

PROCEDURES FOR DIAGNOSING PROFICIENCY IN  
SIGHT VOCABULARY, PHONICS, AND STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

by 1264

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM

Words are the bricks with which thoughts are built, and when a child cannot recognize many of the words which the author has used he is at a great disadvantage in trying to extract meaning from the printed page. (12: 362)

The child with such a disadvantage is a great source of concern for the classroom teacher. In her attempt to help him, she is often at a loss to know what his specific weakness is and how she can help him overcome it. Any teacher concerned with the teaching of reading should be familiar with a number of materials available for diagnostic purposes.

#### I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The following report is a study made to determine some methods of diagnosing deficient word analysis skills of the retarded reader. The purpose of the study was (1) to give some guidelines for selecting appropriate procedures and (2) to review some formal and informal methods of diagnosing difficulties in the word analysis skills of recognizing sight words and using phonics and structural analysis.

#### II. QUESTIONS

After observing the wide range of differences found in their students' reading abilities, teachers attempt to meet many individual needs. What should be the basis of adjusting instruction to meet these needs? How can useful and appropriate procedures be selected for use with certain groups or individuals? What are some of the standardized tools

available for assessing strengths and weaknesses in word analysis skills? What informal methods can be used for diagnosis? What are some important characteristics and features of the procedures which can help in their selection? Which skills are measured and what type of pupil performance is required?

These are some of the questions the writer has attempted to answer in this study.

### III. LIMITATIONS

When assessing word analysis skills of an individual or group of pupils, there is concern chiefly with the skills of using sight vocabulary, phonics, and structural analysis. This report has been limited to diagnostic procedures for use in these areas. However, the reader must keep in mind that this is only part of the total diagnostic procedure. In many reading disability cases comprehension, reading rates, word meanings, dictionary and study skills, use of context clues and reversals will also need to be assessed.

Nearly all word analysis problems appear in the early years of reading development and should, if possible, be remedied then. Therefore, this report includes only diagnostic measures which can be used with pupils who are reading at elementary school levels.

In the reviews of standardized tests, only certain characteristics have been included. These are the author, publisher, and publishing date of the tests; the age or grade for which the test is intended; its appropriateness for group or individual use; its use as a timed or untimed, silent or oral test; the number of forms available; the administration

time required; the types of scores obtained; materials needed; skills tested; and the type of pupil response expected. Reviews of informal methods have been limited to similar characteristics.

#### IV. PROCEDURES

The following descriptive study is a review of literature pertaining to the problem stated previously. The writer has been limited to materials made available by the Kansas State University library and its services and to the test file and other sources provided by Dr. Leo Schell, Associate Professor of Education at Kansas State University.

#### V. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Standardized diagnostic reading tests. A diagnostic test is an instrument of measurement which breaks down performance into several skill areas and gives a measurement within each area to identify strengths and weaknesses. A standardized diagnostic reading test has been given to a varying number of pupils in various schools prior to its publication. Norms are then based on results of this preliminary testing and are used for interpreting results when the test is given to other pupils.

Informal diagnostic reading methods. Informal diagnostic methods have no norms established for comparing performance with other pupils. They only give an indication of how well the individual can do on a particular task. Informal procedures may be in a published form or they may be constructed by the examiner for a particular skill, curriculum, individual or group.

Word analysis. Word analysis refers to those skills which help a child decode an unknown word quickly and accurately so that he may obtain meaning from the printed page. Although these skills are often referred to as word recognition skills, word attack skills, or word perception skills, the term "word analysis skills" will be used in this study.

Sight vocabulary. A reader's sight vocabulary is those words which he recognizes quickly and accurately without a bit-by-bit analysis. Many current initial teaching methods in reading help the child develop a sight vocabulary before analyzing parts of words.

Phonics. Phonics "is essentially learning to associate the appearance of a letter or letter combination with a particular sound . . . ." (12: 330) Included in phonics are consonant sounds, blends, and digraphs; and vowel sounds, diphthongs, and digraphs. The ability to blend word parts to make a word is also a phonics skill. Since the pupil must be able to hear differences between the various sounds of letters or groups of letters, auditory discrimination is the basis of skill in phonics.

Structural analysis. Structural analysis is the method of word analysis whereby a word is analyzed into major parts as the root, prefix, and the ending or suffix. Analyzing parts of compound words is another part of structural analysis as is syllabication.

## CHAPTER II

### SELECTING DIAGNOSTIC PROCEDURES

Many diagnostic techniques are available for use by the classroom or reading teacher, and some of these techniques provide more adequate diagnostic clues than do others. The examiner must be efficient and use only those measures which will help find a solution for a particular problem. It is wise to select and use several measures so that a pattern can be observed in evaluation of the problem.

This chapter presents some information and criteria for the selection of appropriate diagnostic techniques.

#### I. ORAL VS. SILENT READING TESTS

In addition to measuring achievement in reading, oral reading tests aid in making diagnostic evaluations. They aid the examiner in detecting errors and identifying reasons for them. However, there is little agreement on what constitutes an oral reading error so that inconsistencies may arise. Similarly, a great deal of experience is necessary for the examiner to be proficient in giving and recording an oral reading test. Again, inconsistencies arise when experience is lacking.

Silent reading tests seldom indicate a child's specific needs in word analysis, but help only in a broad way. They seem to help approximate the skills of an individual or group but further checking or diagnosis is usually desirable by means of an oral reading test and perhaps a test of specific word analysis techniques.

## II. INDIVIDUAL VS. GROUP METHODS

Group procedures are best for routine classroom use. A group test can be the first step in the diagnosis and in some less severe cases can provide the teacher with information she needs to adjust instruction. However, after studying scores, individual tests may be desirable where further diagnosis is needed. For example, if a child does poorly on the vocabulary section of a test, more intensive individual diagnosis should perhaps be made of his word analysis needs.

Bond and Tinker make it clear that an individual approach is necessary in diagnosing reading difficulties (4: 195). Diagnosis is easier when there is only one child with the examiner at a given time so that a better rapport can be established and the examiner's full attention can be focused on the performance of one child.

## III. STANDARDIZED TESTS VS. INFORMAL METHODS

Standardized tests with established norms provide a more precise measurement than do most informal methods. Directions for administration must be carefully followed so that the norms will be applicable. The teacher may feel more secure in using formal or standardized techniques; and if used cautiously and purposefully, they can be very valuable in diagnosis.

However, some reading authorities believe that the "emphasis on norms runs counter to the point of view that every child should be helped to develop his potentialities, rather than be expected to reach a grade standard or national norm." (20: 135) This seems especially true in a

remedial situation where the child already falls below norms. Thus, a comparison with other students may not be necessarily desirable.

#### IV. CRITERIA FOR SELECTING STANDARDIZED DIAGNOSTIC READING TESTS

In selecting standardized diagnostic reading tests, the usual criteria for all standardized tests must be applied. These include an adequate manual of directions, proper standardization procedures, reliability, and validity. The criteria listed below should also be considered.

1. The test should be administered, scored and interpreted with reasonable ease (9: 46; 25: 527).
2. The content of the test must be appealing and appropriate to the pupil(s) concerned (16: 121).
3. Format is especially important to young children. Test items should be arranged so they are easily read or distinguished (16: 121).
4. Any pictures or illustrations should be realistic, recent, and simple (16: 121).
5. If possible, skills should be tested in a realistic manner which is similar to a reading situation (2: 67).
6. Meaningful subscores should be available. They must represent areas which are helpful in planning remediation. When they represent many skills, they are similar to survey tests (25: 525).
7. The type of responses expected on the test must be considered. Different publishers may label subtests the same, but measure different types of skills. For example, syllabication in

some tests may include dividing words into syllables or counting the numbers of syllables in the word. In others it may mean reading polysyllabic words (25: 525).



## CHAPTER III

### STANDARDIZED DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

According to Bond and Tinker, standardized tests should be used whenever possible in making a diagnostic evaluation in reading. Standardized tests are "the most valuable instruments for analyzing the child's reading strengths and weaknesses." (4: 160) Even though disabled readers are compared with their more typical counterparts, their strengths and weaknesses can be identified with little bias. A precise and valuable measurement can be made if these tests are used cautiously and purposefully.

The purpose of this chapter is to present reviews of a number of standardized tests which can be used in diagnosing problems in sight vocabulary, phonics, and structural analysis. The list is not exhaustive, but presents a variety from which one or preferably several tests could be chosen. The reviews are based generally on material in the administrator's manuals and materials used by the pupils. Technical information is not included in these reviews.

#### I. DIAGNOSTIC READING SCALES

AUTHOR: George D. Spache

PUBLISHER: California Test Bureau

PUBLISHING DATE: 1963

AGE: The Scales are for normal or retarded readers in the elementary school and can be used with retarded readers of junior and senior high school age.

INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP TEST: Individual

SILENT OR ORAL: Both oral and silent reading are evaluated.

FORMS: One

TIMED OR UNTIMED: The reading passages may be timed.

ADMINISTRATION TIME: Approximately forty-five minutes

TYPE OF SCORES OBTAINED: The pupil's instructional, independent, and potential reading levels as well as his silent reading rate are determined.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Manual, Booklet of Reading Passages, and Examiner's Record Booklet

SKILLS MEASURED AND PUPIL PERFORMANCE:

Word Recognition. The three word lists of increasing difficulty serve three purposes. The grade placement obtained determines the initial reading passage to be read. Secondly, they allow one to note the pupil's method of word attack; and, thirdly, they give an opportunity to assess his sight vocabulary. There is ample space for recording errors in the Examiner's Record Booklet. The accompanying checklist gives help in analyzing errors made.

Oral Reading. Beginning at a level determined by the Word Recognition Score, the pupil reads passages of increasing difficulty until his errors exceed the standard given in the Examiner's Record Booklet. Omissions, additions, substitutions, reversals, repetitions, and aided words are recorded.

Supplementary Phonics Tests. These Phonics Tests are intended for use only when the examiner feels further analysis of phonic skill is valuable. No norms are given for these Tests.

Test 1. Consonant Sounds. The pupil gives sounds of isolated consonant letters.

Test 2. Vowel Sounds. The pupil reads each of five nonsense words twice. Once he gives the vowel in the "word" a long sound; then he gives it a short sound.

Test 3. Consonant Blends. The pupil gives the sounds of isolated consonant blends and digraphs.

Test 4. Common Syllables. The pupil reads aloud isolated syllables.

Test 5. Blending. The pupil reads the separated syllables of nonsense words and then blends them into a "word."

Test 6. Letter sounds. The examiner gives the sound of various letters and the pupil tells which letter the sound represents.

COMMENTS: The Diagnostic Reading Scales seem to provide one of the quickest and most meaningful methods of diagnosing reading skills and deficiencies. Although the teacher must be well acquainted with the manual, the test is not difficult to administer. The traditionally accepted concepts of the independent and instructional reading levels have been reversed and may be confusing to some who use the test. The Checklist of Reading Difficulties is a good summary sheet and is helpful in determining a pattern of errors. The examiner must keep in mind that in the oral reading, the type of errors may be more important than the number of errors. Some examiners may also question the value of timing the reading passages when reading is already probably at a remedial level. The timing can be omitted.

## II. DOREN DIAGNOSTIC READING TEST OF WORD RECOGNITION SKILLS

AUTHOR: Margaret Doren

PUBLISHER: American Guidance Service, Inc.

AGE: The test covers techniques taught in the primary grades, so is suggested for use at the end of grade two or in grade three. It can also be used with older reading disability cases.

INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP TEST: The test is written as a group measurement, but can also be given individually.

SILENT OR ORAL: Silent

FORMS: One

TIMED OR UNTIMED: The test is untimed. Each child should have ample time to complete it.

ADMINISTRATION TIME: When given to a group of thirty pupils, about three hours are required. The number of sittings required depends on the maturity of the pupils.

TYPE OF SCORES OBTAINED: The number right on each subtest is recorded on the profile sheet. Any scores falling below the Line of Significant Error indicate a need for remedial work.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Manual of Directions, test booklet, classroom Summary Sheet

**SKILLS MEASURED AND PUPIL PERFORMANCE:** The skills tested are based on those taught in the Scott Foresmann, Row Peterson, Ginn and Company, Lyons and Carnahan, and John C. Winston Reading series.

**Unit II. Beginning Sounds**

Test A. The pupil recognizes the sound of a letter from a picture and associates the sound with its printed form.

Test B. The pupil must use his skill in selecting one of several rhyming words to complete a sentence.

**Unit III. Whole Word Recognition**

Test A. The pupil identifies two identical words in a group of words having similar appearance.

Test B. The pupil selects from a pair of similar words the word spoken by the teacher.

**Unit IV. Words within Words**

Test A. Compound words are to be correctly divided.

Test B. The pupil selects small words he sees and hears in a larger word.

Test C. The pupil makes judgments about using the technique of finding small words in larger words.

**Unit V. Speech Consonants**

Test A. From a pair of words with differing initial consonant digraphs, the pupil selects the one read by the teacher.

Test B. In a contextual setting the pupil selects the correct word from a pair in which only the consonant digraphs differ.

**Unit VI. Ending Sounds**

Test A. From a group of words in which only the final consonants differ, the pupil selects the word read by the teacher.

Test B. In a contextual setting the pupil chooses the correct

word from a pair with different variant endings.

Test C. The correct plural form of the stimulus word is to be chosen.

#### Unit VII. Blending

Choosing from words with like initial consonant blends, the pupil selects correct words to complete sentences.

#### Unit VIII. Rhyming

Test A. The pupil determines auditorily if two words rhyme.

Test B. By observing two words in their printed form, the pupil determines if they rhyme.

Test C. The pupil selects two rhyming words from three look-alike words.

Test D. The pupil selects from three words the two that rhyme even though they may not look alike.

#### Unit IX. Vowels

Test A. The child auditorily distinguishes a word by its short vowel sound.

Test B. The pupil writes the vowel sound heard in a word spoken by the teacher.

Test C. The pupil applies simple spelling rules about the sound a vowel should be given by marking words containing long or short vowel sounds.

Test D. The pupil determines auditorily if a vowel sound is long or short.

Test E. The child marks the vowel sound heard in words which are exceptions to spelling rules.

Test F. The child marks which vowel is heard in a vowel digraph.

Test G. The pupil selects words (all having ea in them) in which long e is heard.

Test H. The child must recognize that a vowel diphthong can have many sounds by marking the words in which ou has the sound heard in ouch.

Test J. The child must recognize that vowels may have sounds other than their own by writing the sound it makes, as in why.

#### Unit X. Sight Words

This subtest checks sight words not spelled phonetically by having the pupil choose the phonetic spelling of each of those words given.

COMMENTS: The Doren Test measures specifically the word recognition skills taught in the primary grades. The author of the test feels that any test which also measures skills such as vocabulary and comprehension is not diagnostic.

The manual is clearly written and has some suggestions for remedial activities. Materials in the test booklet are interestingly and simply presented. There seem to be adequate items in each unit, but not so many that make the test tedious. Unit IV where the pupil makes judgments about the usefulness of finding small words in larger ones would seem to be difficult and perhaps confusing. The child must determine whether the sound of the boxed word does or does not fit the sound of the big word, as know. The writer of this paper questions the reality of this situation and the usefulness of this skill. The test is easily scored and errors charted on the individual profile quickly identify skill deficiencies.

### III. DURRELL ANALYSIS OF READING DIFFICULTY

AUTHOR: Donald D. Durrell

PUBLISHER: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc.

PUBLISHING DATE: 1955

AGE: The test covers reading abilities from nonreader to grade six.

INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP TEST: The test is intended for individual use only.

FORMS: One

TIMED OR UNTIMED: Timed

ADMINISTRATION TIME: The test requires thirty to ninety minutes per child.

TYPES OF SCORES OBTAINED: Norms are provided for most subtests. The scores can be converted to grade placements and position within those grades.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Manual of Directions, Individual Record Book, Reading Paragraphs, tachistoscope, words on cards, stopwatch

**SKILLS MEASURED AND PUPIL PERFORMANCE:**

**Oral Reading.** The examiner records errors and time as the pupil orally reads appropriate paragraphs.

**Word Recognition and Word Analysis.** Words are presented in a flash situation. If a word is not recognized immediately, the pupil is given an opportunity to analyze it.

**Visual Memory of Words.** In a multiple choice situation, the child selects the word that begins, ends, or begins and ends as the word spoken by the administrator.

**COMMENTS:** Perhaps the greatest strength of the Durrell Test is the accompanying checklists. Their help in making a careful analysis may well be more important than the accompanying norms. The Reading Paragraphs appear durable and the content should be of interest to boys.

Considerable practice in administering this test seems important and it, therefore, may be best for use by an experienced teacher or reading specialist. A tape recorder seems essential for later replay and analysis of the oral reading. Use of the tachistoscope may seem unrealistic, but can be of value as the pupil becomes accustomed to it. The test can be most satisfactorily used with cases of reading disability that are not severe.

#### IV. GATES-McKILLOP READING DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

**AUTHOR:** Arthur I. Gates and Anne S. McKillop

**PUBLISHER:** Teachers College Press

**PUBLISHING DATE:** 1962

**AGE:** The tests are appropriate for children of elementary school age.

**INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP TEST:** Individual

**SILENT OR ORAL:** Oral

**FORMS:** I and II

**TIMED OR UNTIMED:** Untimed

**ADMINISTRATION TIME:** None given

**TYPE OF SCORES OBTAINED:** Raw scores are converted to grade scores. The grade scores can also be rated as High, Medium, Low, or Very Low to compare them with those of average children at the pupil's own grade placement or with his general reading ability.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Manual of Directions, Test Materials, Pupil Record Booklet, and tachistoscope (teacher-made)

**SKILLS MEASURED AND PUPIL PERFORMANCE:**

- I. Oral Reading. The child reads from the reading paragraphs until eleven or more errors are made on two consecutive paragraphs. The teacher records errors in the Pupil Record Booklet.
- II. Words: Flash Presentation. As the teacher uses the tachistoscope, the pupil responds to forty words, each presented for one-half second.
- III. Words: Untimed Presentation. The pupil reads words of increasing difficulty until ten consecutive words have been missed.
- IV. Phrases: Flash Presentation. The same procedure is followed as in Test II.
- V-1. Recognizing and blending Common Word Parts. The child reads nonsense words. If he makes an error, he reads the word parts as they have been divided in additional columns and then blends them.
- V-2. Giving Letter Sounds. The pupil gives the sound(s) the written letters represent.
- V-3. Naming Capital Letters. The child names the printed capital letters.
- V-4. Naming Lower Case Letters. The child names the printed lower case letters.
- VI-1. Recognizing the Visual Form of Word Equivalents of Sounds (Nonsense Words). As the teacher reads nonsense words, the pupil selects from four, the "word" she has just read.
- VI-2. Initial Letters. As the teacher reads words, the pupil selects and records the letter representing the beginning sound of that word.
- VI-3. Final Letters. The same procedure as in Test VI-2 is followed, but applied to final letters.



- VI-4. Vowels. As the teacher reads words, the child selects the medial vowel he hears.
- VII. Auditory Blending. After the examiner reads each word in parts, the pupil pronounces the entire word he has heard.
- VIII-3. Syllabication. As the child reads nonsense words, he must be able to blend syllables together smoothly.

COMMENTS: Before administering the Gates-McKillop Tests, the child's mental age must be determined by means of a good intelligence test as the Stanford-Binet; his silent reading should be evaluated by use of a standardized silent reading test; and his actual grade placement must be known. Comparisons are made to determine the degree of reading retardation in relation to the child's ability and then the tests are administered to discover specific problems.

It appears that the Gates-McKillop Test is one of the most thorough diagnostic tools of its kind. However, the scoring and interpreting procedures would seem to be laborious and time-consuming. The examiner is asked to compare the responses, scores, and ratings of various tests and for one item twenty-four comparisons are made. The test may be of little value in some schools, since it can best be administered by a skilled clinician.

The manual is clearly written and emphasizes that not every test need be given to every child. Neither do the tests need to be given in any special order.

It is of interest to note that the oral reading paragraphs constitute a continuous story. The pupil's test materials are clearly and simply written for children to easily follow. Another good feature of the test is the use of both visual and auditory techniques in making the diagnosis.

## V. GILMORE ORAL READING TEST

AUTHORS: John V. Gilmore and Eunice C. Gilmore

PUBLISHER: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc.

PUBLISHING DATE: 1968

AGE: Grades one through eight

INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP TEST: Individual

SILENT OR ORAL: Oral

FORMS: C and D

TIMED OR UNTIMED: Timed

ADMINISTRATION TIME: Normally fifteen to twenty minutes

TYPE OF SCORES OBTAINED: Performance ratings are obtained for accuracy, comprehension, and rate. Stanines and grade equivalents correspond to raw scores in accuracy and comprehension.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Manual of Directions, Reading Paragraphs booklet, Individual Record Blank, stopwatch

SKILLS MEASURED AND PUPIL PERFORMANCE: The test consists of ten oral reading paragraphs forming a continuous story. The pupil begins reading two levels below his grade placement unless it is known that he should begin at a different level. Additional suggestions for determining the basal level are given in the manual. The pupil continues reading the paragraphs until ten or more errors are made.

While the child reads, the examiner records eight types of errors: substitutions, mispronunciations, words pronounced by the examiner, disregard of punctuation, insertions, hesitations, repetitions, and omissions.

COMMENTS: The Gilmore Test should probably be used as only a part of the diagnostic process, and would perhaps be used with pupils showing need for further diagnosis on a silent reading test. More detailed evaluation may also need to take place following this test. The manual is clear in giving instructions for administration and scoring. Good suggestions are given for analyzing results of the test, but no help is given for planning instruction based on the test results. The Error Record box provides for easy summary and analysis in trying to determine a pattern of errors. The reading paragraphs are interestingly presented with some illustrations.

## VI. GRAY ORAL READING TESTS

AUTHOR: William S. Gray

PUBLISHER: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc.

PUBLISHING DATE: 1967

AGE: Pre-primer to adult

INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP TEST: Individual

SILENT OR ORAL: Oral

FORMS: A, B, C, and D

TIMED OR UNTIMED: Timed

ADMINISTRATION TIME: Although no time is given, enough time is needed to read approximately five reading passages.

TYPES OF SCORES OBTAINED: The number of errors made and the time required for reading each passage are used to determine the grade equivalent in oral reading.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Reading Passages, Examiner's Record Booklet, Manual of Directions, stopwatch

SKILLS MEASURED AND PUPIL PERFORMANCE: After finding the child's basal level according to the manual, the pupil reads successive passages until he makes seven or more errors on one. It is suggested that an individual read at least five passages. Two passages should be at an easy level, one at the appropriate level, and two at more difficult levels. As the pupil reads, the examiner records aided words, gross and partial mispronunciations, omission of a word or words, substitutions, repetitions, and inversions.

COMMENTS: As in the Gilmore Oral Reading Test, no specific test of skills is given, but good suggestions are given in the manual for analyzing errors that occurred in oral reading. A study must be made of the relationship between time and errors to see which contributed most to the total score. Did the pupil read rapidly with many errors or very slowly but accurately? In evaluating sight vocabulary, structural analysis, and phonics, one would pay particular attention to aided words and mispronunciations. As with any oral reading test, a tape recorder is most helpful. A unique feature of the test is the separation of norms for boys and girls. The tests may well serve as a springboard for further diagnosis in order to adequately adjust instruction to meet the real needs of the child.

## VII. MCCULLOUGH WORD-ANALYSIS TESTS

AUTHOR: Constance M. McCullough

PUBLISHER: Personnel Press

AGE: Tests I, II, III, and VI are intended for grade four, while Tests IV, V, and VII are for grade five. All tests may be used beyond these levels.

INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP TEST. The test may be used individually or with a group. However, when used individually, the norms may not apply

since they are based on administration of the tests to a classroom-size group.

**SILENT OR ORAL:** When used as a group test, it must obviously be done silently by each pupil. However, if given individually, the responses may be oral and recorded by the administrator.

**FORMS:** One

**TIMED OR UNTIMED:** Untimed

**ADMINISTRATION TIME:** Each of the seven thirty-item tests should be given in separate periods. Work periods are determined by the pupils' maturity and, therefore, no time is given.

**TYPE OF SCORES OBTAINED:** The subtest scores--the number of items right--can be converted to percentile ranks for each grade.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Teacher's Manual, Pupil's Individual Record Sheet

**SKILLS MEASURED AND PUPIL PERFORMANCE:**

Test I. Initial Blends and Digraphs. The pupil selects from a group of four the initial consonant blend or digraph heard in three words spoken by the teacher.

Test II. Phonetic Discrimination. The test is both auditory and visual in that the stimulus word and group of words from which to select are printed as well as pronounced by the examiner. The child must select from four the word with the same vowel sound as in the stimulus word. All common vowel sounds are included.

Test III. Matching Letters to Vowel Sounds. The examiner reads three words containing the same vowel sound. The pupil must then select the letter(s) which represent that sound. Vowel digraphs and blends are included.

Test IV. Sounding Whole Words. The pupil pronounces to himself three strangely spelled words in each group. He must select the word which sounds like a familiar word, as in the following example: blall ~~exll~~ gnall.

Test VI. Dividing Words into Syllables. The pupil divides thirty two-syllable words into their correct syllables. The test is based on eight common syllabication rules.

Test VII. Root Words in Affixed Forms. The pupil marks prefixes, suffixes, and variant endings in thirty words.

**COMMENTS:** The McCullough Test is very detailed and when scoring is completed much information about specific skill strengths and

weaknesses will be known. The cross reference among tests is a unique feature in that it allows the examiner to see how items on different subtests are related. However, this process may be time-consuming for a busy classroom teacher. The publisher suggests that subtest scores rather than total scores are of most value diagnostically. The manual has many valuable suggestions for the interpretation of scores.

### VIII. PRIMARY READING PROFILES

AUTHORS: James B. Stroud, Albert N. Hieronymus, and Paul McKee

PUBLISHER: Houghton Mifflin Company

PUBLISHING DATE: 1967

AGE: Level 1 is for use upon completion of the first-grade reading program while Level 2 is for use after completing the second-grade reading program.

INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP TEST: Group

SILENT OR ORAL: Pupil responses are silent. However, several subtests are administered orally.

FORMS: One

TIMED OR UNTIMED: The examiner controls the speed of work in several subtests while other parts have specified time limits.

ADMINISTRATION TIME: The test is divided into three testing periods of approximately twenty-five or thirty minutes each.

TYPE OF SCORES OBTAINED: Raw scores are converted to percentile ranks, grade equivalents and stanines.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Teacher's Manual, individual Reading Profile Chart, pupil test booklets

SKILLS MEASURED AND PUPIL PERFORMANCE:

Test II. Level 1. (Part A) The child selects pictures whose names begin with the same sound as the stimulus picture.

(Part B) The child selects the printed letter which represents the beginning sound of the stimulus picture.

Level 2. The child matches the initial consonant blends

and digraphs in their written form with pictures representing words with the same initial sound.

Test III. Levels 1 and 2. After the examiner has pronounced one of four words in a group, the pupil marks the word which has been pronounced.

Test IV. Level 1. The child reads short stories of which the last word may not be familiar. However, the word is within his speaking and listening vocabulary. He must select, on the basis of context and phonic clues, the picture which best describes this word.

Level 2. The child reads short stories from which one word has been omitted. The omitted word is quite likely in his speaking or listening vocabulary but may not be in his reading vocabulary. By use of context clues and word analysis skills, he should be able to select, from four, the correct word.

COMMENTS: The manual accompanying the Primary Reading Profiles seems clear and complete for either the hand-scored or machine-scored edition of the test. There are helpful suggestions for interpreting the results and some help is given for planning remedial instruction.

The pupils' test materials are presented to resemble workbook situations to which the children are no doubt accustomed. Test II, Level 2 may cause some confusion. The pupils must recognize the initial consonant sound represented in a picture. Some children may find no corresponding initial sound. For example, the picture which must match with "tractor" will likely be called a caterpillar by some.

The Primary Reading Profiles seem best for locating students with difficulty and perhaps giving some idea as to their general area of difficulty. No detailed diagnostic information is obtained. The manual suggests that further individual testing will take place.

#### IX. ROSWELL-CHALL AUDITORY BLENDING TEST

AUTHORS: Florence G. Roswell and Jeanne S. Chall

PUBLISHER: Essay Press

PUBLISHING DATE: 1963

AGE: The test can be used with any child having difficulty with word

analysis skills or it can be used routinely in grades one through four.

INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP TEST: Individual

SILENT OR ORAL: Oral

FORMS: One

TIMED OR UNTIMED: Untimed

ADMINISTRATION TIME: Approximately five minutes

TYPE OF SCORES OBTAINED: Raw scores in each of the three parts and for the total are converted to an "adequate" or "inferior" rating for the grade of the child.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Pupil's record blank, Manual of Instructions

SKILLS MEASURED AND PUPIL PERFORMANCE: The teacher pronounces words slowly in parts as they are given on the record blank. Parts I and II consist of words divided into two parts; Part III of words divided into three parts. The child listens and then says the word he has heard. A mastery of phonics should enable the pupil to hear the parts and combine them into words.

COMMENTS: A reader must be able to effectively and quickly blend together word parts which he recognizes. A mature reader seldom uses auditory blending but only visually blends word parts. However, a disabled reader often cannot blend words visually or even auditorily. This can be due to either incorrect learning or an auditory handicap (4: 337-339). The teacher should try to improve this skill only if she is sure there is no auditory handicap.

The Roswell-Chall Auditory Blending Test is a very quick and easy test for the classroom teacher to administer. It can give further information about or verify findings of other tests or suspicions of the teacher.

#### X. ROSWELL-CHALL DIAGNOSTIC READING TEST OF WORD ANALYSIS SKILLS

AUTHORS: Florence G. Roswell and Jeanne S. Chall

PUBLISHER: Essay Press

PUBLISHING DATE: 1959

AGE: The test is intended for classroom use at the second through sixth grade reading levels. In remedial situations it can be used at any elementary or secondary level.



INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP TEST: Individual

SILENT OR ORAL: Oral

FORMS: I and II

TIMED OR UNTIMED: Untimed

ADMINISTRATION TIME: The test requires approximately five minutes.

TYPE OF SCORE OBTAINED: After studying the completed test, the examiner estimates whether the pupil has mastered a skill or needs more work. No criteria is given regarding the number of errors made, but the manual gives suggestions for making a decision about the pupil's mastery or deficiency of a skill.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Manual of Instructions, Class Record Sheet, one copy of the test for the pupil and another for the teacher.

SKILLS MEASURED AND PUPIL PERFORMANCE:

- I. Single Consonants and Combinations. The pupil gives sounds of isolated letters and blends.
- II. Short Vowel Sounds. The pupil reads (1) words with short vowel sounds, (2) sentences with many words containing short vowel sounds, and (3) sounds of isolated vowels.
- III. Rule of Silent e. The pupil reads pairs of words as pin - pine.
- IV. Vowel Combinations. The pupil reads words with the vowel combinations ee, ai, oa, ar, oi, and ea.
- V. Syllabication. The child reads words with varying numbers of syllables. The words range from daytime to departmental.

COMMENTS: As is suggested in the statement of purpose in the manual, the test is to "supplement information obtained from standardized silent and connected oral reading tests." (48: 1 of manual) It is quickly and very easily administered. However, it is somewhat limited in the number of word analysis skills measured. Subtest I omits some consonants and blends. One might question why on Subtest III the rule of silent e is included and so many other important rules omitted. Before selecting the test, one must also consider the training of the child to whom it will be given. Perhaps he has never been asked to give letter sounds in isolation as he must do on two subtests, and would, therefore, be handicapped.



# XI. SILENT READING DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

AUTHORS: Guy L. Bond, Theodore Clymer, and Cyril J. Hoyt

PUBLISHER: Lyons and Carnahan

PUBLISHING DATE: 1955

AGE: The tests can be used at any level above grade three.

INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP TEST: Group

SILENT OR ORAL: Silent

FORMS: One

TIMED OR UNTIMED: Timed

ADMINISTRATION TIME: The tests require two testing periods of about forty-five minutes each.

TYPE OF SCORES OBTAINED: Grade equivalent scores are plotted on the Graphic Profile, the key to planning remediation.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Teacher's Manual, one test booklet per child

## SKILLS MEASURED AND PUPIL PERFORMANCE:

1. Recognition of Words in Isolation or Sight Vocabulary. The child selects the word that best describes the picture. In addition to information about the child's sight vocabulary, this subtest gives information about his visual habits through a study of locational errors made.
2. Recognition of Words in Context. The child selects the correct word to complete the sentence. Locational errors can also be analyzed as in Subtest 1.
4. Locating Parts of Words that are Helpful in Word Recognition. Each item consists of a picture and word. The child is to circle the small word within the large word which represents the picture.
5. Syllabication. The child draws lines between syllables.
6. Locating Root Words. The pupil circles the root of words given.
7. Phonetic Knowledge. The child selects and circles the word element spoken by the examiner.

8. Auditory and Visual Discrimination of Word Beginnings. The child selects the word that begins the same as the one read by the examiner.
9. Auditory and Visual Discrimination of Word Endings. The procedure of Subtest 8 is applied to word endings.
10. Identification of Letter Sounds. The child chooses the letter that represents the sound made by the administrator.
11. Blending. The child reads a series of paragraphs with lines ending in hyphenated words and then answers two comprehension questions about each paragraph.

COMMENTS: Directions for administration are clear and pictures are simple and recent. In one instance, however, two subtests are on the same page and some students may work the second test mentally in advance. Completion of the Graphic Profile for each child may be somewhat time-consuming, but it does give an excellent picture of the child's reading. It must be kept in mind that the diagnosis given by this test is based on silent reading and some administrators may wish additional information revealed in the oral reading process. As a basically silent reading test, it cannot be used with nonreaders or severely retarded readers. Another fact to be considered is that an appropriate silent reading test must be given first to determine reading disability cases. The authors suggest the Developmental Reading Tests published by Lyons and Carnahan.

## XII. STANFORD DIAGNOSTIC READING TEST

AUTHORS: Bjorn Karlsen, Richard Madden, and Eric F. Gardner

PUBLISHER: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc.

PUBLISHING DATE: 1966

AGE: Level I is for grades 2.5 to 4.5; Level II for grades 4.5 to 8.5. Level II is also usable with high schoolers who are performing poorly.

INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP TEST: Group

SILENT OR ORAL: Silent

FORMS: W and X

TIMED OR UNTIMED: The test is timed but is not a speed test.

**ADMINISTRATION TIME:** The authors suggest giving the test in four sittings of approximately forty minutes each.

**TYPE OF SCORES OBTAINED:** The raw scores can be converted to stanines or percentiles. Only the comprehension subtest can also be converted to a grade score.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Directions for Administering, test booklets, and Class Analysis Chart

**SKILLS MEASURED AND PUPIL PERFORMANCE:**

**Level I**

**Auditory Discrimination.** The pupil determines if the two words read by the examiner have the same beginning, medial, or ending sound.

**Syllabication.** By a multiple choice method the pupil selects the first syllable of each word and marks it.

**Beginning and Ending Sounds.**

**Part A.** The pupil marks the letter(s) representing the beginning sound of a stimulus picture.

**Part B.** The same procedure as in Part A applies to ending sounds.

**Blends.** As the examiner pronounces a word, the pupil selects the word part he hears at the beginning, middle and end of that word.

**Sound Discrimination.** The pupil selects the word with a sound the same as the stimulus word.

**Level II**

**Syllabication.** Same as Level I.

**Sound Discrimination.** Same as Level I.

**Blending.** The pupil selects and marks beginning, medial and ending sounds that can be combined to make a word.

**COMMENTS:** The Stanford Diagnostic Test has a number of strengths. It is good for use with those who appear to need additional diagnosis following a reading achievement test. Also, both auditory and visual techniques are employed. Although it may be somewhat lengthy to administer, the test is easily scored and the manual has helpful suggestions for interpretation of test scores and for remediation plans. Directions for most subtests should be easily understood. However, the subtest on Blending may require more than the three given samples before all pupils understand what is to be done. A few pictures on the subtest of Beginning and Ending Sounds may need clarification.

## CHAPTER IV

### INFORMAL METHODS OF DIAGNOSIS

One reading specialist, Donald D. Durrell, states that:

. . . 'informal tests based upon the reading materials used in the classroom and charts of faulty habits and difficulties observed when the child is reading provide the best basis for planning instruction.' (16: 99)

While formal methods or standardized tests compare an individual's performance to the performance of others, informal methods have no norms for this comparison and determine only how well the individual can do the job. This chapter presents a number of informal methods for use by the classroom teacher in diagnosing a pupil's difficulties in sight vocabulary, phonics and structural analysis.

#### I. INFORMAL READING INVENTORIES

Classroom materials at various reading levels can be a meaningful basis for informal diagnosis. The first purpose of the informal reading inventory is to determine the frustration, instructional, and independent reading levels of the child. By giving the child classroom materials of different reading levels, a measure of his strengths and weaknesses can also be obtained. Only by analyzing specific skills can a program of instruction be effectively planned. This program must be aimed at the right levels and at any skill deficiencies. Additionally, the informal reading inventory helps the pupil to be aware of his own levels of achievement, his strengths and weaknesses.

The word recognition test. Sight vocabulary can be measured by

using words from classroom materials in isolation. These words should be a sampling of common words from the pre-primer to at least the sixth grade level. For construction of such lists, see Diagnostic and Remedial Reading by Robert M. Wilson (21). A sample vocabulary list based on the Sheldon Basic Reading Series is given in FIGURE 1.

Two types of scores can be obtained from the word lists. One score may represent the child's recognition of words in a flash presentation; the second his performance in working out, in an untimed situation, words which he did not immediately recognize. The score in either case is the percentage of words correct. FIGURE 2 is an example of how errors may be recorded, summarized, and scored on an informal word recognition test.

The reading inventory. Reading selections with comprehension questions are prepared for each reading level. Johnson and Kress, in Informal Reading Inventories (13), explain in detail the preparation and scoring of these selections. The teacher should probably begin presenting oral reading passages "at least one level lower than that at which the child first encountered difficulty in the word recognition test." (18: 151). Reading errors must be carefully recorded and observations must be made of the pupil's reading habits, his attitude, and questions. McCracken suggests that the following types of errors be recorded (2: 85):

1. Repetition - the repeating of a word or phrase.
2. Substitution - saying one word instead of the one in print.
3. Addition - inserting word or words or adding an affix
4. Pronunciation - the examiner pronounces an unknown word for the child.
5. Omission - omitting a word, a phrase, or an affix.
6. Mispronunciation - saying a word in a manner which is definitely incorrect and not a result of defective speech or colloquial pronunciation.
7. Punctuation - phrasing in which the punctuation is definitely misread or added. Ignoring punctuation is not an error.

To Examiner: If no more than one word is missed (90 to 95 per cent accuracy), pupil is to go on to next level.

<u>Pre-Primer</u>	<u>Primer</u>	<u>Book 1</u>	<u>Book 2-1</u>	<u>Book 2-2</u>	<u>Book 3-1</u>
and	all	hear	past	candy	cave
look	paint	about	each	low	stuck
to	like	try	basket	pony	path
see	house	sound	drum	apple	act
blue	ducks	know	roar	trick	dreamed
for	children	pocket	candles	most	roasting
away	thank	street	head	floors	finger
big	friend	how	together	breakfast	believe
get	kitten	sleep	loud	dollars	probably
jump	what	grass	corner	wagon	visit
		their	brought	noise	quite
		every	afraid	twin	unhappy
		squirrel	blow	strange	remember
		right	swam	else	straight
		guess	through	whistle	whispered
<u>Book 3-2</u>	<u>Book 4</u>	<u>Book 5</u>	<u>Book 6</u>	<u>Book 7</u>	<u>Book 8</u>
spend	base	accept	ability	tournament	category
clever	deal	fiber	deposit	friction	bedlam
brook	center	coast	concerts	decoy	endorsements
though	inning	beak	muzzle	binoculars	ravine
goodness	accident	metal	instruments	utilize	parasite
repeated	forced	splendid	beetle	dilemma	angular
orders	ghost	nuggets	valuable	penetrate	visualize
true	weight	captive	guarantee	almanac	devastating
earth	prisoner	vacation	scientist	neutrality	apprehensive
edge	thirsty	kernels	tornado	vitality	incredible
valentines	terms	honest	thread	irrigation	broached
thick	shipwreck	stirred	horrificed	heirloom	yearling
parents	oven	injured	dense	elusive	thoroughfare
fifth	leather	grateful	urgent	contraption	scrubby
twice	speeding	tropical	wealthy	incredulous	vacuum

FIGURE 1

VOCABULARY CHECKLIST BASED ON VOCABULARY OF  
THE SHELDON BASIC READING SERIES.

COPYRIGHT 1957, ALLYN AND  
BACON, INC., BOSTON,  
MASS. (1:13)

Name Robert Age 9 Date 1/8/64

(The following is a random sampling of words taken from the Daniels' READING VOCABULARY STUDY)

## Pre-Primer Level

## Primer Level

Stimulus	Flash	Untimed
1. little	✓	
2. you	✓	
3. can	✓	
4. Play	✓	
5. said	○	<u>Something</u>
6. Want	○	○
7. come	✓	
8. it	✓	
9. comes	<u>came</u>	○
10. Come	✓	
11. for	✓	
12. see	✓	
13. play	✓	
14. It	✓	
15. I	✓	
16. to	✓	
17. in	<u>m</u> ✓	
18. Big	✓	
19. not	<u>down</u>	○
20. big	✓	
75+1		80%

"only four wrong!  
I did good..  
I'm reading."

Stimulus	Flash	Untimed
1. Good	<u>o-o-dog?</u>	<u>what start was it in?</u>
2. Run	✓	
3. are	<u>can</u>	<u>o-o and</u>
4. like	<u>little</u>	
5. one	✓	
6. Away	<u>never said that was</u>	
7. All	○	<u>alls</u>
8. duck	○	<u>b-b-b/e</u>
9. yes	<u>y-e-s</u>	
10. get	○	○
11. She	<u>her</u>	✓
12. make	○	<u>m-m/p</u>
13. my	✓	
14. No	<u>o-o</u>	
15. This	○	<u>they</u>
16. am	<u>it-at</u>	○
17. red	✓	
18. run	✓	
19. Do	✓	
20. he	<u>d-remember</u>	○
21. yellow	✓	
22. will	<u>what</u>	✓
23. home	✓	
24. went	○	○
25. they	○	<u>came</u> ✓
36+1		52%

FIGURE 2

INDIVIDUAL WORD RECOGNITION TEST C  
(18: 158)



McCracken believes scoring is much more accurate when hesitations are eliminated as errors.

By counting the number of errors recorded and dividing this number by the number of words in the selection, a percentage score will be obtained. The quotient subtracted from one hundred gives a percent correct score for the passage.

In assessing oral reading, the teacher must evaluate the types of errors to differentiate between a reading disability and lack of confidence a poor reader has in reading before an audience. Repetitions, hesitations, and insignificant substitutions may not indicate a serious word recognition problem. Neither do difficulties with proper names or rare words. "It is inaccuracies, mispronunciations, and the number of omissions that are significant indicators of reading difficulty." (15: 218)

To determine which word analysis skills are deficient, the teacher studies the pattern of errors made. Checklists are helpful in summarizing and organizing the errors made. FIGURES 3 and 4 are examples of such checklists. They are flexible and must be adjusted to coincide with the particular skills being measured.

Strengths and weaknesses of informal reading inventories. The informal inventory has several strengths. It may give the examiner an opportunity to see the reason for some errors made by the pupil. Secondly, the inventories are made from functional materials. Many authorities seem to agree that this fact makes them especially useful for determining the proper instructional materials for pupils.

However, one interested in constructing and using the inventory must keep in mind some of its weaknesses. There is little agreement on



Name _____	Grade _____	Date _____	Rating on given paragraph level					
Paragraphs			I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Word attack:								
Refuses to attempt unknown words								
Omits words or parts of words								
Inserts words								
Guesses at words:								
Makes sense								
Does not make sense								
Repeats words or parts of words								
Reverses letters or words								
Spells out words								
Sounds out words laboriously								
Recognizes beginning sound								
Mispronounces the whole word								
Recognizes other sounds and tries pronunciation								
Checks pronunciation with meaning in sentence								
Uses structural parts								
Uses combination of methods								
Phrasing:								
Reads in thought units								
Poor grouping								
Word-by-word reading								
Monotone								
Ignores punctuation								
Posture:								
Good								
Book too close								
Book too far								
Finger pointing								
Speed, wpm:								
Comprehension:								
Main ideas identified								
Details								
Inference								
Vocabulary								
Comparison between oral and silent reading								
Comprehension:								
Little or no difference								
Silent reading slightly superior								
Silent reading twice as good as oral								
Little or no improvement in oral reading								
Grade levels:								
Independent								
Instructional								
Frustrational								
Capacity 75% comprehension or better								
Listening comprehension								
No better than reading								
Slightly better								
Much better								

FIGURE 3  
CHECKLIST FOR RECORDING PERFORMANCE ON  
ORAL READING PARAGRAPHS (20: 200)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Greeding Selection Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
 To the Examiner: Place check in appropriate column. Record examples of  
 the types of errors made by the pupil.  
 Key: O indicates acceptable performance. 2.4 is determined by appropriate questions.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Some- times</u>	<u>Examples</u>
<b>1.0 Fluency</b>				
1.1 Rhythmical reading	<u>O</u>			
1.2 Meaningful phrasing	<u>O</u>			
1.3 Punctuation observed	<u>O</u>			
1.4 Adequate eye-voice span	<u>O</u>			
1.5 Word-by-word reading		<u>O</u>		
<b>2.0 Interpretation</b>				
2.1 Effective interpretation	<u>O</u>			
2.2 Natural expression	<u>O</u>			
2.3 Appropriate rate	<u>O</u>			
2.4 Adequate comprehension	<u>O</u>			
2.5 Monotonous voice		<u>O</u>		
<b>3.0 Posture</b>				
3.1 Good position of body	<u>O</u>			
3.2 Correct position of book	<u>O</u>			
<b>4.0 Accuracy</b>				
4.1 Mispronunciations		<u>O</u>		
4.2 Repetitions		<u>O</u>		
4.3 Omissions		<u>O</u>		<u>not</u>
4.4 Additions		<u>O</u>		
4.5 Hesitations		<u>O</u>		
4.6 Reversals		<u>O</u>		<u>saw for was</u>
4.7 Refusals		<u>O</u>		
4.8 Corrections of own errors	<u>O</u>			<u>they to then</u>
<b>5.0 Word Attack Methods</b>				
5.1 Recognizes basic words at sight	<u>O</u>			
5.2 Uses context clues	<u>O</u>			
5.3 Uses configuration--size, shape	<u>O</u>			
5.4 Uses roots, prefixes, suffixes	<u>O</u>			
5.5 Sounds out syllables	<u>O</u>			
5.6 Blends syllables or letters	<u>O</u>			
5.7 Spells unknown words		<u>O</u>		
5.8 Lacks methods of word attack		<u>O</u>		

#### Summary

1. Fluency \_\_\_\_\_
2. Interpretation \_\_\_\_\_
3. Posture \_\_\_\_\_
4. Accuracy \_\_\_\_\_
5. Word Attack \_\_\_\_\_

FIGURE 4  
 ORAL READING CHECKLIST: SIGHT READING  
 (1: 10)

what constitutes an oral reading error. There is variation in how errors shall be recorded and there seems to be a lack of agreement on the types of errors to include. A thorough knowledge and understanding of the reading process is basic to the construction, administration, and analysis of an informal reading inventory. It can be only as sound as its administrator.

## II. GRADED SELECTIONS FOR INFORMAL READING DIAGNOSIS

The Graded Selections for Informal Reading Diagnosis by Nila Banton Smith (50) are one of a number of prepared informal reading inventories. The author has carefully selected oral reading passages and prepared accompanying comprehension questions for informal diagnosis. One hard-bound book for grades one through three and another for grades four through six include the reading passages, the instructions for administration, and checking aids for the teacher. By use of the checking aids, skills in using initial and final consonants, blends and speech sounds; vowel sounds; compound words; hyphenated words; inflectional endings; affixes; suffixes; possessives; contractions and difficult sight words can be assessed. The instructional level of the pupil can be determined by using information obtained.

The Graded Selections are a quick, functional, and informal method of finding strengths and weaknesses. Duplication of the reading passages may be helpful so the teacher can more conveniently take notes as the pupil reads. A tape recording of the child's reading is also of value for making an analysis.

### III. CLASSROOM READING INVENTORY

Designed for teachers with little experience in diagnosis, the Classroom Reading Inventory by Nicholas Silvaroli (49) is intended for individual use in grades two through eight. Forms A and B are available, each consisting of the Graded Word Lists, Graded Oral Paragraphs and a Graded Spelling Survey. Administration time for the Word Lists and Oral Paragraphs is approximately fifteen minutes.

The graded word lists give information regarding word recognition errors and give an approximate starting level for beginning on the oral paragraphs. The child continues reading the lists until he knows less than seventy-five percent of the words.

The oral paragraphs aid in determining the child's independent, instructional, frustration and hearing capacity levels. Additional clues about his word recognition skills are found as the teacher records repetitions, substitutions, omissions, and assisted words.

The Classroom Reading Inventory seems to be a practical and informative method of informal diagnosis for the classroom teacher. Instructions for administration seem especially clear and simple. The reading selections with their illustrations are also attractive and should be of interest to boys.

### IV. INFORMAL READING INVENTORY (Betts Basic Readers)

The Informal Reading Inventory (34) is one example of several inventories constructed to accompany a specific reading series. Although this inventory has been prepared for the Betts Basic Readers, it can be used with any series, keeping in mind the advantages and pitfalls of all

such inventories. Specifically, its purpose is to determine the pupil's instructional level of reading. However, the findings can be used to determine instructional needs in sight vocabulary, phonics, and structural analysis. Materials include a manual of instructions, a Teacher's Record, and a test booklet for the pupil.

The Word Recognition Inventory consists of words flashed from each succeeding text of the Betts Basic Readers. The Reading Inventory is primarily a silent reading test. Any oral reading is rereading with a specific purpose, i. e., "Read aloud the question Freddie asked Mr. Day."

The Betts Inventory is a very informal test and must be adapted to meet individual needs. Its diagnostic value in specific skill areas seems limited and should be used cautiously in drawing any conclusions. The examiner must keep in mind that it is primarily a silent reading test.

#### V. STANDARD READING INVENTORY

The Standard Reading Inventory by Robert A. McCracken (44) accompanies pre-primer through seventh reader levels. It is an individual test with two forms available and measures oral and silent reading. By using the General Score Sheet provided, the frustration, instructional (both questionable and definite) and independent reading levels can be determined. The examiner can also use his own standards for determining these levels if he wishes. Materials include the examiner's booklet, word list cards and card holder, oral passages, and the manual.

Vocabulary is measured in isolation and in context. In isolation it is measured by a series of word lists at various reading levels. These

are presented by a tachistoscope. In context, the pupil reads passages orally and is given credit for each correctly read word of those underlined in the examiner's manual.

Oral reading errors are assessed as the pupil reads the oral reading paragraphs and the examiner carefully records errors made. A tape recorder is helpful.

The Standard Reading Inventory is structured flexibly so it can be used to suit many situations and needs. The method of scoring suggested by the manual is somewhat different than used in many inventories and standards are very high. However, the examiner is not bound by one method of scoring.

#### VI. THE BOTEL READING INVENTORY

The Botel Reading Inventory by Morton Botel (36) is for use with pupils whose reading level is that of the fourth grade or below. Forms A and B are available and materials consist of the teacher's Guide and key, class summary sheets, word recognition test cards and pupil answer sheets. The only scores obtained are the independent, instructional, and frustration reading levels. Errors on the Phonics Mastery Test are recorded so that a pattern can be studied.

The Word Recognition Test, a test of isolated words in an untimed situation, can yield information about the child's sight vocabulary. Errors must be carefully recorded.

The Phonics Mastery Test can give further information about word recognition errors made on the Word Recognition Test and may extend findings of other reading diagnostic tests. The phonics test briefly measures

consonant sounds, blends and digraphs, rhyming words, vowel sounds, syllables, and nonsense words. The child records letters and sounds he is asked to listen for in stimulus words spoken by the examiner. This applies to all subtests except the last in which he must orally read nonsense words. The Word Recognition Test and Nonsense Words Subtest must be given individually. The remainder of the inventory may be given to a group or individuals.

It must be remembered that the Phonics Mastery Tests are auditorily loaded and, therefore, should not be the sole basis of judgment. They do give a good indication of the child's auditory discrimination. There are no oral reading passages, but oral reading is measured by the Word Recognition Test. Directions for administering the inventory are simply written and administration and scoring is quickly completed.

#### VII. McKEE INVENTORY OF PHONETIC SKILL

The McKee Inventory of Phonetic Skill (46) was intended for use with the McKee Reading for Meaning Series but, as with the Betts Inventory, can be used with any series. Test One is for Grade one; Test Two for grades 2.0 through 3.5; and Test Three for grades three, four, five and six. The inventory can be administered to either individuals or groups. No scores are obtained, but after testing, "individual pupils may be given special help in those elements with which they obviously have difficulty." (44:1 of Manual and Key)

All three tests are multiple choice situations in which the examiner gives two stimulus words and the pupil selects his response from four or five possibilities. All three tests measure initial and final



consonant sounds in which the child selects words that begin or end the same as the stimulus words. Structural elements are also measured by all three tests by having the pupil select the word with the same variant ending as the stimulus words.

Tests Two and Three assess additional initial consonant sounds, vowel sounds, and structural elements. Here consonant sounds include two- and three-letter blends. In testing vowel sounds, the pupil selects the word having the same vowel sound as the stimulus words. Long and short vowel sounds, and common vowel digraphs and diphthongs are included. In this second measure of structural elements, the pupil selects the word having the same variant ending, prefix, or suffix as the stimulus words.

Characteristic of only Test Three is the measure of common syllables. The pupil selects the word having the same beginning or ending syllable as the stimulus words.

The McKee Inventory is a very short, quick method of finding strengths and weaknesses in phonics. However, only one type of testing situation--multiple choice--is presented and the inventory is based on the pupil's skill in auditory discrimination. The test may be of more value when used with an oral reading test to determine a pattern of weaknesses. The fact that it measures only a limited number of skills is illustrated by the subtest on syllabication on Test Three. No assessment is made of the child's ability to determine accented syllables or to divide words into syllables.

#### VIII. TEACHER-CONSTRUCTED SKILLS INVENTORIES

A skills inventory is a series of subtests, each measuring the



child's knowledge of a specific skill. It is constructed for a certain group of pupils or a certain grade level and may consist of items adapted from items in workbooks and teacher's manuals exercises. Detailed information regarding its construction is given in "Informal Reading Skills Inventories" by Dr. Leo Schell (28). Materials in a complete inventory would include a pupil test booklet, a manual of instructions and some method of recording individual weaknesses. FIGURE 5 is an example of a rating chart which might be used for this purpose.

Sight Words				
Phonic Analysis				
Initial consonant sounds				
Consonant blends				
l-blends				
r-blends				
Consonant digraphs				
Long vowel sounds				
Short vowel sounds				
Vowel digraphs				
Vowel diphthongs				
R-controlled vowels				
Structural Analysis				
Inflected forms*				
Affixed forms*				
Syllabication*				
Accent*				

\*Each of these skill areas can be further divided into appropriate subskills.

FIGURE 5

SKILLS INVENTORY SUMMARY SHEET  
(28: 119)

Word analysis skills can be conveniently assessed by use of a skills inventory. For example, initial consonant sounds may be measured

by items similar to the following:

'Circle the letters that stand for the sound heard at the beginning of these three words: drum, drink, draw.' Pupils select from three or four possibilities listed in the test booklet or answer sheet, e. g., th, dr, fr, st. (28: 118)

To measure skill in syllabication the following item could be used:

Draw a line between each syllable: excite, wheeling, emphasize, unhappy. (Words are selected to represent different syllabication principles.) (28: 118)

The inventories in FIGURES 6 and 7 were prepared as informal tests of vowels and consonants. Although they were written as group tests, they can be used with individuals. They can also be adapted to measure additional vowel and consonant sounds.

"Skills inventories, when used wisely, provide diagnostic information about pupils that cannot be obtained effectively in any other way." (28: 117) These inventories can provide a good basis for meeting individual needs in instruction. One particular advantage is that they are constructed for a particular group of pupils and coincide with their particular curriculum.

Certain limitations of the inventories must also be kept in mind. They can hardly be used by themselves to make a thorough diagnosis, even when several different levels are used. The examiner must also keep in mind that this is not a standardized instrument.

#### IX. DOLCH BASIC SIGHT WORD TEST

The Dolch Test by E. W. Dolch (37) is a list of 220 service words "which make up 70 per cent of the first readers and 65 per cent of second and third readers." (37: direction sheet) This stresses the importance

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: The teacher reads the words:   sit       doll       cap  
   sat       dill       cup  
   set       dull       cop, etc.

The children fill in the missing vowel.

SHORT "A" "O" "I" "U" "E"

- |           |              |           |             |           |
|-----------|--------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| 1. s__t   | 2. d__ll     | 3. c__p   | 4. sp__ll   | 5. sl__d  |
| s__t      | d__ll        | c__p      | sp__ll      | sl__d     |
| s__t      | d__ll        | c__p      |             |           |
| 6. r__m   | 7. h__t      | 8. p__n   | 9. f__n     | 10. b__d  |
| r__m      | h__t         | p__n      | f__n        | b__d      |
|           | h__t         | p__n      | f__n        | b__d      |
| 11. b__t  | 12. b__g     | 13. h__d  | 14. r__g    | 15. h__m  |
| b__t      | b__g         | h__d      | r__g        | h__m      |
| b__t      | b__g         |           |             | h__m      |
| 16. m__sh | 17. fl__tter | 18. l__ck | 19. p__ddle | 20. r__mp |
| m__sh     | fl__tter     | l__ck     | p__dle      | r__mp     |

FIGURE 6

GROUP TEST FOR VOWELS  
 (32: 18)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: As the teacher reads the words, the children fill in the appropriate consonant.

\_\_ell                  \_\_ump                  \_\_est

\_\_ark                  \_\_ound                  \_\_eep

\_\_ill                  \_\_ack                  \_\_ent

-----

shee\_\_                  fee\_\_                  see\_\_

dum\_\_                  cree\_\_                  har\_\_

ri\_\_                  bum\_\_                  hel\_\_

-----

ro\_\_e                  ri\_\_e                  wi\_\_e                  ro\_\_e                  pa\_\_er

-----

The teacher reads one of the words in each pair. The children circle the word read.

park	rib	deed	pack	brown	bump
dark	rid	deep	back	drown	pump
rope	ride	bit	but	pill	bound
rode	ripe	pit	cut	bill	pound

-----

The teacher dictates 6 words. The children write the beginning letter.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

FIGURE 7

CONSONANT TESTS FOR B, P, AND D  
SIMILAR TESTS MAY BE CONSTRUCTED FOR OTHER CONSONANTS  
(32: 17)

of those words which should be mastered by the completion of the second grade reading level.

The test consists of Parts I and II for more convenient administration and requires approximately fifteen minutes for completion. It may be used with individuals or groups, but more information can be obtained when used individually. Materials include an instruction sheet, a class record, the scoring key and test sheet. When used with groups, the pupil selects from four words on each line the word which was spoken by the teacher. The test should be given four times so each word can be tested. When used individually, the pupil simply reads all the words. A record should be kept of the known words and of errors made on other words. From this, then, a pattern of errors in other skill areas can be determined. The instructional level of the child can also be obtained (23: 43-46).

The Dolch Test is a good measure of sight vocabulary in that the words have been carefully selected. However, precautions must be taken in correcting deficiencies in the child's sight vocabulary. Requiring a child to meaninglessly learn the words by means of drill will be of little value. The words should rather be learned in a contextual setting.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### I. SUMMARY

Teachers of reading are generally familiar with survey tests which are given routinely to an entire class. These tests reveal how the class as a whole and individuals stand in relation to a set of norms. Some survey tests provide several subscores, giving some knowledge of strengths and weaknesses within the class.

For those pupils who score low on the survey test, another instrument is needed to pinpoint with greater precision the nature of the problems that are contributing to the overall low score so that remedial instruction can be appropriately planned and carried forth. The diagnostic reading test is designed to fill this need. (25: 523)

With an increasing number of tests and other procedures being made available for diagnosis of reading skills, the classroom or reading teacher may find it difficult to determine which of these can be most beneficial. For this reason some suggestions and criteria were given in this study for the selection of appropriate materials. Or, the teacher may be familiar with a limited number of methods and for this reason a number of formal and informal procedures were reviewed.

#### II. CONCLUSIONS

Teachers have long been too reluctant to claim any skill in the diagnostic process. They have assumed that it is too complex and time-consuming, so have left it only for trained specialists. One can hardly deny that diagnosis is complex, but the need for continuous diagnosis in

the classroom has made it an important study for everyone associated with the instruction of children. Teachers, administrators and specialists must all be able to work more comfortably in this field.

The instruments for diagnosis have not been perfected, so the teacher must set about to determine which ones meet her needs. Acquaintance with a variety of formal and informal procedures is perhaps the best way for a teacher to determine the limitations and strengths of these procedures and their applicability to the pupil(s) she will test. It seems important that a diagnostic evaluation include the findings of both formal and informal procedures.

The methods of diagnosis presented in this paper are only a part of the complete diagnostic process. Environmental and intelligence factors as well as observation of attitudes and interests must also be taken into consideration. A good diagnosis which provides a sound basis for a remedial program nearly always results in reading improvement at a rate above the normal rate of growth (4: 13).

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## APPENDIXES

## APPENDIX A

### ADDITIONAL SKILLS MEASURED BY TESTS

#### The Botel Inventory

Comprehension

#### Classroom Reading Inventory

Comprehension  
Graded Spelling Survey

#### Diagnostic Reading Scales

Comprehension  
Silent Reading Rate

#### Doren Diagnostic Reading Test of Word Recognition Skills

Letter Recognition  
Discriminate Guessing

#### Durrell Analysis of Reading Difficulty

Silent Reading  
Listening Comprehension  
Naming, Identifying and Matching Letters  
Spelling  
Handwriting

#### Gates-McKillop Reading Diagnostic Tests

Spelling  
Oral Vocabulary (Word Meanings)  
Auditory Discrimination

#### Gilmore Oral Reading Test

Comprehension

Graded Selections for Informal Reading Diagnosis

Comprehension

Gray Oral Reading Test

Literal Comprehension

Rate of Reading

Informal Reading Inventory (Betts Basic Readers)

Comprehension

McCullough Word-Analysis Tests

Interpreting Phonetic Symbols (Dictionary)

Primary Reading Profiles

Reading Aptitude (Levels 1 and 2)

Comprehension (Levels 1 and 2)

Silent Reading Diagnostic Tests

Use of Context Clues

Recognition of Reversible Words in Context

Comprehension

Standard Reading Inventory

Comprehension

Speed

Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test

Reading Comprehension (Levels I and II)

Rate of Reading (Level II)

Vocabulary (Levels I and II)

## APPENDIX B

### ADDRESSES OF PUBLISHING COMPANIES

American Book Company  
55 Fifth Avenue  
New York 3, New York

Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc.  
750 Third Ave.  
New York 17, New York

American Guidance Service, Inc.  
720 Washington Ave., S. E.  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Houghton Mifflin Co.  
2 Park St.  
Boston 7, Massachusetts

Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc.  
4300 West 62nd St.  
Indianapolis 6, Indiana

Lyons and Carnahan  
2500 Prairie Ave.  
Chicago 16, Illinois

William C. Brown Book Co.  
135 South Locust St.  
Dubuque, Iowa

New York University Press  
New York, New York

California Test Bureau  
Del Monte Research Park  
Monterey, California

Personnel Press, Inc.  
180 Nassau St.  
Princeton, New Jersey

Essay Press  
Box 5  
Planetarium Station  
New York 24, New York

Pioneer Printing Co.  
Bellingham, Washington

Follett Publishing Company  
1010 W. Washington Blvd.  
Chicago 7, Illinois

Teachers College Press  
Teachers College  
Columbia University  
New York, New York

Garrard Press  
119 W. Park Ave.  
Champaign, Illinois

PROCEDURES FOR DIAGNOSING PROFICIENCY IN  
SIGHT VOCABULARY, PHONICS, AND STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

by

EVELYN SCHRAG

B. S., Bethel College, 1962

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY  
Manhattan, Kansas

1970



PROCEDURES FOR DIAGNOSING PROFICIENCY IN  
SIGHT VOCABULARY, PHONICS, AND STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

AN ABSTRACT

The child who cannot recognize many of the words used by an author has a great deal of difficulty in obtaining meaning from the printed page. Such a child is a great source of concern for the teacher and she is often at a loss to know what his specific weakness is and how she can help him overcome it.

This report seeks to determine some guidelines for selecting appropriate diagnostic reading procedures and to review some formal and informal methods of diagnosing deficient word analysis skills of the disabled reader. Included are only those formal and informal procedures which measure sight vocabulary, phonics and structural analysis and which can be used with readers at elementary school reading levels. The writer has been limited to materials made available by the Kansas State University library and its services and to the test file and other sources provided by Dr. Leo Schell, Associate Professor of Education at Kansas State University.

Reviews of twelve formal or standardized diagnostic reading tests include the following information:

Author

Publisher

Publishing date

Age or grade

Individual or group test  
Silent or oral test  
Forms available  
Timed or untimed  
Administration time  
Types of scores obtained  
Materials needed  
Skills measured and pupil performance  
Comments by the writer

Similar information is included in the reviews of nine informal measures. Both published and teacher-constructed informal procedures are reviewed.

In conclusion it would seem that teachers as well as administrators and specialists need to be able to work more comfortably in the area of reading diagnosis. Everyone considering the use of a diagnostic measure must become acquainted with a number of formal and informal procedures in order to determine their strengths, weaknesses, and applicability to the pupil(s) to be tested. A good diagnosis which provides a sound basis for a remedial program nearly always results in reading improvement at a rate above the normal rate of growth.