The Third Annual
Reading Reform Foundation Conference

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READING REFORM FOUNDATION

36 West 44th Street, New York 36, N. Y. ■ YUkon 6-0392

To THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL, STATE CHAIRMEN,
AND OTHERS INTERESTED IN THE READING CRISIS:

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Attendance at the Third Annual Reading Reform Foundation Conference rose to 800 from 150 the year before. It was probably the largest meeting of phonics experts ever held.

Growth in attendance and interest symbolized the rapid replacement by logical and common-sense alphabetic-phonetics of discredited look-say or configurationism. Recent efforts to mitigate the ruinous effects of configurationism by mixing it with "some phonics" (too little and too late) are futile. The pre-alphabetic picture-reading of over 3,000 years ago has nothing in common with the alphabet, and mixing the primitive with the civilized system is as paradoxical as it would be to harness a horse to a Buick instead of a buggy.

Two most encouraging developments in the past year have been the final realization, even by the educational hierarchy, that "reading readiness" was a grossly exaggerated, if not a wholly false concept, and that children can and should begin reading instruction at home or in kindergarten as early as three; and the entry of rapidly increasing numbers of substantial companies into the phonics publishing field, with signs that even the worst textbook publishers are about ready to change their tune in the face of this competition.

If all of you continue your fine work, we may hope that the reading problem -- the greatest educational stumbling block of this century -- will be largely surmounted by 1967.

Watson Washburn

President

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PROCEEDINGS

Watson Washburn, President, opened the meeting.

MR. WASHBURN: Ladies and Gentlemen: It is a great pleasure to welcome the 800 of you who are present, many from the most distant parts of the country. We are glad that you are interested in this Foundation. We think it is doing a most important job -- perhaps the most important job of this century -- in the field of education. The harm that has been done by the "look-say" method in the last thirty years has been really beyond comprehension, and if we can repair that damage and install improved phonetic methods, it will be almost a miracle. We hope that this near-miracle will be wholly accomplished within the next two or three years.

About one-quarter of the public schools of the country have now adopted the common-sense phonics method of reading instruction. The parochial and private schools have a better record, and they are all moving in the right direction.

One great thing about our movement is that it is very progressive and like a snowball. Wherever the new phonetic method of instruction is installed in a school, little islands form which rapidly extend to neighboring districts. We never move back, but always forward.

We are very happy to have with us today Dr. Max Rafferty from California, whom you will hear from later, and Mrs. Johnson from Winnipeg, Canada, who single-handed seven years ago began a movement there toward the common-sense method which not only now has taken a great hold in Winnipeg and Manitoba, but has spread over the whole of Canada to a large extent.

The chief remaining obstacle that we face is the unwillingness of a powerful group of educationists to admit that the faulty method of the "whole-word"

or "shape" system which they have been first promoting, and then defending for the last forty years, is itself the cause of the reading crisis.

They do finally admit, most of them, that there is a reading crisis, which they denied up to a few years ago. Their search for scapegoats for this crisis has led them quite far afield. Dr. Arther Trace said in our Conference a year ago that one recent book by two professors lists the following reasons for reading difficulties: "Physical, emotional, intellectual, educational, visual, binocular, hearing, motor, speech, glandular disturbances, brain damage, congenital word blindness, lateral dominance, personal and social adjustment, emotional adjustment and effects of home environment." This takes up about 600 pages, and the only suggestion in this book that the reading program itself and the reading method may be a cause of reading difficulty is under the heading of "Education." This occupies only six pages, and blames dull stories and too much emphasis upon phonics, rather than too little, for causing reading disability.

The last resort of the "look-say" defenders is either to urge a compromise, using the best of both methods, or to teach each child the method that suits him best. Of course, the latter alternative, which is equivalent to having each child separately tutored, is quite beyond the range of possibility. And the trouble with the compromise is that "look-say" is a thoroughly unsound method for every child, the only difference in its effects being that it ruins some while merely retarding others.

Ironically, while in New York State the Regents last fall adopted a recommendation to the schools of the State by which a phonetic system was recommended to be used from the very beginning of reading instruction in the first grade, the City of New York, where the Foundation has its headquarters, has one of the most backward educational systems in the country.

Our Foundation has this week requested the State Board of Regents to investigate the teaching of reading in the City schools, and to take measures to insure that phonics be tried out in at least fifty of the elementary schools here this fall on an experimental basis.

The Reading Reform Foundation now has Committees in 37 states and the District of Columbia. Our National Advisory Council has grown to 243.

I summarize below reports from our State Chairmen which have some national significance.

Our Arizona Chairman, Mrs. Raymond Rubicam (who is also Vice President and a Trustee of the Foundation) reports that Arizona State University has just made a course in phonetics compulsory, according to Dr. G. Homer Durham, the President. This is the first such action, she believes, by any American teacher's college. She adds:

> "Two other colleges of education are alert to this change, and we confidently await some move on their part, for the need for such instruction is obvious with over three thousand classes already teaching phonetics as the basis for reading.
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> "The second accomplishment in Arizona this year is the addition of phonetic texts to the State-adopted list. Three chosen under our multiple adoption law were (#1) Phonetic Keys to Reading, (#2) Phonovisual, (#3) Lyons and Carnahan. The obvious mistake in the third choice leads me to believe that not many members of our State Board of Education knew, when voting for this text in third place, that Lyons and Carnahan does not teach any vowels during grade one, introducing them only when well along in the grade 2 books. This, from our standpoint, is not phonetics at all, but merely that same "too little, too late" instruction usually presented by major sight-reading texts. It is a "phonics" workbook for the sight-readers, not a method of phonetic instruction according to our standards. However, its built-in delay in teaching of vowels will not be too harmful since the spread of strong phonetics is so nearly complete in our State.
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> "A third activity is our T-V film of the Indian children which you will see this afternoon, showing the type of phonetic instruction in all our schools under the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The previous film of our Osborn District children shown last year has been circulating in many states, by request of public school officials, and shown also in colleges in California, Ohio, Kansas, Connecticut, and at the University of Wisconsin. Requests from Canada and New Zealand complete the list to date.
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> "Another interesting trend--the very districts which were first to teach phonetics are first to order the new Open Court Readers, as supplementary to the standard State-adopted texts. These Readers without a 'controlled vocabulary,' are impressing our educators, and point to the new trend of independence in reading."

Mrs. Helen L. Norton reports from Connecticut that phonics instruction is widespread throughout the State. The Commissioner of Education recently informed her, in response to her inquiry, that "all schools in the State, including its major

cities, use a systematic alphabetic-phonetic method of reading instruction from the beginning of the first grade, and none require pupils to memorize the shape of any words beforehand."

In the District of Columbia, Chairman Edna B. Smith reports that Phonovisual phonics, adopted by Superintendent Carl F. Hansen for all grades in all elementary schools three years ago, will be further implemented this year. Teacher training courses were given in 25 states and more than 30 colleges, and over 12,000 teachers were given help. Phonovisual teaches phonics daily as a separate subject, and hence does not require discarding any basal reading series.

Walter T. Spalding (co-author with his wife, Romalda B. Spalding of THE WRITING ROAD TO READING) brought the following news in person from Hawaii from our Chairman, the Honorable Eureka Forbes:

> "The teaching of phonics in most of the parochial and private schools of Hawaii has continued to be very successful and has received much public interest. We do not know what the present position of the State Public School System is, as it will install a new director of reading this fall. Besides Mrs. Spalding's local work for phonics, she has given phonics instruction to 800 teachers in summer classes in various mainland schools.
>
> "I want to pay tribute to the courage and the devotion to children which so many teachers are showing in teaching with phonics. This has often meant a sacrifice of their prospects for promotion; sometimes of friendships. They are marked as non-conformists, which in elementary education may bring ostracism. They deserve high praise and our utmost support."

Our Louisiana State Chairman, Mrs. Mims Gage Ochsner, with the help of Mrs. Martha T. Lindley (one of our panel experts today) has persuaded a considerable number of school districts to initiate phonetics in the first grade. The teachers will learn the proper method of instruction shortly before the schools open, and more than a hundred have already volunteered to take this course.

Mrs. D. Ellwood Williams, Jr., Chairman for Maryland, described encouraging interviews with the Governor and his adviser on education, and with the representatives of the Democratic and Republican National Platform Committees. She also attended meetings of the State branch of the International Reading Association.

The State Superintendent of Education indicated interest in conducting tests comparing results in classes of alphabetic-phonics with "look-say" systems.

The accomplishments of the Massachusetts Committee would fill a dozen pages. This year Philip Marson, Master of English at the Boston Latin School, and author of A TEACHER SPEAKS, and BREEDER OF DEMOCRACY, joined Edmund C. Berkeley in the co-chairmanship. We were very happy to have the Vice Chairman, Eleanor B. Parkman, attend to report in person, with a representative delegation.

The great event there was the adoption in all the elementary public schools of Boston of Phonetic Keys to Reading, one of the pioneer phonics systems, for which Miss Marguerite G. Sullivan, Assistant Superintendent, The School Committee of the City of Boston, was mainly responsible. She had, of course, the enthusiastic backing of our Committee. Boston's example has greatly stimulated the phonics trend, not only in the rest of Massachusetts, but throughout the nation.

The Committee cooperated in arranging advanced phonics workshops under the auspices of the University Extension Division of the Massachusetts Department of Education. Mr. Robert L. Filbin, Principal of the Elementary Schools, Lincoln, was extremely helpful, and his consultant, Mrs. Adrienne Rubin, conducted the workshop.

Our Massachusetts Branch deserves our heartiest congratulations.

Bartram D. Lewis reported from Michigan that among other activities he has made continuing effort to achieve the most effective distribution of news releases. He gets these in bulk from New York, localizes them when possible, and spreads them among the smaller dailies and weeklies in the Detroit area. Dr. Ralph W. Lewis, in East Lansing, and Mrs. Lawrence Bickley, in Grand Rapids have been of great assistance to the Committee.

Dr. W. A. Hammond, our Ohio State Chairman, states that the educationist hierarchy is well entrenched, and while there is strong opposition among the people, it is largely unorganized. However, reform is slowly gaining ground there.

In Oklahoma, the major step forward was the conversion of the entire City of Tulsa to Phonetic Keys to Reading, after this system had established superiority over "look-say" in a three-year test.

An important development in Pennsylvania was noted by our Chairman for its Eastern Section, Joseph Shallit. Philadelphia introduced a "linguistic" experiment in six schools in 1962. Success was such that it was extended to 19 schools in 1963, and will be further extended in 1964. This "linguistic" system begins with the alphabet, and then applies the letter sounds to whole words of one syllable, teaching one vowel at a time. It is fundamentally phonetic, and was devised by Rosemary G. Wilson and Mildred K. Rudolph of the Philadelphia School District, with assistance from Charles C. and Agnes C. Fries.

Our Central Pennsylvania Chairman, Mrs. James A. Hughes, Jr. gave nine five-minute interviews on phonics to radio station WLSH in Lansford, which covered the basic problem, the local and national situation, the attitude of most education professors, the many sets of phonic materials which are available and already in wide use, the findings of university research on the superiority of the phonetic methods, comments by teachers using phonetic methods, the work of the Reading Reform Foundation and what individual parents can do to help their own children learn to read. The tapes of these interviews have already been played on two radio stations in Eastern Pennsylvania as a two-weeks' program entitled "Learning to Read" and are available from Mrs. Hughes, R.D. 2, Tamaqua, Pa. for anyone who would like to lend them to a radio station in his own area. They are suitable for use in any area.

John H. Cooper, Headmaster of the Kinkaid School, our Texas Chairman, writes: "Unquestionably the mood of education throughout Texas is in favor of a shift toward phonics."

Mrs. Helene C. Durbrow, Vermont Chairman, noted a grass-roots movement in the Burlington area, where a summer course for teachers of reading was successfully repeated this year. The reading problem is attracting more attention throughout the State.

Mrs. Frank Lock, of Tacoma, author of WORLD-BUILDING DAY-BY-DAY THE HELEN LOCK WAY, read Chairman Claire Thomas' summary of the year's developments in the State of Washington. Mrs. Thomas had 300 at a public meeting in Seattle in August, 1963. In March, 1964, more than 200 attended a phonics workshop in Tacoma. She expects 400 at her next Seattle meeting on August 11, 1964, at which Mrs. Lock and Mrs. Nellie Thomas, of Rockford, Illinois, will speak. Claire Thomas has given several talks before parents' groups. She has appointed as local Chairmen Mrs. Janice Brandstrom in Olympia, and Mrs. Marian Hinds in Tacoma, who have been most helpful.

Mrs. James A. Hughes, Jr., our Director of Statistical Research, is continuing her project of gathering data on reading levels and IQ levels from schools using phonetic methods. During the year she had received data from 22 additional school systems on five different phonetic methods and is still adding to her tabulation. Another Foundation research activity has been the examination of university research comparing the performance of phonetic groups with that of conventional-method control groups of similar IQ. Dr. Louise Gurren and Mrs. Hughes have analyzed ten doctoral dissertations which include such studies and prove the value of the phonetic approach beyond any reasonable doubt. These dissertations were completed at the following universities by the following authors:

1. Boston University: Helen A. Murphy, 1943.

2. Boston University: Beatrice A. Crossley, 1948.

3. Boston University: Eleanor B. Linehan (summarized in the Journal of Education, February, 1958, with an introduction by Donald D. Durrell).

4. Boston University: Nancy C. Santeusanio, 1962.

5. Duke University: Donald C. Agnew, 1939. (Also as Study No. 5 of Duke University Research Studies in Education, 1939, and condensed in Hunnicutt and Iverson, Research in the Three R's, Harper, 1958).

6. Indiana University: Paul E. Sparks, 1956 (summarized in the Elementary School Journal, April, 1957).

7. University of Minnesota: Sister Mary Edward Dolan, 1963 (summarized in The Reading Teacher, April, 1964).

8. University of Pittsburgh: Sister Mary Louis Wohleber, 1953.

9. Washington University, St. Louis: David E. Bear, 1958 (summarized in the Elementary School Journal, April, 1959, with a follow-up in the Elementary School Journal, February, 1964).

10. Western Reserve University: Walter A. Wollam, 1961 (abstract available from the author, Superintendent of Schools, Alliance, Ohio).

Each of these studies showed significant differences in reading comprehension or vocabulary or both favoring the phonetic groups and showed no such significant differences in either comprehension or vocabulary favoring the control groups.

Mrs. Hughes has been in correspondence with more than a hundred prominent educators during the year and discussed the research with a number of them in person at the International Reading Association Conference at Philadelphia in April. She will be glad to furnish additional information on the studies listed above, and to correspond with anyone interested in evaluating the research.

MR. WASHBURN: Our Treasurer and Fellow-Trustee, John P. Humes, has asked me to remind you that our Foundation depends for its support on voluntary gifts, which will be gratefully received in any amount. Such gifts have been ruled deductible for income tax by the United States Treasury Department, subject to the usual statutory limitations.

A most interesting experiment was conducted here in the last two days by Mrs. Mary Johnson, of Winnipeg, a member of our National Advisory Council. The results, which she will later describe to you in detail, amply confirmed our feeling that the teaching of phonics in the schools of New York City is lamentably deficient.

A most harmful companion of the illogical "look-say" system was the exaggerated concept of "reading readiness." This was the notion that children must not begin to read till they had attained a vast number of supposedly desirable attitudes toward life. One leading educationist (Dr. David H. Russell, in CHILDREN LEARN TO READ, Ginn and Company, Second Edition, 1961, pp.177-179) listed no less than 53 categories - or should we call them "skills"? - which should mark the

"ready" child. Most of these related to conformity with orthodox social sciences: shyness, unselfishness, sulkiness, lack of inquisitiveness, inability to draw, etc.

Dr. Russell conceded that it was not essential for a pupil to master all these 53 skills to qualify for reading. But it is not surprising that to acquire the minimum qualification might be difficult for a child younger than six, and besides, since only teachers could test the children properly, there was no way of knowing till a child went to school whether he was "ready." Accordingly, to guard against the awful psychological risk of upsetting an "unready" child, the instructions of the educationist hierarchy to parents were categorical -- "Don't try to teach your child to read before he comes to school."

Recent research indicates on the contrary that large numbers of children can readily learn to read and write by the alphabetic-phonetic method at the age of three. This was proved two years ago by Professor O.K. Moore, with a grant of several millions from the Carnegie Foundation and the aid of a specially designed electric typewriter. He thus confirmed the experience of previous centuries when children of that age started toward literacy by playing at home or in kindergarten with wooden alphabetic blocks.

It seems logical that the best age children should start reading is immediately after mastering the more difficult accomplishment of intelligent speech. The President of the University of Chicago, Dr. George W. Beadle, said in his invocation address last June:

> "It has become increasingly clear that early learning is much more significant than we have previously thought. We may be missing the boat in our educational systems, for we largely ignore the most sensitive and receptive period of development."

If it is true that most receptive years for literacy in a child's life are from three to six, the blunder of our educationist "experts" in the past 40 years in completely blacking out these best years is equal in ruinous results to the "look-say" aberration, of which it was a natural companion. For the "look-say" faddists well knew that few, if any, parents at home would ever use any system

but time-tested and fool-proof alphabetic-phonics; and children sensibly taught to read before entering school would create most awkward problems for configurationist instructors.

I am going to ask Mrs. Johnson now to describe something of what is going on in Canada with respect to reading instruction, and also to describe her testing experiment of the last two days here.

MRS. JOHNSON: The teaching of phonics in Canada in recent years has been as much in the news as it has in America. Since the publication of Rudolf Flesch's book "Why Johnny Can't Read," the following headlines were among the many which appeared in Canadian newspapers:

SCHOOL EXPERTS CLAIM JOHNNY CAN READ

NO ONE GIVES GROUND IN BATTLE OVER READING

TRUSTEES WANT RETURN TO PHONICS IN READING

IS SEX AT SIX THE REAL REASON WHY LITTLE JOHNNY CAN'T READ?

Out of all this controversy during the past eight years some changes have emerged.

Ontario and British Columbia have replaced the Curriculum Foundation Series with new Canadian texts which have been published since 1960. These new texts - by Winston, Copp, Clark and Nelson - were heralded in the press as being a "return to the old ABC's." The new series do have a slightly larger vocabulary - totalling from 360-501 words at the Grade I level and they do introduce more phonics much sooner. Copp, Clark leads by teaching 501 words in Grade I and by providing an enormous amount of practice drill in reading phonetically spelled words. It is disappointing, however, to find that the new Canadian series, like the Curriculum Foundation and many other orthodox basal series, require children to deduce letter sounds from a core of known words, and to attack new words by the substitution technique.

This indirect method of teaching phonics has failed in the past -- what will be the results when it is used to teach younger children?

The only large-scale experimentation in Canada with a genuine phonic text is in Winnipeg, where a formal three-year experiment was set up in 1962 to compare PHONETIC KEYS TO READING with the CURRICULUM FOUNDATION SERIES. Although only three classes were originally scheduled to use PKR, the experiment was expanded when over half of the Winnipeg elementary principals asked to use the series. Next fall over 3,000 pupils in Greater Winnipeg will learn to read by this method.

In an analysis of test results for the Winnipeg School Board, Phonics Committee Chairman Dr. A. Moore stated, "The failure rate of the non-PKR pupils was four times that of the PKR pupils." In my own informal testing I have found a similar contrast between the two groups -- PKR pupils can read new words four times more accurately than those taught solely by the CURRICULUM FOUNDATION SERIES.

In January of this year the Manitoba Department of Education made two unsolicited and unprecedented grants of $3,600 toward the use of PKR -- thus putting its seal of approval on the work done so far.

This text is not officially authorized, however. The CURRICULUM FOUNDATION SERIES is the only authorized reading program for Manitoba schools, and principals and teachers who wish to use PKR must obtain special permission from the Minister of Education.

Across Canada the authorization of textbooks is controlled by the provincial Departments of Education, the Minister of Education (an elected member of the Government) having final say over the choice. School districts which use unauthorized texts run the risk of having Government grants withdrawn, and individual teachers can be suspended or fined for using texts which have not been officially approved.

Education officials in Manitoba have become receptive to the idea that changes in reading instruction are desirable - and one of the reasons for their change of heart is that demonstrative evidence has been used to draw attention to the children's problems. It is very easy to gather proof of their difficulties if simple tests of new words are used. In 1957, 600 Grade III and IV pupils wrote a simple

spelling test for me and the results were submitted to the Manitoba Royal Commission on Education. The 94 variations of their spelling the new word "jot" were later shown on television.

Two years later this Commission recommended that "the teacher should teach the sounds of the letters, even the consonants, and thus give the child, almost from the outset, two methods of attacking new words. ... The use of the phonetic attack as here recommended must be taught at the Teachers' Training College." Hundreds of Winnipeg school children have read orally for me and these results have also been submitted to educators, and used publicly. One tape-recording of 38 unselected playground volunteers - 15 of whom could scarcely read at all - was sent direct to the Minister of Education, asking him to hear the tape in its entirety. Our new Minister of Education now has this tape and he has promised that he will also listen to it.

On August 3rd and 4th, with the assistance of other members of the READING REFORM FOUNDATION, I tested the oral reading of 89 primary school children in four New York City parks on their ability to read one-syllable words. The test consisted of the following two sentences which were read by the children and recorded on tape:

1. Mother will not like me to play games in my big red hat.
2. Mike fed some nuts and figs to his tame rat.

They averaged 13% error on the known words LIKE, GAMES, BIG, RED, HAT and 44% error on the unfamiliar words MIKE, TAME, FIGS, FED, RAT.* The two groups of words were paired and differed from each other by only one letter. One duplicate of this tape will be sent to the Superintendent of New York Schools, and another to the Governor of New York State.

* Footnote After further analyzing the results, I found that New York City Public School Grade I graduates made a whopping 83% error in reading the simple words MIKE, TAME, FIGS, FED, RAT, which dropped only to 64% at the end of Grade II. Parochial pupils, on the other hand, made 50% error on these words at the end of Grade I and only 24% error at the end of Grade II.

My experience has been that if educators and officials are approached with proof that a problem in reading does exist, they will look into the matter. Most of them are reasonable -- at least they are in Manitoba! - and if they are kept informed and reminded that one is continuing to gather evidence and to use it, they begin to feel that this is a problem which deserves their attention and requires positive action.

In the fall of 1963 the two Manitoba Teachers' Colleges included training in direct phonics for the first time since 1946. To my knowledge, these are the first State-run teacher training institutions in North America to reinstate instruction in the pronunciation and blending of separate letter sounds. This should show up in improved classroom instruction in the near future.

The Department of Education has also surveyed primary teachers throughout Manitoba for their views on reading methods. The consensus of views gathered by this official questionnaire will be used later by the Department to help them select new reading texts for our Province.

Canadian public schools have not travelled as far down the sight method road as their counterparts in America. We fortunately took a little while - especially in the Western provinces - to catch on to the idea of dropping direct phonics. This was a very sketchy process which began in Manitoba in 1946 when the CURRICULUM FOUNDATION SERIES was adopted. Our teachers had previously taught a core of sight words, but parallel to the learning of this basic vocabulary, and right from the beginning of Grade I, they taught individual letter sounds and trained children to sound out words. By the end of the first year pupils could read new material for themselves.

When the CURRICULUM FOUNDATION SERIES was adopted in 1946, the publishers' reading consultants toured Manitoba four times and told teachers that training in direct phonics was old-fashioned and unnecessary. This theory was reinforced by taboos in the Teachers' Manuals, which stated:

> "They should not be asked to sound phonetic elements in isolation." p.37, Grade II.

> "Children should not be asked to 'sound out' words. Phonetic analysis and blending must be done mentally, not vocally." p.61, Grade II (1946 edition)

All teachers did not obey these instructions immediately, and some never did, especially in the suburbs and rural areas. Many teachers continued to get good results by improvising direct phonics instruction. The entire school district of St. James, with 8,000 pupils, now follows a supplementary phonics program. Children are taught to sound out words, and parents are pleased with the results. Similar home-grown programs of phonic reinforcement are in effect in other Canadian centers where educators have taken a close look at the inadequacies of the authorized series.

Not only are Canadians fortunate in having abandoned phonics later than was done in America, but they are also very fortunate to be able to benefit from American reading reform. If it were not for books like WHY JOHNNY CAN'T READ and TOMORROW'S ILLITERATES, and for the work of the READING REFORM FOUNDATION and all the dedicated people connected with it, Canadian reading instruction would surely have continued on down the road to disaster. We owe a great deal to the work of American reading reformers and hope that what little we can do to solve our own problems will in turn be of some benefit to our American friends.

MR. WASHBURN: After hearing Mrs. Johnson talk, you can understand how delighted we were when she joined the National Advisory Council of our Foundation three years ago, and how happy we are that at last she's been able to come down here to New York City and tell us about her activities there, and also to engage in the tests here in New York City which she has so successfully concluded in the last two days. You can obtain a detailed analysis of these tests by writing to her at 1237 Wellington Crescent, Winnipeg 9, Manitoba, Canada.

Our next presentation will be a film showing phonetic instruction on an Arizona Indian Reservation, which Mrs. Raymond Rubicam, our Vice President, will explain.

She started reading reform in Arizona seven years ago and now has succeeded in getting two-thirds of the public schools there to adopt the phonetic system. And in her summers in Maine she's been able to help our Chairman there, Frank E. Dorr, to reform a good part of that State in recent years.

MRS. RUBICAM: The film you are about to see was made at KEAT-TV Studio, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona. The children in the film are from the Apache Indian Reservation at Whiteriver, Arizona. When these children entered the first grade, they spoke only the Apache language, which is radically different, both structurally and phonetically, from the English language. Further compounding the usual difficulties of learning to read was the necessity of helping the children learn how to think in, and how to use, a different language. Typically, these children could be expected to read far below the national norms throughout most, if not all, of their school experience.

The phonetic approach to the teaching of reading, made possible through the PHONETIC KEYS TO READING program, was used quite successfully to overcome these formidable barriers.

The cultural environment in which these children live is unusually deprived, and what we frequently consider the very necessities of life are largely lacking.

While viewing the film, please keep in mind the following:

These were mono-lingual Indian children who could speak no English upon entering school.

Showing of the Film

Conclusion

The remarkable demonstrated reading ability of these Apache-speaking children is a direct result of the effectiveness of the reading program. Because of its phonetic characteristics, this reading program has proved to be equally effective with Spanish-speaking groups. It should not be necessary to emphasize how tremendously successful the program is with English-speaking children.

The dual-discrimination approach demonstrates repeatedly its superior ability to build skills, understandings, and attitudes necessary for reading development.

MR. WASHBURN: My thanks to Mrs. Rubicam for that fine film which shows that children who can't speak a word of English can learn to speak and read it very well in two or three years with proper phonetic instruction. Really, it's a disgrace that we can't teach American children who speak English almost perfectly with a vocabulary of six or eight thousand words, to read it in the same period of time.

The next order of business will be the panel discussion, which will be moderated by Dr. William V. Lawlor, who is our California State Chairman, and who has done a wonderful job out there in reading reform in the last two years. Dr. Lawlor.

DR. LAWLOR: Thank you very much, Mr. Washburn.

Ladies and Gentlemen: I bring you greetings from California -- from the people in Reading Reform in California -- and I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the opportunity of being here with all of you in this wonderful Conference; to congratulate Mr. Washburn for organizing it; and to pay tribute to our State Chairmen and co-workers throughout the nation, who keep the cause of reading reform constantly moving and come here every year to bring cheer and information and the fruits of their work.

Two months ago, our California State Board of Education, after studying the report of a Commission it had appointed to investigate the reading problem in California, passed a very interesting resolution to the following effect: that the State Board of Education, having received from its Commission a report indicating that a majority of the teachers of reading in California districts are inadequately trained to teach reading, calls the attention of local school boards to this deplorable fact, and refers to the reading program in California schools in order that they might make up this deficiency.

Now the Reading Reform Foundation has nothing but respect and admiration for the teachers in our schools throughout the nation.

The California Board of Education, which in past years first blamed the reading crisis on the parents, and then blamed it on the children, and now blames it on the teachers, is the same Board of Education that dictates the programs that those teachers are required to follow; and, furthermore, until three years ago, this same Board of Education was a policy agency for the teachers' colleges in which those teachers were trained.

I have the pleasure now of introducing some of our experts to you. Our first speaker is a great figure in the field of reading and education, to which she has devoted her life. She really needs no introduction to you, I am sure. Miss Mae Carden has made tremendous progress in this last year in California, where she and her people established fifteen new schools, based on the Carden System.

MISS CARDEN: Thank you very much.

I come with a rosy picture. For years I've been working on a program which is based on phonetics and which now has received a reward.

Years ago I lived in Europe and I was so hurt by the attitude of the European that the American was an uncultured person, that about 25 years ago I set to work to prove that this is not true, and if it were true, it should be corrected. So I worked on a phonetic program.

The reward is great, because when you have a sound phonetic program, think of where you can take the children. You can give them perfect diction and perfect speech, and you can give them the facility of grouping words within sentences so that the thought becomes very clear. You can guide them by questioning to realize the important words within the sentence. You can build a vocabulary by which they can express the content of each sentence. You can teach them how to relate sentences to sentences and thus begin the organization of thought. All of these skills you can turn around and use to teach the child how to express himself in written form.

By a good phonetic program, and by all the techniques which will develop comprehension, and by all of the lovely experiences by which you can open all the

doors, you can lead children to become a nation of articulate adults. Our nation is suffering today because it is a nation of inarticulate adults, and when we hear things we don't agree with, we are unable to justify our own thinking because of a lack of ability to communicate.

So my work concerns communication -- communication person-to-person, the means by which you can lead these children to a better understanding; by which you can awaken their thoughts to all the beauty of the world; to make them able to express themselves in all fields of endeavor, and as you do this, you train the child to think and to control his emotions in such a way that the emotions will be there to fortify his clear thinking.

These children will know double talk when they hear it. They will be able to evaluate all the virtues of the founding fathers and all of the Americans who have lived and who have made outstanding contributions to our civilization. This is a great prospect.

Now, when the children have these skills, we are able to open the world of literature to them. Little people will be able to read not only simple stories but real classics, and they will be able to have the classics used right within the classroom. They will learn how to evaluate literature, and they will know how to be able to express their appreciation and evaluation of what they read. There is no end to the wonderful opportunities which a sound phonetic basis will offer to each and every child in America.

DR. LAWLOR: Thank you very much, Miss Carden.

Our next speaker is a fellow Californian now. She came originally from Seattle, Washington, which was Washington's loss and California's gain. She has been a private kindergarten teacher and tutor for 45 years, and she has been recently involved in training and helping school administrators and teachers in reading programs and problems.

I present to you Mrs. Dorothy Taft Watson, of Oakland.

MRS. WATSON: I intend to keep my message short but I hope that I am able to add a note of optimism to this meeting. As many of you know, my contacts are not with large school districts, but rather with individuals. I began with individual parents who wanted help for their children. Later individual teachers wrote for my audio-visual materials. Then came individual schools that introduced them and in some instances, school districts. The appeal has been in the fact that anyone, teacher or parents, can teach phonics successfully through the use of the records, books and games, with no special training.

Since last year's meeting, the Americana Interstate Corp., a subsidiary of Grolier Incorporated, has taken over all of my materials. They are now promoting them on a much larger scale than I could have done. This leaves me free to add to what we have, some of the many new items that I have in the planning stage.

I am happy to be able to announce a very exciting event that has just begun. Last Sunday, August the 5th, the Chicago Tribune began a series of features by Joan Beck. The first of these is an article telling in general about the reading problems that we all know so much about. In it she also tells of a coming series that will be adapted from my Listen and Learn materials. The second article, August 9th, will tell more about my method and explain how parents can teach their children, even three-year-old ones, according to the interest and desire to learn. Older children will be able to receive the needed phonics to enable them to become better readers and spellers. The first of the strips that will appear daily and Sunday for the next 13 weeks appears in the comic section. Week days they will appear on the Woman's Page.

I have just received proofs of the first 30 of these strips. I am delighted with them and feel that an outstanding job has been done. I am confident that many children will receive a great deal of help through the series.

It is expected that soon this series will appear in other cities, as this will be a syndicated feature. I believe that it will play an important part in our Reading Reform movement.

DR. LAWLOR: Thank you very much, Mrs. Watson.

Dr. W. A. Hammond, our next speaker, is a chemical engineer, and he has also taught from the fourth grade to the college level. He is from Xenia, Ohio, and he is the Reading Reform Chairman for that State. He is President of the Ohio Society of the Sons of the American Revolution.

DR. HAMMOND: The first editions of the great McGuffey Readers appeared in 1836 and they spread immediately and widely throughout the schools and homes of the following decades. Indeed, the Holy Bible, a copy of Shakespeare or other classic, and the McGuffey Readers became the standard reading matter in thousands of the homes of those decades. In the schools these great readers became the basic subject matter in public education. They gave the students not merely a knowledge of reading but through them the spelling of the words of the English language became an important phase of learning. Also, through them the student obtained sample selections from the great classics which carried history, biography, and geography along with the basic fields of reading and spelling.

The great editions of 1857 and 1879 spread into the millions of copies which permeated the schools and homes through and beyond the decades of the 19th Century. As population expanded, naturally the edition of 1879 became the largest and that is the edition that may still be obtained through the American Book Company which is the present-day publisher of the books. In the schools, the students were advanced in their progress not by grades as we know them now but by "readers." Thus, a student would be promoted from the Third Reader to the Fourth Reader, etc. A student who finished the Fifth Reader and moved on into the materials of the Sixth Reader and had acquired a corresponding mastery in the other fields of arithmetic, grammar, history, geography, etc., would be considered as an educated person, and many persons with educations up to that level were certified to teach in the public schools.

There were no formal tests in the schools of those days beyond the ordinary "examinations" that were given occasionally. When a student had read the Third

Reader and could read and understand it well, he was promoted to the Fourth Reader. The student's own judgment was part of this test. He felt entirely ready or he felt that he should review, and his judgment or feelings were respected. Thus, the judgments of the teacher, the parents, and the student were drawn upon in making the promotions.

Indeed, the proof of the pudding was in the eating, and this applied to the individual student, in the individual school, and in the level of society in general. The McGuffey Readers produced eminent scholars in all the fields of learning. I mention here only three in as many areas of our country: In the East there came Chauncey M. Depew, to become in his day an outstanding speaker, administrator, and literary man. In the Middle West there came the great Whitelaw Reid, to become the outstanding journalist of the Civil War period and later through his profound and scholarly addresses, the "Scholar in Politics," and to close his career as the outstanding Ambassador to the Court of St. James. In the West there came along the eminent American chemist, Joel T. Hildebrand, who is still calling aloud for a return to basic education. For each of these names you can add another thousand names of men and women who grew into the high levels of scholars from their start in the McGuffey Readers.

When the eminent American journalist, Mark Sullivan, wrote his great volumes, "Our Times," he included 48 pages in a review and commentary on the work of McGuffey and the Readers. These pages are summarized by the earnest statement of Mark Sullivan to the effect that "no individual and no institution had so large a part in crystallizing what we know as the American Way of Life as did the life and works of William Holmes McGuffey."

DR. LAWLOR: Thank you very much, Dr. Hammond.

Our next speaker comes from New Orleans. She is Martha T. Lindley, a remedial reading teacher, who now trains reading teachers.

MRS. LINDLEY: I do want to explain the necessity now for so much teacher training.

There is a large group of teachers throughout the entire United States who are anxious to go back not only to the good old way of learning to read that Dr. Hammond and I followed, but also to go back to cursive rather than manuscript writing.

We are not quite sure how the manuscript writing started, or why. Some people say that it was because we decided to teach reading by shapes of words instead of by sounds of letters. We were not much interested in writing. We were really trying to teach children how to read, that it would more nearly resemble the printed page in the controlled vocabulary readers which had become necessary when pupils could not read independently, due to "look-say."

It is of particular interest to note that CURSIVE WRITING HAS NO LETTERS WHICH BECOME OTHER LETTERS IN THE REVERSE FORM. It neatly flows from left to right, helping immeasurably the visual and kinesthetic recall of letters. On the other hand, letter substitution was rampant in manuscript writing, b becoming d, or p, q becoming g or p.

Neurologists repeatedly assert that impressions made on nerve tissues are never wholly eradicated, but are white-washed over, lingering on and confusing later impressions. Largely for this reason there has been increasing enthusiasm in first teaching by cursive writing, and reserving the printing until maps and posters have to be lettered - usually in the third grade.

Miss Mae Carden and Mrs. Priscilla McQueen, two of our panelists, also favor cursive writing.

One of the first questions we ask is: Did he start from the very beginning with the manuscript writing? And did he start by saying the names of the letters rather than the sounds? If both of those answers are "yes," we know that we can teach him to read in a reasonably short time -- let's say between 50 and 90 hours of concentrated effort -- if we use a phonetic, alphabetic approach.

DR. LAWLOR: Thank you very much, Mrs. Lindley.

Our next speaker is well known to all the members of the Reading Reform Foundation, and I'm sure also well known to our guests here today. She is Director of Speech and Education at the Cerebral Palsy Center, LaSalle, Illinois. She also does remedial reading and speech therapy herself in schools. I present to you Mrs. Priscilla Luetscher McQueen.

MRS. MCQUEEN: I became much interested in finding out how the sight-reading method started, and I undertook a research project on its history. It developed that the experimental research that was done actually confirms the value of phonetics. The first experiments were made with college students and fifth and sixth graders, and they discovered that these fifth and sixth graders and college students read in whole words and phrases. Their eyes jumped across the page, resting momentarily at intervals. The length of the interval and the width of span depended on the difficulty of the material. The experimenting showed that no matter how difficult the material whole words were seen - but difficult or new words caused a hesitation as the eye picked out the word. One very interesting conclusion from this is, since it was the beginning research, obviously all of these students had been taught by one phonetic method or another.

One other thing that I should like to emphasize is that the modern "readers" certainly talk down to the children and don't challenge them in any way. Half of the vocabulary that a child needs for conversing for the rest of his life develops between the ages of two and five. Between five and six, all of the rest of the conversational language that he will need for his lifetime develops. By the time he's six years old, the average child has a vocabulary of 6,000 to 12,000 words. He understands 25,000 words.

Now, there's a little catch in this. The child in his easy-going type of language can converse in an adult manner, but when it comes to the fine meanings of words, he begins to run into trouble and this is where your academic language

comes in and why you send a child to school, and why you want him to progress into the finer meanings of expression. His "readers" should be directed toward this end.

When a child learns to read, he has a process to go through. First of all, the language that he hears is taught to him by the interpretation of speech. Reading is the interpretation of written speech. He sees a combination of letters. He must connect this reading picture with the auditory interpretation or the auditory values, and then he must make a mental picture. Thus he must associate a mental picture with an auditory picture.

Now, this is easy enough to do if you don't have very complicated language. So comprehension should be easy at this point, but it isn't. As this progresses, he has to develop a more academic comprehension of the written word, and very often this leads to trouble in the understanding of the written page, if basic words have not been taught well enough - such as the meanings of the words of, would, etc.

As far as testing is concerned, there is a new test on the market called the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistics which tests, first of all, the ability to understand what is spoken, and, secondly, the ability to express. The test is divided into nine different parts which test various combinations of auditory and visual association, auditory and motor and visual and motor.

While at this time the test is not too satisfactory, I do think it is going to be of value because it is mostly done with photographs and associations. For example, on one page they have a saw. On the second page there are pictures of four items from which to choose. You're supposed to pick out the similar object - in this case a coping saw. But the photograph doesn't show the teeth on the second saw. I think that any child who would see the two saws together would be able to pick it out, but because of the poor photography, it miscues, and the children therefore miss the thing that they're supposed to pick out. I find this is true pretty much throughout the whole test.

It goes to nine years of age. Eventually, I think that it will be worked out into a satisfactory test.

I took the test myself. Since it only went to nine years of age, I figured I should in its present form make a perfect score. But I "flunked." So naturally I felt there were some things that had not been adequately presented.

I myself do very little testing, nor do I allow my cerebral-palsied children or my remedial reading children to be tested. There are no adequate tests for these children at the present time, and if you let the state test them with their regular program, or send them your test results, you are going to have your children labeled mentally deficient and uneducable. I do run a few tests myself, mostly observation tests, but I do not allow the State to have any of the information until I feel the child is ready for testing, or until I have worked long enough with the child to realize that he will pass the test. In this way they are more likely to get help for their education. Otherwise they may not qualify because they are considered uneducable.

Also, I have been forced to use some testing for my remedial reading students in the public schools. We've used the Iowa Tests and the Stanford Achievement Tests, the Metropolitan Test, and many of the Comprehension Tests. I prefer to use Gray's Oral Reading Test, which has been revised. It is an adequate test for two reasons: First of all, the child has to read aloud. Secondly, there are no pictures and it is completely a recall mechanism, with no recognition.

The Comprehension Tests that are on the market today all have multiple choice. This is not recall. This is only recognition. It is much easier to recognize an answer than it is to recall it.

For instance, take this example from your own experience. Somebody will say something to you, and you say, "Oh, I'd know that if I saw it." This is not your own assimilated information. This is somebody else's information that he has given to you and you recognize it. This is one of the big failures in the tests today. They are all multiple choice, some with pictures and some without, but the answer is there and you have only to recognize it. This does not involve expression of any kind.

I would like to see some tests developed that would test real comprehension, because Gray's Oral Reading Test has to be given individually, and we do need to have some kind of test that a teacher can give to a class. The teacher after all simply hasn't the time to test each child individually. What are the other 34 in the class going to do if she has to test one at a time? She needs the help of a good test that uses recall and not recognition, and one that can be administered to a whole class at once.

DR. LAWLOR: Thank you very much, Mrs. McQueen.

I want now to introduce to you one of the real optimists that belongs to our organization, - Fred B. Parker. He is the Principal of Nathaniel Rochester School, #3 in Rochester, New York, which is 96% colored. Mr. Parker has been there for twenty-five years, and four years ago he decided to do something about the reading problem.

MR. PARKER: Thank you, Dr. Lawlor.

A so-called expert - on progressive education particularly - came to my school sometime ago and observed what we were doing in reading. She said: "Fred, I don't know how you get these results, but it's not the way to do it." So I was much interested to find out what was the correct way to do it.

I went to one of the schools which is in New York State, and at that time this expert arranged for one of the teachers to give a demonstration lesson -- a model of the progressive method of teaching reading.

I'm not going to tell you all that I saw, but I should like to give you just one little incident. The teacher, I should like to say, is excellent. I should be happy to have her on my staff.

There were twenty teachers to observe this model lesson. The teacher was giving these children a fine bit of entertainment but I couldn't find very much in-depth teaching.

She had three groups in her class. This was a slow second grade. She had fifteen chairs at the front of the room and there was a little gap -- a door

effect. She stood at this gap and said: "Boys and girls, I'd like to invite this group to come to my reading house. I'm going to have a reading party." So the children came up and as they came in, she shook hands with every one of them. She had talked with all of them before that a great deal, but she shook each of their hands and said, "I'm so glad that you came to my reading house. Won't you have a seat?" And she did so to fifteen children, and that took up seven minutes; I timed it.

Then she got going with her lesson. They were going to talk or read about a rooster, and she brought from behind her chair a puppet of a rooster. She asked: "What does a rooster say?" And several of them tried to imitate a rooster. This turned out to be quite a game that took about two minutes of time.

Then she asked, "Does this make you think of a little song that we have sung recently?" Yes, they all remembered that they had sung a song "The Little Rooster and the Sun." And so she asked: "Would you like to sing it?" Then they took a couple of minutes more to sing about the rooster.

The reading lesson hadn't begun yet, you see, and yet the time was flying away: I was looking at my watch. Finally, because the school had emphasized the fact that <u>they were teaching phonics</u>, she said, "When you pass out of my reading house, just take a look at the bulletin board over there. It has ai on it and you should remember that that says ai." And that was the teaching of phonics in that group for the day!

The children read rather hesitatingly. They were slow children. After she got through, she said, "I'm so glad that you came to my reading party today." Then she went over to this so-called door and shook hands with them again, and added, "I hope you will come again tomorrow." They bowed and scraped and were having a wonderful time, but I don't think they had learned many independent reading skills that day.

If this is a sample of progressive education, is it any wonder that we have great numbers of boys and girls who do not know how to read and drop out of school because of it?

They had a discussion meeting after this lesson, and the expert asked: "Wasn't that the nicest lesson you ever saw?" I choked, but didn't say anything. One teacher inquired: "How far will these children get in their readers by the end of the year?" The expert replied: "Oh, that doesn't make the slightest difference as long as they feel happy and secure and are well adjusted."

I wrote this expert afterwards, and quote some of my remarks:

"As far as I could see, there was no depth teaching; more entertainment than work. I shudder to think what will become of those poor children ten years from now. They are the potential drop-outs of tomorrow, and there will be many, to the great detriment of our country. We, as educators, must shoulder this responsibility.

"I do remember these people were rated slow, but how do we know how much these little people can do? Children are known to have more potential than tests indicate. There should be an upgrading of the reading program in the State of New York, and in the United States.

"The schools that are experimenting with reading lack your help and encouragement, which, if given, would put this City on the map educationally and it would also make a name for yourself."

Now, I didn't want to be rude to that lady, but I did want to tell her what I thought about it. I never received an answer to my letter; there was only a quiet brush-off with stony silence.

You asked me to tell you about the results in our school. I suppose I am partial, but I do know that these children are learning how to read. A visiting mother wrote this to me:

> "I wish to thank you for the graciousness in allowing me to observe the reading program Tuesday morning. The enthusiasm and pleasure of the children, their poise and fluency in reading, and their obvious comprehension should have been an eye opener. The surprisingly small number of errors the children made were, I feel, a natural part of the learning process and of quite a different nature from the errors I have observed children make when taught by the so-called whole-word approach."

Now, that's one parent's opinion. Let me give you the opinion of our Research Department. They have studied our results, and this is a sentence which tells what we are doing: "The prodigious growth in reading achievement at #3 School would seem to warrant continued careful observation of this reading program."

That is all that I want to say, except one thing more. I have been in the Rochester schools -- at #3 School -- for 25 years. Before many years I am going to retire. We have parents in Rochester who would love to have their children taught this way, but they are helpless.

That is my problem. When I leave, where can they get help? They are going to need encouragement from this organization or from some other source.

DR. LAWLOR: Thank you very much, Mr. Parker.

The last member of our panel is an internationally known authority in the field of reading, and probably has come the farthest, to be with us today. It is Mrs. Romalda B. Spalding, of Hawaii.

MRS. SPALDING: Reading reform, as I see it, is founded on the proposition that our written language should be taught to children by its phonics, - by teaching them the connection between its spoken sounds and the written letters that represent those sounds. English is a phonetic language. The I.T.A. project is founded on the very opposite thesis; that English is so non-phonetic that therefore a new and simple phonetic writing is required for beginners.

The Augmented Roman Alphabet, or I.T.A., method of teaching beginning reading is based on the idea of having only one letter or character as the written symbol for each of the 44 most common sounds used in spoken English. Thus it is strictly a phonetic method, but only one-third of its phonograms agree fully with the phonograms of English spelling. Children spend from one to three years learning to write and read in this special, and I might add, unduly complicated, alphabet. After learning this newly invented written language, they must be taught to discard 2/3rds of it, and substitute the normal phonograms and spelling of English.

If and when they can adjust to this major changeover, then only can they accurately write, spell and read English.

The I.T.A. method experimental classes were started in England in 1960-61. Three years is certainly too short a period to teach it and then to prove that most children can successfully convert it into normal English. The claim is that after one to three years working in the 44-letter alphabet the conversion to English phonograms should be easy. Possibly so for some children, but I am certain that many would find it a long and confusing task. Most teachers will agree that it is a harmful mistake to teach young children anything which they must soon be told to discard as being incorrect.

The only gain claimed for this I.T.A. excursion into a newly invented, complex alphabet is that children can read and write it more easily and sooner than they can English. I have good reason to doubt that, provided that English is properly taught by straight phonics. One report by the I.T.A. promoters is that their top first graders in one group became able to read fourth grade material in the I.T.A. alphabet. During the past 12 years, using my method of direct English phonics, our more able first graders read fourth grade stories, but even the slowest were able to read. What is equally important, the spelling first grade scores by June usually show a fourth grade median on tests such as the Stanford Achievement. The Lincoln, Massachusetts public schools use my method and two recent reports in the Chicago Tribune state that 74% of the nine-year-olds at Lincoln made spelling scores in the top 10% in the nation, and none were below grade on an Iowa test. First graders using my method are taught to spell about 750 words by writing them from the teacher's dictation; and even the slowest read several times that many. I have taught classes in all of the elementary grades, and for the last 18 years have taught classes of teachers my method of teaching in the classroom, spelling, writing, and reading as related subjects. We who have taught so many beginning classes in these three subjects, by direct and full phonics of English, believe it to be wrong to teach a new and complex alphabet, which must confuse and delay the child's basic education in conventional English.

If reading the I.T.A. material is judged solely against the reading of English when taught by the prevailing method still used in most schools, it should compare very favorably. There still remains, however, the problem of learning written English.

I have read statements that English is hopelessly non-phonetic; even only 20% phonetic. If properly studied and taught, our language is, in fact, almost completely phonetic, or regular. By "regular," I mean its spelling follows simple rules. By actual count, only 66 of the most used 1000 words are not fully phonetic or regular. Ninety-four percent are spelled by some 70 basic phonograms or in accordance with the rules of English spelling.

Teachers and other educators, however, are only beginning to learn that English is a truly phonetic language and that there are simple reasons or rules explaining the spelling of nearly all words. It should be taught that the written language is simply a way of putting the sounds in the spoken words into writing. Its spelling follows definite patterns. What is even more useful is that children starting in school, can and do very quickly learn and use these phonograms and rules, if taught by a teacher who has studied them herself. My experience is that a teacher needs about forty hours of serious study to qualify for this teaching. So few have had any real training in the techniques of teaching phonics. Some techniques we have found to be most important, and the method and order of teaching these can be briefly stated. The key to the mastery of reading and writing English is spelling. When a child can correctly write a word, from the teacher's dictating it, he can usually read it at a glance. Therefore, it is of prime importance to concentrate on written spelling, and to make clear always that writing and the printed language are only a means of putting on paper the sounds that are used in saying words. Beginners need training in the physical techniques for good handwriting, practicing with, and saying, the first 54 phonograms given in my book, The Writing Road to Reading. They then begin writing words which are taken in the order of their frequency of use in English. When a word that has a non-phonetic part

comes up, it is taught at once. (In the first 300 words, of, one and said are the only ones that have non-phonetic parts.)

It is of great value to teach spelling in one way; the teacher says the word, and the class says each of its phonograms just before writing them and then reads the word aloud. This technique employs together every doorway into the mind of each child, his hearing, the kinesthetics of both speaking and writing, and then his seeing, as he reads aloud what he has just written. No other way fixes a word so soon and so securely in the child's sight vocabulary, and no better way is known for overcoming the very common tendency to reverse or confuse the left to right sequence of English writing. It is also important to point out and teach the simple rules that usually control English spelling, as they are met in writing words. These rules, for example, explain the five kinds of silent final "e's," when to write ei instead of ie, how to form plurals and verb endings, and simple facts such as that English words do not end in the letters j or v and almost none with u. Even the most common and shortest words are best taught first by this phonic analysis because this builds the habit of mentally applying the child's knowledge of phonic and spelling rules, i.e., of reasoning out the sound of all new words the child may read or wish to write. Once he knows a word, he need never again analyze it by phonics, but he has the tools with which to decipher new words. Soon he can read and write without much help. Each one can advance at his best ability and class reading aloud can use even from the beginning, well written, interesting stories that educate, rather than books with highly controlled, limited vocabularies. The phonograms are taught in the spelling lessons. The reading lesson is centered on meaning. Oral spelling is not used because it means naming the letters, and only five ever say their names in English words. It is better to identify an individual phonogram by saying all its common sounds, in the order of their frequency of use. It is found unnecessary and harmful to list the several spellings of any one sound, except five spellings of the sound "er."

One of the very valuable gains from this strictly phonic method is the training in clear, accurate pronunciation. Slovenly speaking becomes unnatural.

I know that most adults greatly underestimate the remarkable ability of the average five and six-year-old to learn and to reason. We find children easily learn and use the direct phonics of English and the rules of spelling when we teach them through writing from the spoken word, and use all the avenues to their eager minds.

In conclusion, I think there is no need at all to exclude children from normal English and to teach them instead the strange 44-letter I.T.A. alphabet, and thereby risk the confusion that follows when they must try to drop it and learn the English phonograms. If the phonics and rules of English are well taught from the beginning, all children learn a facility with the basic elements of the language which is on average, one, two and more years ahead of those taught by the methods now prevailing, as regards this basic part of education.

The teaching of conventional English must be done scientifically. I have not seen that I.T.A. has that problem's solution at hand. I.T.A. seems to add to, and to postpone, the real job.

DR. LAWLOR: Thank you very much, Mrs. Spalding.

* (At the request of Mr. Godfrey Dewey, Vice President of the Lake Placid Club Education Foundation, we append here a summary of the comments of Pitman i/t/a Publications, Inc. on Mrs. Spalding's remarks):

> "In Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, well over half of the first grades transferred to our regular alphabet after nine months of i/t/a - and at an advanced reading level. Only when the children are either very young or immature will it take them longer than the first grade year to master i/t/a and transfer to our regular alphabet. No evidence to date, either from British or American i/t/a projects, indicates that the transition period proves to be a problem to any child. Just as a child does not unlearn walking in order to learn to run, so he does

not unlearn i/t/a. i/t/a is the only alphabet specifically designed as a transition alphabet, with the changes to our regular alphabet prepared for all the way. Examples of creative writing from both Britain and America show that the transition period causes no problem for the child in his spelling - first in i/t/a/ and then in t.o. - properly.

"The researchers in America and England have made it clear that results to date must be viewed as tentative - - that it will be many years before the full impact of i/t/a and its various effects on writing, attitudes, curriculum, etc. can be fully seen and measured. However, three entering classes in some English schools have now begun i/t/a and have transferred out of i/t/a. Each succeeding class has duplicated the results of the past class. In other words, the project has been repeated three times with identical results. This is significant.

"i/t/a has so far not been shown to either confuse or delay; on the contrary, it tends to support and advance the child's basic education in conventional English. We find that we can go far beyond the most frequently used words, or the most basic 1,000, and the child can cope with - in reading and in writing - any word in his speaking vocabulary. There are no limitations in his ability to communicate. No confusion exists in the i/t/a classes as they transfer to our normal English alphabet."

In closing the panel discussion, I would like to leave a little word-picture with you. A great man once said a man rises from bondage and he seeks liberty. From liberty comes independence. From independence comes abundance. From abundance comes indolence. From indolence comes apathy, and from apathy comes bondage and the cycle has been completed.

I would like to suggest to you, ladies and gentlemen, you have been privileged to hear people from all corners of this great land of ours, - individuals who know

not the meaning of apathy, who have long ago forsworn the indolence that might lead to it, and who are devoting themselves to the welfare of the children of this nation in order that these may take advantage of the opportunities that will be presented to them in education and otherwise, and thus enjoy the abundance of this great nation of ours and theirs,which is their heritage, for all their lives.

I now turn the meeting back to our President, Mr. Watson Washburn.

MR. WASHBURN: Thank you very much, Dr. Lawlor, for a most interesting discussion.

We are very happy to be able to tell you that this is the largest collection of phonetic experts that has ever been gathered together in the history of education, so far as I know, in this country, or even in the whole world. You have heard a few of these experts, and there are many others present here.

Now, Dr. Max Rafferty is going to conclude our meeting. He is not only an outstanding educator and author, but he has been a valiant fighter in the cause of good education and is winning his fight. He is a great inspiration to us all.

It gives me great pleasure to present Dr. Max Rafferty, Superintendent of Public Instruction and Director of Education of the State of California.

DR. RAFFERTY: That's a formidable title, isn't it? It reminds me of my old alma mater, University of California at Los Angeles. Fortunately, we were able to use initials, and when it came time to get out there on the field for the old team and cheer them on to victory, it was much more convenient to shout out with a mighty "UCLA" rather than University of California at Los Angeles. It would have been quite a mouthful and would have taken up most of the game time.

As I suppose you know, I have long been in favor of the predominantly phonetic approach to the problem of teaching reading and spelling. I have worked with phonics and have observed it in action for more than twenty years, and I'm satisfied that it should be the strong foundation of any instructional program.

It's always difficult to tell whether things that happen to us are typical of the things that happen to other people. I suppose that a doctor, confronted in one

and the same day with ten cases of bubonic plague, would get pretty panicky. He would assume, rightly or wrongly, that his office was representative of many other doctors' offices throughout the nation, and that therefore the country was headed for an epidemic of the Black Death.

But there is a statistical possibility, remote but real, that through some weird coincidence the only ten new cases of this ancient disease in the entire land had somehow come together in our doctor's office on the same day. The doctor's dilemma - to quote Mr. Shaw in quite a different context - would be to determine which possibility was in fact the reality. Unless he could somehow get at the truth, he would have to face two equally unpalatable alternatives: first, to set off a possible false alarm, or second, to ignore the whole situation.

Since this is the case, you can imagine how relieved I was the other day to come upon a lengthy report written by the National Council of Teachers of English. For quite a while, you see, I had been in the exact position of our hypothetical doctor, except that what was perplexing me was how on earth I was managing to hire so many terrible English teachers.

I almost succeeded for a time in persuading myself that I was becoming tiresomely picky. I kept telling myself that the subjunctive was probably a lost cause anyway, and that it didn't really matter that none of my new hires had ever heard of it. After all, I mused, Justin McCarthy's play would probably have gone over just as well if his Francois Villon had gone around declaiming, "If I was King!" And hadn't minstrel Christie, more than a century ago, come right out and shouted, "I wish I was in Dixie!"? No, I decided, I was not going to bleed and die for the conditional use of the word "were."

However, there was the comma fault. I had to strain pretty hard to swallow inter-office memos from some of my English teachers which contained whole strings of normally self-sufficient, sturdily independent sentences connected by nothing more than weak, much-put-upon little commas. I had been schooled under the stern tutelage of instructors who had taught me marked respect for the semicolon and

period, but for the ubiquitous comma merely the same condescending patronage that one reserves for a watery-eyed in-law who has recently taken to drink. Yet here were credentialed and supposedly qualified English instructors raising the lowly comma to heights of dizzy eminence, and substituting it wholesale for virtually every other punctuation mark known to man, with the possible exception of the asterisk.

The case of the confused conjugations was the last straw. When I heard a ninth grade "language arts" teacher one day inform her class that Jim Hawkins had been laying at the bottom of the apple barrel, I went into my office, closed the door, and sat silently for quite a while, just staring into space. I was busy, if the truth were known, mentally conjugating the verbs "to lie" and "to lay," with special attention to that tricky past-perfect tense. It was no use. My memory was not at fault, nor was my recollection of old Miss Barker in the fifth grade, where I had learned my verbs originally. Yet something was obviously very wrong.

I was confronted, you see, with the doctor's dilemma. Was my school unique? Was there something balefully magnetic about my professional personality which was attracting to my staff the only English instructors in the country who didn't know how to speak or to write English? Or was I witnessing a national catastrophe which within a measurable period of time would result in all of us gaily discussing the way our particular brand "tastes good like a cigarette should"?

Into this mental smog of mine, then, there drove like a stiff and welcome breeze the report of the English Council. Some of the statistics were fascinating. I had never known, for example, that half the people teaching high school English had never majored in English while they were in college. This piece of information conjured up all sorts of speculations. Who were the other half? Mechanic-arts specialists? Agriculture majors? I decided that I had better send for some of my staff's college transcripts, although I didn't quite see what I could do about it if I found that all my English teachers had majored in fly-casting.

I'll have to confess, too, that I hadn't the slightest idea that only seventeen percent of our colleges require a course in grammar of their students who are preparing to teach high school English. This jibed with my own sad experience with teachers who didn't know a split infinitive from a dangling participle. I had been wondering of late why any suggestion of mine to my English Department that our courses contain units in grammar and syntax had been meeting with the same sort of averted glances and embarrassed clearing of throats which are usually reserved for off-color jokes at a church picnic. Now I knew why.

Other statistics found me a little better prepared. I was armored against the fact that one-fourth of all our high school graduates who take college entrance exams flunk the English portion. From my own observations, I was only surprised that the percentage wasn't considerably larger. That more than two-thirds of America's colleges and universities currently find it necessary to offer "bonehead" English to incoming freshmen came as no shock to me. I was only too aware of the "me-Tarzan-you-Jane" literary level of a good many of my own students, and thoroughly ashamed that I had somehow been unable to do more about it.

The Council's Report, in short, left me simultaneously relieved and dismayed - relieved that the laws of statistical probability had not been suddenly reversed just for little me, but dismayed that the subject which I have loved and taught for more than twenty years is in such a parlous state throughout the land. For English, above and beyond all other educational skills and competences, is the great prerequisite to everything else. Without mastery of its essentials, the historian cannot write his monographs nor the astronomer describe his novae. The physicist is limited to mathematics, and the biologist to color movies of fruit flies, unless somewhere along the line they have subjected themselves to the discipline of the mother tongue. Their findings remain parochial, and their influence limited.

The English language, tempered and honed over the centuries, is our most precious cultural inheritance. All of Chaucer's plenty, all of Shakespeare's fancy,

all of Churchill's thunder are woven into the shimmering tapestry which has been proudly passed from one generation to the next. It hangs upon the walls of the English-speaking world like a great web of dazzling light, coruscating with a million radiant hues, shedding its rays of wit and wisdom and warmth and wonder over the greatest and the least of us who speak the tongue of Milton and Macaulay, Holmes and Hawthorne. Few of us in any century are privileged to contribute to the weaving of the web; all of us have the right of a common heritage to enjoy, to understand, to love this living legacy out of our great past. And this we cannot do unless we are taught in school to read it and to respect it.

The problem has its roots in the first grade. Under the influence of Progressive Education, the first experience of the six-year-old with the language which is his proper birthright is apt to be a somewhat shattering one. It is the duty and the delight of the first grade teacher to open for her charges the great, massy door of Reading, to give them at least a glimpse of the marvels and the vistas which abound upon the farther side. Too often, through no fault of the dedicated, devoted teachers who must use the keys provided by their books, their supervisors, and by their training institutions, the door stubbornly resists unlocking.

Consider with me, if you will, the so-called Configuration-Contour method of teaching reading.

Prior to about four thousand years ago, the only way that anyone could learn to read was to memorize the designs of thousands of different pictures, and practice reproducing these pictures on papyrus. This was the method originated by the ancient Egyptians, and immortalized upon the walls of innumerable pyramids and temples. It required a far above average intellect, and produced finally a class of scribes and priests whose task it was to interpret the sacred writings to the illiterate multitude. Only a few could master the intricacies of reading and writing.

Finally the Phoenicians, who were a trading people and eminently practical, invented an alphabet. They had to have some sort of short cut so that even rough

sailors and merchants could make out bills of lading, and read receipts and purchase orders. Hieroglyphics were just no good for this sort of thing. But letters, each with its own sound, could be combined into different words for all the world like interchangeable parts in a factory assembly line. And anyone above the low-grade moron level could learn to read and write. Ever since the Phoenicians, the people of the Western World have used the alphabet, and taught their children to read by memorizing the few letters and their various sounds.

It remained for the Progressive Educationists to resurrect hieroglyphics. The teacher will arm herself with a rather large "flash card" on which will be a picture of a monkey with his tail hanging down one side of the card. Under the picture will be printed the word "monkey." Now, previous generations of Americans would have tackled the problem by first learning the alphabet and the possible sounds of each letter. Next, they would have learned how to combine letters into syllables, discovering in the process that the first syllable in the particular word under discussion can be used also in many other words, including delightful ones like "money." Finally, they would have combined "mon" and "key" and that would have been that.

But not under the Configuration-Contour method. Here the child will gaze hypnotically at the flash card in order to memorize the <u>appearance</u> of the word. Then he will close his eyes and try to remember how the word looks. The next step is to draw a picture of the word on paper with his pencil. He practices "drawing" the word until it is at least recognizable to the teacher. Finally he is given certain "clues" to help him remember what the word looks like. The word "monkey," for instance, starts out on a plateau, with the first three letters of equal height. Then comes a mountain peak in the middle, and a tail hanging down at the end just like the tail on the monkey. As a result, every time the child comes across a six-letter word with a plateau at the beginning, a mountain peak in the middle, and a tail hanging down at the end, he knows that the word will be "monkey."

Doesn't he?

Oh, it's perfectly possible to learn to read under this "look-say" system, as it is popularly called. A lot of children do - a good many, alas, not very well, but enough to get by. But there's one thing for certain: they will never, in a thousand years, learn how to spell worth a plugged nickel.

So if you have been wondering lately why Johnny writes "them" for "then" pretty consistently, and why Mary persists in confusing "sock" with "sack," wonder no more. After all, the "contours" of these words are identical, aren't they?

And if you've been idly concerned with why the new generation seems to be handicapped verbally, and why it seems to possess - by and large - a pretty inadequate vocabulary, I suggest that you concern yourself instead with the method of teaching reading in the primary grades of your own school district.

Now don't go barging in and raising Hades with your teachers. They are teaching the way they have been taught to teach. Raise whatever you want to raise with their supervisors, their textbooks, and above all with the teacher training institutions - the colleges and universities which go blindly on, year after year, turning out primary instructors who have never been taught to teach reading phonetically. Oh, they've been taught the disadvantages of the Phonics approach - the undeniable fact that vowels may have several different sounds, that combinations of certain consonants like "gh" may be pronounced three or four different ways, and so on. But when these disadvantages have been conceded, the fact still remains that the vast majority of English words do follow phonetic rules.

It's easier, quicker, and more efficient to learn to read through a predominantly phonetic approach than through any other. That, incidentally, has been true for roughly four thousand years.

Let's hasten to add that there are some children who seem to respond better to one or more of the other reading methods. For them, the teacher should keep a variety of reading techniques in her instructional arsenal. She should be prepared to teach reading from several angles, but always remembering that a firm base of Phonics is essential for the vast majority of her pupils.

As the child leaves the primary level and starts up the ladder toward junior high school, he comes face to face with the problem of reading material. It's been an open secret for some time now that Ivan Ivanovich exposes his kids to roughly three times as many reading words in the first grade as does Uncle Sam. By the time most European children get to be twelve years of age, they are familiar with literary allusions, grammatical constructions and historical figures which would puzzle most of our high-schoolers. They are reading classics while our kids are reading pap.

You don't believe me? All right, let's try a little experiment.

"Ah," you say, "but surely my children (or grandchildren) are different. They've gotten good grades in school. They know more than you think."

Let's see. Try this experiment on your own children, or on your nephews and nieces. Better still, try it (if you can safely get away with it) on the neighbor's children. This last is by far the most satisfying way. And let's try it first on the sixth graders, shall we? Because in most states they represent the end product of elementary school education.

Get sixth grade Johnny in off the Little League diamond for a few minutes. Stand him in front of you, with his soiled sneakers and his torn T-shirt. Ask him to tell you something about Charlemagne. Get him to give you the background of old Hannibal. Ask him what century Julius Caesar lived in, and who bumped him off, and why. Ask him who crossed the Delaware, and what he did when he reached the other side. See if he ever heard of James Madison or Theodore Roosevelt or Henry Clay. You're going to be mighty, mighty interested in Johnny's answers.

Then get sixth grade Mary in on the carpet, poor kid. See what she can tell you about Evangeline or Silas Marner or The Lady of the Lake. Ask her to quote for you just the opening lines of Paul Revere's Ride or The Charge of the Light Brigade or Old Ironsides. Get her to tell you something - anything - about The Village Blacksmith or The Wreck of the Hesperus or Hiawatha. She'll probably think you've gone right off your rocker.

But don't stop here. Ask the same questions of the first eighth grader you come across. See for yourself what our junior high schools are teaching. Last of all, ask an average graduating senior in high school. And when you recover from the shock, don't blame the youngsters. Or their teachers. Blame yourself - for permitting this sort of quasi-illiteracy to flourish unchecked in your own tax-supported schools.

I'm looking, as I speak, through a moderately elderly textbook. It was written back in 1886 and adopted by my home State as an elementary school reader. Apparently the vast bulk of the small fry read from it with great enjoyment eighty years ago. I just want to list some of the contributors to this basic reader - the men who wrote the material that the boys and girls were reading down in the grades in the days of Grover Cleveland. Here are a few of them: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, William Cullen Bryant, Lord Byron, Charles Dickens, William Shakespeare, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Sir Walter Scott, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Patrick Henry, Daniel Webster, Edgar Allan Poe, James Russell Lowell, Oliver Goldsmith, Bret Harte, Alfred Tennyson, and John Milton.

These names have held up pretty well during the intervening decades, haven't they? The consensus among literary authorities today would be that these writers have contributed significantly to the cultural heritage of the race. Grandpa and Grandma weren't so far wrong, were they, when they insisted through their state-adopted textbooks that their children be exposed to writing of such lasting value?

If you really want a traumatic shock, try these names on some sixth graders today. Or ninth graders. Or even the great majority of twelfth graders. But apparently Grandma and Grandpa learned to read this sort of beautiful, valuable, interesting material all right, didn't they? And don't let anybody tell you that Grandma and Grandpa weren't in school eighty years ago. They may have missed high school - a lot of them - but they were certainly in the grade schools.

A typical elementary reader these days will have stories by people who - to put it as charitably as possible - are not exactly in the same class as Charles

Dickens or Sir Walter Scott. Oh, let's be blunt about it. They are people whom no one ever heard of. They write stories with titles like The Attic's Treasure, How Billy Helped His Team, and A Brand New Job for a Tractor. The vocabulary words are monosyllabic, the characters are one-dimensional, and the plots are moronic.

What happened during the years which lie between these two examples? If you were to ask the reading consultants and the curriculum experts and the education professors who have called the tune for lo! these many years why our children today can't have the wonderful, magical, interesting material which the schools once made available to all, they would look pityingly at you with that insufferable air of condescending superiority and tell you that today's youngsters are just not "mature" enough to grasp such "advanced" material.

Well, why aren't they?

Whose fault is it that they're not?

Are the children in our schools today more stupid than they were eighty years ago? I don't believe it. You don't believe it. Nobody really believes it.

No, what these people mean is that they don't want the children exposed to the great children's classics because of two reasons:

(1) Deep down inside them, these Progressive Educationists have a profound contempt for "classics" of any kind; the very word has no meaning within the scope of their philosophy. They don't really believe that culture and learning and subject mastery are important at all -- compared of course to learning to work with hammers and saws and paint brushes and ceramics and "construction units."

(2) They are afraid these days, deathly afraid that within the foreseeable future everyone - not just a few lone voices crying in the educational wilderness - is going to find out how abysmally poorly the expensive, vapid readers and the "look-say" method

> and the so-called "experts" have prepared the children of the United States to tackle good, vital, rewarding, interesting books with real meat in them.

This is surely going to happen. Indeed, in many places throughout the nation, it is already happening. Meanwhile, we need better English teachers. I say this in the full knowledge that my own State has thousands of brilliant and competent instructors in this highly specialized field, and that every other state can boast its quota of excellence. But we have many thousands of English teachers who, unfortunately, are not this good. Indeed, as the National Council says, too many of them are "actually ill-prepared in English." Its report goes on to call the outlook "desperate," and who am I to argue with such an adjective applied to such a problem?

How are we to get these good teachers?

First, each state should require any teacher who is assigned to teach English to pass a comprehensive examination in the subject.

Second, all teacher training institutions should include a course in the teaching of English grammar which would be compulsory for all those graduates who will be credentialled to teach English.

Third, no school board should be permitted to assign a teacher to an English class unless he has had a college major or a minor in that subject.

Finally, a concerted effort should be made by the National Council and by everyone concerned with teacher training to advertise the needs and the rewards attendant upon the teaching of this, the most important of all subjects. Our best-qualified young people must not be lost to other fields when in reality their true vocation lies in the imparting of the marvel and the miracle of the mother tongue to the next generation.

It is the children who are, after all, the great pathetic losers in this process of cultural dry rot and erosion which has recently reached this evil eminence. It is the youth of the nation, condemned by the folly and fanaticism of years to travel through life along a darkened, featureless passageway, with

all doors closed, with blinders attached to their eyes, with the laughter and shouting of the heroes of childhood forever shut from their ears, with the glory and the tragedy which are the literary birthright of our race forever denied them.

The corridor down which they walk is lined with countless doors, once - long ago - left ajar by the wisdom of our ancestors, with golden shafts of blinding radiance shining through to catch the imagination of the boys and girls, and tempt them gently on to the opening of those doors, with all the wonder and the wisdom and the loveliness which lie beyond.

Too often, those doors are locked and barred today, and on their hinges the rust of many years. The corridor is dark and murky. The children stand at the threshold.

The choice and the future both are in the hands of the teacher of English.

MR. WASHBURN: That was a wonderful speech, as we might have expected from our great Dr. Rafferty, who is leading a grand crusade for better education in California. We are happy to have him here to help us in this part of the country.

We have a brief period for questions and answers.

QUESTION: How can we teach our children to read at home? I have an eight-year-old daughter who is now going into third grade, is taking remedial reading and is not catching on. Is there something that I can get to teach her at home?

MRS. WATSON: That is something that I do have in the home set, and also in this series that I spoke of that is appearing in the "Chicago Tribune." That will give you thirteen weeks of instruction. It will teach the child to read. If she doesn't read, she needs phonics.

QUESTION: Is it possible to obtain a copy of Dr. Rafferty's address?

DR. RAFFERTY: My long-suffering secretary back in Sacramento convinced me that there might be one or two requests. She has some copies. If you'd like to write me care of the Department of Education, Sacramento, I am sure she will send you one.

QUESTION: Mrs. Rubicam, how much does that projector cost that they used in the film in the Indian school?

MRS. RUBICAM: I don't know what those cost. They are standard equipment in Arizona. All of the classes have the overhead projector. I am sure they are easily available, but I do not have any idea of what they cost.

DR. RAFFERTY: There is a vast range in cost of the overhead projectors. I think they range from about $150.00 for the small ones to the large ones, which may go up to eight or nine hundred dollars.

QUESTION: Would Mrs. Lindley please comment on the relationship of reading problems and emotional problems?

MRS. LINDLEY: Well, some of the problems are really not emotional. They only seem to be. A child may become emotionally disturbed because he cannot read just as you and I may become frustrated by some problem which makes us emotionally disturbed.

We need the psychologists and the psychiatrists for really mentally disturbed people, but we don't need them for the child who is retarded only in reading and emotionally disturbed on that account.

QUESTION: The "look-say" method discourages a child from reading at home, and on the theory that reading readiness doesn't permit it until the child is five or six years of age, I would like to ask Dr. Rafferty: Is there any justification for that?

DR. RAFFERTY: The answer is, a child should be taught reading at home when the child exhibits a readiness and an interest in reading; and, secondly, by anybody who happens to be handy and knows how to read. I'm perfectly serious about this.

Our sister Republic to the South has a person-to-person teaching method where any ditch-digger will learn to read and will go out and teach his neighbor to read. There is nothing exotic or esoteric about teaching simple reading.

Now as to when the child should be taught. Anyone who has had a child or worked closely with little ones -- I am talking about three and four-year-olds now -- will know whether that child is ready because when you're reading fairy

tales or nursery rhymes, or whatever it is you decide to read to him, when that child looks over your shoulder and points to a word and says, "Cat, dog," this child is interested in letters and in words. He wants you to lead him gently on, and you must lead him as far as you can and as far as he wants to go.

You don't need to be afraid that you're spoiling it for the first grade teacher. I have been a first grade teacher. I'm probably one of the few men who ever taught a first grade class. I didn't do it very long, and I didn't do it very well, I hasten to add. But if the child comes along with a reading vocabulary and is way ahead of his class, the worst you're doing is inconveniencing the first grade teacher. You are not hurting the child.

If there is one thing we learn in education, it is to take the child where you find him and go as far as you can with him, and this applies at home as well as in school.

What is the alternative? When the child works with his building blocks, A, B and C, and puts them together and spells "cat," and when he is interested in the numbers on the calendar and all of these things which indicate reading readiness, you say, "No, you're only three. You have got to be six before you start to read." When he is six, he may be interested in something else. Take his interest where you find it. Don't worry that you are not a trained teacher. Of course, you won't teach him as well as a trained teacher any more than you can cook dinner as well as Oscar of the Waldorf can cook dinner. You're not a trained chef either. But are you going to wait to feed the child until a really trained chef becomes available? Of course not. You do the best you can.

QUESTION: I should like to ask two questions of Mrs. Johnson. I would like to inquire how rapport was established between the inquirer and the student, and then, did the child have the opportunity to read silently before orally?

MRS. JOHNSON: Those are two good questions. Was rapport established? I know this has come up many times at home and it is a legitimate question because this test-

ing is done in a very unorthodox fashion, and I agree, if I went through the playgrounds, got acquainted with the children, and played with them, before asking them to read, they might do a little better. But if you were there and saw how we handled it, I think you would feel that everything was done in fairness to the child. He is given privacy. I do not like other children to stand around and giggle or talk or distract the child. It can't be taken lightly. I try to treat them in a uniform manner. I encourage them in every way I can. I say, "That's good. Now let's try the next word." I feel the child is given an even break.

As to the second question, I did not instruct the child to read silently first because it is my opinion -- and I think many would agree -- that it is a reasonable request to ask a child after one or two or three years of schooling to pronounce three-letter words without previous rehearsal. To me this does not seem an outlandish request. The child is handed a card, and I say to him, "Hold this card, honey, for a minute while I introduce you on the tape." And while I'm saying "This is Child No. 10, six years of age" -- he has this card in his hand. Now, if he can read, he has the opportunity for silent reading. We try to be fair.

MR. WASHBURN: Any of you who have further questions can address them to my office, Reading Reform Foundation, 36 West 44th Street, New York 36, New York.

Thank you all for coming. I think we have had a useful meeting, and we look forward to early victory.

The Third Annual Conference of the READING REFORM FOUNDATION is now adjourned.