

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN AN EXPERIMENTAL READING PROGRAM GRADES 2-7

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of parental involvement in the reading program at home, while controlling the effects of teacher instruction and curriculum content within the school reading program. A major difference between this study and others reviewed herein is that comparisons of reading gains were made within class groups for children who were involved in a home reading program and children who were not involved in a home reading program, thus controlling teacher and school curriculum variables. The study addressed two questions: (1) Would children who regularly read to their parents at home and received coaching demonstrate better achievement on a standardized reading test than children who did not? (2) Can the relationship between intelligence and reading achievement be used to explain the gains in reading achievement which may be registered by children involved in a home reading program?

Eight class groups representing grades two to seven and consisting of a total of 190 students were used in the research. The students in each class group were arranged in order of performance using pre-treatment scores from a Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (1965). Then students in each class group were

assigned to either the experimental (home reading) group or the control (non home reading) group, using a method of controlled alternate assignment. The Otis-Lennon Mental Ability Test (1967) was also administered, with parental permission, to the students in the eight class groups so that the results could be used as a covariate measure with post-treatment reading scores obtained from another administration of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (1965).

Pre-testing of reading ability was carried out in February of 1985. Students were assigned as described above to experimental or control groups and the Otis-Lennon Test of Mental Ability (1967) was administered in September of 1985. Experimental intervention began, with experimental group children reading to parents at home, in October of 1985 and continued until February of 1986. Control group children were involved in math and spelling tasks at home during this period. Post-testing of reading ability was carried out at the end of February 1986. Analyses of data followed.

The experimental treatment had made a difference. This was indicated by the following observations:

1. Question one was answered by the fact that the difference in mean T-scores of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests (1965) for the experimental and control groups was greater after the experimental treatment had been applied than before; 2.92 T-scale points difference after treatment compared to 1.27 T-scale points difference before treatment.
2. Question one was also addressed by the analysis of covariance

which was conducted using Gates MacGinitie and Otis-Lennon test scores to answer question two of this research. An examination of tables 4 and 5 will show that a significant difference existed between Gates-MacGinitie scores for the experimental and control groups on the post-test measure which had not existed between the groups on the pre-test measure . ($P < 0.05$)

3. An analysis of covariance was conducted using Gates-MacGinitie and Otis-Lennon test scores. As expected there was a highly significant relationship between reading pre-test/post-test scores and Otis-Lennon scores. (Pearson's $r = .6145$)

Question two was answered in the affirmative by the fact that when the effects of I.Q. were statistically controlled a significant difference existed between post-test experimental and control group reading scores ($p < 0.05$) which had not existed at the beginning of the study.

The results of this study led to the conclusions that involving parents at home in listening to their children read and giving them support and encouragement does make a difference in the student's reading ability. This study supports the conclusion of similar earlier studies that I.Q. differences amongst subjects cannot explain differences in reading achievement gains that result from such a home reading program. Another important conclusion to be drawn from this study is that teacher and curriculum variables within the school cannot be used to explain differences in reading performance gains for experimental group subjects.

The results of this study also generated some recommendations for

parental involvement in reading programs and some suggestions for further research. Educators who are interested in the teaching of reading may wish to pursue these recommendations and suggestions further.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	11
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	lx
CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	1
Preamble	1
Why Have Parent Participation in the Reading Program?	3
How Have Parents Been Involved in Reading Programs?	5
The General Problem	14
Questions to be Answered by the Study	15
Definitions of Terms	15
II METHOD AND PROCEDURE	17
Setting	17
Subjects	17
Materials	19
Reading Achievement	19
Intelligence	20
Reading Materials	21
Experimental Design	21
Procedures--In Chronological Order	23
Tabulating Results	27
Verification of Scores	28
III RESULTS	29
Test of Research Question 1	29
Test of Research Question 2	31
IV CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	39
Conclusions Relating to the Results of Research Question 1	40
(a) Duration of the Study	41
(b) Novelty of the Study	41
(c) Energy and Commitment of School Staff	42

(d) Comparing the Vocabulary and Comprehensive Gains on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test Between the Experimental Group and the Control Group	43
(e) The Effect of Teacher Variables Upon the Results of Previous Studies in This Subject Area	45
Conclusions Relating to the Results of Research Question 2	46
Suggestions for Further Research	47
Concluding Statement to the Study	48
BIBLIOGRAPHY	50
APPENDICES	54
1. Letter to Parents	55
2. Suggested Parent Support Group Activities.....	58
3. Monthly Reading Newsletter	60
4. Reading Record Form	65

LIST OF TABLES

1.	Suggestions Most Frequently Made for Parent Reading Involvement	10
2.	Cell Sizes in Experimental and Control Groups at the Conclusion of the Research	19
3.	Population and Group Means for Gates-MacGinitie Pre-Test and Post Test Scores	30
4.	ANCOVA Total Reading Pre-Test. Gates-MacGinitie Scores as the Criterion Variable with Otis-Lennon I.Q. Scores as the Covariate	33
5.	ANCOVA Total Reading. Gates-MacGinitie Post Test Scores as the Criterion Variable with Otis-Lennon I.Q. Scores as the Covariate	33
6.	Population and Group Means for Gates-MacGinitie Pre-Test and Post-Test Vocabulary Scores	35
7.	Population and Group Means for Gates-MacGinitie Pre-Test and Post-Test Comprehension Scores	36

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Preamble

A recent trend in North American education has been for educators to try and get parents more involved in the formal school based education of their children. Leaders in education have taken steps to accomplish this by suggesting that schools host such things as "open houses", parent teacher interviews, and parent-teacher organizations. School boards have pursued this end by adopting policy that school administrators assume the responsibility of organizing these events and activities.

The underlying assumption that communication and involvement with parents will better facilitate learning in children is seldom questioned. The often stated cliches that, "the school is a product of the society", and that, "teachers and parents must form a partnership in the education of children", lead parents to generally accept the notion that they have a duty to take an interest in their child's education. For most parents and teachers, however, the involvement stops there.

Parents have always been a cheap source of manpower for noneducational endeavours within the school program. A wide variety

of extra-curricular activities would be nonexistent without parental help and limiting parents to this type of involvement in schools is acceptable to most parents and a large number of educators. Richek, List and Lerner (1983) made this position clear when they stated that, "... parents should not be expected to teach their own child to read" (p. 30).

The idea that teaching should be left to teachers can probably be attributed to the increasing demands of teacher certification and a feeling on the part of teachers that parents are laymen encroaching on a specialist's territory. The demands of time and money in teacher training are real enough but the idea that some magical skill is acquired in the teacher training process cannot be supported. This study investigated the premise that parents can be effective teachers of their children at home. Other studies which will be reviewed here have shown that children who read to their parents at home will demonstrate greater gains in vocabulary and comprehension ability over a given period than children who do not. This study was designed to retest that hypothesis while controlling the teacher variable, the different possible effects teachers might produce in student learning and achievement in any classroom experimentation. This has not been attempted in the research reviewed to date. Also, this study investigated the hypothesis that the influence of the child's I.Q. cannot completely explain the greater reading gains made by children who regularly read to their parents at home.

Why Have Parent Participation in the Reading Program?

Why do some educators want parents to become involved in the school's reading program? Bauch, Vletze and Morris (1973) categorized parent involvement in reading program into three general areas:

1. For the sole purpose of assisting parents in their role as educational facilitators for their children.
2. For mutual benefit to parents and to the educational program.
3. To support the educational program.

Until recent times educators were mainly concerned with the third category, that of gaining support for the educational program. Behavioural control and attendance at school are major prerequisites to learning. Teachers need direct parental help in these matters and in so doing they are getting parents closer to involvement in real educational issues. Perhaps the great majority of teachers and parents have yet to take the next step--direct parent participation in instructional programs.

For many years teachers have recognized the effect of home environment and preschool experiences on the acquisition of language. Bing (1963), and Brown and Deutsch (1965) identified a causal relationship between specific child rearing practices and language ability in children. Gordon (1972), Klein (1978), and Irvine (1979) supported the notion that parents' actions during preschool years significantly affect children's language acquisition and school performance. Chomsky (1972) identified five

specific stages of early language development and observed that the rapidity with which children move through these stages is determined by the socioeconomic status and the reading interests of the children and their parents. Anselmo (1978) reported on a number of studies which showed a positive relationship between oral language ability and reading ability. She theorized that children's ability to use receptive and expressive language influenced their learning to read. In a landmark study in 1963 Loban concluded that children who were deficient in oral language development almost invariably were retarded in reading development.

The results of these studies were seen by some as evidence that children came to school with an established predisposition to reading success or failure. Teachers often felt that this mould could not be broken. However, a small but growing body of research points to the fact that parents can play a very significant role in helping their children to become better readers by becoming involved in reading programs at home in an organized way.

McDonald (1976) concluded that no more than thirty-six percent of learning can be attributed to school teaching efforts. He analyzed the correlations of pupil achievement scores with academic aptitude estimates, socioeconomic factors and instructional factors in reaching this conclusion. If almost two-thirds of a child's knowledge is gained from the home and community it would seem essential for educators to capitalize on family resources to support school reading programs.

School personnel are also beginning to question the notion that the school is the centre of learning. Research in the British Isles and North America is producing some surprising results which have caused some researchers to question long held beliefs about the relationship between student reading achievement and I.Q., and the effects of involvement and instructions by non-teachers in the reading program.

How Have Parents Been Involved in Reading Programs?

Vast amounts of money, time and energy have been spent trying to improve the reading scores of children in inner-city schools in North America, often with limited success (Grimmett & McCoy, 1980). One explanation for this has been that children in these areas do not have the same level of reading experience at home as do children in suburban single family dwelling areas (McKinney, 1975). Some parents lack the knowledge and direction to help their children at home in acquiring academic skills. While this may be true to some extent it is not an insurmountable obstacle, as other studies cited here will clearly demonstrate.

Early research on parent involvement in the reading program showed that the parents' educational values and their reinforcement of school learning directly affected academic achievement (Bloom, 1965; Lavin, 1965). Recent research has similarly shown that parent involvement is directly related to their children's achievement at school (Evans, 1971; Shelton, 1973; Bronfenbrenner, 1974; Cassidy & Vukelich, 1978). Children who become successful readers usually come

to school with a varied background of experience and a vocabulary which has developed to match their experience. Children learn these basic language patterns from their families, usually in an unstructured way. Few parents embark upon a highly structured plan of instruction designed to teach their children to speak, yet most children learn to speak very adequately before they enter school. For reading instruction, however, some researchers have investigated the value of training parents to operate home reading projects. Sullivan and La Beaune, 1970; Crosset, 1972; Woods et al., 1974, and McKinney, 1975 found that home reading projects are more effective when parents have been trained to use specific teaching techniques than when they have not. These authors all point out that parents can, with training, help to improve their children's reading performance.

Other investigators of parental involvement in reading programs (Ketcham, 1967; Hubbard & Salt, 1975; Revicki, 1982) feel that the child's self-concept and social-emotional comfort with the family are critical factors in the success of home reading programs. Ketcham (1967) outlined the following negative views that low reading achievers and their families typically held:

1. Only eggheads like to read.
2. Reading is a feminine occupation.
3. College is only for those who can afford it.
4. Girls do not need a college education.

Admittedly these views have been modified somewhat over the past

nineteen years but the need for a strong self-concept and emotional security to facilitate efficient learning remains. Ketcham (1967) contends that parents are in a better position to nurture these qualities in their children than are teachers. Coons and Sugarman (1978) support this contention and feel that parents have a greater right than school personnel to make educational decisions affecting their children. However, one would have to bring into question the nature and scope of the decisions to be made and the degree of involvement of school personnel. Indeed, Caliguri (1970) found evidence to support the view that many administrators and teachers did not wish to give parents any further decision making powers in regard to "head start" programs in the United States of America. Given such warnings the point has been made that parents generally have closer social and emotional ties with their children than teachers do, and that these relationships can be used to advantage in home reading programs.

Concentration and memory are the prime prerequisites for learning and Gilmore (undated) found that both of these mental activities are inhibited by low self-concept and social-emotional insecurity. Gilmore noted that underachievers suffered from weak ego strength, while high achievers had strong egos, positive self images, feelings of personal worth, and high degrees of motivation. Parental involvement in home reading programs, even if parents have little or not training in reading education, tends to focus attention on the child, provides for practice and positive feedback

and builds involvement and communication between parent and child. Gilmore feels that changes in parental attitudes towards children can transform underachieving students into highly motivated, productive students. Chan (1981) found this to be true in his study of adolescents in Hong Kong. There, the parents' behaviour towards their children affected the children's achievement in reading and other verbal skills.

Wilby (1981) further supported this point in an article entitled "The Belfield Experiment", which appeared in the Sunday Times Weekly, in March of 1981. While the report lacks hard experimental data it does point to the observation by parents and teachers that parents -- not just middle-class, college-educated parents, but parents from all social classes-- can be more effective teachers of their own children than qualified professionals. In the Belfield Primary School in Rochdale, England, six to eight year olds had been taking home reading material and record cards for parents to sign and make notes on for three years prior to the report being written. Children read the material to a parent and parents received suggestions from the teachers as to how they could help their children during this reading. Wilby reports on the reactions of some mothers with children at the school. They were surprised when they were asked to help at home with reading because, "keeping parents at arms length is a tradition in English education". Wilby noted that it is widely believed that education should be left to the experts. The Belfield and other experiments challenge that

notion. The parent is emerging as the new hero although parents are not being trained to replace teachers.

A number of educators have surveyed the literature on parent involvement in school programs. Groberg (1969), Goodson and Hess (1975), Anselmo (1977), Gordon (1978), Becker (1982), and Becker and Epstein (1982) all found positive aspects to studies involving parents and their children's reading performance. Their findings could be summarized in the following points:

1. Parent involvement in school programs can have positive effects on children's achievement.
2. Parent involvement that is organized, sustained, and widespread will have an effect in increased academic performance of children.

Vukelich (1984) reports that, "A search of the professional literature from 1973 to 1983 revealed 37 authors who suggested 24 different activities parents could provide or behaviours they could model for their children" (p.472). She lists the most frequently made suggestions and notes that "'Read to your child," was naturally recommended most often" (p.472) (Table 1).

Table 1

Suggestions Most Frequently Made for Parent Reading Involvement

Activity or Behaviour	No. of times suggested, out of 24
Read to your child	22
Be a good literate model	14
Provide books, magazines, etc., for the child to read	13
Build a reading atmosphere at home (place, time, library area)	11
Talk and listen to your child	7
Exemplify a positive attitude toward reading, including praising your child for reading	7
Provide experiences for children that are reading related, e.g., library trips, or that can be used to stimulate interest in reading	7
Read environmental signs; capture reading opportunities in the environment	5
Provide contact with paper and pencil	4
Be aware of your child's interests	4
Point out similarity and differences in objects in the environment	4

These suggestions are largely based on intuition and experiences of teachers and while they can be observed to cause changes in reading ability and attitude they may be only indicators of other attitudes and values which exist in home environments and family relationships. Indeed, Vukelich (1984) further comments that Tobin's (1981) research suggests that being read to is not a predictor of success in reading when differences among children such as socio-economic status, kindergarten attendance, IQ, sex, etc., are statistically controlled. More scientific research is required before these variables and their influences can be understood.

Recently the work of Tizard, Scholfield and Hewison (1980, 1982) has produced some insights into the nature of parent participation in the reading program. Their 1980 research began with a pilot study conducted by Hewison in 1979 which involved structured open interviews with the parents of sixty-five children who were in their final year of infant school at two inner-city schools in London, England. The interviews covered topics such as children's play, discipline, leisure, reading to the child, and listening to reading. The reading attainment of the children was assessed using a standardized reading test. From this pilot study one question elicited replies which correlated very strongly with the child's reading attainment. This was whether or not the mother regularly heard the child read. Attitudes of parents which correlated with "coaching" (hearing a child read) produced better

readers.

A second study was devised by Hewison, et al. (1980) to further test this serendipitous finding. Thirty children from each of four junior schools participated in this study, which was similar in format to the pilot study though more refined in that aspects of the mother's language behaviour were assessed. Scores on a standardized reading test and an Intelligence test were obtained for sample children. Significant correlations were again obtained between a number of different aspects of home environment and reading achievement. As in the pilot study, the significant factor associated with reading success was whether or not the mother regularly heard the child read, not whether she read to the child. Hewison, et. al. (1980) reported, "As expected, a highly significant relationship also existed between reading scores and I.Q. in this study (Pearson's $r = 0.54$, $P < 0.001$). Also, coaching and I.Q. were strongly correlated. The point biserial correlation between the two was 0.37 , $P < 0.001$. Yet it was established that the I.Q. differences were insufficient to account for the superior reading attainment of children who had read to their parents and received some coaching from them". An interesting fact!

To further test these findings Tizard, Scholfield and Hewison conducted another study in 1982 which was designed to investigate the causal relationship between active parental help and reading performance. This study was conducted in six infant and junior schools in the London borough of Haringay. Planned intervention in

reading instruction was built into this study by having groups (classes) of children receive parent help at home and other groups receive extra teacher help, with these groups being matched with control groups. This study once again provided experimental findings showing a significant relationship between parents hearing their children read at home and improved reading achievement as measured by a standardized reading test. The researchers were quick to point out that they had no control over such variables as the quality of classroom teaching in reading and within-class comparisons of children who read and did not read to parents. Further research is needed if the variables that underlie the relationship are to be understood but this lack of understanding may not be important for most practical purposes. What is significant is that this type of intervention produces results and it does so without the parents having received any elaborate tutoring in techniques to be used when listening to their children read. Tizard, Schofield and Hewison (1982) summarized their findings in the following points:

1. Nearly all parents in innercity multi-racial schools can be involved in educational activities even if they are non-literate or largely non-English speaking.
2. Children who receive parental help are significantly better in reading attainment than children who do not.
3. Most parents express great satisfaction in being involved in this way.
4. Teachers reported that they found the contact with parents worthwhile.
5. Small group instruction in reading by specialist teachers did not produce reading improvement comparable with that produced by collaboration with parents.
6. Collaboration with parents was significant for children at all initial levels of reading attainment.
7. The fact that some parents could not read English, or not read at all, did not prevent improvement in the reading skills of their children.

The General Problem

The previously cited studies leave unanswered many questions. The effects of parental involvement in home reading programs have been clearly documented. The causes of observed changes in student reading performance have not been clearly established. The effects of I.Q., home environment, parental attitudes, developing better self concepts, and language development on reading achievement have all be investigated and their correlation with reading achievement,

In a variety of situations and conditions, has been described.

The present research sought to replicate parts of studies cited above, notably the works of Tizard, Schofield and Hewison (1980, 1982) with one significant difference. In the research that has been reviewed to date comparisons of the effects of parental involvement on student achievement have been made between class groups and schools. Comparisons have not been made within class groups. Therefore the teacher variable has not been controlled and this could be a major source of interference in relation to the comparison of academic test results for experimental and control groups. The present research sought to control the teacher variable by comparing children within class groups.

Questions to be Answered by the Study

1. Will children who read to their parents at home on a regular basis (5 - 15 minutes daily) and receive coaching demonstrate better achievement on a standardized reading test than children who do not read to parents at home?
2. Can the relationship between intelligence and reading achievement be used to explain the gains in reading achievement which may be registered by children involved in a home reading program?

Definition of Terms

Parental Involvement--having parents listen to their children read at home and monitor reading activity through a home/school record form.

Regular Home Reading

Having children read orally to their parents, at home, for 5 to 15 minutes a day, every day of the week.

Reading Achievement-- a standardized reading test score from the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test.

Parental Coaching--having parents provide positive reinforcement to children as they read, helping with vocabulary and reading concepts and generally discussing the reading material. Suggested procedures for coaching were made at the initial parent meeting and subsequent parent meetings. Newsletters also provided suggestions as to techniques that might be used (See Appendix 3). Suggestions were made as to the following:

1. Correcting word recognition errors.
2. Looking for signs of difficulty the child might have with the material chosen.
3. Discussion of the story as a volunteered activity by the child.
4. Provision of positive feedback to the child.
5. Discussion of the child's difficulties with the teacher rather than the child.

I.Q.-- the derived intelligence quotient score obtained from the Otis-Lennon Test of Mental Ability.

CHAPTER II

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

This study was designed to investigate the effects of parental involvement at home in the reading program while controlling the differing effects of teacher instruction and curriculum content within the school's reading program. Parents for brief periods of time heard their children read to them at home. Comparisons were made using Gates-MacGinitie reading test scores between experimental and control groups within class groups. Comparisons were also made between experimental and control group performance on the Gates-MacGinitie reading tests in relation to the children's mental ability as measured by the Otis-Lennon Mental Ability Test.

Setting

The study took place in Mackenzie Elementary School which is located in the townsite of Mackenzie 120 miles north of Prince George. The school is part of the Prince George School District in British Columbia. The township has a population of 7,000 and is based on the lumber and pulp processing industries.

Subjects

A total of 190 subjects was used in the research. With the exception of children who were repeating a year all children in

grades 2 to 7 in the school were eligible to take part in the study. Of the 190 subjects whose parents signed permission forms in September of 1985 to have them take part in the research, 156 were included in the final analysis of data in February of 1986. This represents an attrition rate of approximately 18% or 34 of the initial 190 subjects. The causes of this attrition will be further discussed in Chapter IV but the main cause of attrition was due to the continued non-return of reading record forms. Whenever an experimental group subject was lost, for any reason, the corresponding subject in the control group was eliminated. In this way the cell sizes always remained equal. A breakdown of cell sizes in the experimental and control groups at the conclusion of the research is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2
Cell Sizes in Experimental and Control Groups
at the Conclusion of the Research

Division	Grade	Expt. Grp.	Control Grp.	Total
1	7	8	8	16
2	6/7	11	11	22
3	5/6	8	8	16
4	4/5	11	11	22
5	4	10	10	20
6	3	10	10	20
7	2/3	12	12	24
8	2	8	8	16
Total		78	78	156

Materials

Reading Achievement. For the purpose of obtaining a variate and covariate measure of reading achievement in the areas of vocabulary and comprehension, pre-testing and post-testing was carried out using the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests (1965) at the following levels:

Primary B - Grade 2

Primary C - Grade 3

Level D - Grade 4, 5, and 6

Level E - Grade 7

The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test was selected for the following reasons:

1. Normative data existed for Canadian student populations.
2. Van Roekel, reporting in the Seventh Mental Measurements Yearbook, vol. I (1972) commented that, ". . . these tests probably function best as survey tests" (p. 1082). Powell, reporting in the Journal of Educational Measurement (1969) commented that, "As compared to other general reading tests, the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests would provide usable data on achievement in comprehension, vocabulary and speed" (pp. 3-10).
3. The test is used regularly by School District #57, Prince George, and teachers are very familiar with its administration and scoring.

Intelligence. The design of the study called for a measurement of intelligence to be used as a control in interpreting reading achievement gains which were made by the experimental and control groups. The Otis-Lennon Mental Ability Test (1967) was selected to provide that measure for the following reasons:

1. It was reviewed in Buros' Seventh Mental Measurements Yearbook, Vol. I (1972) by Milholland, who stated then that,

"The construction and norming of this test bespeak adherence to the highest level of current standards" (p. 370). Also, Milholland commented that, "The test correlates adequately with educational criteria and with other measures of general scholastic aptitude" (p.371).

2. The test is suitable for group administration.
3. Teachers needed only a short orientation session to make them feel comfortable with administering and scoring the test.

Reading Materials. Reading materials used in the project included a wide range of texts from basal reading series which have been authorized and approved by Ministries of Education for use in schools in North America. Reading materials from home, school, and public libraries were also used at the reader's and parent's discretion.

Experimental Design

The design of this particular study could be described as "quasi-experimental" (Campbell and Stanley, 1963). To account for prior differences among members of the experimental and control groups due to the lack of random assignment of subjects to these groups, pre-test scores on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test(1965) were used as a variate measure of reading achievement in subsequent data analysis. A graphic representation of the research design is presented below.

The Influence of Parental Involvement in the Reading
Program, Quasi-Experimental Research Design

190 students in

grades 2-7

Controlled alternate assignment of students in each class to experimental or control group using a class list of Gates-MacGinitie total test scores, arranged in order of performance. (High to Low--February 1985 scores.)

Timeline

September 1985

Exp. group

95 students

Control group

95 students

Notes

Gates-MacGinitie tests of reading are given at the request of School Board
Otis-Lennon test of Mental Ability will be given to all students with approval of the School Board/
Parent Consent
There is no experimental intervention in the school. Parents of experimental group children will provide the intervention at home
Administered at the direction of the School Board

September 1985

95 students
Otis-Lennon
Mental
Ability Test

95 students
Otis-Lennon
Mental
Ability Test

October 1985

95 students
Intro.
Parent
Involvement
and Record
Keeping

95 students
No
Involvement
of parents

February 1986

78 students
Gates-
MacGinitie
Test

78 students
Gates-
MacGinitie
Test

Draw conclusions regarding questions

Procedures--In Chronological Order

1. February 1985. Data were collected in February of 1985 when Gates-MacGinitie reading tests were administered to all children in the school (grades 1 to 7) as part of the School District's annual testing program. Teachers were familiar with the administration of this test. Directions for administering were followed and answers were recorded on machine scorable answer sheets. When the answer sheets had been machine scored and the results returned to the school they were used to assign subjects in each of eight classes (grades 2 to 7) to experimental or control groups. This was done by arranging the subjects in each class in order of performance on the total test (high to low) and alternately assigning them to the experimental or control group. Children who were repeating a year were not included in this assignment, although they were able to take part in the project.

2. September 1985. In September of 1985 a letter was sent to parents or guardians of children in the experimental group (see Appendix #1) outlining the nature of the project and their involvement. Parents who did not return the consent form which was contained in the letter were contacted by telephone by a teacher or the researcher. The experimental group and matching control group was confirmed for each class. In the few cases where parents did not give permission for their child to participate the corresponding control group subject was also removed from the class list.

3. Late September 1985. In the last week of September, 1985,

the Otis-Lennon Mental Ability Test was administered to all students in grades two to seven, with School District and parental permission. Most teachers had not administered this particular mental ability test before and care was taken in a staff meeting to review the test handbook's administration procedures and to ensure that teachers could follow them correctly. These tests were scored by teachers and later checked for accuracy of scoring by the researcher.

4. Early October 1985. On October 2nd 1985 parent information meetings were held in the school during the afternoon and evening, to further explain the project to parents of experimental group children and to enlist the help of parents in forming a Parent Support Group. This group was to serve as a liaison group between the school and community to provide support, information, and ideas for the project. The group had regular monthly meetings in the school, to which all reading group parents were invited by newsletter, and became involved in a wide variety of activities in association with the project (see Appendix #2). The group's monthly meetings typically involved:

1. Identifying the content of the next parent newsletter--"Reading Together, Parents--Children--Teachers" (see Appendix #3).
2. A presentation by a teacher or community member on some aspect of reading education.
3. A discussion followed the presentation.
4. Sharing of parents' comments from home reading record sheets

and other contacts with Parent Support Group Members.

5. October 1985--Experimental intervention begins. By the end of the first week in October, 1985, all necessary data had been collected. Parents of experimental group children had been notified through newsletters and meetings of the purposes and procedures for the project. Teachers had outlined procedures to children and had prepared record keeping devices and collected suitable basal reading materials to be sent home. The project was then ready to begin.

6. Mid-October 1985. In the second week of October, 1985, teachers sent home reading materials (basal readers at the child's reading level) and reading record forms (see Appendix #4) to be completed by parents and returned to school on Friday of the same week. Teachers collected the forms which were returned and issued new forms for the coming week to every child in the experimental group. Over the weekend teachers would check the returned forms and respond to parents in any of the following ways:

1. Teachers would sign the form.
2. Teachers would answer specific questions asked by parents.
3. Teachers would add stamps, stickers, or encouraging comments.
4. Teachers would contact parents directly when necessary.

With children who had not returned a form teachers would take appropriate action. Punishment was never a part of the project. Children were always encouraged and rewarded for the return of completed reading record forms; they were never punished for not returning forms. Each Monday, reading record forms from the

previous week were given to the researcher who also signed them and added appropriate comments, stamps, and stickers. Then the forms were returned to children to be taken home to their parents. Apart from charting the return of forms in each class for each week, classroom routines were not differentiated for the experimental and control groups. Subjects in control groups were involved in math or spelling projects which also required the return and charting of record forms. While theis activity could have had a possible contaminating effect by increasing parental interest and involvement in school programs in these areas with a carry over into reading for these pupils, It was felt by the school staff that it would be unethical to involve only the experimental group subjects in the home intervention program. Also, many families had children in both experimental and control groups at different grade levels and there was a strong likelihood that parents would question experimental intervention with only one of their children. Under these conditions parents may have used the home reading procedure with all of their children. Therefore, it was decided amongst the staff to provide the control groups with alternative home assignments involving parents.

7. October 1985 to November 1985. As the project progressed a high level of positive reinforcement was maintained for both reading subjects and their parents. Incentives to children for the return of record forms included written comments by the teachers, stickers, stamps, bookmarks, bookbags, recognition at monthly student

assemblies, special class activities (free reading time, etc.

For parents, teacher comments on reading record forms, participation in monthly student assemblies, monthly parent meetings, contact with the Parent Support Group, being mentioned in the monthly reading newsletter and being involved with their children were considered intrinsic rewards.

8. November 1985 to February 1986. As parents and children became more comfortable with the home reading task children were encouraged to switch to self-selected reading materials. The monthly reading newsletter had summarized a presentation by the public librarian which was made at a monthly parents' meeting entitled, "Selecting Reading Material for Your Child". By the beginning of November 1985 teachers were not sending home basal readers with children except where parents requested them.

9. Mid-February 1986. The Gates-MacGinitie reading tests were administered as the variate measure to all subjects. Again, this was given as part of the School District's assessment program. Machine scorable answer sheets were hand-scored before being sent away for machine scoring and later cross checking by the researcher.

Tabulating Results

For each subject in the experimental group and matching control group the following scores were recorded by the researcher.

1. Gates-MacGinitie total T-score and grade equivalent scores in vocabulary and comprehension for the February 1985 and February 1986 administrations of the test. These served as variate and covariate

measures of reading achievement.

2. A "derived I.Q." from the late September 1985 administration of the Otis Lennon Mental Ability Test. This served as a control for the interpretation of reading achievement gains made by the experimental and control groups.

Verification of Scores

Scores were verified to establish the accuracy with which they were obtained and entered on student records. Machine scored answer sheets for both the February 1985 and February 1986 administrations of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test were used to enter results to a computer file which checked the original hand screening of the test.

Results from the Otis Lennon Test of Mental Ability were compiled initially by teachers and later checked by the researcher. These results were also entered into a computer file to be used in the statistical analyses of the data.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

The present chapter describes the statistical analysis of the data collected to test the two questions of the study. The study involved 156 students located in eight class groups (Table 2). Children were assigned by controlled alternate assignment to a treatment group or a control group within each of the eight class groups. The experimental groups were required to read to their parents at home on a regular basis, 5 to 15 minutes daily, for a five month period and to return reading record forms to the school each week. The control groups were required to review spelling and basic number facts drills with their parents at home and to return spelling or math record forms to the school each week. For the experimental and control groups data were collected using standardized reading pre-test and post-test procedures and a standardized mental ability test.

Test of Research Question 1

Question 1 focussed on reading achievement of subjects in experimental and control groups as measured by the Gates-MacGinitie reading test. The question stated that children who regularly read to their parents at home would demonstrate greater reading gains

than children who did not. Population and group means for the experimental and control groups are shown in table 3.

Table 3
Population and Group Means for Gates-MacGinitie
Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores

Year	Group	No.	Mean T-Score	Standard Deviation
1985	Total population	156	52.53	8.25
1985	Experimental	78	53.17	8.39
1985	Control	78	51.90	8.11
1986	Total population	156	52.01	8.48
1986	Experimental	78	53.47	8.55
1986	Control	78	50.55	8.41

Five different forms of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test were used to gather reading achievement scores for Grades 2 to 7. It would not be possible to relate the test raw scores across difference grade levels so T-scores were used for comparative purposes because they are derived from raw scores and have the same

mean and standard deviations at each grade level. Therefore, they can be used to make across grade comparisons.

Table 3 shows that the difference in mean T-scores for the experimental and control groups was greater after the experimental treatment had been applied than before, 2.92 T-scale points after treatment compared to 1.27 T-scale points before treatment. In relation to its pre-test position on the T-scale the experimental group moved 0.3 T-scale points. In relation to its pre-test position on the T-scale the control group moved -1.35 T-scale points. This change in relative positions on the T-scale for the experimental and control groups would indicate that the experimental group recorded a greater gain in reading achievement, during the study period, than the control group.

Further statistical analysis addressed the issue of the significance of the reading gains.

An analysis of covariance was conducted using pre-test and post-test Gates-MacGinitie Reading scores as the criterion variable with Otis-Lennon I.Q. scores as the variate measure. Tables 4 and 5 indicate that a significant difference existed between experimental and control group subjects on the post-test measure of reading ($p < 0.014$) which did not exist on the pre-test measure ($p < 0.357$).

Test of Research Question 2

Question 2 focussed on the relationship between reading gains and I.Q. scores for the experimental and control groups. The question asked whether the relationship between intelligence and

reading achievement could be used to explain the gains in reading achievement which may be registered by children involved in a home reading program?

Pearson's r for Gates-MacGinitie and Otis-Lennon

Pearson's r was calculated using total Gates-MacGinitie reading scores and an Otis-Lennon I.Q. score for all experimental and control group subjects. This was found to be .6145, which was a level where one could feel a measure of confidence in using these data sources for an analysis of covariance.

To control for the effects of I.Q. an analysis of covariance using Gates-MacGinitie's test scores as the criterion variable and Otis-Lennon test scores as the covariate was conducted. These results are shown in Tables 4 and 5 below.

Table 4
ANCOVA Total Reading Pre-Test.

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	MS	F	Sig.
Gates-MacGinitie covariate Otis	3984.020	1	3984.020	93.341	0.0000
Main Effects					
Group	36.420	1	36.420	0.853	0.357
Explained	4020.440	2	2010.220	47.097	0.000
Residual	6530.400	153	42.682		

p <0.05

Table 5
ANCOVA Total Reading Post-Test.

Source	Sum of Squares	DF	MS	F	Sig.
Gates-MacGinitie covariate Otis	4618.893	1	4618.893	108.290	0.000
Main Effects	263.166	1	263.166	6.170	0.014
Explained	4882.056	1	2441.030	57.230	0.000
Residual	6525.915	153	42.653		

p <0.05

An examination of Tables 4 and 5 shows that as expected there was a highly significant relationship between reading pre-test/post-test scores and Otis-Lennon I.Q. scores. The surprise was in the main effects group between these scores. When the effects of I.Q. were statistically controlled a significant difference existed between post-test experimental and control group reading scores, which did not exist in the pre-test scores. With the significance of f set at the .05 level Table 5 shows that the effect of the experimental treatment on reading ability, when the effects of I.Q. were statistically controlled, was significant for post-test results at the .014 level.

A further analysis of data to be used purely as a descriptive statistic was conducted by converting raw scores in vocabulary and comprehension to grade scores using the tables provided in the Gates-MacGinitie technical manual. These grade equivalent scores were then analyzed for the total population, experimental and control groups, to see what changes had occurred during the length of the study. Population and group means are shown in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6
Population and Group Means for Gates-MacGinitie Pre-Test
and Post-Test Vocabulary Scores

Year	Group	No.	Vocabulary Mean	Standard
			Grade Score	Deviation
1985	Total Population	156	4.1	1.9
1985	Experimental	78	4.2	2.0
1985	Control	78	4.0	1.8
	Difference		.2	
1986	Total Population	156	5.3	4.4
1986	Experimental	78	5.8	5.8
1986	Control	78	4.8	2.3
	Difference		1.0	

Scores rounded off to nearest tenth

Table 7
Population and Group Means for Gates-MacGinitie Pre-Test
and Post-Test Comprehension Scores

Year	Group	No.	Comprehension Mean	Standard
			Grade Score	Deviation
1985	Total Population	156	4.1	3.9
1985	Experimental	78	4.5	5.4
1985	Control	78	3.7	1.2
	Difference		.8	
1986	Total Population	156	4.8	5.5
1986	Experimental	78	5.3	7.6
1986	Control	78	4.3	1.2
	Difference		1.0	

Scores rounded off to the nearest tenth.

While the limitations in the use of grade scores are well understood they can serve a purpose here because they are being used to describe vocabulary and comprehension test performance separately. Also, the researcher is not seeking to assign any significance to the scores reported in Tables 6 and 7 but rather to point out that a difference in average grade score performance exists in the pre-test and post-test scores for the experimental and

control groups.

On the Gates-MacGinitie sub-test of vocabulary the experimental group recorded an increase of 1.6 grade score points between their pre-test and post-test results. The control group recorded an increase of 0.8 grade score points between their pre-test and post-test results. The pre-test difference between the two groups on the vocabulary sub-test was 0.2 grade score points while the post-test difference was 1.0 grade score points. The fact that formation of the experimental and control group was by controlled alternate assignment of class members based on the 1985 Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test scores makes these reported differences more meaningful. Apparently the experimental treatment helped the experimental group to develop better vocabulary skill than the control group over the course of the study.

On the Gates-MacGinitie sub-test of comprehension the experimental group recorded an increase of 0.8 grade score points between their pre-test and post-test results. The control group recorded an increase of 0.6 grade score points between their pre-test and post-test results. The pre-test difference between the two groups on the comprehension sub-test was 0.8 grade score point while the post-test difference was 1.0 grade score points. Apparently the experimental treatment did produce some gain in comprehension skill for the experimental group when compared to the control group during the course of the study but the gain was not as great as that produced in vocabulary.

From the results of the statistical analyses presented the following observations can be made.

1. The experimental group recorded a greater gain in total reading achievement as measured by Gates-MacGinitie T-scores than the control group did (Table 3).
2. There was a significant difference in post-test Gates-MacGinitie reading scores for the experimental and control groups which did not exist in the pre-test scores (Tables 4 and 5).
3. The significant difference in post-testing reading scores for the experimental and control group cannot be attributed to I.Q. differences between the groups (Table 4 and 5).

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study was conducted to investigate the effects of parent involvement at home on the reading progress of their children. It was designed to replicate studies conducted in the British Isles by Tizard et al. (1980, 1982) with an added dimension which called for the control of teacher variables and classroom curriculum content in reading instruction. No research reviewed to date in this area had allowed for the control of teacher variables and classroom curriculum variables when making comparisons between experimental and control groups. Variance in teacher abilities and their manipulation of classroom curriculums in reading could have a confounding effect on the comparison of whole class groups in a study such as this. Therefore, within class comparison, pooled across grades, were made in ways described in the experimental design (Chapter 2).

This study addressed the following questions. They were:

1. Would children who read to their parents at home and receive coaching demonstrate better achievement on a standardized reading test than children who do not?
2. Can the relationship between intelligence and reading

achievement be used to explain the gains in reading achievement which may be registered by children involved in a home reading program?

Conclusions Relating to the Results of Research Questions 1

Would children who read to their parents at home and receive coaching demonstrate better achievement on a standardized reading test than children who do not.

Evidently the treatment provided for the experimental groups, i.e., reading to parents at home and receiving coaching from them, produced a significantly greater average gain in reading performance as measured by the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests, for the experimental group when compared to the control group. While the first research question was confirmed, the results suggest some discussion around issues such as the duration of the study, the novelty of the study, and the energy and commitment of the school staff to the experiment. Inherent in the first question, was a question related to increases in the vocabulary and comprehension components of reading ability for the experimental and control groups. The design of the standardized reading (Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test) used in this research, enabled the researcher to draw some conclusions about the effects of parent involvement in the reading program on specific categories tested, namely Vocabulary and Comprehension skills. An attempt was also made to determine if the differences in reading performance which had been cited in previous studies could be attributed to teacher variables? Would differences

in reading performance still exist in a replicative study where within class comparisons were made.

Discussion

(a) Duration of study. The study was limited to a period of five months and ran from October 1985 to February 1986. The main determinants of this time frame were the placement and promotion of students into new class groups in September of 1985 and the school district's annual assessment of reading which was conducted at the end of February 1986. Given that the results of the study were obtained in a five month period is it possible that the experimental treatment could have produced even greater differences between experimental and control groups if the treatment had been applied for a full school year of ten months? Considering that the subjects involved in this study were students in an elementary school, few if any would have realized their maximum potential of reading ability. It could be argued that continued involvement of parents, at home, in the reading program could produce even greater gains for the experimental group over the control group.

(b) Novelty of the study. Many parents had never been involved with their children's reading in this way before and they found it a novel experience. Would this feeling and their involvement with the program be strengthened or weakened over a longer period of time? When the project began parents demonstrated a high degree of interest in the study. At the October 2nd 1985 meeting of parents to introduce and explain the project, 48 parents of experimental

group children were in attendance. This level of attendance for a student body which represented just under half of the school's total population was impressive when compared to the average of ten parents, representing the total school population, who attended regular monthly parent association meetings.

However, all parents of experimental group children were contacted by letter (see appendix) or phone and all give their permission to have their children take part in the study. Of these, one officially notified the school of withdrawal at a later date, saying that it was the school's job to teach reading, not the parents'. This meant sixteen students (an attrition rate of approximately 18%) were not included in the final analysis of results because of the nonreturn of record forms.

Teachers made many contacts with these homes to encourage parents and children to continue with the home reading program. In some homes the lifestyle, which revolved round shiftwork and two working parents, was a problem. In others, single working parents who saw little of their children had no time to cater to the school's request. The period just before Christmas was the worst for attrition. After Christmas the population of home readers remained relatively stable and they could have continued with the project, in my opinion, throughout the remainder of the year.

(c) Energy and commitment of school staff. In the school setting teachers certainly felt an extra burden associated with this research. The weekly task of distributing and collecting reading

record forms, charting these returns on a wall chart in the classroom, responding to parents' comments and questions on reading record forms, locating and keeping track of suitable reading materials for children, and in many ways acting as promoters of the project in their classrooms, were all time consuming activities.

During the project teachers agreed that there were obvious benefits associated with increased parental involvement with their children at home and increased contact between parents and teachers, but many teachers were glad to see the project end. A high degree of staff commitment and leadership drive would be necessary to sustain the level of student, parent, and staff involvement that this project called for, if a full year's program had been implemented.

A single project coordinator is perhaps required to organize such a project in a school or group of schools. It should not be left to the discretion of individual class teachers.

(d) Comparing the vocabulary and comprehensive gains on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test between the experimental group and the control group. While a formal research question regarding vocabulary and comprehension gains by the experimental and control groups on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test was not made, comparisons in fact were made.

It would be logical to assume that differentiated gains in reading ability between the experimental and control groups in this

research would be largely confined to the vocabulary component of reading ability because parental coaching concentrated largely on word recognition. While this was true there was also a difference in comprehension performance which was somewhat surprising because parents were given instruction (see Appendix) to assist children minimally with word attack skills and no emphasis was placed on questioning or other strategies to develop comprehension. In Chapter 3 the differences between pre- and post-test Vocabulary and Comprehension scores on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test were described. For Vocabulary the experimental group recorded an average increase of 1.6 grade score points which was twice the increase of 0.8 grade score points recorded by the control group. Obviously the experimental group had developed better vocabulary skills as a result of the experimental treatment. In Comprehension the experimental group recorded an average gain of 0.8 grade score points compared to an increase of 0.6 grade score points for the control group. Apparently the experimental treatment did produce some gain in comprehension ability for the experimental group over the control group, even though it was not specifically designed to do so.

It is possible that the home reading program activity produced gains in comprehension ability similar to the gains reported in Heckleman's (1969) study involving unison reading? In Heckleman's study unison reading by adults and children who were classified as retarded readers produced surprising increases in vocabulary and

comprehension ability even though there was no discussion of vocabulary or story content during the reading sessions. Reading is a holistic activity which involves a number of component skills; and oral reading practice in the ways used in this study apparently develops the component skills of reading ability other than word recognition. The practice that children received must have improved their reading to some degree. Statistical analysis has shown that I.Q. differences cannot account for the improvement registered so we must look to reading practice and parental involvement that produces a stronger self-concept and a drive or desire in students to perform better in reading, to explain these results.

The contentions made by researchers such as Ketcham, 1967; Hubbard and Salt, 1975; Coons and Sugarman, 1978; and Revicki, 1982 that the child's self-concept and emotional security are determinants of reading success are supported by this research. The exact nature and extent of these influences can only be determined by further controlled research.

(e)The effect of teacher variables upon the results of previous studies in this subject area. Again a formal research question was not posed but in the present study it was clear that teacher variables were not a factor which contributed to differentiated average reading gains for the experimental group and the control group. In studies cited earlier that had been a key factor of concern in a comparative analysis of test results. The difficulties associated with the control of the teacher variable and

their manipulation of the reading curriculum were obvious and some ethical questions were also associated with this. In the present research the reasons for the study were explained to parents of experimental group children and an alternative activity was organized for control group children. The researcher was reluctant to do this because of possible contamination of results by having control group children benefit from parental involvement in these areas by improving self concept with a possible carry-over into reading performance. However, the school staff thought it would be unethical and difficult to justify to parents that half of a class should be involved in a home reading project and the other half of the class should be ignored, so the alternative was accepted. The fact that the research questions were confirmed under these conditions adds more strength to the conclusion that it was the experimental treatment which made the difference.

By controlling the possible effects of teacher variables in reading the present research has answered one more question related to the interaction of parental involvement at home in reading and corresponding reading gains.

Conclusions Relating to the Results of Research Question 2

Can the relationship between intelligence and reading achievement be used to explain the gains in reading achievement which may be registered by children in a home reading program?

The results of the analysis of covariance presented in Tables 4

and 5 in Chapter 3 indicated that when the effects of I.Q. were statistically controlled a significant difference existed between post-test experimental and control group reading scores. This finding answered question 2 in a negative way. This provided more meaningful data than previous research studies cited had done because the experimental and control group comparisons were made within class groups. The conclusion that the experimental intervention had made the difference is more defensible in this instance because experimental and control group subjects were seated in the same class with the same teacher teaching the same reading program in the same way. The home reading program was the only difference.

Suggestions for Further Research

This present research study led to some suggestions for further research in the area of parental involvement at home with the reading programs of their elementary school children.

(a) The effects of parental involvement at home in the reading program over a longer period of time could be explored. A study, with similar controls to the present study, designed to track pupil progress in reading over a one year period, or longer, would be interesting.

(b) Particular weightings to the effects of home reading programs at different grade levels could be made. A study involving a larger number of class groups at primary and intermediate grade levels would enable comparative analyses to be made to determine if gains

are more likely to occur at certain grade levels.

(c) This present research suggests further study might be made of the relationship between reading ability and the students' self concept, ego strength, and social-emotional comfort. Are these factors predictors of reading ability and is it only parents who can substantially influence them?

(d) No attempt was made in the present study to compare the gains in reading ability which were made by students in experimental and control groups who had been receiving learning assistance in the school. How would such a home reading program affect such children with reading difficulties? Would they be better served by spending extra time with a trained learning assistance teacher?

(e) Attempts might be made to determine if there is a relationship between the size of reading gains registered in these types of programs and the amount of time that children spend reading to their parents at home. A study using a larger sampling of class groups could address this question. Optimum times and frequency of home practice reading could perhaps be more accurately determined.

Concluding Statement to the Study

The following conclusions may be drawn from the findings of this research.

(a) Under certain conditions reading practice at home with a parent will produce significant gains in reading ability for children.

These gains cannot be attributed to intelligence alone.

(b) The Vocabulary component of reading ability as measured on a

standardized test is most affected by a home reading program of this nature. The experimental group registered twice the gain in Vocabulary that the control group did. However, the experimental group also registered a small gain over the control group in Comprehension ability.

(c) The notion that the teaching of reading should be entrusted only to trained professionals cannot be totally supported. When the teacher variable was controlled in this research, parental involvement in reading at home still produced significant differences in reading ability between experimental and control group children when the effects of I.Q. were statistically controlled.

(d) Parents should be involved with their children's reading not only because they are an untapped source of support for teacher instruction but because parents have a vital interest in and association with their children's schooling and self-concept which no one else can have.

(e) Involvement of parents at home in the reading program is a goal which should be pursued further by educational jurisdictions in North America. Fluctuations in pupil numbers and teacher supply coupled with shifting emphasis in the allocation of monetary resources by government points to the need for greater involvement of parents and the community at large in the education of their children.

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APPENDIX 1
LETTER TO PARENTS



BOX 160, 32 HEATHER CRESCENT, MACKENZIE, B.C. — PHONE 997-3230

September 23, 1985

Dear Mr. and Mrs. _____,

Your son/daughter _____, has been chosen to take part in some research that I am conducting into the influence of Parental Involvement in the Reading Program.

I am trying to determine to what extent parental involvement, at home, in listening to children read and "coaching" them in certain ways, will help to improve their child's reading scores on tests that the school district gives in schools each year.

The project involves the following:

- 1) Parents will be required to attend monthly planning and instructional meetings at the school, to learn methods of "coaching" their children. These methods are very simple, require no special training and are not time consuming.
- 2) Parents will be required to keep a record of time spent in listening to their children read and in "coaching" them.
- 3) Parental consent is required to have their child take a group pencil and paper test of mental ability--the Otis Lennon test of Mental Ability. (45 minutes). Results will be available to individual parents only. In reports that I write, students will be identified by numbers and only I will have the master list which will be destroyed at the conclusion of the research.

Your participation in this research will be helpful in that it could identify better ways for parents to help their children at home. Also, your child should benefit from your interest and involvement in their reading program.

The results of this experiment for your child will be communicated to you at the conclusion of the research.

Participation in this research is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time by notifying me.

Page 2
Sept. 23, 1985

I am seeking your co-operation in working with your child to help in this research. You will find it an interesting and rewarding experience in that you will know that you have helped your child to become a better reader. Please complete the form below and return it to your child's teacher. If you have any questions, please call me at the school.

Yours sincerely,

Ray Giffin,
Principal.

RG/sml

- I ☐ give my consent
- ☐ do not give my consent

for my child, _____ to participate in the research outlined above. I
(Child's name)
have read and understand the procedures of the research and also understand that my child may be withdrawn from the research at any time. Such withdrawal will not affect, in any way, my child's right to further teaching, the class standing, or participation in future research projects.

Signed _____
(Parent or Legal Guardian)

APPENDIX 2

SUGGESTED PARENT SUPPORT GROUP ACTIVITIES

PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

Items for consideration in the reading project relating to:

1) Newsletter

Newsletter to go home once a month.
Comments on solving specific reading problems.
Sample parent comments.
Sample children's comments.
Books that children/parents recommend.
Number of returns for groups - best in school.
How to choose the "right" book.
Variety in reading materials.
Children illustrate a favourite story.
Suggested book lists - by age - by subject.
Suggestion on when and where to read.
Include book reports from children.
Mention names of children who have improved considerably.
Inform parents of next meeting date.
Record the ideas that parents get as a result of the reading program.
List the names of parent support group members who can act as contact people.

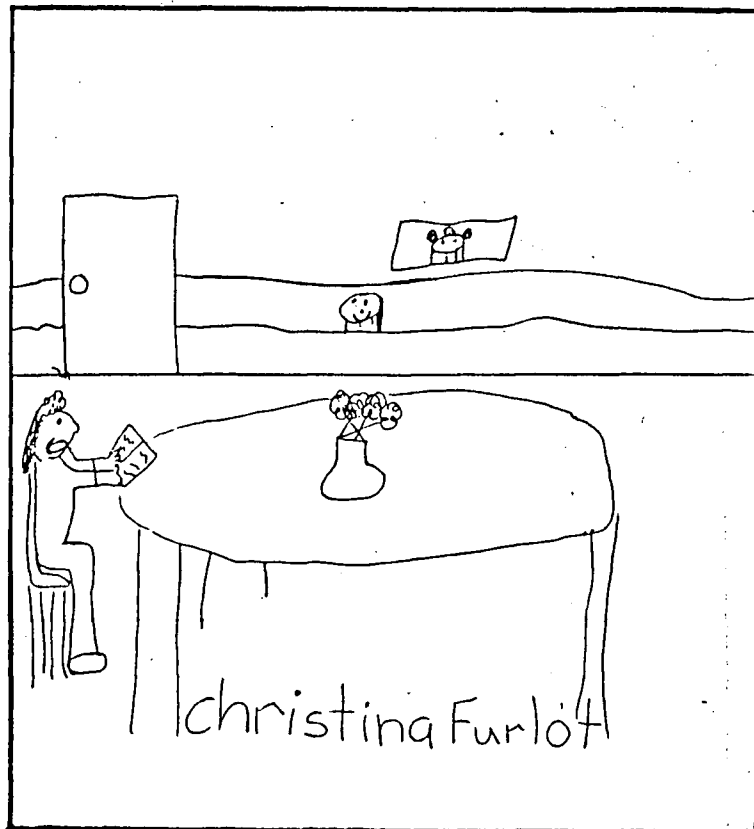
2) Other Actions

One day a week, read the newspaper.
Summarize a story read in writing.
Have parent read to the child with the child following in the book.
Cultivate an interest in reading poetry.
If the project is successful, get other schools involved.
Have a meeting with parents and children.
Have someone take your place when you can't hear your child read.
Use cable channel to advertise meetings - radio - Mackenzie Times.
Phoning Committee.
Post Office Bulletin Board - meeting place and times.
Encourage children to get and use library cards.
Regular meetings for parents.
Incentives for both parents and children.
Incentives for children who bring back reading sheets on time.
Acknowledge children through assemblies, newsletters, etc.
Have children read to parent group if they feel comfortable.
Parents could initiate a chart at home to keep track of times read.
Make note of words children have trouble with and make flash cards.

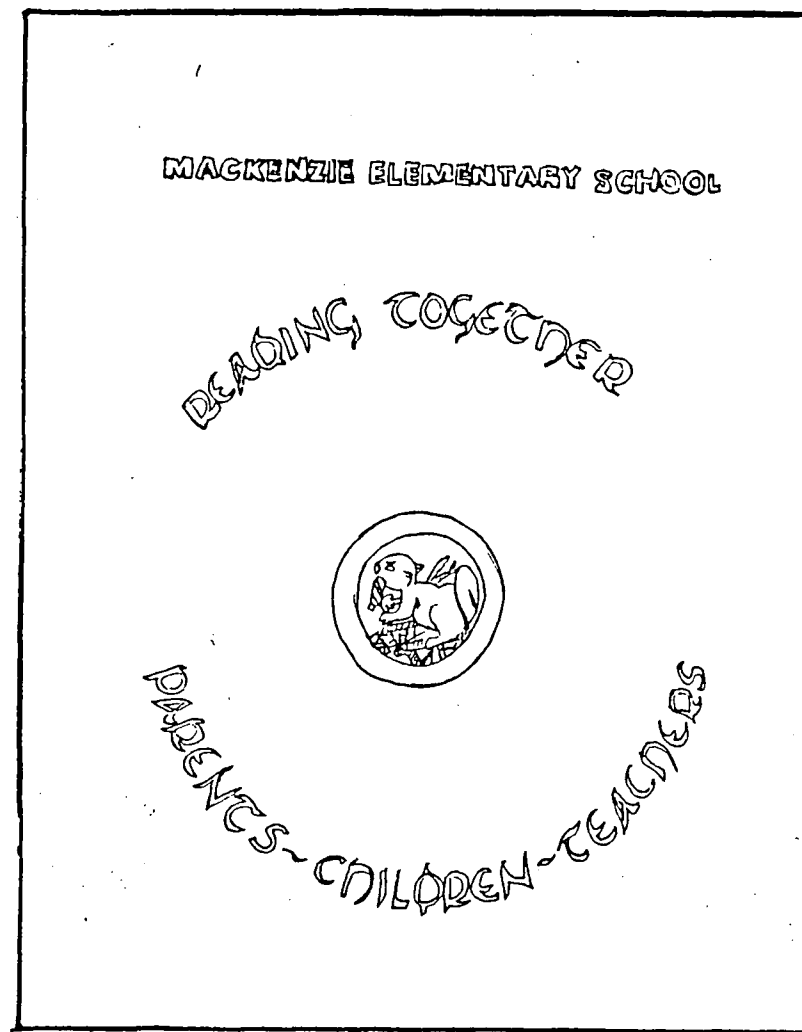
APPENDIX 3
MONTHLY READING NEWSLETTER

RECORD CARDS

Your child will bring home a record card because we need to know how much time they spend reading at home each week and how you feel about your child's reading.



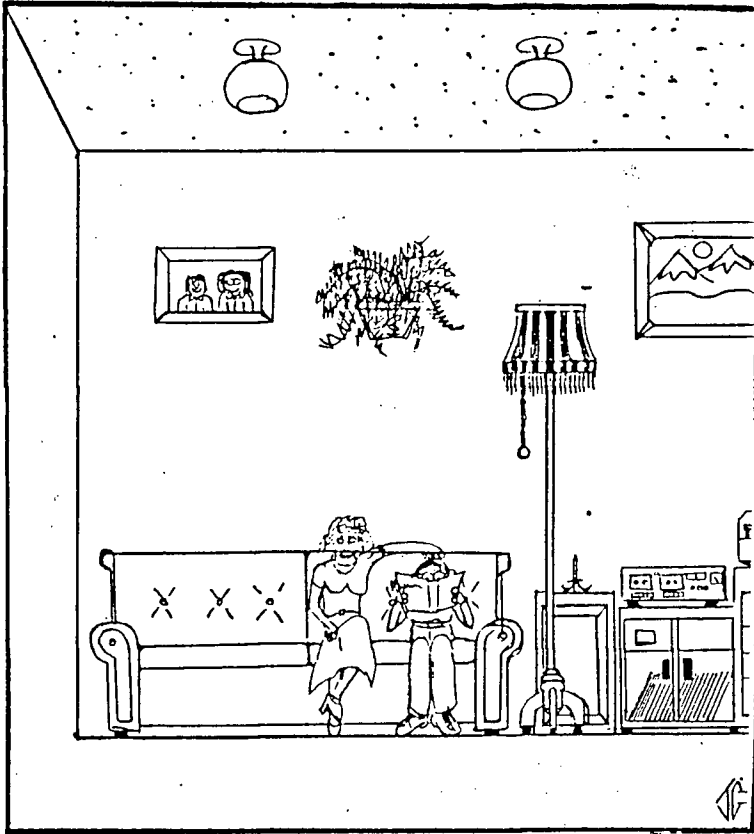
Please complete the record card each time you hear your child read and have them return it to the school on time.



Reading Together - Vol. 1, No. 1
Oct. 4, 1985

WHY?

Children who read at home with a caring adult will become better readers.



They need lots of praise and encouragement.

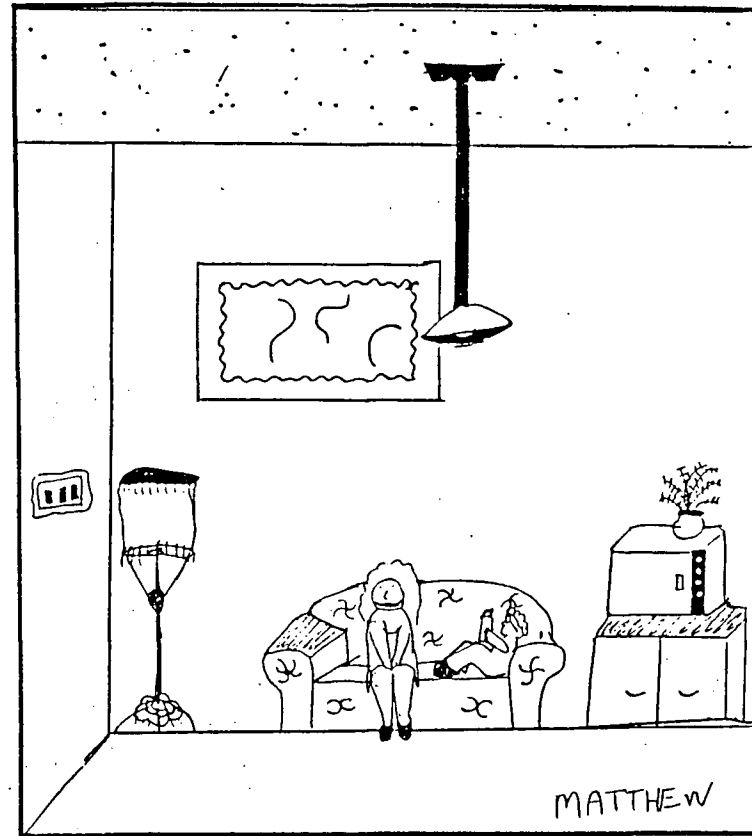
They need to know that you're proud of their reading.

They need your special interest.

They need to enjoy reading with you.

WHEN?

Whenever you both want to. 5 to 15 minutes a day is fine.

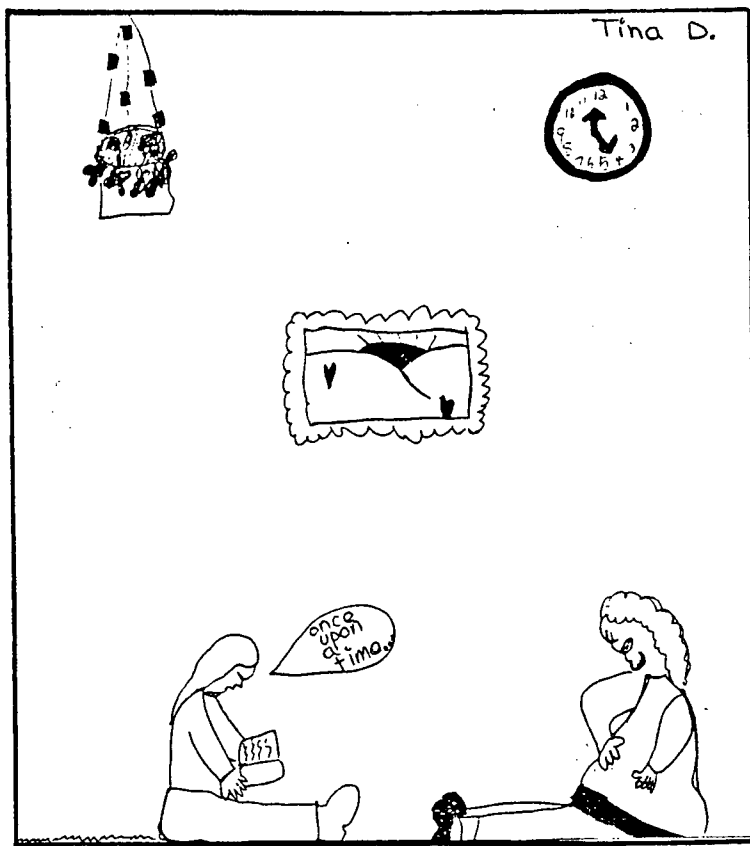


Find a comfortable, quiet place.

Sit close to your child, and pay attention to their reading. You may like to discuss the story afterwards, but only if you both want to.

WHAT?

We will send home material that is at the right level, or your child can choose something from home, the school library, or the public library.



The librarians will help them to find a book that's right for them.

Parent meetings and more of these newsletters are planned to tell you more about reading.



You will learn how to pick a suitable book for your child and how to help them while they read.

READING MATERIALS

Your child can choose reading materials from the school library, the public library, or books and magazines that they have at home. Parents are invited to drop in to the school library to choose a book with their child--12:30-1:00 p.m. or 3:00-3:30 p.m. For grade one children parents should read to the child and talk about story books and nursery rhymes that are suitable for that age. Once again the school librarian can help you with suggestions for reading materials.

As a general rule if a child makes more than five mistakes on a page the material is too difficult.

YOUR PUBLIC LIBRARY AND THE SCHOOL READING PROGRAM

HOW can the public library assist you in helping your child in the reading program?

By providing a wide range of resources for your and your child.

WHAT kind of resources are available?

Resource books for adults with ideas, games, and booklists, a complete range of books for children of all ages and at all reading levels, a relaxing reading atmosphere, helpful library staff.

WHO can I contact at the public library?

Any of the library staff--Janice, Doreen, or Lisa.

WHEN is help available?

Any time during regular library hours--
Tuesday to Thursday 12-9 p.m.,
Friday and Saturday 12-5 p.m.

If a morning would be more convenient, or if you wish to research some resource books, etc., you may call Janice Hall at the library (997-6343) after 9 a.m. Tuesday to Friday.

APPENDIX 4
READING RECORD FORM

Class Record Sheet

Subject - _____

Child's Name _____ Division _____ Dates _____ to _____

Work Covered	Parent's Comments/Signature	Teacher's Comments/ Signature
<u>FRIDAY</u>		
Time -		
<u>WEEKEND</u>		
Time -		
<u>MONDAY</u>		
Time -		
<u>TUESDAY</u>		
Time -		
<u>WEDNESDAY</u>		
Time -		
<u>THURSDAY</u>		
Time -		