informal reading inventory in that it is distinguished by the following characteristics: (1) there are usually norms (i.e. it tells how an individual compares to others who have taken the test); (2) data are included which establish reliability and validity; (3) there must be clear, well-defined directions for administering and scoring; (4) it usually yields what appears to be a precise numerical score rather than a description of a child's performance (Fry, 1977, Guszak, 1978).

In order for the score obtained on a standardized test to be valid, the test administration and scoring instructions must be followed exactly as specified in the

test manual. More detailed explanations, more time than specified, or acceptance of incorrect responses will invalidate the test (Guszak, 1978).

Standardized reading tests are most often used by the teacher in order to obtain information concerning the strengths and weaknesses in a particular skill area, to obtain information concerning the current status of general development in a particular area or skill, and to estimate the expected levels of performance or to predict particular behaviour (Mour, 1968).

Most published tests are standardized. This means that they have been tried out on a large number of pupils prior to publication. The scores of the trial group provide the standard or norm against which any child subsequently taking the test can be compared. The group used for setting the standard should, therefore, be typical or representative of children of their age (Vincent and Creswell, 1976).

Beyond the general characteristics, standardized reading tests vary considerably among themselves. Most textbooks on reading tests distinguish three general types - (1) group survey tests, (2) group diagnostic or analytical tests and (3) individual diagnostic or analytical tests.

Group survey reading tests

The group survey reading test provides general information about the child's reading level. It usually has at

least two parts. One part measures the child's reading vocabulary and the other part measures paragraph comprehension. Some survey tests also have sections that test sentence comprehension and reading rate. Survey tests are usually designed as group tests. Students read silently and then answer multiple choice questions. These tests usually begin with relatively easy items and progress to more and more difficult ones. Norms for interpreting the scores usually extend over several grades. The scores obtained on the survey test can be used to determine how well an individual child reads in comparison to the rest of his/her class and with other children of the same age and grade. Usually the survey test is the first test given to assess reading ability. The Gates-MacGinite Reading Test (Gates and MacGinite, 1979), and the Stanford Achievement Tests (Kelley, Madden, Gardner and Rudman, 1966) are examples of group survey reading tests (Bond and Tinker, 1973; Kirk, Kliebhan and Lerner, 1978).

Group diagnostic or analytical tests

The group diagnostic or analytical test enables the teacher to diagnose a reading group in the classroom. These tests are usually divided into many more subtests than are the group survey tests so that the administration and scoring will be helpful in alerting the teacher to a variety of word-

perception skills that the child needs to perform successfully in reading (Tinker, 1973; Zintz, 1977).

Bond and Tinker (1973) sum up the advantages of group diagnostic tests in the following statements. They contend that these tests

> ...(a) are useful to the teacher for sizing up the relative proficiency of her pupils in a variety of reading abilities; (b) reveal the individual needs of specific pupils who can be helped by the classroom teacher; (c) identify pupils who are in difficulty seriously enough to be referred to a remedial teacher for additional diagnosis and individual instruction; (d) are in general primarily useful for identifying individual needs of students with moderate reading deficiencies in the intermediate and higher grades; (e) are also useful in the more severe disability cases in locating the areas that need further diagnosis (pp. 219-220).

They also contend that these tests have the added advantage of testing more pupils in less time.

Some examples of group diagnostic tests are the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Tests (Karlsen, Madden and Gardner, 1966), the Doren Diagnostic Reading Test of Word Recognition Skills (Doren, 1964), and the Silent Reading Diagnostic Test (Bond and Tinker, 1970). There are also certain other tests which are listed in the handbook (Smith and Barrett, 1974; Zintz, 1977).

Individual diagnostic or analytical tests

The standardized individual diagnostic test is not to be confused with the informal reading inventories. They differ in that the standardized tests have norms with which to compare responses.

Individual diagnostic or analytical tests are used whenever a more detailed and extensive diagnostic procedure seems necessary. They are, of course, administered to each child on an individual basis and enables the teacher to determine the child's strengths and weaknesses in reading by testing a wide variety of skills. Although the tests vary, many of them include the following subtests: oral reading; silent reading; listening comprehension; word recognition and word analysis; reversals; blending word parts; visual and auditory discriminations; phonics; spelling; naming letters; and giving letter sounds. The administration of this type of test can be quite lengthy and complex. The instructions for some of these tests, however, allow the subtests to be administered at different times throughout the school day or over a period of several days. The Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty (Durrell, 1955), and the Gates-McKillop Reading Tests (Gates and McKillop, 1962) are examples of individual diagnostic tests (Burns and Broman, 1975; Karlin, 1975; Leibert, 1971;

Tinker, 1973; Zintz, 1977).

Limitations of Standardized Reading Tests

Although there are advantages to the use of standardized reading tests, there are also a number of disadvantages or limitations associated with them. Teachers who are planning to select a test for use in their classrooms should be aware of these limitations if they are to select the test that is most appropriate for their particular group of children.

The following are some of the limitations of standardized reading tests:

1. In that a test is standardized, it may be inappropriate (i.e., too difficult or too simple) for use with certain groups or individuals. The group used to establish norms may not be comparable to the group to be tested.

2. The kinds of reading that a test requires do not cover all the types of reading that children do in school or elsewhere. It is one thing to read and understand a single paragraph on a test and another to comprehend longer passages in a test.

3. Some tests require children to read words in isolation which normally children are not required to do in their everyday work.

4. Timed conditions on some tests do not allow for flexibility and the scores of some children who work slowly but accurately are likely to be meaningless.

5. The group situation, combined with the standardized conditions may invalidate the test for children who have difficulty working under those conditions.

6. Tests at upper grade levels tend to assume ability at lower levels (Howards, 1980; Karlin, 1973; Otto, 1973; Potter and Rae, 1973).

Mitchell (1968) feels that no standardized test can cover all the specific objectives of reading instruction. It does not reveal the extent to which students integrate reading skills to solve an intellectual problem. He also contends that word meaning of vocabulary sections are often limited by inadequate sampling of word knowledge, do not provide for differentiation between word attack problems and word meaning problems and do not make provisions for multiple meanings of words.

The major shortcoming of standardized reading tests is that the subtests are too short to have high reliability or validity. Unless there are frequent revisions of standardized reading tests, the content becomes out-dated. Also, the tests cannot be adapted to special current needs, to local emphases, or to the particular units of study without lessening their validity (Farr, 1969; Mitchell, 1968; Potter and Rae, 1973; Strang, 1960).

Selecting the Diagnostic Instruments

Some of the limitations discussed above do not apply

to all standardized reading tests. Teachers should, therefore, become familiar with a set of criteria to assist them in the selection of tests. As Smith and Barrett (1974) contend

> ... the most helpful information for classroom teachers regarding reading achievement tests would seem to be not a strong bias for one or two tests, but rather a criteria for evaluating tests (p. 171).

They also have found that the following six questions have been helpful to teachers and administrators in evaluating and selecting reading tests.

1. Are the students who were used to gather normative data similar to our students, and therefore, likely to provide helpful comparisons?
2. Are the reading passages on the test good representations of the kind of reading material students must learn to read?
3. Are the tasks students must perform good representations of what a good reader does when he is getting meaning from print?
4. Are the comprehension questions carefully constructed to measure different levels of thinking about significant aspects of the content of the material?
5. What are the strengths and weaknesses of one particular test with regard to the strengths and weaknesses of other available tests?
6. Is reading rate always measured as rate of comprehension? A rate of reading score that does not take comprehension into consideration is meaningless (pp. 171-172).

The number of reading tests that are available can be quite confusing for the teacher who is trying to select an appropriate test for his/her particular group of children. There are a number of factors that must be taken into consideration when choosing a reading test, whether such a test is informal or standardized.

A test cannot be chosen merely on the basis of its title. The test should be examined and the instructions read carefully. A reading test should be evaluated on its ability to contribute useful information to the evaluation of a group's or individual's reading behaviour (Glock, 1971; Hill, 1974).

The following guidelines presented by Otto (1973) and Strang and Lindquist (1960) can be helpful when selecting a reading test:

1. The purpose for testing should be defined.
2. Suitable tests should be located using Buros' Mental Measurements Yearbooks, professional textbooks, handbooks, catalogues, recommendations of other teachers, etc.
3. The tests should be evaluated before being selected in terms of their validity, reliability, economy, ease of administration, adequacy of the manual, relevance of the norms provided, and the appropriateness of the content for local pupils.
4. A test must be readily and currently available if it is to be used in quantity.

5. The test should be economical. Such things as initial cost of test booklets, whether the booklets are reusable, ease of scoring, and compatability with machine scoring techniques must be considered.

6. Availability of alternate forms of the test is required if the test is to be used in a test-retest comparison.

Once the teacher has decided on a test that he/she feels would be appropriate, a specimen set should be ordered. This test usually includes a copy of the test, test manual, and scoring key. The teacher should then review the test and the test manual carefully and using the guidelines presented above, along with the questions presented by Smith and Barrett (1974) determine whether or not the test will give the required information about his/her class' reading ability.

CHAPTER III

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is the development of a handbook which lists and describes a number of reading tests that can be utilized by primary and elementary teachers to help them diagnose the strengths and/or weaknesses of their students in reading. This chapter discusses the procedures utilized in the selection of tests for inclusion in the handbook, along with a description of the method used in the organizing and describing the tests included.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section deals with the sources of professional information as found in the literature, on the usability of specific diagnostic instruments for the classroom teacher. The second section describes the procedures used to sample the perceived needs of the teacher for those tests that are included in the handbook, and the tabulation and discussion of the data obtained from the teacher questionnaire. The third section discusses the organization of the tests in the handbook.

Guidelines used in the Selection of Tests

Professional Literature

Much of the professional literature on reading and

diagnosis discusses tests that can be used for testing reading achievement and for diagnosing reading strengths and/or weaknesses. Some writers, such as Bond and Tinker (1973), Dobbin (1974), Farr (1969), Farr and Anastasiow (1969), Guszak (1978), Karlin (1975), Spache (1981), give descriptions of a variety of reading tests and discuss the aspects of reading behaviour each test deals with - comprehension, vocabulary, word recognition, spelling, etc. Some of these writers, along with Leibert (1971) and others, actually give lists of these tests that can be used for diagnosing problems, along with brief descriptions of each test.

While reviewing the professional literature on testing and diagnosis in reading, the writer made lists of tests that are listed and/or recommended by specialists in reading. All tests were checked in Buros' Mental Measurements Yearbooks for intended grade utilization, subtests, strengths and weaknesses, and usability by the classroom teacher, prior to their inclusion in the handbook.

The Teacher Survey

Since the handbook is developed specifically for the teachers of Newfoundland and Labrador, the writer decided that it was necessary to survey a sampling of the teacher

population to determine the specific needs of the teachers in the areas of testing and diagnosing in reading.

A questionnaire (Appendix A) was developed for the following purposes:

1. To determine whether published reading tests are being used in the schools, the types of tests being used, and the reasons for using them.
2. To determine who is administering these tests.
3. To determine what methods are being used for diagnosing reading strengths and weaknesses in schools where published tests are not being used.
4. To determine whether teachers felt published reading tests would be helpful for use in their classrooms.
5. To determine what published reading tests are being used in the schools.
6. To give teachers an opportunity to state their opinions regarding testing in reading.
7. To get some idea of teachers' familiarity with published reading tests.

For the purpose of this thesis, The Directory of Newfoundland and Labrador Schools was obtained from the Department of Education. This directory lists the schools according to educational district and denomination, and gives the address, name of school board, grades, phone number, name of principal, enrolment and number of teachers for each school. Since this study is concerned with

obtaining information from teachers in grades one to six, only schools which included at least those grades were considered for the study. These schools were listed as they appeared in the directory. From this list, every second school was selected for inclusion in the survey, for a total of 201 schools. Each school was randomly assigned a number from one to six. This number designated the grade level of the classroom teacher who would receive the questionnaire in each school to ensure an equal representation of teachers from each of grade one to six.

Tabulation of Data

The data obtained from the questionnaires are organized in table form for easy reference (Appendix B). The information is tabulated according to the order in which the questions appeared on the questionnaire. Each table is numbered, and the heading describes the information reported in the table.

Discussion of Data

The questionnaires were sent to the teachers in the selected schools during the winter of 1981. Responses were received from ninety-one teachers, 44% of whom were males and 56% were females.

The teaching experience of the respondents varied

from less than one year to over twenty five years. Over half (54.5%) had less than ten years experience with the greatest concentration (35.8%) in the range of six to ten years (Table II).

The levels of teacher certification ranged from level II to level VII, with 71% having either level IV or level V (Table III).

Nine teachers did not state the number of reading courses they had. Out of the remaining eighty two respondents, the number of reading courses ranged from none (9.8%) to over four (9.8%). Five respondents had only one reading course, 26 had two reading courses, 21 had three, and 14 had four (Table IV). Most of those who had no reading courses had done the conjoint degrees Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education which deal with high school methods of teaching.

Forty four of the respondents had at least one course in tests and measurements (Table V). In contrast to this number, however, only nine of these claimed they were familiar with Buros' Mental Measurements Yearbooks (Table VI). Three did not respond to the question.

Published reading tests were used in 70 of the schools surveyed (Table VII). Forty seven schools used standardized

reading tests, 25 used informal reading inventories and 45 used Basal Reader tests. Some schools used a combination of all three types of tests (Table VIII).

There were a variety of responses explaining the specific reason for the administration of these tests. The most common reasons given were the determining of reading levels in the classroom (57) and the diagnosing of reading problems for remediation in the classroom (49) (Table IX).

In 53 of the schools the tests were administered as the need arose. Twenty one administered them at the beginning of the year, 20 at the end of the year, and 9 at the completion of a given reader (Table X).

The classroom teacher was involved in administering the tests in 59 schools (Table XI). A reading specialist or consultant was involved in testing in 26 schools. Other people involved in administering the tests included the principal (11), a guidance counsellor (4), and a remedial teacher (2).

Twenty four different reading tests were specified as being used. The most widely used test was the Gates-MacGinite Reading Tests (30), followed closely by the Nelson Language Development Reading Test (28). Tests such as the Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty and the

Woodcock Mastery Tests were used in only one or two of the schools (Table XII).

Tables XIII-XV describe the data tabulated from respondents in schools where published reading tests were not utilized. Twenty one schools fell into this category.

The most common methods used by these schools for determining reading problems or for grouping were teacher-made tests (15), and observation (15). In five schools formal tests were administered by a consultant from the school board.

Organization of the Handbook

The reading tests included in the handbook (Appendix C) are listed in alphabetical order under the following headings: Reading Readiness Tests, Reading Inventories, Individual Diagnostic Reading Tests, Group Survey Tests, Oral Reading Tests, Group Diagnostic Reading Tests, Individual Achievement Tests and Tests of Word Analysis and Phonics Skills. A table of contents and an index are included to facilitate reference to the required tests.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This thesis has described the development of a handbook of reading tests intended specifically for primary and elementary teachers (K to 6) of Newfoundland and Labrador. The handbook is not intended to be all-inclusive, and some of the tests included are not for use by all classroom teachers. For example, tests of reading readiness would be used by teachers in kindergarten and grade one. Some tests are for use in primary grades (K to 3), and others for use in elementary grades (4 to 6). Some of the tests included may require the teacher to have had some experience in administering tests before administering these particular tests. This is noted in the Comments Section in the handbook.

The questionnaire, which was sent to teachers throughout the province as part of a needs assessment survey, showed that more than one third of the teachers surveyed were not involved in formal testing in reading. These teachers relied exclusively on informal measures in determining reading strengths and weaknesses of children in their classrooms.

Teachers who used formal testing instruments relied mostly on group survey tests, such as the Gates-McGinite

Reading Tests, as opposed to diagnostic reading tests, such as, the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test, listed by six teachers, and the Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty named by one teacher.

The handbook developed as part of this thesis was an attempt to present teachers with an opportunity to become aware of a selected variety of reading tests that are available from publishing companies. Included are individual and group diagnostic tests, informal reading inventories, oral reading tests, reading readiness tests, group and individual achievement tests and word analysis/phonics tests.

These tests have been selected from a variety of sources, such as (1) the teacher questionnaire; (2) the professional literature; (3) the Reading Clinic, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Memorial University of Newfoundland; (4) the Roman Catholic School Board for St. John's, and (5) Buros' Mental Measurements Yearbooks, which was used to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the tests as promulgated by the reviewers. These strengths and weaknesses are included in the Comments section of each test in the handbook.

CONCLUSIONS

At the completion of this thesis, the writer was able to make several conclusions with regard to the use of published reading tests for diagnosing reading strengths and weaknesses of students in our schools. Some of these conclusions are as follows:

1. It appears that although teachers sometimes use published reading tests, they do not do so in an organized or systematic manner. The survey showed that many teachers are not familiar with reading tests that will test a wide variety of reading skills. The most commonly used test, according to the survey, was a group survey test (the Gates-MacGinite Reading Test), which gives grade-equivalent scores in Comprehension and Vocabulary.

Only two diagnostic tests were used. Six teachers said they administered the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test, and one teacher administered the Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty. One teacher mentioned a reading readiness test but did not specify the name. Nine teachers included intelligence tests despite the fact that the questionnaire was specifically concerned with reading tests.

2. Eight of the teachers who responded to the questionnaire did not have any professional courses in reading. These were either teachers who had completed the conjoint degree program (Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education), which deals with high school methods, or who had only second or third grade certification.

Without some professional training in the teaching of reading, the teachers are obviously lacking much of the theoretical background regarding the diagnosis of reading strengths and weaknesses, and the remediation of reading problems of their students. Although the reading manuals of most reading programs are fairly extensive and provide information on diagnosis and remediation of reading problems, the teachers still need a solid background in the theoretical and practical aspects of reading instruction. Teachers should know what children read, why they read, how they read, how well they read and what difficulties they are having.

3. Only about one-half of the teachers surveyed had a course in tests and measurements, and only nine of these teachers were familiar with Buros' Mental Measurements Yearbooks. Many teachers are obviously lacking information regarding the technicalities of test development, and the meaning of the terminology involved with testing, such as

stanines and percentiles.

4. The number of reading tests that are available can be overwhelming for the inexperienced classroom teacher who is trying to select a reading test to be used with his/her particular group of students. Therefore, it is essential that teachers have access to an instrument, such as the handbook developed as part of this thesis, to assist them in selecting the appropriate tests. Since one test may not give sufficient information, the teacher may have to select several tests to obtain a fairly accurate diagnosis.

Ot[illegible] (1973) and Strang and Lindquist (1960) cite six guidelines which should be followed when selecting a reading test:

(a) The purpose for testing should be defined;

(b) Suitable tests should be located using Buros, Mental Measurements Yearbooks, professional textbooks, handbooks, catalogues, recommendations of other teachers, etc.

(c) The tests should be evaluated in terms of their validity, reliability, economy, ease of administration, adequacy of the manual, relevance of the norms provided, and the appropriateness of the content for local pupils;

(d) A test must be readily available if it is to be used in quantity;

(e) The test should be economical. Such things as initial cost of test booklets, whether the

booklets are reusable, ease of scoring and compatability with machine scoring techniques must be considered;

(f) Availability of alternate forms of the test is required if the test is to be used in a test-retest comparison.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The writer proposes a number of recommendations relating to the teacher use of published reading tests, and to the handbook itself.

1. The results of the teacher questionnaire showed that many classroom teachers are not using published reading tests as might be expected. It is, therefore, recommended that teachers be encouraged to use these formal instruments more in correlation with their reading instruction. This encouragement should come from the university, the school boards, and the school administrators. The university should offer compulsory courses in tests and measurements, specifically relating to reading, or reading courses with emphasis on testing in reading as part of its undergraduate and graduate teacher training programs. Familiarity with Buros' Mental Measurements Yearbooks should be a key factor in these courses.

The school boards should offer in-service training or workshops on testing for the classroom teacher. These sessions could provide familiarization with Buros' Mental

Measurements Yearbooks, information on the principles of diagnosis, diagnostic procedures, procedures for selecting suitable reading tests, and a description of the various types of reading tests, such as achievement and diagnostic tests. Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis and the handbook could be used by the conductor of the workshops to obtain background material.

The school boards should also assist the schools in establishing a school testing policy. The school administrators have the responsibility of ensuring that money is budgeted for purchasing tests and assisting the teachers in carrying out a testing program in accordance with the school testing policy.

2. Eight of the teachers surveyed did not have any professional courses in reading. Most of these teachers had studied high school methods as part of their undergraduate degree program. It should be the responsibility of the school boards to insist that teachers hired to teach in the primary and elementary grades are qualified to teach reading.

According to Smith (1969) and Strang and Lindquist (1960), teachers can reduce the incidence of reading failure by being aware of children's ability in and attitude

towards reading, and by understanding the specific difficulties faced by children learning to read. Good reading instruction depends on the ability of the teacher to diagnose the child's strengths and weaknesses in reading and to teach him/her on his/her appropriate instructional reading level.

3. Since the handbook represents only a modest attempt to present information on a limited number of available reading tests, teachers are encouraged to continue to add information on other tests that they are aware of and might find useful in their classroom. This information can be obtained from school board reading consultants, university courses, reading workshops, publishers' catalogues, and other teachers.

4. The handbook should be updated annually to include new tests and revised editions of previously published tests. This is important since tests can quickly become outdated, and new editions are continuously being published.

5. Although the handbook describes the tests, teachers should attempt to view each test before ordering a set to be administered to the whole class or instructional group. Many publishing companies which produce these tests have specimen sets available for a reasonable price. The specimen set includes a copy of the test, along with the manual and any other pertinent information required for administering the test.

When the specimen test has been obtained, the teacher should use the guidelines set down by Otto (1973) and Strang and Lindquist (1960), as well as those listed by Smith and Barrett (1974) in Chapter 2 of this thesis, to determine whether the test is suitable for use with a specific group of students.

6. Testing and diagnosis of reading strengths and weaknesses can often be a complicated process for the inexperienced teacher. However, if the recommendations discussed in this chapter are carried out, teachers should be equipped to do a much better job of diagnostic teaching.

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APPENDIX A

Teacher Questionnaire

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Section 1

Name of school _____

Grade taught _____ Grades in school _____

Years of teaching experience _____ Sex _____

Education certificate _____

Number of courses in reading _____

Do you have a course in Tests and Measurement? _____

Are you familiar with Buros' Mental Measurement Yearbook? ___

Are published tests used in your school? _____ (If YES, answer Section 2. If NO, answer Section 3).

Section 2

1. Are the published tests used in your school

   _____ standardized reading tests?

   _____ informal reading inventories?

   _____ Basal reader tests?

   _____ Other? Specify _____

---

2. Why are these tests given?

   _____ grade placement

   _____ placement in remedial reading class

   _____ placement in special education class

____ to determine reading levels in the classroom

____ to diagnose reading problems for remediation in the classroom

____ other. Specify _____

3. When are the tests administered?

____ at the beginning of the year

____ at the end of the year

____ as the need arises

____ other. Specify _____

4. Who administers the tests?

____ classroom teacher

____ principal

____ reading specialist or consultant

____ other. Specify _____

5. Specify name(s) of test(s) used. _____

6. Comments _____

Section 3

1. What methods are used for placing students in remedial or special education classes or for grouping in the

classroom?

_____ teacher-made tests

_____ observation

_____ trial and error

_____ other. Specify _____

2. Are you familiar with any published tests that could be used in your school or classroom?

_____ Yes

_____ No

3. If the answer to #2 is YES, specify names of tests

_____

_____

4. Do you feel that published reading tests, either standardized or informal, could be beneficial to you?

_____ Yes

_____ No

Explain _____

_____

5. Comments _____

_____

APPENDIX B

Results of Teacher Questionnaire

TABLE 1

SEX DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

Possible responses	Number	Percentage
Male	40	44
Female	51	56

TABLE II

YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Possible Responses	Number	Percentage
0 - 5	19	21
6 - 10	33	36
11 - 15	17	19
16 - 20	10	11
21 - 25	7	8
over 25	4	5
no response	1	1

TABLE III

LEVELS OF TEACHER CERTIFICATION

Possible Responses	Number	Percentage
Level I	0	0
Level II	4	5
Level III	10	11
Level IV	37	41
Level V	28	30
Level VI	11	12
Level VII	1	1

TABLE IV

NUMBER OF COURSES IN READING

Possible Responses	Frequency of Response
0	8
1	5
2	26
3	21
4	14
Over 4	8
No response	9
Total	91

TABLE V

RESPONSE TO QUESTION:
DO YOU HAVE A COURSE IN TESTS AND MEASUREMENTS

Possible Responses	Frequency of Response
Yes	44
No	43
No response	4
Total	91

TABLE VI

RESPONSE TO QUESTION:
ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH BUROS'MENTAL MEASUREMENTS YEARBOOKS?

Possible Responses	Frequency of Response
Yes	9
No	79
No response	3
Total	91

TABLE VII

RESPONSE TO QUESTION:
ARE PUBLISHED READING TESTS USED IN YOUR SCHOOL?

Possible Responses	Frequency of Response
Yes	70
No	21
Total	91

TABLE VIII

RESPONSE TO QUESTION:
WHAT PUBLISHED TESTS ARE USED IN YOUR SCHOOL?

Possible Responses	Frequency of Response
Standardized Reading Tests	47
Informal Reading Inventories	25
Basal Reader Tests	45

TABLE IX

RESPONSE TO QUESTION:
WHY ARE THESE TESTS GIVEN?

Possible Responses	Frequency of Response
Grade Placement	22
Placement in Remedial Reading Class	22
Placement in Special Education Class	18
To Determine Reading Levels in the Classroom	57
To Diagnose Reading Problems for Remediation in the Classroom	49
No response	4

TABLE X

RESPONSE TO QUESTION:
WHEN ARE THE TESTS ADMINISTERED?

Possible Responses	Frequency of Response
Beginning of the Year	21
End of the Year	20
As the Need Arises	53
Completion of Given Reader	9

TABLE XI

RESPONSE TO QUESTION:
WHO ADMINISTERS THE TESTS?

Possible Responses	Frequency of Response
Classroom Teacher	59
Principal	11
Reading Specialist or Consultant	26
Guidance Counsellor	4
Remedial Teacher	2

TABLE XII

RESPONSE TO QUESTION:
SPECIFY NAMES OF TESTS USED

Possible Responses	Frequency of Response
Gates-MacGinite Reading Tests	30
Nelson Language Development Reading Test	28
Canadian Test of Basic Skills	12
Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test	6
Ginn Reading Series Test	5
Slossom Oral Reading Test	5
Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test	4
Stanford Achievement Tests	3
Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT)	2
Canadian Standards Test	2
Stanford-Binet Diagnostic	2
Metropolitan Achievement	2
Informal Reading Assessment (Gerrard & Beard)	2
Otis-Lennon	2
OISE Achievement Tests	1
Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty	1
Basic Achievement Tests	1
Oral Reading Facility	1

TABLE XII (CONT'D.)

Possible Responses	Frequency of Response
Primary Mental Abilities	1
Dolch Basic Sight Word Test	1
Informal Achievement	1
Reading Readiness (Did not specify name)	1
Woodcock Mastery Tests	1
Open Highways Reading Series Test	1

TABLE XIII

RESPONSE TO QUESTION:
WHAT METHODS ARE USED FOR PLACING STUDENTS IN REMEDIAL OR SPECIAL EDUCATION CLASSES OR FOR GROUPING IN THE CLASSROOM?

Possible Responses	Frequency of Response
Teacher-made Tests	15
Observation	15
Trial and Error	1
Testing by School Board	5
No response	1

TABLE XIV

RESPONSE TO QUESTION:
ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH ANY PUBLISHED READING TESTS THAT COULD BE USED IN YOUR SCHOOL OR CLASSROOM?

Possible Responses	Frequency of Response
Yes	6
No	15
Total	21

TABLE XV

RESPONSE TO QUESTION:
IF THE ANSWER TO #2 IS YES, SPECIFY NAME(S) OF TEST(S)

Possible Responses	Frequency of Response
Nelson Reading Test	3
Ginn	1
Stanford-Binet	1
Gates-MacGinite	1
Stanford Diagnostic	1

APPENDIX C

Handbook of Reading Tests

A HANDBOOK ON PRIMARY AND ELEMENTARY READING TESTS FOR THE CLASSROOM TEACHER

Yvonne Hepditch, B.A., B.Ed.

August, 1983

TABLE OF CONTENTS - APPENDIX C

INTRODUCTION

Diagnosis of reading strengths and weaknesses is an integral and essential part of reading instruction. Often, the diagnosis is informally done through observation of a child's everyday work and through teacher-made tests. Sometimes, however, this approach does not give enough or adequate information, and the teacher will need to initiate a more systematic approach through the use of published reading tests.

The results of a survey of classroom teachers, conducted during the winter, 1981, showed that many teachers are not familiar with reading tests that are available to help them in the reading diagnosis of their students. The purpose of this handbook is to give some basic information on a variety of reading tests that can be obtained from publishing and testing companies. For each test, the intended grade utilization, time required for administration, forms, if applicable, a brief description of the test, along with comments on the strengths and weaknesses according to Buros' Mental Measurements Yearbooks and/or professional literature.

The number of tests included in the handbook is not to be interpreted as all-inclusive. Attempts were

made, however, to include those tests utilized in the schools, as determined by the teacher survey. Other tests were selected on the basis of their recommendation by reading specialists as gathered from professional literature, and also on the basis of their usability by the classroom teacher. Further information can be obtained by referring to the appropriate reference accompanying each test in the handbook. Teachers are encouraged to continually check catalogues from testing companies to update the handbook, and keep informed on revised tests.

Although the tests in the handbook are divided according to specific areas of difficulty they diagnose, teachers should be aware that learning to read is a holistic process and is not merely a process of learning a hierarchy of individual skills. A low score on word analysis or phonics tests, for example, does not mean that the reading program should deal solely with the correction of problems in these areas. These skills should be taught in the context of a total reading program.

It is hoped that the handbook will provide teachers with useful information, that it may create an awareness of the many reading tests available, and that it may indirectly encourage the use of these instruments whenever more information is needed to carry out diagnostically-oriented reading instruction.

SECTION I

GROUP DIAGNOSTIC READING TESTS

Diagnostic Reading Test: Pupil Progress Series
Oliver F. Anderhalter, R. Stephen Gawkowski, and Ruth Colestock, Illinois: Scholastic Testing Service Inc., 1970.

Grades: Primary One (1.9 to 2.1); Primary Two (2.2 to 3.0); Elementary (4.0 to 6.0); Advanced (7.0 to 8.0).
Time: About 50 minutes
Forms: A and B for each level
Description: Primary Level One gives nine scores: Vocabulary (word recognition, word to context relations, words in use, total), rate of reading for meaning, comprehension (recalling information, locating information, reading for descriptions, total). Primary Level Two provides ten scores: Vocabulary (words in use, word meaning, total), rate of reading for meaning, comprehension (same as for Level One plus following directions, reading for meaning). Elementary Level gives 13 scores: knowledge and use of sources (functions, best sources, use of index, use of table of contents, total), rate of reading for meaning, comprehension (same as for Primary Level One plus word meaning, reading for meaning, and reading for directions or procedures).

Comments: Although this test does not fully serve the requirements as a diagnostic tool, it is valuable as a survey instrument. When the comprehension and vocabulary sources are combined, the value of the test can be greatly increased as a gross measure of reading abilities. The pictures in the test are dated, and the format needs to be improved. There is some doubt as to the value of timed comprehension and vocabulary, and the overbalance of factual questions can be easily answered by referring to the passages. The test should be used with caution and an awareness of its limitations. (Buros 7:718).

New Development Reading Tests (2nd. ed.)
Guy L. Bond, Bruce Balow and Cyril J. Hoyt. Chicago: Lyons and Carnhan, 1968.

Grades: Lower Primary (1.0 to 2.5); Upper Primary (2.5 to 4.0); Intermediate (4.0 to 6.0).
Time: About 50 minutes
Forms: U1 and U2, L1 and L2, A and B respectively.

Description: Each of the primary tests gives four scores: word recognition, comprehending significant ideas, comprehending specific instructions, and an average grade score. The intermediate test gives five basis scores: (1) vocabulary; (2) reading for information; (3) reading for relationships; (4) reading for interpretation; and (5) reading for appreciation. It also gives three combination scores - literal comprehension (reading for information and reading for relationships), creative comprehension (reading for interpretation and reading for appreciation), and general comprehension (a combination of all the other subtests except vocabulary).

Comments: This test is recommended for cautious use in analyzing the reading abilities of particular students in the primary and elementary grades. It measures a number of important components of comprehension. Reading material and item structure are good with a few exceptions. The normative data available for the primary test is inadequate. (Buros 7:697).

OISE Achievement Tests in Silent Reading: Advanced Primary
Patricia Tracey. Toronto: Institute for Studies in Education, 1971.

Grades: One to Four
Time: 90 minutes in three sessions
Forms: A and B
Description: This test has three subtests: (1) Words in Use; (2) Multiple Word Meanings; and (3) Comprehension. In Words in Use, the student must use context clues to select the word to complete the sentence. The Comprehension subtest is divided into two parts. In Part A, the student is required to read the passage and select the best answer to the question. In Part B, a story is formed by arranging a group of sentences in correct order. The alternate forms allow for a pre-testing and post-testi[illegible]

Comments: The OISE tests have a reported reliability of .97 and a validity of .75. Tables are provided to translate the raw scores into stanines and percentiles as opposed to the more familiar ages or grade equivalents. The administration time is greater than that of the other available tests. (Buros 8:736).

Primary Reading Profiles
James B. Stroud, Albert N. Hieronymous, and Paul McKee. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968.

Grades: One to Three
Time: 95 to 100 minutes
Description: This test gives scores in reading aptitude, auditory association, word recognition, word attack, and reading comprehension. It also gives an overall score. The auditory association test is divided into two parts. In Part A, the student marks pictures whose names begin with the same beginning sound as the first picture in the row. In Part B, the student is required to associate the initial sound of a word and the letter or letters that stand for that sound. In word recognition, the student is required to mark the word (out of four words) pronounced by the teacher. The word attack subtest involves using context and auditory clues to determine a word. Reading comprehension is also divided into two parts: Part A involves answering questions about a picture, and Part B involves answering questions about a story the student reads silently. The test is designed to measure progress at the end of one year of instruction.

Comments: The reliability provided for this test has little or no value. No data is presented to show the relationship of this test to others. The strong points of the test are its built in readiness test to be administered prior to beginning the following year's instruction, the individual profile chart, and the cleverly designed auditory association test. Technical information is clearly presented in the manual. (Buros 5:665).

Silent Reading Diagnostic Tests (2nd. ed.)
G.L. Bond, B. Balow, and C.J. Hoyt. California: Meredith Corporation, 1970.

Grades: Two to Six
Time: 90 minutes in three test periods
Description: This test is composed of eight subtests to evaluate areas of word recognition: (1) Words in Isolation is comprised of 54 items in which the child selects a word to best describe a picture: (2) Words in Context has 30 items in which the child selects a word that logically completes a sentence; (3) Visual - Structural Analysis utilizes 30 affixed words

containing the most common prefixes and suffixes, to assess knowledge of word structure; (4) Syllabication measures ability to separate words into syllables; (5) Word Synthesis measures the ability to blend words together both visually and phonetically; (6) In Beginning Sounds, the child selects the letters that represent the sound heard at the beginning of the word read by the teacher; There are 30 items, most of which test common blends and diagraphs; (7) Ending Sounds (same format as test 6); and (8) Vowel and Consonant Sounds - the child selects the letter that represents the initial sound in the word pronounced by the teacher.

Comments: The manual for this test is clearly written and provides tables for converting each subtest score to grade equivalents, stanines, and percentile ratings. The test provides certain information about word recognition and analysis in silent reading, but may not aid the teacher in the analysis of specific needs as claimed by the authors. No validity data is available. (Buros 7:722).

Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (2nd. ed.)
Bjorn Karlsen, Richard Madden, and Eric F. Gardner. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc., 1976.

Grades: Red (1.5 to 3.5); Green (2.5 to 5.5); Brown (4.5 to 9.5).
Time: Varies with each level.
Forms: A and B
Description: The red level tests word reading, comprehension auditory vocabulary, auditory discrimination, phonetic analysis. It gives a score for each, plus a total score for word reading and comprehension. The green level tests auditory vocabulary, auditory discrimination, phonetic analysis, structural analysis, and comprehension (literal, inferential, and total). The brown level has seven scores - auditory vocabulary, comprehension (literal, inferential, and total), phonetic analysis, structural analysis and reading rate. Scores are reported in stanines, percentiles and grade equivalents.

Comments: Buros has high praise for this test. This edition varies from the first edition which only had two levels. It provides information that should prove useful to teachers who do not have any special training in diagnosis and remediation. The manual is clear, concise, and

contains all the necessary information. A limitation of the test is that it is not designed for severely disabled readers. (Buros 8:777).

SECTION II

GROUP SURVEY TESTS

Canadian Achievement Tests: Reading
Canadian Test Centre. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1982.

Grades: Level 12 (1.6 to 2.9); Level 13 (2.6 to 3.9); Level 14 (3.6 to 4.9); Level 15 (4.6 to 5.9); Level 16 (5.6 to 6.9); Level 17 (6.6 to 7.9).
Time: About 79 minutes for Levels 12 and 13; 56 minutes for all other levels.
Forms: A
Description: The reading section of this test is part of a battery of tests which include reading, spelling, language, and mathematics. In addition, a reference skills test is included in Levels 14 to 19. In Levels 12 and 13 the reading is broken into four basic skills: Phonic Analysis; Structural Analysis; Reading Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension. All other levels include Reading Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension. The test can be hand-scored or computer scored. The Can Scan Scoring Service provides a number of reporting forms which can be beneficial to the teacher. The Student's Test Record provides a complete record of a student's test performance. The Class Record Sheet lists the scores for the students in the class. The Objectives Competency Sheet contains a list of students and category objectives accompanied by an indication of level of performance as proficient, competent, or low. Seven scores can be obtained: raw score, scale score, grade equivalent, national percentile, national stanine, local percentile, and local stanine.

Comments: This is a new test, and the writer was unable to find any reviews of it. However, because it is Canadian and appears to be well-developed, it is included here to make teachers aware that it is available and to allow them to obtain more information to determine if it suits their needs.

Gates-MacGinite Reading Tests (Canadian Edition)
Arthur I. Gates and Walter H. MacGinite. Don Mills, Ontario: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1979.

Grades: Level A (1.0 to 1.9); Level B (Grade 2); Level C (Grade 3); Level D (4.0 to 6.9).

Time: About 55 minutes
Forms: One and Two
Description: The Canadian Edition of this test is similar to the new edition of its American counterpart, on which it is based. During the autumn of 1978, the tests were standardized on approximately 50,000 students from all across Canada, and contain Canadian content. Subtests for all levels include Vocabulary and Comprehension and a total reading score can be obtained. A test designed for a given grade is usually suitable for the beginning of the following grade, especially if the group is average or below. Grade equivalents, stanines and percentiles can be obtained.

Comments: One of the major revisions of this test is the addition of a wide range of reading skills in the first-grade test. This edition also includes a newly designed scoring key to enable the teacher to score the answer booklets more quickly. The publisher also provides a machine-scored profile sheet, which not only reports the date, but also includes a brief diagnostic evaluation of the student. (Cheek and Cheek, 1981; Nelson's Measurement and Guidance Catalogue, 1981).

Metropolitan Achievement Tests: Reading
Walter N. Durost, Harold H. Bixler, J. Wayne Wrightstone, George A. Prescott, and Irving H. Balow, New York, Psychological Corporation, 1973.

Grades: Primary Level Two (2.5 to 3.4); Elementary Level (3.5 to 4.9); Intermediate Level (5.0 to 6.9)
Time: About 50 minutes
Forms: F. G and H
Description: This test, part of a battery of tests, gives three scores at each level: word knowledge, reading and a total score. The word knowledge subtest measures vocabulary and word recognition. The reading subtest measures sentence meaning and paragraph meaning at the primary level, paragraph meaning at the elementary level and paragraph plus larger selection comprehension at the intermediate levels. All items are multiple choice.

Comments: Tables are available for obtaining grade equivalents, percentiles and stanines. There is a separate teacher's handbook for each level and a battery technical manual is available. Although some of the comprehension items can be

answered without reading the passages, the tests are considered good for obtaining a rough indication of broad areas of strengths and weaknesses in reading (Buros 8:732).

Nelson Reading Skills Test (Revised)
Gerald S. Hanna, Leo M. Schell, and Robert L. Schreiner. Scarborough, Ontario: Nelson Canada Ltd., 1980.

Grades: Level A (3.0 to 5.0); Level B (5.0 to 9.0)
Time: 33 minutes
Forms: Three and Four
Description: This is a newly-normed survey of achievement and diagnosis of basic reading skills. Three levels in a single booklet permit group-administered individualized testing. Word Meaning (Vocabulary) test contains three types of items: words in isolation, words in phrases and words in sentences. The Reading Comprehension Test measures literal, translational and higher order tasks. Optional Word Parts test for grades three and four permit diagnosis of students' specific needs in the decoding skills of sound - symbol correspondence, root words, and syllabication. Optional Reading Rate for grades five to nine is also indicated.

Comments: The information on this test was found in the Measurement and Guidance Catalogue from Nelson. Any teachers who feel this test may suit their needs should order a copy of the test and study it carefully before using it with their class and attempt to find a professional review of the test.

Stanford Achievement Test: Reading (6th ed.)
Richard Madden, Eric F. Gardner, Herbert C. Rudman, Bjorn Karlsen and Jack C. Merwin. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1973.

Grades: Primary Level One (1.5 to 2.4); Primary Level Two (2.5 to 3.4); Primary Level Three (3.5 to 4.4); Intermediate Level One (4.5 to 5.4); Intermediate Level Two (5.5 to 6.9).
Time: About 80 minutes
Forms: A and B
Description: This test is part of a battery of tests. Primary Level One and Two give six scores: reading (word comprehension, and word plus comprehension), word study skills, total and vocabulary. Primary Level Three and

Intermediate Levels One and Two each give four scores: comprehension, word study skills, total and vocabulary. The test norms provide percentile ranks, stanine scores, grade equivalent scores and scaled scores.

Comments: This test has an attractive format and very complete and informative manuals. Instructions for test administration and interpretation are well written. The reading skills covered adequately represent reading which is taught in schools. (Buros 8/745).

SECTION III

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

Peabody Individual Achievement Test: Reading
L.M. Dunn and F.C. Markwardt. Circle Pines, Minnesota: American Guidance Service, 1970.

Grades: One to Twelve
Time: About 15 minutes
Description: The reading test of this battery of tests contains two subtests: Reading Recognition and Reading Comprehension. The Reading Recognition subtest has eighty four items ranging in difficulty from pre-school to high school. The items test skill development in matching letters, naming capital and lower case letters, and recognizing words in isolation. The comprehension subtest contains sixty six multiple-choice items assessing skill development in what is read. After reading a sentence, the student must indicate comprehension by choosing the correct picture out of four pictures that are presented. Age equivalents, percentile ranks and standard scores can be obtained for each subtest and for the test as a whole.

Comments: The item content of this appears to be appropriate and the directions are clear, allowing the test to be administered by anyone who has read and understood the directions. The test can be useful as a screening device to help obtain a quick rough estimate of educational levels. It can also be used to suggest the point at which a more comprehensive test may be employed to give more specific information (Buros 7:17).

Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT)
Joseph F. Jastak and Sarah Jastak. Delaware: Jastak Associates Inc., 1978.

Grades: Level I (ages 5 years to 11 years); Level II (age 12 to adult)
Time: About 15 minutes
Description: The WRAT is an individually administered, paper and pencil test that assesses performance in reading, spelling and arithmetic. The reading subtest consists of recognizing and naming letters and pronouncing words out

of context or in isolation., There is a time limit of 10 seconds per word and a test limit of 12 consecutive errors. Raw scores are converted to grade ratings and separate norms are given for males and females.

Comments: The major criticism of this test is that it provides relatively few behaviour samples of a student's skills in specific content areas. The reading subtest assesses only skill in decoding isolated words; assessment of comprehension skills is totally ignored. Teachers of regular or special classes can use the WRAT to obtain a global picture of achievement, but they should make curricula decisions on the basis of tests that provide more extensive samples of behaviour. (Buros 7:36).

SECTION IV

INDIVIDUAL DIAGNOSTIC READING TESTS

Diagnostic reading Scales (2nd ed.)
George D. Spache. Monterey: California Test Bureau, 1972.

Grade: One to Six.
Time: About 45 minutes
Description: This test contains three word recognition lists, graded paragraphs for oral and silent reading and comprehension, supplementary phonics tests which gives scores in consonant sounds, vowel sounds, consonany blends, common syllables, letter sounds, initial consonants, and auditory discrimination. It helps determine instructional level, independent level, rate of silent reading (optional), and potential level (auditory comprehension). It includes a word analysis checklist and a checklist of reading difficulties.

Comments: The manual is well organized. In 1975, a technical bulletin on reliability and validity was added. The test has considerable potential in diagnosing a wide variety of reading skills and needs. The 22 graded passages represent narrative, expository and descriptive selections, each followed by seven or eight comprehension questions, mostly involving recall of information. Depending on the background of the student, some of the questions can be answered without reading the passages. The interpretation of the instructional and independent reading levels are complicated and confusing and do not follow the usual form of determining these levels. (Buros 8:753).

Note: The Diagnostic Reading Scales were revised again in 1981. The writer has not been able to find a review of this new edition, other than by the author himself. (Spache, 1981, pp. 203-214).

Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty
Donald D. Durrell. New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1955.

Grade: One to Six
Time: About 30 minutes.

Description: This test contains subtests in the following: oral reading - timed; silent reading; listening comprehension; word recognition and analysis; matching letters; naming letters and identifying letters; visual memory of words - primary level; hearing sounds in words - primary; learning to hear sounds in words; sounds of letters; learning rate; visual memory of words - intermediate; phonic spelling; spelling test and handwriting. Subtests of oral reading, silent reading, word recognition and analysis have check lists of difficulties. There is also a check list of instructional needs and a general history data form.

Comments: Although the directions for administering the test are quite clear, there may be considerable difficulty in using and interpreting the norms. There is no mention of reliability or validity and there is no indication of consistency of results. The check lists for observing errors in oral reading and faulty reading habits are quite complete and detailed. The test is probably most suited for the teacher who has had previous experience in testing. (Buros 4:561).

Gates-McKillop Reading Diagnostic Tests

Arthur I. Gates and Anne McKillop. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1962.

Grade: Two to Six
Time: 30 to 60 minutes
Forms: One and Two
Description: This test is divided into eight sections with each of these sections being further divided into more specific sections as follows (I) Oral Reading; (II) Words: Flash Presentation; (III) Words: Untimed Presentation; (IV) Phrases: Flash; (V) Knowledge of Word Parts: Word Attack - recognizing and blending common word parts; giving letter sounds, naming capital letters and lower case letters; (VI) Recognizing the Visual Form or Word Equivalent of Sounds - nonsense words, initial letters, final letters and vowels; (VII) Auditory Blending; (VIII) Supplementary Tests - Spelling, Oral Vocabulary, Syllabication, Auditory Discrimination. The raw scores are converted to grade scores.

Comments: The well-organized manual provides detailed instructions for administering, scoring and interpreting test results. The test itself assesses a variety of functions taught in the skills sequence in reading instruction. However, a comprehensive assessment of a skills sequence instruction is precluded by the lack of subtests on the use of syntax, semantic and graphene - phoneme correspondences in identifying words in context. Another major weakness is that while paragraphs one to four are about equally spaced, there is a large increase in difficulty between paragraphs four and five and again between paragraphs six and seven.

Despite critical reviews of this test over the years, it has not been revised. (Buros 8:759).

SPIRE Individual Reading Evaluation

Harry Alpert and Alvin Kravitz. New Dimensions in Education Inc., 1973.

Grade: SPIRE ONE (grade One to Six); SPIRE Two (grades Four to Ten).
Time: 20 to 35 minutes.
Description: Each level of the SPIRE actually consists of two tests: Diagnostic Reading Evaluation (20 to 30 minutes), and Quick Placement Test (5 minutes). There are three diagnostic scores - individual word recognition, oral and silent detention, oral and silent comprehension, and two quick placement scores - individual word recognition and reading. It gives three derived scores - instructional level, independent level and frustration level.

Comments: The strengths of this test lie in its identification of levels of materials appropriate for instruction, and the summary sheets provided for describing oral errors and the child's reading habits. The selections presented for reading are interesting and appropriate for their level. Ditto masters are included for all expendable sheets. On the negative side, the time required for administering the whole test might be a deterring factor, although the five minutes required for administering the Quick Placement would certainly be worthwhile. The comprehension questions supposedly consist of main idea, detail, inference and vocabulary. Most of them, however, involve detail and each selection does not have the same number of each type of question. (Buros 8:773).

Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests
Richard Woodcock. Minnesota: American Guidance Service, Inc., 1973.

Grades: K to 12
Time: 25 to 30 minutes
Forms: A and B
Description: The Woodcock contains five subtests: (1) Letter Identification; (2) Word Identification; (3) Word attack; (4) Word Comprehension and (5) Passage Comprehension. The raw scores convert to grade scores, percentile ranks, and standard scores. The alternate forms can be given at the beginning and end of the year or learning period.

Comments: The strengths of this test lie in the wide variety of interpretative scores which are highly reliable even for the subtests, a clear and concise manual, test directions that are easy and largely devoid of ambiguity, and a wide grade range. On the negative side, the manual combines administration and technical data, which can be confusing for the classroom teacher inexperienced in testing. The material is sexist in that women are portrayed only as students, mothers, wives or nurses, whereas boys and men are portrayed in a wide variety of situations. According to Buros, this test can be a valuable tool in the hands of an experienced diagnostician, but is not recommended for general use. (Buros 8:779).

SECTION V

ORAL READING TESTS

Gilmore Oral Reading Test (2nd ed.)
John V. Gilmore and Eunice Gilmore. New York: Harcourt Brace and World Inc., 1968.

Grade: One to Eight
Time: About 15 to 20 minutes
Forms: C and D
Description: The test provides a measure of accuracy of oral reading, comprehension of material read, and rate of reading. Each of the two forms is comprised of ten oral reading paragraphs which form a continuous story. Each paragraph has an illustration of characters and/or events along with five questions to test comprehension. The errors made in reading, the time required for reading each paragraph and responses to the comprehension questions are recorded in an individual record. Performance ratings are provided for accuracy, comprehension and rate of reading.

Comments: Buros describes this test as among one of the best standardized tests of accuracy in oral reading of meaningful material available. The usefulness of the comprehension and rate of reading scores are more questionable. The manual gives specific directions for marking errors and determining grade level of students. The teacher must record the errors made in reading the paragraph, the time required for reading, and the responses to the questions. Comprehension questions involve mostly recall of information read. (Buros 7:737; and 8:785)

Gray Oral Reading Test (2nd ed.)
William S. Gray. Edited by Helen M. Robinson. New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1967.

Grade: One to College
Time: About 40 minutes
Forms: A, B, C and D
Description: Each form of this test contains 13 graded paragraphs to help in diagnosing oral reading difficulties. This is done by marking the types of errors made - mispronounciations, omissions, insertions, substitutions,

repititions and inversions. The paragraphs are made more difficult by difficulty of vocabulary, range and density of vocabulary, syllabic length of words, length of words, length and complexity of sentence structure and the maturity of concepts. The errors made are recorded as the passage is read. The time in seconds for reading each passage is also recorded. The four literal comprehensions are not used for obtaining a grade equivalent, but they are useful in serving the diagnostic purpose of the test. Grade equivalents are given separately for boys and girls.

Comments: Although this test has been standardized using a small population, it is well constructed and the manual gives detailed instructions for administering and scoring the test. Because the test involves only oral reading, the teacher has to decide whether the results will be relevant to a program that employs mostly silent reading. (Buros 6:842; Spache, 1981, p. 189).

Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT)

Richard L. Slosson. New York: Slosson Educational Publications, 1963.

Grade: Preprimer to High School
Time: About 3 to 5 minutes
Description: The SORT is given individually and is based on the ability to pronounce words from graded lists at different levels of difficulty. There are ten graded lists of 20 words each. The total number of words pronounced correctly plus any words below an individual's starting list is converted to a reading level in years and months. The testing materials consist of two pages - the word lists and the instructions for the teacher.

Comments: Although the SORT is standardized, no information regarding the population involved in standardization is provided. The test was not validated with any test that measures comprehension in determining reading ability. If this test is used as a diagnostic tool, it should be used as a word recognition test rather than a test of oral reading ability. The teacher should note the types of errors made by the student, as well as the skills employed in attempting an unknown word. (Cheek and Cheek, 1980, p. 121; Spache, 1981, pp. 217-220).

SECTION VI

READING INVENTORIES

Botel Reading Inventory
Morton Botel. Chicago: Follett Publishing Co., 1970.

Grade: One to Junior High
Time: Unlimited
Description: This inventory consists of four subtests. The Word Recognition Subtest has eight graded lists of words from preprimer to fourth grade level. Word Opposites consist of ten graded paragraphs from grade one to senior high school level. Phonics Mastery has two forms each of which is divided into four levels. Level A tests mastery of single and compound consonants sounds, and of sound-letter pattern relationships of words. Level B tests mastery of vowel sounds. Level C tests ability in syllabication, and Level D uses nonsense words to test recognition in phonetic elements. The Spelling Placement Test is a test of five graded word lists of 20 words each. The overall test is designed to give the frustration, instructional, and independent reading levels.

Comments: Buros describes this test as a somewhat formalized individual informal reading inventory using several groups of graded words. It is useful as an informal test that will give the teacher a means of selecting reading materials for children and for assessing what knowledge and use of word recognition skills. More information is needed on reliability and validity of the test. (Buros 6:834).

Classroom Reading Inventory (3rd ed.)
Nicholas J. Silvaroli. Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Publishers, 1976.

Grade: Two to Eight
Time: About 15 minutes
Forms: A, B and C
Description: This inventory gives an indication of the child's ability in word recognition, along with the independent reading level, instructional reading level, frustration level, hearing capacity level and spelling. The graded wordlists and the graded paragraphs are

designed to be administered individually. The spelling section may be administered to a group.

Comments: The Classroom Reading Inventory (CRI) is designed for the elementary teacher who has not had any prior experience with either group or individual diagnostic measures. There are clear instructions for the recording of the child's reading performance to provide the maximum amount of information to the teacher. On the negative side, there is an over-balance of factual recall in the five comprehension questions on each paragraph, and the print is the same size for all levels. (Buros 8:749).

Informal Reading Assessment

Paul C. Burns and Betty D. Roe. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1980.

Grade: Preprimer to Grade Twelve
Time: Unlimited
Forms: A and B for Word lists; A,B,C and D for Passages
Description: The two lists of 20 words from each reading level (PP to 12) can help give the teacher an indication of the level at which the child can begin to read the graded passages. Each form has a selection of four paragraphs for each level, with questions to measure different types of comprehension skills. Information can be expressed in grade equivalent scores to indicate independent, instructional, frustration and reading capacity levels.

Comments: The manual provides detailed descriptions of how to administer, score and interpret an informal reading inventory. Scoring and record - keeping summary sheets are included. All the material required is contained in one book.

Standard Reading Inventory

Robert McCracken. Klamath Falls, Oregon: Klamath Printing Co., 1966.

Grade: One to Seven
Time: About 30 minutes
Forms: A and B
Description: The SRI contains 11 graded word lists, 11 graded paragraphs for oral reading, and eight paragraphs

of silent reading. It measures four levels of reading - independent, minimum instructional, maximum instructional and frustration level. It provides scores in vocabulary in isolation, vocabulary in context, oral word recognition, and both oral and silent reading.

Comments: The major contribution of this test is that it provides more information about the process of reading than can be obtained from a group standardized silent reading test. It is useful as a rough semi-diagnostic tool for learning about how a child reads certain material. It should give more comparable and consistent results than a teacher-made inventory. The materials are attractive and printed clearly. However, some concepts are vague or are introduced with inadequate explanation, the scoring of oral errors seems complex and confusing and the manual is cumbersome. (Buros 7:723).

SECTION VII

READING READINESS TESTS

Clymer-Barrett Prereading Battery

Theodore Clymer and Thomas C. Barrett. Lexington: Massachusetts: Personal Press, 1967.

Grade: Kindergarten to Grade One
Time: 45 minutes
Description: This battery tests recognition of letters, matching words, discrimination of beginning and ending sounds. It contains a rating scale for oral language, concept and vocabulary development, listening skills, skills in creative and critical thinking, social skills, emotional development, attitude towards and interest in reading, and work habits.

Comments: Two major strengths of this test are listed by Buros are (1) The items within the subtests are chosen with care, and (2) the PreReading Rating Scale for the accumulation of teacher's observations, although subjective, should be particularly useful. On the negative side, there is no evidence of its diagnostic validity. Buros 7:744).

Gates-MacGinite Reading Tests - Basic R

Walter H. MacGinite With Joyce Kamons, Ruth 1. Kowalski, Ruth K. MacGinite And Timothy MacKay. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1980.

Grade: One
Time: About 65 minutes in two sessions.
Forms: One
Description: The subtests in Basic R of this test include Vocabulary, Comprehension, Letter Recognition and Letter Sounds. All items are multiple choice. Vocabulary items involving finding the word that names the picture; the Comprehension items involve choosing the picture that goes with the text. A picture at the beginning of each line allows the child to identify the line the teacher is describing when administering the test. There is no time limit. The teacher is encouraged to pace the children through the test, moving at whatever rate is appropriate to the group.

Comments: This Canadian Edition of the Gates-MacGinite Reading Tests is based on the Second Edition of the Gates-MacGinite Reading Tests, published in 1978. The manual gives clear information on the procedures used in obtaining Canadian norms. Because of the newness of this edition, it is not reviewed in Buros. However, the writer has noted that two of Buros' criticisms of the first edition of the Readiness Test has been corrected in this edition: the length of the test (originally 120 minutes), and the lack of clues to identify the line being described by the teacher. The stimulus items are clearly defined and the pictures are clearly detailed. The directions for both the teacher and the student are clearly defined. For a review of the previous edition, see Buros 7:749.

Harrison-Stroud Reading Readiness Profile

M.L. Harrison and J.B. Stroud. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1956.

Grades: Kindergarten and Grade One
Time: Three sessions. Approximately 80 minutes
Description: This test contains six subtests: (1) Using Symbols; (2) Making Visual Discrimination; (3) Using Context; (4) Making Auditory Discrimination; (5) Using Context and Auditory Clues; and (6) Giving Names of Letters (optional). The test helps determine these skills in which the children may need help before or during initial reading instruction.

Comments: The specific directions for administering the test are precise and should cause no difficulties. The coloured boxes and the spacious layout of questions are attractive. The directions show an appreciation of the steps to obtain a valid score. However, there is no evidence of reliability of the tests or their inter-correlations. (Buros 5:678).

Lee-Clark Reading Readiness Test (Revised)

J. Murray Lee and Willis W. Clark. Monterey: California Test Bureau, 1962.

Grades: Kindergarten to Grade One
Time 20 minutes
Description: The Lee-Clark Test is designed to help

determine which pupils are ready for reading instruction, as well as to establish a pattern of growth for those who are not ready. It tests knowledge of letter symbols, concepts, and word symbols and gives a score for each subtest. It also gives an overall score.

Comments: This is one of the oldest of the better known tests of reading readiness and has been revised several times since it was first published in 1931. However, the readiness factors it evaluates are few in terms of all the variables that cause a child to read. With its ease of administration, short testing time and easily interpreted administration, short testing time and easily interpreted scores, it can be a convenient way for the teacher to determine some of the facets of a child's reading maturity. (Buros 7:752).

Metropolitan Readiness Test (Revised)
Gertrude Hildreth, Nellie L. Griffith, Mary E. McGauvran. New York: Harcourt Brace-Jovanovich Inc., 1976.

Grades: Kindergarten and Grade One
Time: Three sessions totalling 60 minutes
Description: This test covers linguistic maturity, perceptual abilities, muscular co-ordination and motor skills, number and letter knowledge, ability to follow directions, and attention span.

Comments: According to Buros, the subtests included in this battery are similar to those of other readiness tests except for the inclusion of a numbers subtest, and the exclusions of auditory discrimination. A major strength of the test is the extensive discussion on interpreting the test results. It appears to have undergone careful development, appears to be valid and reliable and provides unusually specific information about the instructional value of the test results. (Buros 7:757 and 8:802).

Murphy-Durrell Reading Readiness Analysis (2nd. ed.)
Helen Murphy and Donald Durrell. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1965.

Grades: One
Time: No time limits. Three sessions suggested.

Description: This test consists of three subtests that provide information for grouping children for beginning reading instruction. It gives six scores: sound recognition, letter names (capitals, lower case, total), learning rate, and total. The answer booklet is well organized so that scoring can be done efficiently. Raw scores for the three subtests and the total score can be converted into percentiles, stanines and quartiles.

Comments: Buros describes this test as one of the better reading readiness tests available. The manual gives suggestions for grouping, and teaching pupils based on the results of the test. In Learning Rate (no pre-test), the students are taught nine sight words. They are tested one hour after teaching. However, no reason or justification is given for this time factor. (Buros 7:759 and 8:803).

SECTION VIII

TESTS OF WORD ANALYSIS AND PHONICS SKILLS

Co-operative Primary Tests: Word Analysis
Educational Testing Service. Don Mills, Ontario: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co. Inc., 1967.

Grades: 1.5 to 2.0; 2.0 to 3.0
Time: About 45 minutes
Forms: 13A and 13B
Description: This test deals with the child's general abilities to attack words, rather than with each word and sound. In Part One the teacher reads the items while the child marks the responses in the test book. The tasks involve associating sounds with letters, sounds with written words, letters with sounds, and recognizing probable letter sequences. In Part Two the child works independently to match letter configuration, match beginning letters to picture words, recognize words in compound words, contractions, derivatives of root wrods, and roots of derived words. There are 60 items with a three-choice format.

Comments: The format of the test is clear and provides visual clues to assist the child in moving from the test item to the answer choices. Pictures are simplified line drawings. Scores can be converted to percentile ranks for each grade. Interpretation of results from the manual are very limited in terms of both class and individual use. (Buros 8:751).

Cooper-McGuire Diagnostic Word Analysis Test
J. Lewis Cooper and Marion L. McGuire. Conneticut: Crost Educational Services Inc., 1972.

Grades: One to Five
Time: About 40 minutes.
Forms: A and B
Description: This word-analysis test contains three readiness for-word analysis tests (letter names and shapes, visual discrimination of word forms, auditory discrimination of letter sounds and blending ability), two phonic analysis tests (consonant sounds and vowel sounds), four structural analysis tests (root words and endings, compound words and contractions, prefixes and suffixes and syllables). Spirit masters are included for local duplication.

Comments: The manual does not give any evidence to show that the tests are in sequential order, or that the reliability or the validity of individual tests or test items have been examined. The test situation is one where the child receives an auditory stimulus and has to respond by making a visual match in a multiple-choice format. In actual everyday reading, however, this process is often reversed. The tests represent useful reference material to be used as a check to inform or confirm diagnostic hunches. (Buros 8:750).

Doren Diagnostic Reading Test of Word Recognition Skills (3rd. ed.)

Margaret Doren. Minnesota: American Guidance Service, 1973.

Grades: One to Four and Disabled Readers
Time: No time limits. Allow about 180 minutes.
Description: The Doren consists of 395 items in 12 subtests: (1) Letter Recognition; (identify case and forms); (2) Beginning Sounds (sound identity and context selection); (3) Whole Word Recognition (word identity and similarity); (4) Words Within Words (compound and hidden words and discrimination); (5) Speech Consonants (auditory and visual); (6) Ending Sounds (consonant, variant and plurals); (7) Blending; (8) Rhyming; (9) Vowels (word choice, vowel identity, vowel rules and sounds, rule exceptions and double vowels); (10) Discriminate Guessing; (11) Spelling; (12) Sight Words. The test does not give scores in terms of grade equivalents, stanines, or percentiles. Instead, scores are determined by the use of Individual Score Sheet and and the Individual Skill Profile.

Comments: The skills covered are those that teachers are most concerned about in reading instruction, and that good readers have already mastered. The directions are fairly clear and explicit and the format leads to easy administration and scoring. A section of the manual is devoted to activities for remedial reading. On the negative side the names assigned to several of the subtests do not accurately describe the skills being tested, there are no item statistics to demonstrate the reliability of the tests and the subtests and there is a lack of a comprehension section. (Buros 8:757).

McCullough Word Analysis Test

Constance M. McCullough. Ohio: Personnel Inc., 1963.

Grade: One to Six

Time: About 70 minutes in seven sessions.

Description: This test has seven subtests each containing seventy items: (1) Consonants - initial blends and digraphs; (2) Vowel Sounds - Phonetic Discrimination; (3) Sounding Whole Words; (4) Interpreting Phonetic Symbols; (5) Dividing Words into Syllables; (6) Root Words in Affixed Words; and (7) Vowels: matching letters to vowel sounds. Separate norms are reported for boys and girls.

Comments: Despite the lack of validity of the subtests, Buros describes this test as the "best single instrument of its type currently available for assessing the mechanical aspects of word analysis". The titles of each subtest clearly and accurately identify the skill it measures. (Buros 7:719).

Phonics Knowledge Survey

Delores Durkin and Leonard Meshover. New York: Columbia University, Teachers College Press.

Grade: One to Six

Time: 10 to 30 minutes

Description: This test was designed to assist teachers in assessing pupil's knowledge of phonics. It test skills in letter naming, consonant and vowel sounds, vowel generalizations, syllabication, sounds of c, y and g consonant blends, digraphs, vowel combinations, vowel followed by r, and sounds of qu, oo and x. The test is simply constructed and consists of two basic parts - a content card with the letters and letter combinations for the child to look at, and a response card containing the directions for the teacher to read plus a place to record student responses.

Comments: The directions of this test are clear and the test is easy to administer. Although it is not standardized, its content is valid and in agreement with most basal reader series and with phonics methods. The reading teacher who does not know phonics well may well find this test a useful instrument. (Buros 7:720).

Reading Skills Diagnostic Test
Richard Bloomer. New York: Brador Publications Inc., 1971.

Grade: Two to Eight
Time About 105 minutes
Description: This test has 350 items divided into six subtests: (1) Letter Identification; (2) Simple Phonics - select from three choices the letter or letter combinations that represent the sound pronounced by the teacher; (3) Phonetically Inconsistent Words; (4) Phonetically Consistent Words - select the word from three pronounced by the teacher; (5) Letters in Context - fill in the missing letters to complete a sentence; and (6) Words in Context - fill in the missing words in a paragraph. Grade equivalent scores can be obtained.

Comments: Although the skills tested are the same or similar to those in other diagnostic tests, the manual does not give any evidence to back the author's claim that the subtests are hierarchally arranged. The manual is adequate in most of its suggestions for remedial reading instruction in that ideas offered vary widely from those put forth by most reading specialists. (Buros 8:772).

Sipay Word Analysis Tests (SWAT)
Edward R. Sipay. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Educators Publishing Service Inc., 1974.

Grades: Two to Twelve
Time: 10 to 20 minutes.
Description: The SWAT has a survey test that can be given to determine which of the more specific tests should be administered to obtain more information. There are 16 subtests designed to measure word analysis skills: (1) Letter Names; (2) Symbol - Sound Association; (3) Substitution - Single Letters; (4) Consonant-Vowel-Consonent Trigams; (5) Initial Consonant Blends and Digraphs; (6) Final Consonant Blends and Digraphs; (7) Vowel Combinations; (8) Open Syllable Combinations; (9) Final E Generalizations; (10) Vowel Versatility; (11) Vowels plus R; (12) Silent Consonants; (13) Vowel Sounds of Y; (14) Visual Analysis; (15) Visual Blending; (16) Contractions. The test components include a general test manual, a mini manual for each subtest, test cards, answer sheets and individual report forms.

Comments: The skills tested are effectively sequenced and each of the tests can be used individually or in combination. The manual gives ample suggestions for overcoming diagnosed difficulties, as well as detailed suggestions for analysis and interpretation of results. Validity and reliability have not been statistically established. The time and analysis factors combined with the fact that the skills are measured in isolation may deter teachers from using the test. (Buros 7:775; Cheek and Cheek, 1980, p. 129).

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GLOSSARY

Achievement Tests Tests used to discover differences in ability among individuals or groups usually in the areas of reading and arithmetic.

Diagnostic Tests There are two types of diagnostic tests - group and individual. They are designed to break down the total reading performance into specific strengths and weaknesses.

Frustration Level The oral reading level that is too difficult for the child. Comprehension is 50% or less.

Group Survey Tests Tests designed to compare an individual's or group's performance with that of other children of the same age and grade. Usually contains subtests of vocabulary and comprehension.

Independent Reading Level The highest level at which a child can read easily and fluently without assistance.

Informal Reading Inventory A test constructed by the teacher from materials used in the classroom. Helps determine frustration, instructional and independent reading levels.

Instructional Reading Level The level at which a child can benefit from systematic instruction. Word recognition is about 95% and comprehension about 75%.

Percentile Indicates the percentage of students tested who had scores equal to, or lower than the specified score.

Reading Readiness The stage at which the child is ready for a specific reading program because he/she has reached a certain stage of mental maturity, has a satisfactory emotional adjustment and has acquired an adequate background of experiences and attitudes.

Reliability The extent to which a test is consistent in the results it provides from one application to the next of the same test or its alternate form.

Standardized Tests Tests whose scoring, norms and administration have been established as a result of the test being tried out on a large number of subjects.

Stanine A weighted scale divided into nine equal units that represent nine levels of performance on any particular test.

Validity The extent to which a test measures what it claims to measure.

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