

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS
OF FORMALLY TEACHING READING READINESS
IN KINDERGARTEN

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

We are living in an age of pressure. One of the trends resulting from the myriad of pressures on education is the earlier introduction of learning tasks, with earlier formal reading occupying a significant place among these trends. A difference of opinion has existed regarding the effectiveness of the formal teaching of reading readiness to kindergarten students. Historically, formal reading began in the first grade because a mental age of six and a half was believed to be optimum for beginning readers.¹ Later investigations have established that children can be taught to read at an earlier age.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study (1) to determine if there were significant differences in reading achievement test scores at the beginning of grade two between two groups of elementary school pupils, one group who had a one-semester formal reading readiness program in kindergarten and one group who did not have any formal reading readiness instruction in kindergarten; and (2) to present

¹Mabel Morphett and Carleton Washburne, "When Should Children Begin to Read?" Elementary School Journal, 31 (March, 1931), 496.

supporting evidence concerning the advantages and disadvantages of early reading instruction.

II. LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

The study was limited to students who had attended the Beloit Elementary School, Beloit, Kansas. It was also limited to students who had attended the Beloit schools consecutively from kindergarten through second grade.

It was further limited by the fact that the two groups were not from the same class or year; one group was a year behind the other, although the teachers had been the same for both groups.

It was further limited by the questionable validity of the measuring instrument due to the ceiling effect as reflected by the number of perfect scores. It may not have been the best instrument to test reading, but it was the school's choice for an achievement test because it has different sub-tests and is nationally recognized.

III. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Reading readiness. Artley has defined reading as the act of reconstructing from the printed page the writer's ideas, feelings, moods, and sensory impressions.² Reading readiness means the state of being ready to read.

²A. Sterl Artley, "What Is Reading?" Report on Elementary Education, (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, and Company, 1965), p. 3.

A number of behaviors which reading readiness research has indicated as characteristics of being ready for instruction in reading include:

Vision

- Good binocular acuity, near
- Good binocular acuity, far
- Able to shift focus easily and accurately
- Good binocular coordination
- Good hand-eye coordination, near

Speech

- Free from substitutions and baby talk
- Able to communicate in conversation and with group
- Reasonable fluency and sentence structure

Social and Emotional Behavior

- Able to work independently or in a group
- Able to share materials
- Able to await turn for teacher's attention
- Able to lead or to follow

Listening

- Able to attend to and recall story
- Able to answer simple questions
- Able to follow simple directions
- Able to follow sequence of story
- Able to discriminate sounds of varying pitch and loudness
- Able to detect similarities and differences in words
- Sufficient auditory vocabulary for common concepts.³

Formal reading readiness. Formal reading readiness is interpreted here to mean that which is taught in the workbook, Getting Ready to Read,⁴ used by the student and its accompanying guide used by the teacher.

³George Daniel Spache, Reading in the Elementary School (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1964), p. 47.

⁴Paul McKee and M. Lucile Harrison, Getting Ready to Read (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1962).

These prereading exercises include:

1. Using Spoken Context
2. Distinguishing Letter Forms from One Another
3. Listening for Beginning Sounds
4. Associating Letter Sounds and Forms
5. Using Spoken Context and Letter-Sound Association
6. Using Spoken Context and First Letter in a Printed Word.

Getting Ready to Read is designed to teach the use of oral context along with letter-sound association for consonants to unlock a printed word.⁵

⁵Robert L. Hillerich, "Prereading Skills in Kindergarten," Phi Delta Kappan, XLVI (June, 1965), 528.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Much has been written in regard to reading readiness of young children and their larger vocabularies and broader experiences accumulated before entering school. Only a brief summary of the work done on problems very closely related to the one at hand will be reviewed.

I. LITERATURE ON READINESS

Change is the byword of society but kindergartens are little different from thirty or even fifty years ago. The placement of prereading skills taught in first grade is based on tradition.

Observation of five-year-olds today forces us to recognize the fact that television, travel, and home background have had an effect on children's vocabularies and experiences. Schramm reports that preschool TV-viewing results in "vocabularies about a grade higher than children have if they are without the benefit of TV".¹

The kindergarten teacher does not initiate readiness to read. In the broad sense, this begins when the child is born. Parents help, more specifically, later in the life of the

¹Wilour Schramm, J. Lyle and E. Parker, Television in the Lives of Our Children (Palo Alto, California: Stanford University Press, 1961), p. 2.

preschool child by providing him with experiences in speaking, listening, and looking at books. The kindergarten teacher is first to provide an environment designed for intensive and specific instruction.

Gray summarized three important generalizations: (1) readiness experiences should precede reading, (2) kindergarten training results in greater "readiness" in first grade, and (3) specific training in language deficiencies results in greater readiness in first grade.²

Hillerich interprets reading readiness as representing progress in two areas of living: (1) time for growth and development, and (2) experience and training.³

Two crucial questions seem to be (1) what kind of pre-reading instruction is most effective, and (2) when should formal instruction begin?

Most studies show that programs that contribute to success are of two kinds: (1) an experience approach appears better than a workbook approach when the latter involves interpreting pictures and/or gross kinds of discrimination, and (2) a program designed to teach the use of context and consonant-letter-sound associations

²William Gray, "The Teaching of Reading," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, 1960, 1115-1116.

³Robert Hillerich, "An Interpretation of Research in Reading Readiness," Elementary English, XLIII (April, 1966), 359.

seems better than an experience approach, and the use of a workbook with this kind of program was the most effective.⁴

What then should be the program? It must be a program which will provide the basic skills preliminary to beginning reading, a program which will encourage interest in reading, and also one that recognizes and utilizes the inquiring mind, boundless energy and the short attention span of the five-year-old.

Learning to read is a complex of many skills. The typical five-year-old sees a meaningless jumble when he looks at a printed word. He does not even know the part of the page on which he must start to read. He needs to be taught that he can use context in reading just as he already uses it in listening. He needs to distinguish letter forms and to associate certain sounds with the proper letters. He needs to be taught these skills and their application to reading, along with certain mechanics such as left to right and top to bottom.

Pincus and Morgenstern have stated, "In America, the actual teaching or reading has been so much delayed that many a child, instead of getting ready to read, gets bored with waiting to be taught."⁵

⁴Hillerich, op. cit., p. 363.

⁵Morris Pincus and Frances Morgenstern, "Should Children Be Taught to Read Earlier?" Reading Teacher, 18 (October, 1964), 39.

If kindergartens, as a whole, are to avoid boredom and frustration, and if they are to build on the abilities the children bring to school, then at least some kindergarten programs should offer opportunities to learn to read. Other kinds of learning opportunities should be provided because these children may show special interest and abilities in art, for example, or because they are fascinated with simple arithmetic. However, preschool children, who are interested in reading and/or in writing, are not necessarily interested every day.⁶

Durkin suggests that currently it would seem that kindergarten teachers work too often with the whole class and too infrequently with small groups and individuals. Instead, thoughtful and imaginative planning could allow for much more individual work and for more diverse activities especially as the year progresses.⁷

II. STUDIES COMPARING READINESS PROGRAMS

When McKee's Getting Ready to Read became available in January, 1963, the kindergarten teachers in Glenview, Illinois, began a trial use of the program. The Denver schools had been using an experimental form of the McKee program in kindergarten during 1962. During this large scale study, the McKee approach was significantly better than the next best of four approaches.

⁶Dolores Durkin, "Early-Readers--Reflections After Six Years of Research," Reading Teacher, 18 (October, 1964), 5.

⁷Pincus and Morgenstern, loc. cit.

Anderson used the McKee program and found that a group of kindergarten students with mental ages ranging from 52 to 65 months benefited equally as well as group with mental ages of 79 to 91 months.⁸

The Denver longitudinal research study indicated that a preschool child can be taught certain beginning reading skills provided he has a mental age of at least four and a half years. The amount a child learned was related directly to the amount of time someone practiced the beginning reading activities with him. The minimum amount of practice established as necessary was thirty minutes per week. Reading to the child was also found to have a significant effect. The conclusion was that such early reading instruction has a measurable, positive, and continuing effect.⁹

An extra bonus of the program as reported by the speech therapists was that minor speech problems have virtually disappeared. Apparently they have been helped to overcome such substitutions as w for l, f for th, and others. Their early awareness of sounds and beginnings of spoken words might make children more conscious of the language as they experience it in their daily lives.

⁸Dorothy Anderson, "A Study to Determine if Children Need a Mental Age of Six Years and Six Months to Learn to Identify Strange Printed Word Forms When They Are Taught to Use Oral Context and the Initial Sound of the Word" (unpublished EdD Dissertation, Colorado State College, 1960).

⁹Joseph E. Brzeinski, "Beginning Reading in Denver," Reading Teacher, 18 (October, 1964), 20.

In Glenview, Illinois, the five year study indicated a significant difference in skill in favor of the groups who used the workbooks as determined by the 58 item reading test given at the end of first grade. The earlier start in formal reading, based on a foundation of specific skills, made it possible for the children to get greater experiences in reading outside the basal reader. More first grade children read more library books, and read them sooner, than did first grade children of previous years.¹⁰

In 1959 and 1960, in St. Louis, Missouri, a study was conducted using We Read Pictures, readiness book published by Scott Foresman, in the morning sessions, while a child interest approach was used in the afternoon sessions. The experience-activity approach resulted in significantly greater readiness to reading for boys than does the basal workbook. There was equal efficiency for the girls.¹¹

In the Grand Forks, North Dakota, study, it appeared that a formal readiness program complete with pupil workbooks profited children of all ability levels more than an informal readiness program without pupil workbooks. The greatest

¹⁰Robert L. Hillerich, "Pre-reading Skills in Kindergarten: A Second Report," Elementary School Journal, 65 (March, 1965) 316.

¹¹P. W. Blakely and E. M. Shadle, "A Study of Two Readiness-For-Reading Programs in Kindergarten," Elementary English, 38 (November, 1961), 505.

significance occurred between the means of the below-average control and the below-average experimental groups.¹²

III. SHOULD WE TEACH READING IN KINDERGARTEN?

Children can be taught to read but should they? For the average or slow kindergartener who is uninterested in reading, formal instruction may well lead to earlier failure rather than earlier reading. For the bright child, the possible advantage of a month or two by third grade is hardly worth the time and effort.¹³

Nila Banton Smith feels experiments must await further longitudinal measurements before a valid judgment can be made. It has been proved many times that an adult can teach a young child to read. The most important question that many people are asking is "Is this desirable?"¹⁴

Dr. Hymes has concluded that we will teach a child to read whenever and whatever he is ready for by reading a good story, by writing on a pad or on the board, and by reading signs. Learning to read is a slow, steady process which does not start in first grade. Hymes believes that kindergarten

¹²Hugh Schoephoerster, Richard Barnhart, and Walter M. Loomer, "The Teaching of Prereading Skills in Kindergarten," Reading Teacher, 19 (February, 1966), 355.

¹³Sue Moskowitz, "Shall We Teach Reading in the Kindergarten?" Elementary English, XLIII (November, 1965), 801.

¹⁴Nila Banton Smith, "Shall We Teach Reading in the Kindergarten?" (Washington, D. C., Service Bulletin of the Association for Childhood Education International, 1965), 1.

children are kept busier and experiences are more meaningful to them if they are involved in making signs and labels, recording stories, painting, and planning and carrying out trips, experiments, and dramatizations.¹⁵

The first four or five years are critical to the maximum development of the language, cognitive, and intellectual capacities of children. These are the decisive years. Accordingly, language training up to and including reading should occur before age five if the methodology is gentle, self-teaching, non-directive, and paced to the development of each youngster.

Children at an early age need to experience the self-thrill of learning with success. The inner satisfaction from learning to read at an early age is a powerful and dynamic force that will affect the whole future of the child.¹⁶

A typical American child begins to lose his deep involved interest at just about the age when, according to the presently accepted timetable, he first can read well enough to read the books that answer those questions and spin the adventurous and fanciful tales--around nine years old. After nine, his interest turns to matters of peer relationships, the beginnings of heterosexual relationships, and the problems of leaving the

¹⁵Dr. James L. Hymes, Jr., "Teaching Fives To Read," Grade Teacher, LXXVI (May, 1959), 14, 58.

¹⁶John Henry Martin, E. E. D., "The Well-Documented Case for Teaching Reading Early," Grade Teacher, 82 (April, 1965), 92.

dependency of childhood and accepting the independent role of an adult.

If the child doesn't read at seven, eight, or nine, he won't experience the deep involvement with books and reading which is basic to building the desires and motivations for a lifetime of avid, thoughtful reading. Newman points out the longitudinal studies of Kagan and Moss or Bloom and Newman both suggest that childhood up to nine or ten is particularly influential in forming the eventual adult personality traits and academic habits.¹⁷

Reading instruction should be begun in kindergarten but only if the reading activities are taught in such a way as to build enthusiasm for books and reading and the foundation for a lifetime interest in reading for pleasure and inquiry. Children need to be reading on their own while they are still openly inquisitive and asking the kinds of questions that can be answered readily and intelligently in the books that are available to them. Early reading is the key to the lifelong desire to read.¹⁸

¹⁷Robert E. Newman, "The Kindergarten Reading Controversy," Elementary English, XLIII (March, 1966), 237.

¹⁸Ibid.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

Type of study. This study was a comparative study with a longitudinal approach.

Sample. The writer used two groups of second grade students who had attended the Beloit Elementary School consecutively from kindergarten to the second grade.

There were thirty-seven students in each group of this study. The groups were equal in number quite by chance.

Procedure of the study. Through a cooperative agreement between the kindergarten and first grade teachers of the Beloit Elementary School, the reading readiness workbook, Getting Ready to Read,¹ was taught to the kindergarten students during the second semester of 1964-65 rather than being taught in the first semester of first grade. The writer was involved as a teacher of one section of the first grade students included in both of the study groups.

Group I (Control) was given no formal reading readiness program while in kindergarten in 1963-64 and were in second grade in 1965-66. This group did have informal functional contacts with reading readiness such as excursions, creative experience charts, signs, name tags, and story time. Group II (Experimental) was taught McKee's Getting Ready to Read during the second semester of kindergarten in 1964-65 and were in the

¹McKee, loc. cit.

second grade in 1956-57. This book was taught to Group II in small groups within each class for about fifteen minutes daily.

Measuring device. The Stanford Achievement Test² was used as the measuring device. The categories of the test included (1) word reading, (2) paragraph meaning, (3) vocabulary, (4) spelling, and (5) word study skills.

Method of gathering data. Scores were taken from the cumulative records for Group I as tested in October, 1965, and Group II as tested in October, 1966.

Method of presenting data. The data was presented in table form.

Method of analysis. The two groups were compared in each of the test's categories by finding the mean scores and the standard deviations. The mean mental age was determined. The number of perfect scores were compared. The t-test was used to determine if there were significant differences at the .01 level between the scores of Group I and Group II on each of the categories of the achievement test.

²Truman L. Kelley, Richard Madden, Eric Gardner, Herbert C. Rudman, The Stanford Achievement Test (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1964).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

An important question which the research sought to answer was: What effect did a formal reading readiness program in the kindergarten have upon subsequent achievement by the beginning of second grade? The results can be seen in the following tables.

Influence of variables on achievement. A comparative study of the two groups was made of such variables as chronological age, mental age, and IQ. Although the groups included all the children who attended the Beloit Elementary School consecutively from kindergarten to second grade and no attempt was made to equalize these stated variables, Table I is presented to show the similiarity of the two groups.

TABLE I
COMPARISON OF GROUPS

Group	Chronological Age - Mean	Mental Age Mean	IQ Mean
I (Control)	6 yrs 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ mos	7 yrs 4 mos	109.84
II (Experimental)	6 yrs 6 mos	7 yrs 7 mos	113.95

Comparison of perfect scores. Table II indicated that the pupils in both groups could have scored even higher since

there were numerous perfect scores. Group I had eight perfect scores compared to sixteen perfect scores in Group II, exactly half as many.

TABLE II
COMPARISON OF PERFECT SCORES
ON ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

Categories of Test	Group I	Group II
Word Reading	0	2
Paragraph Meaning	3	3
Vocabulary	0	1
Spelling	3	4
Word Study Skills	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>
Total - Perfect Scores	8	16

Word reading test scores. The word reading test consisted of 35 items, graduated in difficulty, which measured the ability of a pupil to analyze a word without the aid of context. These results are shown in Table III.

TABLE III
WORD READING SCORES

Groups	Sum of Squares	Standard Deviation	Mean-Grade Equivalent	t Ratio
I	204.84	.5085	2.30	1.454 (NS)
II	254.70	.5398	2.57	

Although Group II scored .27 of a grade equivalent higher than Group I, it was not enough to be significant at the .01 level.

Paragraph meaning test scores. The paragraph meaning test consisted of a series of paragraphs, graduated in difficulty, from each of which one or more words had been omitted. The pupil's task was to demonstrate his comprehension of the paragraph by selecting the proper word for each omission from four choices that were given him. The results are shown in Table IV.

TABLE IV
PARAGRAPH MEANING SCORES

Groups	Sum of Squares	Standard Deviation	Mean-Grade Equivalent	t Ratio
I	231.80	.6326	2.42	1.127 (NS)
II	275.56	.6789	2.64	

Although Group II scored .22 of a grade equivalent higher than Group I, it was not enough to be significant at the .01 level.

Vocabulary test scores. The vocabulary was measured by a multiple-choice type of test in which the pupil was required to select from a series of three alternatives the proper answer to a question or statement read by the teacher. It measures knowledge of synonyms, simple definitions, and ready associations. It measured a pupil's vocabulary independent of his reading skill.

It measured the verbal life of a child and reflected not only his school achievement but also his home background.

TABLE V
VOCABULARY SCORES

Groups	Sum of Squares	Standard Deviation	Mean-Grade Equivalent	t Ratio
I	295.90	.2997	2.66	1.684 (NS)
II	381.97	.3332	3.04	

Table V indicated that Group II scored .38 of a grade equivalent higher than Group I, but it was not enough to be significant at the .01 level.

Spelling test scores. Spelling ability was measured by means of a 20-item test with a dictation-type exercise. The results are shown in Table VI.

TABLE VI
SPELLING SCORES

Groups	Sum of Squares	Standard Deviation	Mean-Grade Equivalent	t Ratio
I	210.47	.5465	2.32	1.791 (NS)
II	269.87	.4849	2.66	

Table VI indicated that Group II scored .34 of a grade

equivalent higher than Group I, but it was not enough to be significant at the .01 level.

Word study skills test scores. The word study skills test included 56 multiple-choice items, as follows: (1) auditory perception of beginning sounds, (2) auditory perception of ending sounds, (3) phonics, and (4) phonograms. The results are shown in Table VII.

TABLE VII
WORD STUDY SKILLS

Groups	Sum of Squares	Standard Deviation	Mean-grade Equivalent	t Ratio
I	321.40	.3343	2.75	3.045*
II	507.77	.3735	3.51	

*Significant at the .01 level. (Fisher's t)¹

The children in Group II, who had the formal kindergarten reading readiness program, demonstrated achievement .76 of a grade equivalent higher than Group I. This was a significant difference.

¹J. P. Guilford, Fundamental Statistics in Psychology and Education (3rd Edition; New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1956), p. 539.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study investigated the effectiveness of beginning the formal teaching of reading readiness in kindergarten by a comparative study with a longitudinal approach and a presentation of supporting evidence concerning the advantages and disadvantages of early reading instruction.

I. SUMMARY

The sample consisted of two groups of 37 children each who had attended the Beloit Elementary School consecutively from kindergarten to the second grade. Although no attempt was made to match the children by chronological age, mental age, or IQ, the groups were quite similar.

Group I (Control) was given the usual kindergarten experiences with no formal reading readiness program while Group II was taught formally for fifteen minutes each day during the second semester of kindergarten using McKee's Getting Ready to Read.

The Stanford Achievement Test was used as the measuring device. The categories of the test included (1) word reading, (2) paragraph meaning, (3) vocabulary, (4) spelling, and (5) word study skills. The scores used were converted to grade equivalents. This test was given in the fall semester of each group's second grade term.

The findings were:

1. Beginning reading skills can be taught quite effectively to the typical kindergarten pupil.
2. Group II scored higher on all categories of the test than did Group I.
3. Group II scored significantly higher on the word study skills category than did Group I.
4. Some students in both groups could have scored even higher according to the frequency of perfect scores, however, there were more perfect scores in Group II than in Group I.
5. No evidence was reported that the early instruction of reading readiness created any problems of school adjustment or caused any dislike for reading.
6. Most parents voiced their enthusiasm for the program as evidenced by the regular parent-teacher conferences.

II. CONCLUSIONS

Results at the end of two years of study suggest a possible advantage for the children who had an opportunity to learn the elements of beginning reading in kindergarten. One of the five comparisons significantly favored Group II while four other comparisons showed a slight but consistent trend in this direction. There were also twice as many perfect scores attained by the members of Group II.

Research has established that boys and girls can be taught to read at an earlier age than they generally are. This fact that most children are not taught to read before the age of six years and six months may be attributed to two factors: (1) tradition, and (2) fear of harmful results.

The results of this investigation were most reassuring concerning potential harm which may result from early reading instruction. If a formal prereading program built around purposeful games and activities is administered with common sense, it is felt that it will aid rather than impair the emotional well-being of a young child.

III. IMPLICATIONS

Teachers, schools, and school systems that wish to experiment with early reading programs should consider the Denver program using the McKee's Getting Ready to Read. Also, this is only one of many possible approaches which may be equally as efficient.

Planners also need to realize that reading must be only one part of a sound kindergarten program. To focus too narrowly on a reading program is to fail to recognize the great range of experiences five-year-olds need in order to meet their developmental tasks. They should have a sound program in the social studies, science, and the arts to help them learn to think, to conceptualize, and to attach meaning to the world of people and

things. All of these ingredients contribute to the kind of kindergarten program appropriate for today's young children.

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A STUDY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS
OF FORMALLY TEACHING READING READINESS
IN KINDERGARTEN

by

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of beginning the formal teaching of reading readiness in kindergarten by a comparative study with a longitudinal approach and a presentation of supporting evidence concerning the advantages and disadvantages of early reading instruction.

The sample consisted of two groups of 37 children each who had attended the Beloit Elementary School consecutively from kindergarten to the second grade. Although no attempt was made to match the children by chronological age, mental age, or I.Q., the groups were quite similar.

Group I was given the usual kindergarten experiences with no formal reading readiness program while Group II was taught formally for fifteen minutes each day during the second semester of kindergarten using McKee's Getting Ready to Read.

The Stanford Achievement Test was used as the measuring device. The categories of the test included (1) work reading, (2) paragraph meaning, (3) vocabulary, (4) spelling, and (5) word study skills. The scores used were converted to grade equivalents. This test was given in the fall semester of each group's second grade term.

The findings were (1) beginning reading skills can be taught quite effectively to the typical kindergarten pupil, (2) Group II scored higher on all categories of the test than did Group I, (3) Group II scored significantly higher on the

word study skills category than did Group I, (4) some students in both groups could have scored even higher according to the frequency of perfect scores, however, there were more perfect scores in Group II than in Group I, (5) no evidence was reported that the early instruction of reading readiness created any problems of school adjustment or caused any dislike for reading, and (6) most parents voiced their enthusiasm for the program as evidenced by the regular parent-teacher conferences.

Research has established that boys and girls can be taught to read at an earlier age than they generally are. This fact that most children are not taught to read before the age of six years and six months may be attributed to two factors: (1) tradition, and (2) fear of harmful results.

The results of this investigation were most reassuring concerning potential harm which may result from early reading instruction. If a formal prereading program built around purposeful games and activities is administered with common sense, it is felt that it will aid rather than impair the emotional well-being of a young child.

Teachers, schools, and school systems that wish to experiment with early reading programs should consider the Denver program using the McKee's Getting Ready to Read. Also, this is only one of many possible approaches which may be equally efficient.

Planners also need to realize that reading must be only one part of a sound kindergarten program. To focus too narrowly on a reading program is to fail to recognize the great range of experiences five-year-olds need in order to meet their developmental tasks. They should have a sound program in the social studies, science, and the arts to help them learn to think, to conceptualize, and to attach meaning to the world of people and things. All of these ingredients contribute to the kind of kindergarten program appropriate for today's young children.