

THE EFFECTS OF NEW READING SERIES ON
SECOND GRADE READING ATTAINMENT

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During recent years, the teaching of reading has achieved a position of prime importance in our schools. Research has forged ahead, reading materials have become abundant, teachers are better trained, and techniques and devices for teaching have been improved.

According to Spache, the real degree of success of the primary reading program is a matter of acrid debate among various authorities. Estimates of the proportion of children failing to achieve sufficient reading skill to be able to meet the demands of the intermediate grades are around 15 to 25 percent. Whether it is possible under any circumstances for all children in any grade to be taught in such a manner that they would universally meet the standards of the next grade level is, of course, highly questionable. A great many critics of current reading instruction feel, however, that: (1) too great a proportion of children are unprepared for each successive year; (2) many pupils, and particularly those of greater intelligence, should be offered a richer, more challenging program; and (3) the primary program does not adequately prepare children to use their reading skills effectively in the content-field, reading, characteristic of the intermediate grades.¹

Many other criticisms reflect the inadequate training and insecurity of some teachers rather than inherent faults in the primary basal program. Among these are use of the basals not as the core, but as the whole of the reading

¹George D. Spache, Reading in the Elementary School (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1964), p. 69.

program, over-dependence upon the workbooks for the teaching of skills, excessive oral reading without any real purposes, and a perfectionistic attitude toward the learning of the basal vocabulary.²

Hildreth, in one of her studies on reading, listed some primary basal programs showing the many types or approaches now current in our schools. They are:

1. Using the basal series from the very beginning instruction.
2. Using the basal series in consecutive order.
3. Using the basal text after initial instruction in teacher-made materials.
4. Using the basal series through the primer and then reverting to a variety of preprimers from the basal series.
5. Using lower-level books from other series as supplementary to the basal series.³

Statement of the problem

This study was undertaken to determine whether the reading scores of children in the second grade at Coronado and Lowell Schools in Salina would be affected by changing from the Houghton-Mifflin Series to the Scott, Foresman Series.

More specifically the primary consideration of this study was to test the following hypothesis:

H₀: There is no significant difference in vocabulary and comprehension scores for second graders who had been subjected to a new reading series and those who had been kept with the same reading series.

²Ibid., p. 69.

³George D. Spache, Toward Better Reading (Illinois: Garrard Publishing Company, 1962), p. 35.

Definition of terms

Basic Series. Readers developed to provide continuity of growth in reading habits, skills and attitudes through a carefully graded series of reading materials. They also provide a wide variety of reading activities, a complete organization of reading experiences, and a content of important ideas essential to school and other activities.⁴

SRA Reading Test. The Science Research Associates test which measures pupils' basic achievement in comprehension and vocabulary.

SRA Primary Mental Abilities Test. This is designed to provide both multifactored and general measures of intelligence.

Limitations and Delimitations

The writer used resources (i.e., books, magazines and pamphlets) from Marymount College, Kansas State University, and Salina Public libraries. The schools were limited to three from which the students were obtained, and these were all from the same grade level. There were limited teacher and time variables since four teachers were used and the experiment covered a period of six months. Also, some Primary Mental Abilities test results were obtained in April, 1968, for a group of students who were scored wrong the year before and for those who were new to Salina.

⁴David Russell, The Basic Reading Program in the Modern School (Boston: Ginn and Company, No. 1, 1962), p. 21.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There appeared to be agreement among reading experts that basic reading instruction reflected current theories in education. Methods of teaching suggested are based on the best scientific knowledge available. Materials in basic reading series today are adapted to a theory of continuous child growth. They recognize maturing reading skills, habits, and attitudes. They provide a gradual introduction of each skill and careful repetition and expansion of each aspect of reading necessary for successful achievement. They develop a wide variety of skills. Children are introduced to different types of reading that require an interrelation of skills and a combination of them into organized patterns. However, the writer found that there were both pros and cons for using the same basal reading series throughout the elementary school years.

In the primary grades, children cannot read books which contain strange concepts or words which are not a part of their familiar listening vocabulary. Words must be used in their simpler meanings, in ways familiar to children. This control is at present exercised by carefully limiting the number of new words per page and by the careful distribution of the word throughout the book in such a manner as to secure the maximum number of repetitions per word. Yet, Yoakam found that books differed widely in the words they use, although there was considerable agreement on a certain number of base words common to all written material. An examination of books from different series will show a considerable range in the vocabularies used.⁵

⁵Gerald A. Yoakam, Basal Reading Instruction (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1955) p. 34.

Basal readers are not all alike in the demands they make upon children. Some series are more simply graded than others; some use more restricted vocabularies and more repetition than others. It is generally better to follow the sequence of a basal series than to mix the books of different series at the same level, since there is generally considerable difference in the vocabularies of different basal series. After one basal sequence is developed, however, other basal books may be used in developing fluent reading at the different reading levels and increasing as the child gains reading power.⁶

Fitzgerald and Fitzgerald agreed that a well-planned series with work-books and manuals contain stories and selections designed to accommodate the reading development of youngsters. The exercises and activities are planned to meet the accumulating sequential need of skill development. A second important reason for using a basal series is vocabulary control, which is so planned that only a small number of new words in the early grades, one or two, are presented on a page, with ample distributed repetition to assure the recognition of each word in various types of context. The vocabulary of one book of a series is a basis for the succeeding book, and so on. The slow learner with proper guidance can succeed if he is paced according to his ability. The rapid learner and the normal pupil also may proceed according to their needs and enrich their reading in other books.⁷

To the teacher, one second grade book is as easy as another second grade book, but not to the children, according to Dolch. He, too, feels there is great difference in vocabulary between books of different series. An easy

⁶Ibid., p. 204.

⁷James A. Fitzgerald and Patricia G. Fitzgerald, Reading and the Language Arts (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1965), p. 163.

book of another series may not be easy for the children because of the difference between series. That is, this plan puts the children across on to another word ladder and they are not prepared for it because they have not had the lower books in that ladder.⁸

Other advocates of the one basal series are Gray and Reese, who stated that it is generally wise to continue through the same series set of readers in order that the pupils can derive full benefit from the organization of vocabulary and skills. Though it is true, that most modern readers avoid the use of words beyond the grade level of the child, the writer found, inevitably, different story situations require different words in the telling. Thus, there is enough variation in vocabulary and in the placement and emphasis given to skills to confuse a child who has to shift from a second reader of one series, for example, to a third grade reader of another series which may presuppose a different vocabulary development and skill building program. By using one series consistently, the child is more apt to develop the feeling of confidence and power which comes from being able to deal competently with most of the words he meets in print. This is true, of course, only if the series is a good one.⁹

Hildreth thought readers in use today are easier, grade for grade, than they were before, insuring early progress toward independence. However, units of different series vary in difficulty. The primer of one series may be nearly as difficult as the first reader of another series. In some series

⁸Edward W. Dolch, Methods in Reading (Illinois: The Garrard Press, 1955), p. 115.

⁹Lillian Gray and Dora Reese, Teaching Children to Read (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1957), p. 152.

the vocabulary load is smaller from book to book and shows more overlap than in other series.¹⁰

Growth in reading is developmental and basal readers are designed with this fact in mind, according to Heilman. All facets of instruction are provided for a logical sequence and each receives proper emphasis. The essence of primary-level instruction is continuity and a systematic building of skills.¹¹

Evidence supporting basal reading instruction is summarized in the following statements by Yoakam.

1. Evidence shows that in the learning of skills, systematic guidance and practice are essential.
2. Even though it is true that children learn to read by reading, basal instruction in reading is essential to establish skills which make learning by doing possible.
3. Carefully guided practice is always more effective than trial-and-error learning.
4. The criticisms of basal reading instruction are, in fact, criticisms of the misuse rather than of the proper use of systematic teaching of reading.
5. Children of superior intelligence need less systematic basal instruction in reading than those of average or low intelligence.
6. It is impossible for average teachers to achieve carefully controlled vocabulary and planned sequence which characterize basal reading instruction through the use of experience lessons based upon community life and the selection of reading material from sources other than those which are carefully written and planned for children.
7. Basal instruction from carefully prepared basal materials has over two hundred years of experience behind it in America and goes back to the hornbook and the religious primer of the Middle Ages.

¹⁰Certrude Hildreth, Teaching Reading (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1959), p. 225.

¹¹Arthur W. Heilman, Principles and Practices of Teaching Reading (Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1963), p. 139.

8. In teaching the basal skills, facts, and principles of any field, carefully planned and graded materials are universally used, at least in the beginning stage of the learning process or when any new fundamental skills or techniques are to be learned.¹²

In viewing the objections against changing the series, participants in a reading conference chaired by James B. Conant stated that they were convinced that there was no one book and its brand of teaching reading that was so superior to all others as to render it imperative for school systems to adopt exclusively that one book and brand of teaching as constituting their entire reading program.¹³

Fred C. Bryan, in a study of children's vocabularies, concluded that children in grades two through six know at least 10,000 words. Seashore and Smith found a vocabulary increase of approximately 5,000 words per grade. Reading textbooks, on the average, assume that a child can learn about 500 words the first year, and from 1500 to 2500 by the end of the third year.¹⁴

After much study, Hildreth found that the similarity in vocabulary between books of comparable level in different series provides a considerable range of interlocking narrative material for sight reading.¹⁵

The writer found that many are discovering that learning to read is not solely a matter of learning to read a school reader as both teachers and laymen have so erroneously thought. It is rather a matter of learning to read any kind of material which has meaning and use for children. It is not merely

¹²Yoakam, op. cit., p. 7.

¹³Dorothy M. Fraser, Deciding What to Teach (Washington: NEA Association, 1963), p. 123.

¹⁴Kathleen B. Hester, Teaching Every Child to Read (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 133.

¹⁵Hildreth, loc. cit.

teaching children to read and enjoy stories. It is also concerned with teaching the child to read newspapers, textbooks, magazines, and anything else that he will need to read in the course of school experiences and his daily life. Basal instruction is only the foundation experience in learning to read. It is the type of instruction at any level which helps the child with reading techniques which he has not acquired and gives him the necessary training until he gains strength and is able to carry on through his own efforts.¹⁶

Evidence objecting to basal reading instruction is summarized in the following statements.

1. No book is so superior to all others to necessitate its adoption exclusively for an entire reading program.
2. There is a similarity in vocabularies between books of comparable levels in different series.
3. Learning to read is learning to read any kind of meaningful and useful materials.

¹⁶Yoakam, op. cit., p. 6.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

Type of study

This was an experimental study involving two second grade classes who have changed from Houghton-Mifflin Reading Series to Scott, Foresman Reading Series and two second grade classes who stayed with the Ginn Reading Series.

Description of sample

At the time of this study the Salina Elementary School System consisted of nineteen schools staffed by 239 teachers. There were approximately 6,154 students in these schools.

The Salina Catholic Elementary School System consisted of two schools staffed by twenty-four teachers. There were approximately 657 students.

Coronado and Lowell schools were chosen for the experimental group because the writer was the teacher at Coronado and she was well-acquainted with the teacher at Lowell. The two second grades were taken from Sacred Heart because the other school had been experimenting with several different series and the writer knew of no other school around the immediate area that had not changed reading series.

The two groups using a new reading series were combined homogeneously as were the two groups staying with the same series they had used in first grade. There were forty-five, (26 girls and 19 boys), in the experimental group and forty-seven, (21 girls and 26 boys), in the control group (Table I). All subjects were seven and eight years of age. They were ranked in sequence according to the PMA test scores.

TABLE I
DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE

| School | Second Grade Enrollment | | | | Total |
|--------------|-------------------------|-------|-----------|-------|-------|
| | Section A | | Section B | | |
| | Boys | Girls | Boys | Girls | |
| Lowell | 8* | 8* | 24 | | 40 |
| Coronado | 11* | 18* | | | 29 |
| Sacred Heart | 12* | 7* | 14* | 14* | 47 |

* Used in sample

Measuring devices

The SRA Primary Mental Abilities tests, revised in 1962, are designed to provide multifactored as well as general intelligence indices for all grade levels from kindergarten through twelfth grade. The five basic factors of intelligence, the primary mental abilities, that are measured are not all inclusive; others have been isolated through research. However, a profile of ability in these five areas helps to evaluate individual differences in behavior between children who appear to be of comparable intelligence. The total score provides an I.Q. as a general index useful in various aspects of the schools' guidance and testing programs. There are five batteries in the PMA: K-1, 2-4, 4-6, 6-9, and 9-12. The five tests and the primary mental abilities they measure are verbal meaning, number facility, reasoning, perceptual speed and spatial relations.¹⁷

¹⁷Science Research Associates, PMA Primary Mental Abilities (Examiner's Manual for grades 2-4, revised in 1962), p. 3.

The SRA Reading Test measures pupils' basic achievement in comprehension and vocabulary. This test is part of the SRA achievement series 2-4, published in two editions; the single-booklet edition which includes the Reading, Language Arts, and Arithmetic tests in one booklet and the separate-booklet edition in which each of the tests is bound separately.¹⁸

Description of procedure

The second grade class at Coronado and Lowell schools and two second grades at Sacred Heart in Salina were given SRA Reading tests the mornings of October 17 and 18, 1967. Vocabulary and Comprehension scores were recorded for each student. The same test was given again on April 22 and 23, 1968, and these scores were also recorded.

During the period of the experiment, the groups followed approximately the following schedules as noted in the following table:

¹⁸Science Research Associates, SRA Achievement Series (Examiner's Manual 2-4, Form C.), Illinois: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1964), p. 2.

TABLE II
DAILY TIME SCHEDULE

| SUBJECT | EXPERIMENTAL | CONTROL |
|------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Spelling | 30 minutes | 15 minutes |
| Reading | 105 minutes | 90 minutes |
| Math | 60 minutes | 30 minutes |
| Music | 20 minutes | 15 minutes |
| Science/Social Studies | 20 minutes | 0 |
| Phonics | 0 | 75 minutes |
| Religion | 0 | 30 minutes |
| Writing | 20 minutes | 15 minutes |

In Group I, one class had two reading groups with SRA and the other had three groups without SRA. In Group II, one class had three reading and phonics groups and the other, two reading and phonics groups.

After all the results were tabulated from the tests, the writer divided the students in the experimental group according to Above Average, Average, and Below Average. The same procedure was followed with the control group. (See Table III). Each student was listed by number and their PMA scores were recorded along with the Reading scores from both tests.

TABLE III

COMPOSITION OF SAMPLE IN TERMS OF I.Q.

| GROUP | ABOVE AVERAGE | AVERAGE | BELOW AVERAGE |
|--------------|---------------|---------|---------------|
| Control | 18 | 23 | 6 |
| Experimental | 25 | 20 | 0 |

Method of analysis

A comparison between the two groups was made by using the t-test. A comparison within the groups was also made by using the t-test.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

The individual scores in Comprehension, Vocabulary, and Total Reading for the control and experimental groups are presented in Tables IV and V.

The t-test was employed in the analysis of the data. Before running the twelve t-tests on the data, a t-test was run on the I.Q.'s of the two groups and this t-test was significant ($t=2.14$, $df.=90$, $p .05$). The fact that this t yielded a significant difference would obviously affect the overall results. This does not correspond with the basic assumption of no difference between groups. However, it must be pointed out that the I.Q. test booklets had not been properly scored when the groups were selected.

It should also be noted that the t-tests between Groups I and II on Comprehension, Vocabulary, and Total Reading Scores during Fall was not significant. The Spring comparison on the same measures yielded larger t's in Comprehension as well as in Total Reading. However, these were not significant. All t's are listed in Table VI.

TABLE IV

INDIVIDUAL SCORES OF CONTROL GROUP MEMBERS IN
COMPREHENSION, VOCABULARY AND TOTAL READING

| (Control) | | FALL | | |
|------------|------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| Individual | I.Q. | Comprehension | Vocabulary | Total Reading |
| 1 | 147 | 33 | 25 | 58 |
| 2 | 111 | 17 | 22 | 39 |
| 3 | 111 | 25 | 15 | 40 |
| 4 | 137 | 36 | 21 | 57 |
| 5 | 119 | 34 | 19 | 53 |
| 6 | 122 | 29 | 20 | 49 |
| 7 | 122 | 35 | 24 | 59 |
| 8 | 114 | 27 | 18 | 45 |
| 9 | 111 | 17 | 6 | 23 |
| 10 | 112 | 26 | 14 | 40 |
| 11 | 117 | 33 | 30 | 63 |
| 12 | 112 | 25 | 10 | 35 |
| 13 | 116 | 11 | 9 | 20 |
| 14 | 119 | 33 | 20 | 53 |
| 15 | 124 | 12 | 7 | 19 |
| 16 | 122 | 32 | 20 | 52 |
| 17 | 122 | 29 | 16 | 45 |
| 18 | 128 | 25 | 18 | 43 |
| 19 | 105 | 39 | 29 | 68 |
| 20 | 106 | 34 | 25 | 59 |
| 21 | 108 | 22 | 21 | 43 |
| 22 | 109 | 27 | 16 | 43 |
| 23 | 107 | 32 | 20 | 52 |
| 24 | 105 | 30 | 16 | 46 |

| (Control) | SPRING | |
|---------------|------------|---------------|
| Comprehension | Vocabulary | Total Reading |
| 38 | 27 | 65 |
| 35 | 29 | 64 |
| 28 | 25 | 53 |
| 34 | 27 | 61 |
| 34 | 23 | 57 |
| 38 | 27 | 65 |
| 36 | 31 | 67 |
| 26 | 24 | 50 |
| 27 | 19 | 46 |
| 36 | 24 | 60 |
| 34 | 31 | 65 |
| 29 | 19 | 48 |
| 23 | 18 | 41 |
| 31 | 24 | 55 |
| 27 | 10 | 37 |
| 37 | 29 | 66 |
| 35 | 24 | 59 |
| 25 | 22 | 47 |
| 40 | 29 | 69 |
| 38 | 27 | 65 |
| 33 | 26 | 59 |
| 28 | 24 | 52 |
| 36 | 25 | 61 |
| 30 | 20 | 50 |

(Control)

FALL (CONT.)

| Individual | I.Q. | Comprehension | Vocabulary | Total Reading |
|------------|------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| 25 | 105 | 19 | 18 | 37 |
| 26 | 91 | 35 | 23 | 58 |
| 27 | 99 | 10 | 4 | 14 |
| 28 | 102 | 29 | 20 | 49 |
| 29 | 102 | 14 | 6 | 20 |
| 30 | 98 | 23 | 11 | 34 |
| 31 | 93 | 24 | 13 | 37 |
| 32 | 99 | 29 | 22 | 51 |
| 33 | 100 | 10 | 10 | 20 |
| 34 | 103 | 18 | 5 | 23 |
| 35 | 104 | 30 | 15 | 45 |
| 36 | 103 | 17 | 6 | 23 |
| 37 | 101 | 24 | 8 | 32 |
| 38 | 104 | 23 | 12 | 35 |
| 39 | 93 | 28 | 24 | 52 |
| 40 | 98 | 26 | 15 | 41 |
| 41 | 94 | 31 | 13 | 44 |
| 42 | 88 | 15 | 11 | 26 |
| 43 | 75 | 17 | 10 | 27 |
| 44 | 81 | 30 | 20 | 50 |
| 45 | 86 | 29 | 9 | 38 |
| 46 | 83 | 15 | 6 | 21 |
| 47 | 78 | 14 | 7 | 21 |

| (Control) | SPRING (CONT.) | |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Comprehension | Vocabulary | Total Reading |
| 30 | 29 | 59 |
| 29 | 23 | 52 |
| 23 | 14 | 37 |
| 31 | 27 | 58 |
| 25 | 19 | 44 |
| 31 | 19 | 50 |
| 27 | 14 | 41 |
| 33 | 29 | 62 |
| 14 | 10 | 24 |
| 27 | 16 | 43 |
| 33 | 29 | 62 |
| 24 | 11 | 35 |
| 26 | 19 | 45 |
| 31 | 20 | 51 |
| 37 | 26 | 63 |
| 32 | 18 | 50 |
| 32 | 21 | 53 |
| 29 | 16 | 45 |
| 25 | 14 | 39 |
| 33 | 20 | 53 |
| 31 | 20 | 51 |
| 26 | 11 | 37 |
| 22 | 11 | 33 |

TABLE V

INDIVIDUAL SCORES OF EXPERIMENTAL GROUP IN
COMPREHENSION, VOCABULARY AND TOTAL READING

| (Experimental Group) | | FALL | | |
|----------------------|------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| Individual | I.Q. | Comprehension | Vocabulary | Total Reading |
| 1 | 118 | 26 | 8 | 34 |
| 2 | 132 | 27 | 20 | 47 |
| 3 | 114 | 32 | 14 | 46 |
| 4 | 111 | 22 | 10 | 32 |
| 5 | 115 | 24 | 11 | 35 |
| 6 | 118 | 28 | 14 | 42 |
| 7 | 113 | 25 | 6 | 31 |
| 8 | 123 | 30 | 20 | 50 |
| 9 | 125 | 24 | 14 | 38 |
| 10 | 121 | 28 | 19 | 47 |
| 11 | 122 | 33 | 26 | 59 |
| 12 | 114 | 31 | 20 | 51 |
| 13 | 110 | 27 | 16 | 43 |
| 14 | 119 | 33 | 21 | 54 |
| 15 | 132 | 32 | 31 | 63 |
| 16 | 115 | 32 | 26 | 58 |
| 17 | 124 | 33 | 22 | 55 |
| 18 | 110 | 26 | 6 | 32 |
| 19 | 111 | 25 | 21 | 46 |
| 20 | 114 | 31 | 21 | 52 |
| 21 | 110 | 25 | 13 | 38 |
| 22 | 126 | 27 | 19 | 46 |
| 23 | 128 | 32 | 22 | 54 |
| 24 | 123 | 37 | 29 | 66 |
| 25 | 118 | 23 | 10 | 33 |

| (Experimental Group) | SPRING | |
|----------------------|------------|---------------|
| Comprehension | Vocabulary | Total Reading |
| 29 | 22 | 51 |
| 35 | 25 | 60 |
| 28 | 24 | 52 |
| 31 | 23 | 54 |
| 26 | 17 | 43 |
| 33 | 18 | 51 |
| 34 | 16 | 50 |
| 30 | 27 | 57 |
| 26 | 16 | 42 |
| 37 | 26 | 63 |
| 40 | 27 | 67 |
| 35 | 28 | 63 |
| 30 | 21 | 51 |
| 34 | 24 | 58 |
| 35 | 32 | 67 |
| 36 | 28 | 64 |
| 37 | 27 | 64 |
| 29 | 15 | 44 |
| 36 | 26 | 62 |
| 38 | 25 | 63 |
| 32 | 26 | 58 |
| 35 | 31 | 66 |
| 37 | 27 | 64 |
| 40 | 32 | 72 |
| 34 | 19 | 58 |

(Experimental Group)

FALL (CONT.)

| Individual | I.Q. | Comprehension | Vocabulary | Total Reading |
|------------|------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| 26 | 95 | 13 | 4 | 17 |
| 27 | 98 | 29 | 8 | 37 |
| 28 | 108 | 21 | 11 | 32 |
| 29 | 108 | 23 | 12 | 35 |
| 30 | 92 | 13 | 7 | 20 |
| 31 | 104 | 21 | 10 | 31 |
| 32 | 108 | 19 | 8 | 27 |
| 33 | 94 | 22 | 16 | 38 |
| 34 | 105 | 9 | 3 | 12 |
| 35 | 100 | 22 | 14 | 36 |
| 36 | 103 | 28 | 29 | 57 |
| 37 | 107 | 29 | 20 | 49 |
| 38 | 108 | 17 | 11 | 28 |
| 39 | 108 | 23 | 6 | 29 |
| 40 | 104 | 16 | 4 | 20 |
| 41 | 103 | 18 | 8 | 26 |
| 42 | 98 | 23 | 10 | 33 |
| 43 | 99 | 32 | 21 | 53 |
| 44 | 106 | 18 | 8 | 26 |
| 45 | 104 | 28 | 21 | 49 |

SPRING (CONT.)

| Comprehension | Vocabulary | Total Reading |
|---------------|------------|---------------|
| 24 | 12 | 36 |
| 28 | 16 | 44 |
| 29 | 17 | 46 |
| 24 | 25 | 49 |
| 16 | 9 | 25 |
| 38 | 26 | 64 |
| 29 | 27 | 56 |
| 29 | 22 | 51 |
| 33 | 28 | 61 |
| 30 | 22 | 52 |
| 35 | 31 | 66 |
| 35 | 27 | 62 |
| 18 | 14 | 32 |
| 33 | 19 | 52 |
| 32 | 18 | 50 |
| 23 | 18 | 41 |
| 33 | 17 | 50 |
| 31 | 22 | 53 |
| 33 | 23 | 56 |
| 34 | 26 | 60 |

TABLE VI
COMPARISON OF READING SCORES BETWEEN
EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

| AREA | GROUP | MEAN | S.D. | DIFFERENCE IN MEANS | df | <u>t</u> |
|------------------|--------------|------|-------|---------------------------|----|----------|
| <u>FALL</u> | | | | | | |
| Comprehension | Control | 25 | 7.71 | 0 | 90 | .09 |
| | Experimental | 25 | 6.07 | | | |
| Vocabulary | Control | 16 | 6.73 | 1 | 90 | 1.41 |
| | Experimental | 15 | 7.31 | | | |
| Total Reading | Control | 40 | 13.62 | 0 | 90 | .12 |
| | Experimental | 40 | 12.67 | | | |
| <u>SPRING</u> | | | | | | |
| Comprehension | Control | 30 | 5.20 | 2 | 90 | 1.19 |
| | Experimental | 32 | 5.18 | | | |
| Vocabulary | Control | 22 | 5.95 | 1 | 90 | .85 |
| | Experimental | 23 | 5.48 | | | |
| Total Reading | Control | 52 | 10.47 | 2 | 90 | 1.13 |
| | Experimental | 54 | 9.75 | | | |

t .05=1.96

* t significant

Since no significant results were obtained, a within group analysis was carried out. These t-test scores are given in the following table.

TABLE VII
COMPARISON OF READING SCORES WITHIN
EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

| AREA | TIME OF YEAR | GROUP | MEAN | S.D. | DIFFERENCE IN MEANS | df | <u>t</u> |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|------|-------|---------------------|----|----------|
| Comprehension | Fall | Control | 25 | 7.71 | 5 | 92 | 4.09** |
| | Spring | | 30 | 5.20 | | | |
| Vocabulary | Fall | Control | 16 | 6.73 | 6 | 92 | 4.84* * |
| | Spring | | 22 | 5.95 | | | |
| Total Reading | Fall | Control | 40 | 13.62 | 12 | 92 | 4.73** |
| | Spring | | 52 | 10.47 | | | |
| Comprehension | Fall | Experimental | 25 | 6.07 | 7 | 88 | 1.88 |
| | Spring | | 32 | 5.18 | | | |
| Vocabulary | Fall | Experimental | 15 | 7.31 | 8 | 88 | 6.27** |
| | Spring | | 23 | 5.48 | | | |
| Total Reading | Fall | Experimental | 40 | 12.67 | 14 | 88 | 6.21** |
| | Spring | | 54 | 9.75 | | | |

*t significant at .05 level = 1.96

**t significant at .001 level = 3.29

A significant gain was seen in both groups from Fall to Spring.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Reading has achieved a very important position in our schools in recent years. Much research has been carried on to resolve what would be the best for each individual child.

The purpose for this study was to determine whether reading scores of children in the second grade at Coronado and Lowell Schools in Salina would be affected by changing from the Houghton-Mifflin Reading Series to the Scott, Foresman Series.

Literature showed that there were both pros and cons for a basal reading program. Some felt that a systematic learning of skills and practice are necessary, while others were not convinced that one book or brand of teaching should constitute an entire reading program.

The writer chose the second grade at Lowell and Coronado Schools in Salina for her experimental group and two classes at Sacred Heart, Salina, for her control group. The two experimental classes were combined homogeneously into a group of forty-five students. The same was done with the control groups, but they were combined into a group of forty-seven students. Both groups were ranked in sequence according to the PMA test and paired in order. Two SRA tests were administered to all--one in October and the other in April. Scores were obtained for Comprehension, Vocabulary, and Total Reading.

Analysis using the t-tests were computed between the groups on score results from both Fall and Spring tests. The hypothesis of no difference in Vocabulary and Comprehension scores for second graders who had been subjected to a new reading series and those who had been kept with the same reading

series was accepted. However, in the analysis of the within group differences, the hypothesis was not accepted for the experimental group in Vocabulary and Total Reading and for the control group in all three measures. The t-test run on the I.Q.'s of the two groups resulted with a significant difference. The experimental group had the higher I.Q.'s. Because of this, it would seem that Group I would do better than Group II. Apparently, there was a motivational problem.

It seemed that Group II had a positive transfer of the items they had learned because they did not have to shift to another Reading series.

On the whole, the experiment showed that gain is not so much a function of the kind of reading series as it is a function of the teacher and motivation on the part of both the teacher and students.

Suggestions for further research and study include:

1. Run the experiment for a period of at least two years.
2. Use random sampling in choosing the subjects, and include a larger number of groups.

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THE EFFECTS OF NEW READING SERIES ON
SECOND GRADE READING ATTAINMENT

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

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ABSTRACT

There are many types or approaches of the primary basal reading program in our schools. Criticisms of these programs seem to be based on the inadequate training and insecurity of some teachers, rather than on inherent faults in the basal program. Basal programs are designed to present all facets of instruction in a logical sequence. They are only the foundation experiences in learning to read.

This study was undertaken to determine whether comprehension and vocabulary scores of children in the second grades at Lowell and Coronado Schools in Salina would be affected by changing from the Houghton-Mifflin Reading Series, which they used in first grade, to the Scott, Foresman Series.

Both pros and cons have been expressed for a basal reading program. Those for it say that material in basic series are adapted to a theory of continuous child growth. Vocabulary control is maintained so there is a careful distribution of new words per page and a maximum number of repetitions per word. However, some felt that there was a similarity in vocabulary between books of comparable level.

Four second grades in Salina were chosen for the experiment. Two classes, containing a total of forty-five students, from both Coronado and Lowell Schools, were the experimental group. Two classes at Sacred Heart totaling forty-seven students, were the control group. Both groups were ranked in sequence according to the PMA test. SRA tests were given to all in October and April. Scores were obtained for Comprehension, Vocabulary, and Total Reading.

t-tests were run on I.Q.'s and both the October and April reading test scores. There was a significant difference between I.Q.'s of the two groups, with the experimental group having the higher score. The between group analysis resulted in the acceptance of the hypothesis of no difference in comprehension and vocabulary scores for second graders who had been subjected to a new reading series and those who had been kept with the same reading series. However, in the analysis of the within group differences, the hypothesis of no difference was rejected for 5 tests and accepted for the experimental group in comprehension.

The control group had a positive transfer of the items they learned because they didn't have to shift to another reading series. However, there apparently was a motivational problem with one class in the experimental group.