

TEACHING READING SKILLS IN THE FIFTH GRADE  
SOCIAL STUDIES AREA

by 500

JEAN LEONA RATHERT

B. A., Kansas Wesleyan University, 1939

---

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

1969

Approved by:

  
Major Professor

LD  
2668  
R4  
1969  
R37  
C.2

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  | PAGE |
|--|------|
| THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED . . . . .    | 1    |
| The Problem . . . . .                                  | 1    |
| Statement of the problem . . . . .                     | 1    |
| Hypothesis . . . . .                                   | 1    |
| Limitations and delimitations . . . . .                | 2    |
| Definitions of Terms Used . . . . .                    | 2    |
| Study skills . . . . .                                 | 2    |
| Locating information . . . . .                         | 2    |
| Selecting information . . . . .                        | 3    |
| Organizing information . . . . .                       | 3    |
| REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE . . . . .                     | 4    |
| What Research Says . . . . .                           | 4    |
| Teachers' Attitudes . . . . .                          | 6    |
| Why Teach Skills in Social Studies? . . . . .          | 8    |
| What Skills Should Be Taught? . . . . .                | 11   |
| How to Teach Needed Skills . . . . .                   | 12   |
| PROCEDURE AND METHOD OF ANALYSIS . . . . .             | 15   |
| SUMMARY, RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS . . | 23   |
| Summary . . . . .                                      | 23   |
| Results . . . . .                                      | 24   |
| Conclusions . . . . .                                  | 26   |
| Recommendations . . . . .                              | 27   |

|                        | PAGE |
|------------------------|------|
| REFERENCES . . . . .   | 29   |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . . | 31   |
| APPENDIX . . . . .     | 35   |

## THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

It seems that some children enter the fifth grade without the ability to use the skills necessary for meaningful learning and understanding in the social studies area even though these skills are usually included in their basal readers. Since many of these children are very capable of applying these skills to story type writing, it seems safe to assume that the difference in the style of writing in the social studies could be the cause of the difficulty. If this is the case, it is felt that the social studies teacher would do well to spend some time teaching such skills during the social studies class.

### The Problem

The purpose of this study was to see whether, through planned systematic instruction using the social studies textbook, skills such as reading maps and graphs, locating information, selecting information, and organizing materials could be improved among fifth graders.

Statement of the problem. Children of the fifth grade do not seem able to adapt reading-study skills learned from basal reader material to other content areas such as social studies.

Hypothesis. It is hypothesized that a child of the

intermediate level will be more capable of applying the specific skills needed for achievement in the social studies area if such skills are taught from the social studies textbook as well as the basal reader.

Limitations and delimitations. This study was limited to one fifth grade class and covered a period of approximately five months. The group consisted of fifteen girls and fourteen boys whose IQ range was from 89 to 126 with a group median of 106 on the Science Research Associates (SRA) Mental Ability Test. Although instruction was given in many skills necessary for reading in the social studies area, in this study special emphasis was given to these skills: reading maps and graphs, locating information, selecting information, and organizing materials. All the lesson plans and most of the tests were teacher made.

#### Definitions of Terms Used

Study skills. In this paper the definition given to study skills is that used by Nila B. Smith in which she said, "Study skills in reading may be broadly defined as skills used when there is intention of doing something with the content read", (1, p. 307).

Locating information. Locating information is defined as including the skills of using parts of the textbook, using reference sources (dictionaries, encyclopedias, atlases,

almanacs), and using the card catalog and any other aids available in the school library.

Selecting information. In this paper selecting information means being able to ascertain through titles, introductions and summaries, or through the art of skimming whether a selection will be of any value in answering a particular problem.

Organizing information. Organizing information means the skills of putting words or ideas into categories, finding main ideas of sentences and paragraphs, arranging in correct sequence, writing simple summaries, and making simple outlines.

## REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Although much has been written about the question of teaching reading skills in social studies class as well as from the basal reader, not many new ideas have been presented. As one author says:

In recent years we have seen much ferment, change, and experimentation in reading instruction. However, over the past twenty-five years, the professional literature relating to reading-study skills has not reflected much change or innovation. There has been a noticeable lack of breaking new ground, both in evolving new concepts and in improved procedures for teaching, (2, p. 419).

### What Research Says

Social studies has been one of the last subjects of the curriculum of our school systems to undergo any scrutiny with regard to change. Only within the last thirty years have educators begun to realize the need for teaching reading skills in subject areas other than the reading period itself (3). It was assumed that, once learned, reading ability could be used in any situation where reading was required.

Even in fairly recent studies some educators have contended that the fault for the lack of ability to read in the social studies lay in the textbook. Lay (4) stated that recent studies showed that most social studies texts are beyond the comprehension of many students. Since there may be a

span of as much as six grade levels in an average fifth grade class this might very well be true.

Authorities and educators alike agree that a child undoubtedly must have a strong foundation of basic reading skills in order to become competent in reading in the content areas.

Fay agreed with this when he said:

Evidence is clear both from research and the experience of countless teachers that after the primary grades it becomes increasingly more difficult to be "poor" in reading and "good" in the content areas, (5).

However, even if the reading scores of a group show them to be very capable of reading in the basal reader it does not necessarily follow that they will score high on a social studies reading test. Bond and Tinker have found that "correlations between reading tests and reading tests in the content areas range from about .30 to .50", (6, p. 352).

As more research has been conducted most authorities have become more and more aware that reading in one area may differ so greatly from that in another area that a student may be competent in reading materials in one area and not in another. In another article, Fay (7) stated that one of the first ways of improving reading in any content area is to build up the specific skills related to that particular subject area.

Another authority has made the following statement:

Studies show that, other things being equal, groups given reading guidance in a curricular area show greater subject-matter attainments than groups for whom no training is provided, (8, p. 208).

Nila B. Smith has cited many early research projects which prove that there are definitely differences in the skills needed in various content areas and the conclusion she reached from these studies was:

The results of these studies seem to indicate rather clearly that there are unique differences in skills used in different subject matter fields; and that while "general reading ability" is operative in all reading to a certain extent, there is also definite need for the development of specific skills to use in different curricular areas, (1, p. 309).

From the research that has been carried out it would seem that there are skills peculiar to the social studies and that students given special training in these skills may show far greater progress than a group which is not given this training.

#### Teachers' Attitudes

The idea that various skills needed in the social studies area should be taught with social studies material rather than out of context in basal reader material is being stressed more and more by educators.

However, in an introduction to his column in the Reading Teacher, Nemeth said that he feels many teachers have accepted the idea of teaching reading skills in content areas

but do not practice it, (9, p. 291).

When teachers were approached with questions regarding whether "every teacher is a reading teacher" and whether the final ability of a student is the result of the teaching or lack of teaching reading in all areas, Witty (10, p. 562) found feelings from total acceptance to full rejection of the idea.

Another writer (11) also found that teachers have conflicting points of view regarding the integration of reading with content subjects. One group thought of the subjects as a series of little niches with reading as one. Another group felt that reading should be taught as quickly as possible in the lower grades in order that children might "study" in the upper grades. Still others held the point of view that the study skills differ in various content fields and should be taught with material from each specific area.

Whipple (8) found that many teachers felt that all reading training should be given early. They argued that they did not have time to teach reading skills in the social studies period. Others argued just as strongly that reading belongs in the entire school day since reading skills can best be developed where they are most commonly used.

It would seem that the attitude of teachers today varies from that of the social studies teacher of a generation ago who thought a child dull or lazy if he did not

achieve in that field to that of the more modern theory that his underachievement might well be from the very nature of the content matter and the child's lack of guidance in interpreting it.

### Why Teach Skills in Social Studies?

One reading authority said that the "basal reader only lays the foundation for good reading and the content areas extend and refine its efficiency", (10, p. 562).

The reading material in social studies is a very different type writing from that in a basal reader. There are many of the study skills which are not used anywhere in the curriculum except in the social studies area so these must be carefully taught with that subject.

The use of reference materials is an important skill which is not taught thoroughly enough or not at all in the basal readers. The social studies area offers an ideal situation for presenting this skill to children of the elementary grades.

Diagram materials such as maps and graphs are rarely, if ever, found in basal readers. If a child is not taught to "read" these in social studies class, he will probably ignore them completely as they will be meaningless to him.

The reading in social studies is some of the most difficult a child is asked to do. Those who write for social

studies textbooks are trained researchers and their writing, simplified though it may be, is research type writing and not the type to which children are accustomed (12).

Social studies has its own characteristics (13). The writers use varied patterns of writing and varied patterns of organization. The topic sentence may be found at various locations within a paragraph or it may be only implied. The student must be able to grasp many details from one paragraph; many facts are crammed into a few words. He must be able to turn from the text to a map, graph, or picture and use that to gain more knowledge. He must understand or know where to find the meanings for the specialized vocabulary terms used in social studies material.

Basal reader stories, on the other hand, are usually concerned with an animal, one or two main characters, or a family. These stories have a definite plot and an interesting climax. The reader is able to read on smoothly and happily with an unbroken flow of interest. If he misses a word or two as he reads, in all probability it will not detract too much from the general idea of the story.

Social studies does not provide this type of interest. The content is a collection of impersonal facts which may even be uninteresting and unappealing to children. Many times it contains references to some subject about which the student knows nothing. It is informational type material

with no plot, no actual beginning or end, with people brought into the story in an incidental manner.

"The main reason for expecting teachers to give reading instruction in the content subjects is that each subject calls for its own particular combination of reading skills", (14, p. 140).

In this era of the "explosion of knowledge" no teacher should leave a student with the impression that his text can possibly give him all the information there is about any subject. No one book nor any one head can contain all the information available today. The facts of today may not be true tomorrow. Therefore, there should certainly be increased emphasis upon the skills of locating and evaluating information. Pupils should be required to memorize less facts and taught more about how to find needed information.

Many writers feel that the teaching of skills which was at one time of secondary importance may well be the most important part of the social studies education of today.

Social studies should play a big part in helping young people live in this world of great change. Becker said that many educators expect the social studies to "play a major role in the development of knowledge among free men", (15, p. 317).

Studies have proved that much improvement can be made in a skill when concentrated instruction is given in that

skill even for a short period (16).

Perhaps O'Conner gave one of the most logical reasons for teaching reading study-skills in the social studies area when he said that the "good" teaching of content cannot be separated from the teaching of skills--that the two must be fused (17).

### What Skills Should be Taught?

Since most authorities agree that the teaching of skills has a definite place in the social studies program, the next question to be answered is, "What skills should be taught?"

One answer that several reading authorities have given to this question is that a desirable division would be for the skills which are needed in all reading to be taught in basic reading class and that the application of these skills and any special skills be taught in the social studies area.

All reading authorities agree that social studies has a specialized vocabulary which must be taught. They agree that the understanding of time and chronology belongs in the social studies program. They also agree that the skill of reading charts and graphs and interpreting maps must be taught by the social studies teacher.

Most writers believe that special skills must be taught in order for most students to comprehend the special

type of writing found in most social studies textbooks. They stress locational and evaluative skills, organizational skills, and group-work skills (cooperation). Some writers call these the skills of inquiry, methods of discovery, and self-directed learning.

Many writers suggest that instructors are obligated not only to teach the skills, but also should teach the students when to use the skills.

#### How to Teach Needed Skills

Newton (14) suggested that there are two ways commonly used to help pupils understand the reading study-skills needed in the social studies area. One way is to give suggestions and teach study-skills at the beginning of the course. The other, and better, procedure is to take up the skills as they are needed.

Most authorities who believe that the social studies teacher should be a reading teacher also feel that such instruction should not be incidental. Growth in skills will not take place unless specific provisions are a planned part of the daily lesson. These skills should be taught from the social studies lesson rather than out of context. They should also be practiced whenever the opportunity arises to extend the skill.

Diagnostic tests should be given to find out what the

child is capable of doing. If standardized tests are not available, teacher-made tests may be used. Wheeler (12) suggests that the teacher should also check these three things: intelligence, reading test scores, and grades to see if the student applies himself.

This "finding out" period may seem to take quite some time but is well worth the effort because, once the teacher knows what skills the pupil lacks, she will be able to anticipate the skills she will need to teach in order to make a lesson meaningful.

The teacher should give specific instructions in a skill and carefully supervise the child's first attempts to use the skill so poor habits will not be developed. The success of such a lesson depends on the teacher's ability to motivate the pupils' desire for learning and using the skill. Improvement must be desired. After presenting the lesson and giving the children a chance for supervised practice, the teacher should test and evaluate to see if the lesson was effective. The child's work should be evaluated at once so that he may know whether he has succeeded or failed. It may be necessary to present the lesson again or give individual help to those who did not succeed.

Although the teaching of skills should follow a logical sequence through various levels of complexity, more than one skill may be taught at one time since some skills seem

to belong together. The program should also be kept flexible to allow skills to be taught as they are needed.

The teacher should constantly test and evaluate the pupils' progress and her own teaching. Fay stated that the final conclusion to be drawn from research is that "improvements can best be made when the teacher attempts to increase his own effectiveness through experimentation", (7, p. 70).

## PROCEDURE AND METHOD OF ANALYSIS

This action research study was carried out in a self-contained fifth grade classroom. Since this was the only fifth grade in the building, any pupil enrolling in the fifth grade was admitted to this group. Therefore, there was no control over the sampling used in the study.

The students were given an SRA Mental Abilities Test early in the fall of 1968. On that test the IQ range was from 89 to 126 with a group median of 106.

The school is in one of the more stable residential areas and of the thirty-two students who started the study in the fall, twenty-nine (fifteen girls and fourteen boys) were still there in the spring. Three of the children had repeated a grade and were twelve years of age in the fall. One boy was considerably younger than others of the group since he had his tenth birthday in December. Of the others, twelve had their eleventh birthday this spring and nine of them will be eleven this summer.

Most of the students were from homes of average income, and the parents were eager to cooperate with the school in every way. Only ten of the parents had attended college, but all but five families expressed their desire to send their children.

The group had been given SRA Achievement Tests in the

early part of the fourth grade. On that test their reading scores averaged 4.1--right at grade level, but the social studies test average was 3.1--a grade level low.

In the fall of 1968 in the fifth grade the group was given a teacher-made diagnostic test (see Appendix) based on the study skills needed in the social studies area. The group mean for this test was 41.62 per cent. This test was closely followed by the fall diagnostic test which is published three times yearly by Scholastic Magazine. These tests are divided into two sections: reading and work-study skills. The reading section tests comprehension, vocabulary, and finding main ideas. The work-study skills tested are reading maps, tables, and graphs and the use of various sources of information. On this test the group mean was 21.93 out of 30 possible points on the work-study skills section and 26.03 out of 32 possible points on the reading section (see Table I). These tests are not standardized but the teacher's manual contains a table which shows an approximate comparison with standardized tests. Compared with the table the group was below fifth grade level in the work-study area and above in reading.

Since the purpose of this study was to improve the individual's study skills, it was felt that the pupils would participate much more willingly if they could see a need for the work. The corrected tests were returned to the pupils,

they were encouraged to discuss the results, and the plan for the year's work was explained. The skills chosen to be studied were selected by teacher judgement from those areas in which the most errors were made.

TABLE I

## PRE-TESTING RESULTS

Scholastic Magazine Test

|                         | Group Mean | Possible Score |
|-------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Reading                 | 26.03      | 32             |
| Comprehension           |            |                |
| Literal                 | 7.5        | 8              |
| Reasoning               | 6.6        | 8              |
| Vocabulary              | 6.7        | 8              |
| Finding Main Idea*      | 5.2        | 8              |
| Work-Study Skills       | 21.93      | 30             |
| Map Reading*            | 6.4        | 10             |
| Reading a Table         | 4.5        | 5              |
| Sources of Information* | 6.4        | 10             |
| Graph Reading*          | 3.5        | 5              |

\*Selected for study

## LESSON LIST\*

| SKILL                       | DATE        |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| MAPS                        | October 7   |
| Reading a "Story" from Maps |             |
| Learning Directions         |             |
| Locating Waterways          |             |
| Reading Special Maps        |             |
| Scale of Miles              |             |
| Latitude and Longitude      |             |
| GRAPHS                      | October 28  |
| Circle                      |             |
| Bar                         |             |
| SOURCES OF INFORMATION      | October 21  |
| Using Parts of a Book       |             |
| Choosing Key Words          |             |
| Encyclopedias               |             |
| SELECTING INFORMATION       | November 11 |
| ORGANIZING INFORMATION      | December 9  |
| Categories                  |             |
| Main Ideas                  |             |
| Outlining                   |             |

\*Sample lessons can be found in the Appendix

The work was started with map instruction, partly because this seemed to interest the pupils the most, but also because it was felt that greater improvement might be achieved more quickly in this area and thus prove an incentive to future work. The group did some map work during social studies period every day for three weeks. The lessons usually started as directed group work, but a pupil could try to do the work individually whenever he felt that he was ready. Evaluating was done often, not only as a means of measurement, but also to find those who needed individual help.

Some study of circle graphs had been included in the study of maps because the textbook placed a percentage circle graph beside each population, agriculture, or manufacturing map. For that reason the study of graphs was begun with more work on circle graphs. Most of the time was spent in making and learning to interpret bar graphs which are the ones found most often in fifth grade books. The social studies text used by the class had no line graphs in it and very few were found in the reference material available to the group so little time was given to the study of those.

The majority of the students had never learned to survey a graph before trying to read it. They had to learn that they must read the title and the symbols, decide what was being presented and what scale was being used. To give

practice in those skills, the pupils worked in teams and prepared graphs to be used on the overhead projector. A member of the team was responsible for interpreting the graph to the others. As in map work, testing was done often to find those needing more help.

Although the maps and graphs which were used were from the social studies book or concerned with some phase of school work, they were presented out of context as far as the time element was concerned. This was done to give a block of work with daily practice over a period of time. All other skills were presented in context with whatever the lesson for the day was.

While maps and graphs were being studied, daily reading assignments were also given from the social studies text. Learning to use the parts of the textbook was taught and encouraged by the way assignments were given. Page numbers were not given, but such questions as "On what page do you find . . .?" or "In which chapter might you find . . .?" were used. The pupils were told the name of the map or graph to be used and they found it by using the list of maps or graphs in their book. Special lessons were also given on each section of the book, finding key words in questions, and in the use of the encyclopedia. Almanacs and atlases were kept in the room where they were readily available to any child for use or just for browsing. It soon became apparent that much

more success was gained with the slower pupils if they were allowed to examine resource materials such as almanacs and make their own discoveries as they became interested.

As the students worked on locating information it was easy for them to understand that they saved much time and effort by being selective of their material. They found that skimming the introduction, the summary, or even the main part of an article often saved them from reading an entire article and still not finding the information for which they were searching.

After the study of maps and graphs was completed, daily lessons on the organization of materials were added to those of locating information. The first lessons were very simple ones of putting words and ideas into categories or arranging items in the correct sequence. As the lessons progressed into the more complicated task of finding main ideas, it soon could be seen that the majority of the children could not distinguish between main ideas and details in most social studies work. A great deal of oral work was done. Special attention was given to this study skill because it was felt that finding a main idea is the basis for understanding what is read, for outlining, and for writing summaries. As the students became more able to find main ideas and distinguish the main idea from details, it was easy to put these into a simple outline form.

In January the students were divided into groups and a complete unit was studied as a research project. The slower students were put into groups where they could receive help from the more knowledgeable students. Those students were also encouraged to find information from the textbook while others used encyclopedias and other resource books. The results of each group's work was then summarized or put into outline form and presented to the other students. By the time this unit had been completed each member of the class was able to achieve at least some success with resource type work. In the following unit each individual was assigned his own research project according to his ability.

## SUMMARY, RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Summary

Statement of the problem. Children of fifth grade do not seem able to adapt reading skills taught from a basal reader to other content areas such as social studies.

Procedures. Early in the fall of 1968 the twenty-nine pupils of the fifth grade class used in this study were given a teacher-made diagnostic test based on their social studies text and also the fall issue of a diagnostic test sent by the Scholastic Magazine. For this study it was decided to give special emphasis to those areas in which the most errors were made: reading maps and graphs, locating information, selecting information, and organizing materials. Lesson plans were made for each of the study skill areas chosen. The lessons progressed from very simple to the more complex and short tests were given often to determine the need for more work in a given area. In early March a second teacher-made diagnostic test was given. This test was very similar to the first one given in the fall, but it covered different material. The spring Scholastic Magazine test was given in April after formal instruction in skills was over.

Brief summary of the report. On the first teacher-made diagnostic test the group mean was 41.62 per cent correct. On the fall Scholastic Magazine test the group mean

was 21.93 out of 30 points in the work-study skills section and 26.03 out of 32 possible points in the reading section of the test. While these tests are not standardized, Scholastic does include a table which shows a comparison with standardized tests. According to that table the group was below fifth grade level in study skills and above in reading.

When the second teacher-made diagnostic test was given in the spring, the group mean rose to 87.75 per cent. The group mean for the spring Scholastic Magazine test was 26.2 out of 30 points in study skills and 26.1 out of 32 points in the reading section.

Not only did the group show a gain on the tests, but there seemed to be a change in the attitude of the pupils. Most of them can now approach new lessons in social studies with more ease and self-confidence.

### Results

In January the second diagnostic test from Scholastic Magazine was given. With few exceptions the pupils showed a definite gain in the work-study skills. Those exceptions were a few who had been very high on the first test and three who had been ill and had just returned to school on the day the test was given. On this test the mean for the work-study skills test was 24.5 out of 30 points and for the reading test was 26.16 out of 32 points. Early in March a second

teacher-made diagnostic test was given. This test was very similar to the one given in the fall but was based on different units of the book (see Appendix). The group mean on this test was 87.75.

The third diagnostic test from Scholastic Magazine was given in April. By then the daily directed lessons on skills were completed. On that test the students showed still greater gain. The group mean for the work-study skills test was 26.2 out of 30 possible points and 26.1 out of 32 possible on the reading test (see Table II).

The results of the testing showed that, on the teacher-made diagnostic tests, the mean rose from 41.62 per cent correct on the first test to 87.75 per cent on the post-test. The largest individual gain was 61 per cent; the group gain was 46.13 per cent. The mean on the Scholastic Magazine test in the work-study skills rose from 21.93 points out of a possible 30 on the pre-test to 26.2 on the post-test given in April. The group gain on that test was 4.27 and the highest individual gain was 13 points.

Every effort was made to have the testing results of as much value as possible even though standard tests were not used. All tests were given on the same day of the week and at the same time of day. Only scores of those students who were in the group at the beginning of the study and also at the end were used when means were figured.

TABLE II  
APRIL POST-TESTING RESULTS

Scholastic Magazine Test

|                         | Group Mean | Possible Score |
|-------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Reading                 | 26.1       | 32             |
| Comprehension           |            |                |
| Literal                 | 7.0        | 8              |
| Reasoning               | 6.1        | 8              |
| Vocabulary              | 6.5        | 8              |
| Finding Main Idea*      | 6.6        | 8              |
| Work-Study Skills       | 26.2       | 30             |
| Map Reading*            | 8.7        | 10             |
| Reading a Table         | 4.6        | 5              |
| Sources of Information* | 8.5        | 10             |
| Graph Reading*          | 4.4        | 5              |

\*Skills used in the study

Conclusions

Since this action research project was carried out in a single classroom and standard tests were not used, the results can scarcely be considered of value from a scientific point of view. However, it appears that a student can gain a great deal in his ability to apply study-skills if such skills are taught from the social studies text as well as from the basal reader.

Not only was there a gain in the ability to use the skills, but there seemed to be a change in the attitude of the students toward the skills. They seem to be able to see more need for these skills when the skills are taught from social studies material. The pupils approached these lessons with the idea that they were learning something that will help them in higher grades. Most of the students are now able to attack new work with much more ease and self-confidence.

It would seem that time given to teaching the study-skills needed in social studies is time well spent. Not only are the pupils able to use the problem approach to learning much more gainfully in the intermediate grades, but they are also being prepared for the era in which we live when it is necessary to be able to use these skills in order to keep up with the "explosion of learning".

#### Recommendations

Social studies is a field in which innovations appear to be sadly lacking in actual practice. It would seem that educators could greatly improve the teaching of social studies by carrying out studies of this nature under more controlled conditions. It might also prove of more value if such a study could be carried out over a longer period of time with a definite plan for scope and sequence covering

three or four years. Skills are a definite need in the social studies area and, until the teaching of these skills becomes a definite planned part of the curriculum rather than a whim of each individual teacher, not much gain can be made in the use of these skills.

## REFERENCES

1. Smith, Nila B., Reading Instruction for Today's Children. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963.
2. Heilman, Arthur, "Teaching the Reading Skills" in New Perspectives in Reading Instruction: A Book of Readings, Albert J. Mazurkiewicz, (ed.). New York: Pitman Education Series, 1964.
3. Smith, Nila B., "Patterns of Writing in Different Subject Areas," Journal of Reading, 8:31-37, October, 1964.
4. Lay, Edward, "How Readable Are Your Textbooks?" Ohio Schools, 45:32-33, March, 1967.
5. Fay, Leo C., "Responsibility For and Methods of Promoting Growth in Reading in Content Areas," Scholastic Magazine, 1:89, December, 1959.
6. Bond, Guy and Miles Tinker, Reading Difficulties, Their Diagnosis and Correction. New York: Appleton-Century-Croft, Inc., 1957.
7. Fay, Leo C., "What Research Has to Say About Reading in the Content Areas," Reading Teacher, 8:68-72, December, 1954.
8. Whipple, Gertrude, "Controversial Issues Relating to Reading in the Curricular Areas," Reading Teacher, 8: 208-11, April, 1955.
9. Nemeth, Joseph, "In Other Magazines," Reading Teacher, 21:291-293, December, 1967.
10. Witty, Paul, "Role of Reading in the Social Studies," Elementary English, 39:562-569, October, 1962.
11. Heilman, Arthur W., Principles and Practices of Teaching Reading. Columbus, Ohio: Charles Merrill Books, Inc., 1961.
12. Wheeler, Arville, "Reading in the Content Fields," The Teaching of Reading, Section IV of 6 Sections, New London, Connecticut: Arthur C. Croft Publications, 1959.

13. Dawson, Mildred and Henry Samman, Fundamentals of Basic Reading Instruction. New York: David McKay Co., 1963.
14. Newton, J. Roy, Reading in Your School. New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., Inc., 1960.
15. Becker, James M., "Emerging Trends in the Social Studies," Educational Leadership, 22:317-322, February, 1965.
16. Hunkins, Francis and Phyllis Shapiro, "Teaching Critical Thinking in Elementary Social Studies," Education, 88: 68-72, September, 1967.
17. O'Conner, J. R., "Reading Skills in the Social Studies," Social Education, 31:104-107, February, 1967.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Books

- Berg, Harry D., (ed.). Evaluation in Social Studies. Washington, D. C.: National Council for the Social Studies, 1965.
- Bond, Guy and Miles Tinker. Reading Difficulties, Their Diagnosis and Correction. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1957.
- Carpenter, Helen McCracken (ed.). Skill Development in Social Studies, Thirty-third Yearbook. Washington, D. C.: National Council for the Social Studies, 1963.
- Dawson, Mildred and Henry Bamman. Fundamentals of Basic Reading Instruction. New York: David McKay Co., 1963.
- Dechant, Emerald V. Improving the Teaching of Reading. Englewood-Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964.
- Fay, Leo C., Thomas Horn, and Constance McCullough. Improving Reading in the Elementary Social Studies. Bulletin No. 33. Washington, D. C.: National Council for the Social Studies, 1961.
- Harris, Albert J. Effective Teaching of Reading. New York: David McKay Co., 1962.
- Heilman, Arthur W. Principles and Practices of Teaching Reading. Columbus, Ohio: Charles Merrill Books, Inc., 1961.
- Jarolimek, John. Social Studies in Elementary Education. New York: MacMillan Co., 1960.
- Moffatt, Maurice P. Social Studies Instruction. Englewood-Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1954.
- Newton, J. Roy. Reading in Your School. New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., Inc., 1960.
- Preston, Ralph C. Teaching Social Studies in the Elementary Schools. New York: Rinehart and Co., Inc., 1958.

Schick, George B., and Bernard Schmidt. A Guidebook for the Teaching of Reading. Chicago: Psychotechnics Press, 1966.

Smith, Nila B. Reading Instruction for Today's Children. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963.

#### Books: Parts of Series

Smith, James A. Creative Teaching of the Social Studies in the Elementary School. Book V of a Series of 7. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1967.

Wheeler, Arville. "Reading in the Content Fields, Section IV of 6 Sections," The Teaching of Reading. New London, Connecticut: Arthur C. Croft Publications, 1959.

#### Periodicals

Becker, James M. "Emerging Trends in the Social Studies," Educational Leadership. 22:317-322, February, 1965.

Fay, Leo C. "What Research Has to Say About Reading in the Content Areas," Reading Teacher. 8:68-72, December, 1954.

Fay, Leo C. "Responsibility For and Methods of Promoting Growth in Reading in Content Areas," Scholastic Magazine. 1:89, December, 1959.

Hunkins, Francis. "Skill Building in the Social Studies," Education. 88:122-125, November, 1967.

Hunkins, Francis and Phyllis Shapiro. "Teaching Critical Thinking in Elementary Social Studies," Education. 88:68-72, September, 1967.

Inbody, Donald. "Maps and Globes: A Story of the Earth," Elementary School Journal. 60:270-273, February, 1960.

Lay, Edward. "How Readable Are Your Textbooks?" Ohio Schools. 45:32-33, March, 1967.

- Lohmann, Victor. "How Shall We Develop the Reading Abilities Demanded of the Content Areas?" Reading Teacher. 8:78-81, December, 1954.
- Nemeth, Joseph. "In Other Magazines," Reading Teacher. 21:291-293, December, 1967.
- Schell, Leo M. "Informal Reading Skills Inventories," Education. 89:117-120, November-December, 1968.
- Smith, Nila B. "Teaching Study Skills in Reading," Elementary School Journal. 60:158-162, December, 1959.
- Smith, Nila B. "Patterns of Writing in Different Subject Areas," Journal of Reading. 8:31-37, October, 1964; 8:97-102, November, 1964.
- Witty, Paul. "Role of Reading in the Social Studies," Elementary English. 39:562-569, October, 1962.
- Whipple, Gertrude. "Controversial Issues Relating to Reading in the Curricular Areas," Reading Teacher. 8:208-211, April, 1955.
- Young, William E. "Reading in the Social Studies of Elementary Schools," Social Education. 17:111-114, March, 1953.

## APPENDIX

SOCIAL STUDIES: DIAGNOSTIC TEST\*  
(1st Semester)

Parts of the Book:

1. a) How would you quickly find a map which shows the sections of the United States?  
b) Where is such a map?
2. a) On which page does Chapter 15 begin?  
b) What is the title of the unit that chapter is in?
3. How will the introduction to Unit II on pages 45-46 help you?
4. a) On page 17 what vocabulary words will need special attention?  
b) How can you tell?
5. How can the questions on page 21 and "Things to Do" on page 22 help you?
6. On what page or pages will you find out about coal mining?

Resources:

7. In the library what would you use to help you find the book Mennonite Martha?
8. If you want to learn several details about Thomas Jefferson's life, would you look in an encyclopedia or find a biography of his life?
9. a) Name a set of encyclopedias.  
b) How are topics arranged in an encyclopedia?

Use of Maps and Graphs:

10. What does the map on page 187 show?

---

\*Unless otherwise stated the lessons and tests given in this paper were teacher-made and based on material in the text In These United States and Canada. Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1965.

11. In the map on page 328, what does the light green represent?
12. Turn to the graph on page 364. What food do Americans eat the least of in a year?
13. Look at the picture on page 52. These old Pueblo dwellings were like that modern buildings?

Vocabulary:

14. Read page 406.
  - a) Define the word evaporates.
  - b) What does water cycle mean?
  - c) What is a pore?

Main Ideas:

15. Read pages 11-13, "America's Ups and Downs".
  - a) What is the main idea of the paragraph that starts "The kind of slope . . .?"
  - b) What does the group of paragraphs tell that start "As the name . . .?"
  - c) In one short sentence tell what the group of paragraphs are talking about that start "Land that is called . . .".

Details:

16. Read the same pages again if necessary; then answer these questions.
  - a) How are mountains made to seem real on the map on page 12?
  - b) What kind of flatland is low?
  - c) Where is North America's largest river basin?

Drawing Conclusions:

17. Read pages 24 and 25.
  - a) Why do you think many people left the Old World?
  - b) Why did they choose the U. S. to live in?
  - c) Why do you think the children of France gave money to help build the Statue of Liberty?
  - d) If you were going to outline what you just read, what would your first topic be?

SOCIAL STUDIES: DIAGNOSTIC TEST  
(2nd Semester)

Parts of the Book:

1. a) On what page do you find a map of Canada?  
b) On what page do you find a graph which shows the national origin of Canada's population?
2. a) On what page does Chapter 17 begin?  
b) What is the name of the unit of which it is a part?
3. How would you get a quick overview of what Unit VII is about?
4. List the words that need special attention on page 447.
5. How will the work on page 477 help you?
6. On what pages do you find information on the Erie Canal?

Resources:

7. You want to find the book On the Banks of Plum Creek by Laura Wilder. What are two ways it may be listed in the card catalog?
8. Which should give a more accurate account of a person's life--a biography or an autobiography? Why?
9. Could you find the population of a city more quickly in an encyclopedia or in an almanac?

Use of Maps and Graphs:

10. What is the map on page 453 showing?
11. Look at the graph on page 468. Which two of Alaska's important businesses bring the state about the same amount of money?
12. Look at the precipitation map on page 496. The Eastern part of Canada gets about \_\_\_\_\_ inches of rain each year.

13. On page 501 find the map marked 1650. Why is it so different from maps of today?

Vocabulary:

14. On page 446 find the word wheat-fallow. Use the context to find a definition for the word.
15. What is a geyser? See page 425.
16. On page 406 find a sentence that helps you understand the meaning of helium.

Main Ideas:

17. Read the paragraphs under the heading "Great Salt Lake" on page 423. What is the main idea of the first four paragraphs.
18. Read page 398. What is the main idea of the paragraphs on that page?

Details:

19. Look on page 454. How did redwoods get their name?
20. Read page 457 and tell why automobile factories are putting plants on the west coast.
21. Read the section called "Manufacturing and Building" on page 471. Where is the most raw sugar refined?

Drawing Conclusions:

22. Read page 451 about "Seattle". Can you give three reasons for people moving there?
23. Read the "Forty-Ninth State" on page 467. Why do you think that people thought Alaska would never become a state?
24. Look on page 480. What is meant by Anglo-American?
25. Read about Chicago on pages 360-361 and in one word tell what has made that city grow.

## . INTERPRETING MAPS

### Concepts to be Developed:

Physical maps show natural features of land.

Political maps show man-made features.

The two kinds are often combined.

There are special maps such as precipitation, temperature, population, agriculture, resource, and manufacturing.

Learn standard map symbols, but also learn to study the key before reading a map.

Learn directions. Try to eliminate the use of "up" for north and "down" for south. Look for a marking to determine north.

Learn that the earth is thought of in terms of hemispheres.

Latitude and longitude lines are the imaginary "streets" of the world. They are used for determining location, time zones (longitude), and temperature zones (latitude).

Latitude lines are parallel to the equator which is zero degrees and they are spoken of as north or south (of the equator).

The prime meridian is the zero degree longitude line and longitude is spoken of as east or west (of the prime meridian).

## MAPS

- A. Reading a "story" from maps. Use a wall map of the world and page A2 and A3 in the text.
1. What continents will have some areas of hot weather all year? How can you tell?
  2. Which continent is farthest south of the equator?
  3. Which continents are entirely in the northern hemisphere?
  4. Which continents are referred to as the western hemisphere?
  5. Are the largest mountains of the North American continent in the east or west?
  6. Are the large mountains on the same side of the South American continent?
  7. Which continent has no mountains shown?
  8. Which has more mountains--Africa or Eurasia?
  9. What mountains are in the eastern part of the United States?
  10. What continents will have some of the coldest weather during part of the year? Why?
  11. Why is Antarctica often white on maps?
  12. Does most of the earth appear to be land or water?
- B. Use of Directions. Use the map on pages VIII and IX in the text and a wall map of the United States.
1. You are in Kansas. If you go straight north, you will be in what state?
  2. If you go east, what state will you be in?
  3. If you could go straight west to an ocean, what states would you cross?

4. If you went straight south to a large body of water, what states will you cross?
  5. You are in Alabama. The state north of you is \_\_\_\_\_; east is \_\_\_\_\_.
  6. The Mississippi River forms the \_\_\_\_\_ border of Tennessee.
  7. Our neighbor to the north of the United States is \_\_\_\_\_.
  8. Our neighbor to the south is \_\_\_\_\_.
- C. Locating Waterways. Use same maps as above.
1. Find three large seaport cities on the east coast.
  2. Find three on the west coast.
  3. Find a seaport city on the Gulf of Mexico.
  4. What large river flows from north to south in the United States?
  5. Into what body of water does its water drain?
  6. What river forms the boundary between Texas and Mexico?
  7. What bodies of water form part of the boundary between the United States and Canada?
  8. What large lake is in one of the western states?
- D. Special Maps. Pages 15, 269, 303, 343, 387, 422, and 476.
1. Most of Kansas receives an annual precipitation of \_\_\_\_\_ inches.
  2. The heaviest rainfall in the western states is in \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. The average temperature is given for the month of \_\_\_\_\_.
  4. What can rainfall and temperature maps tell you about possible agriculture products?

5. On the population map in our books each dot represents \_\_\_\_\_ people.
6. Compare the population maps. Which group of states has the most people? Which seems to have the fewest?
7. Look at all the agriculture maps for the groups of states. Do they use the same pictures on each map to represent the same product? Compare these with other agriculture maps. Do all books use the same key?
8. Compare the precipitation map and the agriculture map. Can you see any pattern between rainfall and the crops each area grows?
9. What color shows a manufacturing area on the maps in your book? Will all books use this same color?
10. How are major manufacturing areas marked on the maps?
11. Could a resource or agriculture map help you know what kind of factories might be in that area?
12. Why are some called resource and some called mining maps? Could they all have been called resource maps? Could they all have been called mining maps?

#### E. Scale of Miles.

1. Look at the map on page 352. On the scale of miles you see that one inch is equal to how many miles?
2. Use that scale of miles to see how far it is across Kansas from east to west? From north to south?
3. If the scale of miles said one inch equals seventy-five miles, would the map have to be larger or smaller? Make a map of Kansas on which the scale is seventy-five miles to one inch.
4. Draw a map of Kansas on which the scale of miles is 300 miles to one inch.

5. Turn to the map on pages VIII and IX.

"Where am I if I'm . . ."

- a) 50 miles north of Gary, Indiana?
- b) 175 miles southeast of Miami, Florida?
- c) 40 miles north of Cleveland, Ohio?
- d) 130 miles southwest of Topeka?
- e) 120 miles west of Portland, Oregon?
- f) 175 miles north of Seattle, Washington?

F. Latitude and Longitude.

1. "Am I on land or water if I'm . . ."

- a) 40 degrees north latitude, 100 degrees west longitude?
- b) 0 degrees latitude, 80 degrees west longitude?
- c) 20 degrees south latitude, 0 degrees longitude?
- d) 20 degrees south latitude, 120 degrees east longitude?
- e) 40 degrees south latitude, 60 degrees west longitude?
- f) 0 degrees latitude, 0 degrees longitude?
- g) 60 degrees north latitude, 80 degrees east longitude?
- h) 40 degrees north latitude, 100 degrees west longitude?

## GRAPHS

## Steps in Graph Reading

1. Read what the graph is about.
2. Decide what is being compared.
3. Interpret the legend; in a bar graph what is on the vertical and horizontal axis?
4. Identify the scale of measure.
5. Draw your conclusions.

## Circle Graphs:

Circle graphs show the relation of parts to a whole.

1. Study the circle graphs given with each population, agriculture, and manufacturing map in the text.
2. Add the percentages to see all together they total 100 per cent.
3. Study other circle graphs from the overhead projector.
4. Make circle graphs.
  - a) How you spend the 24 hours in a day.
  - b) How much time of each school day is spent in various activities.

## Bar Graphs:

Bar graphs show comparisons.

1. Study bar graphs in the book.
2. Use bar graphs on the overhead projector.
3. Make bar graphs.
  - a) Tickets sold by each class for Fun Night
  - b) Birthdays in each month
  - c) Double bar to compare boys and girls in each room

## PARTS OF THE BOOK

**Purpose:** To gain some idea of the use of various parts of the book. To learn how to use the parts of a textbook to locate desired information quickly.

While the subjects of books differ, certain parts of all books are the same. Almost all text books have basic parts in common. Most often they begin with a flyleaf, a half-title page, a frontispiece, the title page, a preface, the table of contents, an introduction, and possibly a list of maps, graphs, or other illustrations. Following the body or text of the book are reference materials such as an appendix, a bibliography, a glossary, notes, and an index.

The flyleaves. These are pages found just inside the front and back covers of the book. They are usually of heavier paper and are there for protection to the pages of print. These are usually blank, but they might contain a map or some illustration.

The half-title page. This is a page which comes just before the title page and is there to protect the title-page. It usually contains just the title of the book, but it may list the series and other titles of the series if the book is a part of a series.

The frontispiece. The frontispiece is usually found on the reverse side of the half-title page, facing the regular title page. It may bear an illustration.

The title page. The title page usually contains the following information: full title of the book, name of the author(s) and/or editor(s), name of the illustrator(s), edition of the book if it has been printed more than once, publisher and place of publication, and date of publication.

The preface. This contains information about the author and the book. It explains the purpose of the book and explains any special features of it.

The introduction. This part of the book describes the contents and tells how the author intends it to be read. Someone else may write this part of the book. It also may be a part of the first chapter rather than a separate part of the book.

The table of contents. The table of contents is a list of chapters of the book. It is an outline of all the subjects covered in the book. Sometimes it is divided into units (topics) and chapters (subtopics).

The list of maps or other illustrations. These lists might refer to maps, graphs, diagrams, or pictures. The list tells what the subject of each illustration is and on what page it is to be found.

The text. The text is the main part of the book, including all the subject matter and the illustrations.

Reference material. Reference material is located after the last page of the text. The appendix describes

materials which may be referred to but are not part of the text. A bibliography is a list of books. These may be books which the author consulted to write his book, and they may be books about the same subject which the author thinks are interesting to read. A glossary is something like a dictionary and includes only words used in the book which the author thinks may be difficult. The index lists all the topics covered in the text. It is arranged alphabetically and has page references so that topics can be located. It may contain cross references to help find related material.

Using Parts of the Book: (Use with the textbook)

1. On what page is the table of contents?
2. What does the table of contents tell you?
3. How many units does this book have?
4. How many chapters does it have?
5. Which units are about history?
6. Finish this sentence: The index is found on pages 552- \_\_\_\_.
7. How is an index arranged?
8. What key word (or words) would you look under if you wanted information about Bonneville or Grand Coulee Dams?
9. Which page of your book has a picture of Cape Kennedy?
10. Under the heading "War Between the States" you are told to look under another heading. What is it?
11. How many subtopics are listed under Southern States?

12. Are some of these also listed elsewhere as topics?
13. How do you pronounce San Joaquin?
14. Does your book have a diagram showing how sugar cane is made into raw sugar? If so, what page is it on?

#### Choosing Key Words:

Circle the word or words which you would look for in an index if you were trying to find an answer to these questions.

1. Why did the United States enter World War II?
2. Where is the largest active volcano located?
3. Who invented the first sewing machine?
4. Where is the most coffee grown?
5. What was the chief cause of the Civil War?
6. What is the bottom of the ocean like?
7. Is sugar made from anything other than sugar cane?
8. Are lightning and electricity related?
9. Which seals are most sought for their fur?
10. What did the early pioneers use in making soap?
11. From what materials do Indians usually weave baskets?
12. Is silk made anywhere except in China?
13. Did Henry Ford make the first automobile?
14. What causes tides in the ocean?

## ENCYCLOPEDIAS

This lesson is to be used with Compton's Pictured Encyclopedias.

1. Find the number and letter of your volume.
  - a) Have you seen sets of encyclopedias that do not have numbers on the volumes?
2. Each of these volumes has two parts: the text is the first and larger part; the index is just behind the thumb tab.
  - a) Do all encyclopedias have the index in each volume?
  - b) Where is another place you find the index?
3. The fact index found in each of these volumes may be used in several ways:
  - a) to obtain a small amount of information.
  - b) to locate a single item.
  - c) to locate all the information to be found in this and other volumes of the set.
4. These encyclopedias are also cross referenced in another way. Some articles say "see" and "see also".
  - a) Can you find an example of this in the volume you are looking at?
5. There are main entries and sub-entries in encyclopedias. The main entries are arranged in alphabetical order and the sub-entries are then arranged in alphabetical order under the main entry.
6. Encyclopedias have pictures and legends to help you.
  - a) What does legend mean in this sentence?
  - b) Find an interesting picture to show the group. Read the legend.
7. Encyclopedias have maps and graphs.
  - a) Find a map or graph to share with the group.
8. Many articles include a bibliography to help you find more books on your subject.

## SELECTING INFORMATION

Skim quickly through the two following paragraphs to see if one will give you the answer to the following question:

Why were the wheels of covered wagons extremely large?

In North America, many of the people who were going out West made the trip in covered wagons. The wagon box or body of these wagons was built of very strong wood. The floor sloped upward at both the front and back so that the load would not slide out when the wagon went up or down hill. The bottom was also curved something like a canoe, so that the wagon would float in water easily. The white canvas hood was held in place by six or eight wooden bows which made high arches over the wagon. Generally, the box was blue and the wheels were red.

The wheels of a covered wagon were almost as tall as a man and very strong. The rims were made six or eight inches wide so they would not sink into mud so easily. Many times the wagon had to cross a river with no bridge. Usually the water was shallow and the wheels were so high that the oxen or horses could pull the wagon on through. If the water was deep or swift, the animals had to swim and they and the wagon both might be swept downstream.

## ORGANIZING INFORMATION

## Categories:

Page 143 Find all the words that have anything to do with transportation.

Page 147 Read the next to the last paragraph. What word or synonym for that word do you see in each sentence?

Page 148 Find all the words pertaining to the Navy.

Page 153 List all the means of travel.

Page 154 Find all the words that name some aspect of nature.

Page 162 What did Americans buy in California?  
What did they sell?

Pages 165-168 List the ways the West was tied to the East.

Put the following ideas under one of the headings which are at the bottom of the page.

- A. He is protected by the governments under which he lives.
- B. He must defend his country.
- C. He has freedom.
- D. He should uphold the nation's laws.
- E. He must do his best to see that the country is well run.
- F. When he is old enough he helps other citizens govern his state and country.

Duties of a Citizen

Rights of a Citizen

Main Ideas:

Read the first part of the introduction to Chapter 8 on page 225.

- a) What word do you see repeated in nearly every sentence on this page?
- b) Since you see that word repeated so often, what would you call these paragraphs if you were to give them a title?
- c) When you see a word or synonym of the word repeated in nearly every sentence that is probably the main idea of that paragraph.

Read the first column on page 228. Use the graph at the bottom to help you.

Which of these is the best main idea for these paragraphs?

- a) The farmer of today has machines to help him.
- b) The farmer of today can grow more on an acre of land.
- c) Reasons why one farmer can grow enough to feed more people today.

Read the top of page 250.

Choose the one best main idea for all of those paragraphs.

- a) The United States is divided into groups of states because the states of each group are tied together in some way.
- b) The Mountain States are in the Rocky Mountains.
- c) The Northeast is divided into two sections.

Which of these is the best main idea for the material on pages 255 through 257?

- a) A glacier is a thick sheet of ice moving slowly.
- b) A glacier moving across the country made New England a "hard" land.
- c) The glacier formed and melted four times in a million years.

Outlining:

Read pages 228-231. Copy the Roman numerals, letters, and Arabic numerals on your paper the way they are on this paper. Instead of putting the question in the blank, write a word or words which will answer that question in each place. Start each with a capital letter. Do not put in periods. Read all the questions carefully before you write.

I. What is the main idea of these pages?

A. What is one reason there are fewer farmers today?

1. On this and the next two lines--what helps the farmer?

2.

3.

B. What is another reason for needing fewer farmers?

1. What makes this possible?

2.

3.

4.

TEACHING READING SKILLS IN THE FIFTH GRADE  
SOCIAL STUDIES AREA

by

JEAN LEONA RATHERT

B. A., Kansas Wesleyan University, 1939

---

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

1969

Statement of the problem. Children of fifth grade do not seem able to adapt reading skills taught from a basal reader to other content areas such as social studies.

Procedures. Early in the fall of 1968 the twenty-nine pupils of the fifth grade class used in this study were given a teacher-made diagnostic test based on their social studies text and also the fall issue of a diagnostic test sent by the Scholastic Magazine. For this study it was decided to give special emphasis to those areas in which the most errors were made: reading maps and graphs, locating information, selecting information, and organizing materials. Lesson plans were made for each of the study-skill areas chosen. The lessons progressed from very simple to the more complex and short tests were given often to determine the need for more work in a given area. In early March a second teacher-made diagnostic test was given. This test was very similar to the first one given in the fall, but it covered different material. The spring Scholastic Magazine test was given in April after formal instruction in skills was over.

Brief summary of the report. On the first teacher-made diagnostic test the group mean was 41.62 per cent. On the fall Scholastic Magazine test the group mean was 21.93 out of 30 points in the work-study skills section and 26.03 out of 32 possible points in the reading section of the test. While these tests are not standardized, Scholastic does

include a table which shows a comparison with standardized tests. According to that table the group was below fifth grade level in study-skills and above in reading.

When the second teacher-made diagnostic test was given in the spring, the group mean rose to 87.75 per cent. The group mean for the spring Scholastic Magazine test was 26.2 of 30 points in study-skills and 26.1 of 32 points in the reading section.

Not only did the group show a gain on the tests, but there was a change in the attitude of the pupils. Most of them can now approach new lessons in social studies with ease and self-confidence.