ATTITUDES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL GRADUATES AND TEACHERS TOWARDS THE LITERACY SKILLS OF UNIVERSITY-BOUND STUDENTS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

by

MARIAN E. MACKWORTH

B.A., York University, 1966

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Department of Reading Education)

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

September, 1978

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the Head of my Department or by his representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of Reading Education

The University of British Columbia
2075 Wesbrook Place
Vancouver, Canada
V6T 1W5

Date Sept 30/78

Abstract

Surveys two populations, teachers of grade 12 English in the province of British Columbia and recent high school graduates who are now in English 100 at the University of British Columbia, to ascertain the differing perspectives held by those two groups toward certain literacy and communication skills deemed to be relevant to successful university or college study.

Respondents were asked to rate the frequency of teaching of each skill, the strength of the average university-bound student (or the student respondent) in each skill, and the importance of each skill to university study.

All student-completed questionnaires were considered usable. A 76% return was obtained from teachers in the Province. Results, reported in descriptive terms, were analyzed by computer using programs from SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.

It was found that teachers agree with students as to the frequency of the teaching of skills and the importance of those skills to university study. However, students and teachers show less agreement in rating the strength that students have in individual skills.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to:

Dr. Chester, my advisor, who has been generous with his time and support.

Dr. Summers, who has produced much appreciated "goodies" all along the way.

Dr. Parkin, who made possible my forays into the English Department.

Alan, my husband, who has contributed time, patient instruction and computing expertise.

I should also like to thank the English 100 Instructors who allowed me to distribute my questionnaire and those students amd teachers who took the time to complete it.

CHAPTER ONE

The Problem

Students who intend to extend their educational goals beyond high school require both knowledge of and practice in those skills which will enable them to deal with a new breadth and depth of materials.

In recent years much concern has been expressed by educators, as well as by the public, over the purported lack of language ability of university entrants. It is felt that a survey of the differing perspectives held by those who teach at the grade 12 level and by recent high school graduates who are presently completing first year university would serve to indicate whether or not such concern is justified.

1.1 Rationale for the Study

The Canadian public is being exposed to media articles which indicate that first year university students show a serious lack of language fluency. The Toronto Star, January 20, 1978 reports:

> The University of Waterloo says fewer than 50% of 535 students who took remedial English writing classes were able to pass a basic test after 10 weeks.

The Toronto Star, in February, 1978, continued its report from

Waterloo:

> "Our standards are extraordinarily modest," says Ken Ledbetter, Associate Dean of Arts for special programs...Ledbetter says "many students write better than one decent paragraph, [sic] but many can't. It's not their fault. It's the fault of the school system. Many elementary and secondary teachers can't teach writing."

Again, from the Toronto Star, January 24, 1978:

> Beginning in 1980, students in arts and sciences courses at the University of Toronto will be required to pass an English literacy test to remain in university...Under the new policy, students who fail the literacy test will be allowed to continue in school for one year before being retested. If they fail a second time, they will be refused further registration.

The Vancouver Sun, February 6, 1978 reported:

> If B.C. youngsters took as their hero author Robertson Davies instead of Bobby Orr, they probably would arrive in university with far better writing skills than they are now...present day society doesn't put strong emphasis on reading and writing skills...(Alan Davie, head of English and Modern Languages at Vancouver Community College) admitted 40% of first year University of B.C. students failed their Christmas examination. But the exam itself was extremely difficult, at times confusing. "One also has to consider the fact that the results were based on a student population which contains far more students from disadvantaged backgrounds than ever before."
>
> Many of the 3,300 students who wrote the test do not even use English as their first language, he continued.
>
> There are also more adults returning to school who are having difficult [sic] coping with new literature programs. And the effects of a generation of youngsters who spent their waking hours glued to a television screen are also making themselves felt.

Davie is hinting at a problem already acknowledged in American schools. That is, university admissions policies are less rigid than they were a decade ago. If this trend is not

already part of the educational scene, it is part of the future of Canadian universities as enrolment declines. William Kent, Director of Admissions at the University of Toronto sees a decline in admission standards as being imminent (Ubyssey, March 8, 1978).

As these newspaper excerpts indicate, the media are raising the question of the quality of education being given to those students who have no discernible educational deficiencies.

In the United States, universities have assumed an active role in providing skills development. Though the bulk of available information in this area is from American sources, those Canadian studies which are available suggest that the Canadian experience is similar. There is every indication that a trend to provide skills centres at the university level is occurring in Canadian institutions. Public concern over the quality of university entrants is growing. The existence of and perceived need for university reading programmes seem to provide some justification to the public for its concern.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to provide insight into the following questions:

1) Do students and teachers concur in their estimation of the frequency of instruction of selected reading skills?

2) Do first-year university students and high school teachers rate the same literacy and communication skills as being

important to university study?

3) Do grade 12 teachers feel their university-bound students to be stronger in certain skill areas than do the students themselves?

4) Do teachers and students differ in their views concerning the need for increased attention to reading at the senior levels of high school?

5) How many grade 12 English teachers in the sample have had training in the teaching of reading?

6) Do students and teachers agree on who should teach reading skills during the senior year of high school?

1.3 Limitations of the Study

Several factors must be taken into consideration when interpreting the results of this study:

1) There were 61 English 100 sections in the 1977-78 winter session at U.B.C. Of these, 11 were Z sections and 50 were standard sections. Z sections of English 100 have a greater emphasis on the study of literature than do the regular sections which emphasize composition. All first year U.B.C. students must register in English 100. Students who do sufficiently well on the Educational Research Institute of British Columbia's English Placement Test may opt for a Z section of English 100. The student population included in this study is relatively small and represents the 16 standard and Z sections whose instructors expressed interest in participating in this project.

2) Results are based on the number of questionnaires returned. Some Heads of English declined to respond to the questionnaire. The population of this study represents a sample of the total population of grade 12 English teachers in the province of B.C.
3) One grade 12 English teacher in each B.C. senior school was asked to answer a questionnaire. In six cases, all grade 12 teachers involved in the English programme made copies of the questionnaire sent to the school. The mean of these replies was used to make a single composite response questionnaire.
4) An insufficient number of replies were returned by English 100 instructors to warrant their inclusion in this study.
5) The results of this survey are recorded in purely descriptive terms and cannot be generalized beyond the present population. The analysis of the data offers no more than possible trends which should be examined.

1.4 Organization of the Report

Chapter 2 reviews the literature concerning the need to assess the reading skills of college- and university-bound students. The organization of the study, including population and procedure, is described in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 presents the results of the two questionnaires used in this study. A discussion of those results, recommendations and conclusions are given in the final chapter. Appendices and bibliography follow the main body of the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Literature

Over the past two decades, increasing numbers of students have opted for post secondary education . Though most of the available literature reflects the direction of American education, the little data available concerning the Canadian scene echo the American experience. The British Columbia Reading Assessment of 1977 indicated that 21.3% of grade 12 students in the province intended to go on to university. A further 10.0% were intending to transfer to university after an initial period at a community college. Seven point six percent of students planned to pursue career goals through a community college programme. A substantial proportion of the grade 12 student population in the province, then, had educational goals beyond high school (p. 111, Test Results).

The review of literature traces the present need for, and increase in, university and college sponsored reading programmes, the position of those programmes on university campuses, and teacher awareness of reading as a subject at the senior secondary level; finally, it presents a profile of the current status of reading in secondary schools.

2.1 Identifying the Need for University Sponsored Reading Programmes

The argument that a need for university sponsored reading programmes exists because of an apparent failure in the system at an earlier level must be considered in two ways. First, in the United States, there is an acknowledgement that more high-risk students are being admitted. Aaronson (1972) states:

> As we approach the last quarter of the twentieth century, we find that the composition of our educational bag is obviously changing. Higher education is no longer the privileged sanctuary of the intellectual and financial elite. The gates have opened to allow entrance to a broader spectrum of the population including the underprivileged and the academically weaker student. (p.134)

The results of this policy in the United States (where many students are guaranteed enrolment in a state college) has been, according to Carter (1970), that "one third of all entering university freshmen need to develop basic skills in reading to meet minimal requirements for college study"(p.1). Henderson (1976) feels that the open door policy encourages students to embark upon degree programmes "without regard to previous experience, probable success or academic skills" (p.464). Kingston (1957) says that some students have learned basic skills late. Still others have had negative feelings toward school and reading which resulted in poor preparedness. Others lack skills for socio-economic reasons.

That the problem of inadequately prepared students will continue into the forseeable future is prophesized by Shepherd

(1977):

> Within the next 10 years, the decline in birth rate will make it necessary to recruit increasing numbers of students from among unprepared high school graduates and adults who have been out of school a number of years. (p.497)

There is, however, a second consideration in the discussion of the preparedness of university entrants. Are the students who are deficient in reading skills the same students who are present at university only because of more relaxed admissions policies? The answer would seem to be no.

In the United States, Beamer (1955) says "college professors like other adults throughout the country are bewildered by the lack of reading ability of the college student" (p.59). Ten years later, the situation appears to have become worse. Newman (1966) states, "students come into college without the reading or study skills we used to take for granted in college freshmen" (p.200).

Vavoulis and Raygor (1973) state that though it is certainly true that one of the factors resulting in the formation of skills centres at the university level is that the university population is so diversified, there is an increasing recognition by those institutions that "many potentially able students lack the necessary skills for college success" (p.163). Tremonti (1965) is in agreement with this statement. Larsen and Guttinger (1975) add another dimension to this problem:

> The improvement of reading skills might be an important strategy for survival under the competitive system of higher education in many of our best universities. The ability to gain entrance into these

> institutions and to maintain an adequate grade point average could be directly related to proficiency in reading and study skills.... It is not known how many intellectually competent high school students were not able to make the score required for college entrance because of poorly developed reading skills. (p.123)

Some students are entering universities and colleges apparently without the basic reading skills required for effective development of more mature reading skills. Universities in the United States are admitting a more diversified population and this accounts for some of the deficiencies in freshmen skills. There is every indication that the declining population will result in a similar trend in Canadian institutions. However, there seems to be a more generalized disquiet concerning the quality of university entrants amongst educators and the public alike.

2.2 Increasing Numbers of University Reading Programmes

Shaw (1961) makes the startling statement that "reading difficulties are prevalent among college freshmen; estimates run from 64% to 95%" (p.24). Those estimates call into question the assumption that reading skill centres exist at university solely for the upgrading of second language or for the benefit of open admission candidates. Reading centres on American campuses have existed for many years. Lowe (1970) reports that the earliest formal attempt to help college students with reading problems was in 1915. In 1937, the Paar survey indicated the presence of seven remedial programmes on American campuses. By 1942, Lowe

says, the Triggs survey reported 258 such programmes and in 1947, 165 colleges or universities had reading programmes (p.2).

By 1972, Sweiger reported that the results of a survey of 832 junior colleges listed in the 1971 directory of the American Association of Junior Colleges revealed that only 169 had no reading programme. Of 288 questionnaires judged to be representative of the junior college population, 86% had a reading programme. Of those, 65% reported the English department to be responsible for administration of the reading course.

In 1975, Smith, Enright, and Devrian sent a questionnaire to 2,783 campuses of the 3,389 accredited colleges and universities listed in the 1972-73, 1973-74 American Educational Directory. One thousand two hundred and eighty-five or 38% returned questionnaires. Of those, 61% reported having study skills programmes and 9.3% planned to develop learning skills centres in the next two years. It was reported that 78% of all two year colleges and 43% of all four year colleges had such centres.

Hayward (1971) polled Canadian colleges and universities to determine the status of reading programmes on these campuses. She found that of 60 universities surveyed, 53 or 88% responded to the questionnaire. Of these, 32 or 53% offered reading instruction and one was planning to do so. Twenty-one universities did not have any form of reading instruction. Of the 138 colleges surveyed, 105 or 76% responded to the questionnaire. Fifty-two offered reading courses. Fifty-three

did not. A planned follow up, which would have yielded more recent data, was not done.

2.3 The Status of Reading Programmes

Griese (1967) feels that there is a question as to whether or not reading programmes in the United States should be included at the college level even though 75% of post secondary institutions have reading programmes.

> Reading as a subject in the college curriculum holds anything but a secure position. It is being taught in various ways in the majority of colleges but less a legitimate subject of study for which credit is granted than as a remedial effort - to bring certain students up to standards, to teach them what they should have learned before coming to college. (p.7)

Griese points out that very few colleges give credit for reading courses. Huslin (1975) supports this statement. Of the 177 different American colleges and universities he surveyed, 68 schools only granted credit for reading improvement courses. The general concensus was that such courses should be optional. However, Smith et al (1975), in their survey, concluded that 65% of their respondents offered course credit. It must be noted that, since their response rate was only 38%, it could well be concluded that only those institutions which consider their reading programme to be important (which might be signified by the offering of credit for taking the course) bothered to reply to the questionnaire.

Hayward's (1971) Canadian study suggests that, at the university level, reading courses carry with them the taint of

remediation. Though at the college level 23 of the 52 institutions offering reading programmes also offered some sort of credit for the programme, at the university level, no institution offered credit.

Those involved in reading and study skills programmes at the post secondary level suggest that there are many areas of weakness readily apparent in incoming freshmen. Butcofsky (1971) found problems among University of Delaware freshmen in such basic skills as the failure to use outside sources, headings and summaries or other parts of a text effectively. He found many students read word-by-word. In short, Butcofsky concluded that "specific study habits...need to be reinforced at the high school level for students who intend to enter college..."(p.198). Tremonti (1965) drew the same conclusion:

> High school and college students are expected to generalize, draw inferences and conclusions, and appreciate subtleties of style and content...The assignments are more difficult and complex and those newcomers to the college campus must adapt their reading to meet their new needs. Most of these skills should be mastered at the high school level. (p.81)

Larsen and Guttinger (1975) also support the idea that better reading instruction is required at the secondary school level in order that the adjustment to the academic demands of the university might be made more easily. They feel that it is necessary to encourage the teaching of reading at the secondary school level in order to prevent some of the reading problems encountered by college freshmen. "Then, the continuity of developing skills would be maintained in relation to the

maturity process of the reader" (p.123).

2.4 Teacher Role at the Secondary Level

How aware are teachers that a sizable number of their graduates may not be well prepared for the reading requirements at university?

Hodges (1974) notes that a systematic and structured approach should be taken at the senior grades since new and more complex tasks are being asked of the students. The content area teachers should be accepting an active part in this developmental process if the students are to be provided with the vital information which they will need at university. Shepherd (1972) states that "the reading process as applied to the subject areas comprises a broad body of techniques which the reader uses to get information and understanding" (p.173).

Authorities stress that there is no automatic development of skills (Kingston, 1964; Palmer, 1975; Robinson, 1961) and it is the teacher who must help the students to acquire the necessary strategies for dealing with new materials. Michaels (1965) sees reading at the senior grades to be a two pronged affair. Content is of major importance. However, equally important, students must be given the means to master content independently.

2.5 Teacher Awareness at the Secondary Level

The theory is clear. All teachers should be taking an active part in giving students who have post-secondary educational goals the hierarchy of skills they will need for growth in and beyond high school.

Some educators feel that the reason for the neglect of reading skills may be due to teacher ignorance. Courtney (1969) describes the difficulties in content area teaching. Teachers, he says,

> 1) cannot identify the basic reading skills and are not aware of how these effect classroom efficiency
> 2) are not aware of the reading demands of their own area
> 3) make assignments without giving directions or establishing purpose
> 4) fail to provide any specific background in referring students for special help, and
> 5) fail to give a sense of success to students and to stimulate intrinsic motivation. (p.29)

Braam and Walker (1973) stress that while knowledge of reading skills may not automatically result in teachers providing skills training, that knowledge is the basic pre-requisite for any skills to be taught. Various reading experts point out that reading skills must be a part of a developmental approach in which each teacher in each subject area takes an active part while honouring with the demands of the subject (Hodges, 1974; Robinson, 1975; Shepherd, 1972).

2.6 High School Surveys

How much reading activity is taking place in high schools? In 1966, Applebee reported the results of a two and one half

years' survey of selected American high school English programmes. The schools in the study were regarded as having good English courses. It was found that in grade 12 classes, teachers emphasized literature 61.5% of the time, composition 15.7% of the time, language 13.5% of the time and reading only 4.5% of the time. That little attention was being given to reading skills training in the senior high school years suggested that teachers assumed that their students had mastered all the necessary reading skills earlier.

Braam and Roehm (1967) attempted to assess the role of content area teachers as well as that of reading teachers in the reading programmes at 16 secondary schools in New York State. Of the 47.7% of schools responding to the questionnaire, 63% of the teachers involved in reading had no formal training. Five schools had full- time reading teachers and five had part-time reading teachers. The reading teachers were also found to be inadequately trained. Subject area teachers seemed ignorant of, or rejected, their responsibilities in teaching reading skills.

Chronister and Ahrendt (1968) surveyed 216 secondary schools in the province of British Columbia to ascertain what reading programmes were being provided. Three descriptions of programmes were given: remedial, college-bound and developmental. It was found that 77 teachers in 116 programmes had no formal training in reading instruction. Only seven schools in the province offered a course for the college-bound student. Only 33 of the schools operated developmental programmes and most of these were the responsibility of English

teachers. In concluding their report, one recommendation made by Chronister and Ahrendt was that more attention be given to the province's university-bound students.

In 1970, Bowren conducted a survey of a sample 217 high schools in the state of New Mexico. He found that only 79 out of 217 schools had a reading programme and that 76% of those teaching reading were unqualified to do so.

Fahy (1972) surveyed senior secondary schools in the province of Alberta to ascertain: 1) to what extent English teachers accepted in principle the responsibility to teach reading, 2) to what extent English teachers attempted to teach certain skills and employ procedures related to the reading instruction programme, 3) how teachers evaluated their preparation and their own and their schools' efforts to teach reading, and 4) the importance teachers attached to certain elements of a high school reading instruction programme.

A 65% questionnaire return indicated that English teachers in Alberta do accept the responsibility for teaching reading skills. However, Fahy's conclusions indicate that though teachers are, theoretically, supportive of the attempt to teach reading skills in senior high schools (and in many cases are attempting to put theory into practice), strong factors inhibit success:

> High school teachers in Alberta are aware of the need for reading instruction at the high school level, are fairly well academically prepared to undertake it, and, in their own eyes, are at least somewhat successful in their efforts. In this respect the picture is bright.
>
> In terms of actual practice, however, the 55 schools from which data were gathered reported little

> cause for joy: great reliance on Reading 10 (which it will be recalled, is intended to move candidates for corrective reading instruction - the "educational casualties" - into the developmental stream) as the major format for reading instruction was evident; less than one-third of the schools had an appointed reading teacher, despite the finding that 79.2 percent of the sample rated the presence on the staff "very important" (45.1 percent "essential") to the program, and 21.8 percent of the reponse listed such a teacher as "the most important factor", in reply to the free response question; and less than one-quarter of the schools had a reading policy, and only one of the schools had a policy attempting a reading program for all students (p. 115).

A survey of 485 American school districts was conducted by Freed (1973). The purpose of this study was to "establish the nature and extent of reading programs", to examine "certification standards of those reponsible for reading instruction" and to "investigate the perceived need for improvement" (p. 199). Fifty percent of the school districts in 41 states responded.

Freed found that "83% of the states do not set a minimum number of courses in reading as a part of their certification requirements for secondary school English. Seventeen percent require one course in reading for secondary English teachers" (p.199). Again, the assumption is that English teachers should, and do, take much of the reading load. In 37% of the selected school districts, both English and reading teachers were found to be responsible for reading instruction. In 21% of the districts, English teachers had that responsibility.

Narang's (1973) survey of Sasakatchewan schools reflects a similar neglect of reading at the senior levels of the secondary school. Of the 268 schools that replied from the 400 polled, only 5% had instruction for the college bound. Again, most of the schools placed the onus for reading instruction on the English teacher. Moreover, a high proportion of the teachers responsible for reading instruction were found to be untrained to assume that responsibility. One of Narang's conclusions was that "the reading needs of academically bright students are neglected in secondary schools"(p.60).

Kinzer's (1976) survey of the status of reading in British Columbia schools reflects the findings of earlier studies in both Canada and the United States. He classified reading instruction into 1) organized reading activity, 2) developmental reading classes, 3) corrective reading classes, 4) content- or subject-area reading instruction, 5) remedial classes, and 6) disadvantaged reader programmes.

Kinzer canvassed three hundred and thirty-four schools by

questionnaire. Of these, 294 questionnaires (88.8% of the total) were considered to be usable. He cautions that "there seems to be little or no information available as to the quantity, quality or scope of the reading instructional programs for secondary schools in the province" (p.1). Table I shows the availability of reading programmes in grades 8 to 12 in British Columbia.

Table I

Availability of Secondary Reading Programs in Grades 8 to 12

	Grade				
	8	9	10	11	12
Program Type					
developmental	125	94	68	32	27
corrective	113	98	69	26	17
remedial	138	117	85	30	24
disadvantaged	87	75	65	30	26
total # of schools with this grade	185	179	178	111	108

From "A Status Survey of Reading Programs in British Columbia Secondary Schools" by C. K. Kinzer, M.A. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1976.

Table II

Availability and Types of Secondary Reading Programs in Junior and Senior Schools

	jr. secondary		sr. secondary	
program type	no.	% of total	no.	% of total
remedial	74	89.2	10	71.4
developmental	52	62.2	9	64.3
corrective	59	71.1	8	57.1
disadvantaged	42	50.6	9	64.3
content	3	39.8	5	35.7

From "A Status Survey of Reading Programs in British Columbia Secondary Schools" by C. K. Kinzer, M.A. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1976.

Table III

Special Training in Reading Instruction of British Columbia Secondary Reading Teachers

special training in reading instruction	# of teachers	% of tot.
no special training	34	15.9
inservice training	41	19.2
1 or 2 professional courses	82	38.3
undergraduate concentration	36	16.8
graduate degree	21	9.8

From "A Status Survey of Reading Programs in British Columbia Secondary Schools" by C. K. Kinzer, M.A. Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1976.

Kinzer found that "higher grades seem to stress developmental reading to a lesser extent than do lower secondary grades"(p.42). Table II indicates the availability and types of reading programmmes at junior and senior grades. As with other studies, Kinzer's results show an inverse relationship between the availability of reading instruction and the progression to higher grades.

Again, developmental reading programmes are often linked to the English classroom although English teachers are not necessarily qualified reading teachers. The British Columbia Reading Assessment (1977) reported that "an average of 43% (of polled teachers) indicated 'Agree' regarding the statement that 'the English teacher is in the best position to determine and teach reading skills'. It is interesting to note, however, that science and social studies teachers are more in favour of this position than are teachers of English" (p.36, Instructional Practices). Both Kinzer in British Columbia and Fahy(1972) in Alberta recommend that English teachers have additional reading courses, since, in practical terms, opinion holds them responsible for reading instruction. Table III shows the level of training of present reading instructors in the province, as reported by Kinzer.

The results of the British Columbia Reading Assessment: Summary (1977) suggests an awareness of the need for secondary reading programmes in the province but points out serious factors standing in the way of an immediate practical solution:

> The picture which emerges from the combined data is one of increasing awareness of the importance of reading skills for secondary students created by the demand of the current secondary school curriculum and the student's needs ....There are a number of factors which indicate more could be done.
>
> First, even in a limited sense, for a majority of secondary students there is no provision for teaching reading at all. Teachers indicate that only 11% - 30% of secondary students receive specific reading instruction regularly. Second, there is a shortage of personnel educated in methods of teaching reading at secondary school level. Third, while secondary school teachers agree in the primary importance of reading skills development at that level, they appear to actually spend relatively little time in developing these skills.
>
> Finally, since secondary school teachers in the content fields agree that they have a vital role to play in developing reading skills relative to their subject areas, the lack of such programs must be of some concern. (p.40)

Surveys in both Canada and the United States show that English teachers are often expected to be reading teachers even though they may lack the training to do an adequate job. Moreover, like most content- area teachers, they see their role at the senior levels as being teachers of content.

There seems to be a dearth of reading programmes in both Canada and the United States. This is especially apparent at the senior levels of high school. Even where such programmes do exist, the personnel responsible for the course may not be qualified reading teachers. As students progress through the secondary school, reading instruction often decreases even though specialized skills are needed, especially by those who plan on post-secondary education.

2.7 Summary

The Canadian public is registering concern over the lack of basic skills, including reading skills, apparently possessed by present university entrants. Is this a justified worry?

The literature shows that there has been a marked increase, in the United States, in college- and university- sponsored reading programmes. Canadian information is sparse; however, Hayward's 1971 study suggests that Canadian post-secondary institutions are also offering reading remediation of various types though the status of such programmes varies.

The literature shows a surprising lack of reading programmes at the secondary level, especially at the senior secondary level, in both Canada and the United States. In 1969, Margaret Early wrote of high school programmes:

> One expected shift failed to occur. That is, we might have expected that, as terminal students in high school dropped from about 80% in the early 1950s to less than 50% in the 1960s, reading improvement programs would have veered toward serving the college bound. (p.535)

Attention to reading instruction appears to decrease as students go into higher grades. Programmes for the college-bound are rare; rare to the extent that Narang (1973) in Saskatchewan calls the reading needs of the academically bright students "neglected". The phenomenon of ever decreasing reading instruction was apparent in American and Canadian studies (Freed, 1973; Kinzer, 1976). This state of affairs may be attributable to the lack of formal reading instruction taken by

those responsible for reading instruction in the secondary classroom (Bowren, 1970; Braam & Roehm, 1967; Kinzer, 1976; Narang, 1973).

It is the English teacher who is regarded as being primarily responsible for teaching reading skills (Freed, 1973; British Columbia Reading Assessment, 1977). English teachers do accept this task though sometimes with less enthusiasm than that with which colleagues assign the task to them (British Columbia Reading Assessment, 1977; Fahy, 1972; Freed, 1973). Various studies, such as the Canadian studies of Fahy and Kinzer, recommend that English teachers be required to take reading courses as part of their teacher training since they are held to be responsible for the teaching of reading skills. English teachers are given the additional role of reading teacher by default since, though content teachers may theoretically assign themselves roles in reading instruction, few all-content area programmes exist (British Columbia Reading Assessment, 1977).

Various experts have stated the need for systematic and structured developmental reading programmes throughout a student's school life as skills do not develop automatically (Hodges, 1974; Palmer, 1975; Robinson, 1961; Shepherd, 1972).

The literature indicates a serious need to re-assess the reading needs of students during their senior years at secondary school as the theory of reading instruction has not yet been translated into practical instruction.

CHAPTER THREE

Description of the Study

3.1 The Instrument

The format for the data-gathering instrument used in this study was based on a questionnaire designed by Allen and Chester (1978) to survey inservice reading needs. Two separate questionnaires were used. The first was administered to English 100 students at the University of British Columbia. The second was sent to senior secondary English teachers in the province of British Columbia. The questionnaires differed only in the amount of demographic information requested in the first part of the survey form. The sixteen skills included in the body of the form were adapted from skill areas of interest in the British Columbia Reading Assessment (1977).

The questionnaire was divided into three areas vis a vis the literacy skills of university- and college-bound students. For each skill the frequency with which the skill was taught, the strength of that skill and the importance of that skill as it pertains to university achievement were each assessed. Respondents were asked to select an appropriate response to the sixteen listed skills using three separate five-point scales designated as questions one, two and three (see Appendices A and B). Questions one and three used a numerical scale. Question

two required answers to be chosen from an alphabetic scale. It was felt that a change in the reply mode would prevent a mechanical response pattern from forming.

Demographic information was included on the front page of the questionnaire. The questions asked of the English 100 students were more detailed, including sex, frequency of pleasure reading , and a subjective self-assessment of reading ability. Questions addressed to both teachers and students included information on school size and preferences and needs as regards reading programmes for the college-bound.

The questionnaire was typed in sections, reduced by Xeroxing and laid out to fit 8 by 14 inch paper. This was done twice in order to accommodate the differing demographic material (Appendices D and E). A covering letter and a return, stamped envelope were included with the questionnaire in both the first and second mailing to the English Department Head in each of the senior secondary schools in the province.

3.2 The Population

A covering letter (Appendix C) was sent to every instructor of the possible 50 regular sections and 11 Z sections (see Chapter 1.3) of English 100 at the University of British Columbia during the final term of 1978. Fifteen instructors expressed interest in participating in the study. Their classes, a total of 269 English 100 students, completed

questionnaires. All questionnaires were considered usable.

A questionnaire was also mailed to the Head of English of every senior secondary school in the province of British Columbia immediately following the completion of the English 100 survey. The total population of 163 schools was contacted in a first mailing consisting of a covering letter (Appendix D), a questionnaire and a stamped, return envelope. Direct refusals to participate in the study were received from four Heads of Department, each offering a different reason for declining to return questionnaires. These schools were excluded from the second mailing.

A follow-up letter (Appendix E), questionnaire and stamped, addressed envelope were sent to the remaining non-respondents of the 159 schools now considered to be the total viable population.

3.3 Procedure

Data were gathered from English 100 students directly. The author of this study and colleagues went into English 100 classrooms at times designated as convenient by the instructors. A standard introduction explaining the purpose of the survey was given and a procedure for filling out the form was suggested. Approximately 20 minutes were needed to accomplish both introduction and form completion.

In order to collect information from the 163 senior

secondary schools in the province, a covering letter was typed into the Texture text processing system on the computer at U.B.C. Each letter was headed using school addresses taken from a master file stored in the computer. Address labels were generated by a computer programme from the same file. The initial covering letter, along with questionnaire and envelope, was sent to the Head of English at each secondary school having senior grades. The Head was requested to have a grade 12 teacher complete the form. Each questionnaire was identified in order that the school might be eliminated from a second mailing upon receipt of a completed form. It was decided that six weeks would be allowed between the first and second mailings. At the end of that period, there was a 47% response rate.

A second covering letter was prepared by computer for the second mailing. The enclosures were the same as in the first mailing. The second letter was sent to those schools of the 159 possible which had not returned a questionnaire (or appeared not to have done so). The questionnaires were coded to facilitate the tallying of replies against the master list of schools. Several replies to the second mailing indicated that in some cases, the first letter had not reached the English department.

Four weeks were allowed for returns from the second mailing. At the end of that period, usable returns stood at 76% of the total.

3.4 Data Analysis

Raw data received from the English 100 students and from the provincial teachers were key punched, in separate batches, onto data cards. Each questionnaire required a single card. Information from the cards were then transferred to files in order to make editing on a terminal possible. For the analysis, the alphabetic responses to question two were converted to numbers.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences provided the packaged programmes used for data analysis. Frequencies generated frequency distributions as histograms to provide a "picture" of the demographic information as well as providing histograms and other statistical information for the skills referred to in questions one, two and three.

Crosstabs allowed for cross analysis of the data from each questionnaire. Scattergram yielded the correlation of frequency of teaching of the skill to strength of skill, the level of significance of that relationship and the slope of the best fit straight line.

Since the questionnaire was designed to solicit subjective responses, analysis of the data was effected in purely descriptive terms.

3.5 Summary

Chapter Three describes the data-gathering instrument used in this study and the procedure by which it was administered to

the two populations included in the analysis. Methods used for analyzing the data are described briefly at the close of the chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Analysis: Results and Observations

A descriptive analysis of the data is presented in this chapter. First, those questions posed in Chapter 1 are examined. Next, trends in the data are discussed.

Gay (1976) states, "If your percentage return is not at least 70%, the validity of your conclusions will be weak"(p.132). Analysis in this instance is based upon two separate administrations of the survey instrument. All 269 questionnaires completed by the English 100 students at U.B.C. Were considered usable. The usable return from the secondary schools in the province was 121 or 76% of the adjusted total.

Tables related to the results are to be found at the end of the chapter.

4.1 Questions Examined by the Study

Question 1: Do students and teachers agree in their estimation of the frequency of instruction of selected reading skills?

An examination of the means yielded by the data from both students and teachers showed a high consensus concerning the ordering of the frequency of teaching of certain skills (Table VI) at the end of this chapter. (Recall that frequency,

strength and importance were each rated on a five point scale (1-5) with 1 representing "very frequently", "very strong" and "essential" respectively while 5 represents "never", "very weak" and "irrelevant".)

Written expression, the ability to express oneself in writing, was rated highest in the frequency of instruction. Comprehension of inferential information and interpretive reading were assessed as high-frequency items. These three most frequently taught skills, along with literary appreciation, are directly related to the teaching of literature. However, students rated literary appreciation slightly below the position given to it by teachers. The popularity of instruction in the skills named above is attributable to the fact that English teachers spend much of their time trying to give students an insight into the teachers' particular area of interest even though, at the same time, teachers rank literary appreciation as being of low importance to university success.

Rated lowest in teaching frequency are flexible reading rate, word study skills, library and reference skills, listening skills and context clues. Students indicated that critical reading skills (British Columbia Reading Assessment: Test Results, 1977, p.43) and use of study aids are taught less often than teachers suggest.

It is appropriate to comment here that though the questionnaire concerned itself with university-bound students teachers do deal, for the most part, with mixed groups of students. Thus, the low frequency of the teaching of some

skills may be explained by the observations made by teachers themselves. It was stressed by some respondents that the academic needs of university hopefuls may not reflect the life skill needs of the majority of the students. Some teachers clearly felt that since, in their opinion, the highest proportion of grade 12 students show no immediate interest in continuing formal education, the need for certain academic skills to be taught in the general programme is minimal. Typical of teachers' responses were the following:

> In this survey you seem to assume that a primary task of English teachers in high school is to prepare students for college or university. This is not the case. No more than 50% of our students have educational ambitions at post-secondary level.

> About 10% of our grade 12 are planning to attend universities

> It must be remembered that all high school students are not going on to university and therefore other skills to be emphasized as well [sic].

The question which may be asked is this: do we adjust a programme to fit either one group or the other? This attitude seems to imply that all programmes must be sufficiently general to fit all students.

Question 2: Do first year university students and high school teachers rate the same literacy and communication skills as being important to university study?

Written expression is ranked as being the most important skill by both teachers and students (Table V). Interestingly enough, students did not rate themselves as being particularly strong in this skill even if it is the skill most often given attention in the classroom.

Research skills and study aids are deemed to be important by both groups though the frequency of instruction is lower than the importance might indicate. A viable explanation for this discrepancy has been discussed earlier: teachers often feel that skills appropriate to university study should not be stressed in a general programme where the majority of students have no immediate plans to continue schooling past grade 12.

Comprehension of factual information is considered to be important by both students and teachers. However, the comprehension of inferential material, high on the teachers' list, was much less important to students. Students do, however, feel spelling is of prime importance while teachers place it near the bottom in importance.

Literary appreciation is rated by teachers and students at the bottom of their respective lists. Though literary appreciation is a high-frequency item, clearly teachers see it as being totally related to the study of literature and see no benefits accruing to it which might lead to success in other academic endeavours. This is interesting. Do teachers see their subject area and the skills related to it as separate entities rather than part of a learning process which matures into a learning gestalt?

Question 3: Do grade 12 teachers feel their university-bound students to be stronger in certain skill areas than do the students themselves?

Table VIII shows that teachers and students agree that students are able to cope with both factual and inferential information. Beyond this, there is very little agreement.For example, students rate orthography as being an important skill (Table VII) and they also see themselves as being competent spellers. Teachers are less convinced. Literary appreciation is weak in students' estimations and strong in the judgement of their former teachers. Again, teachers rate their students' writing skills highly. Students see themselves as being less proficient.

Research skills, study aids, flexibility of reading rate, and library and reference skills are weak according to students. Students feel their ability to read critically is less well developed than teachers believe it to be (British Columbia Reading Assessment: Test Results, 1977, p.43).

Teachers and students register more disagreement in their estimation of the strength of skills of students than they do in either the frequency of the teaching of those skills or the importance of the skills to university study.

Question 4: Do teachers and students differ in their views concerning the need for increased attention to reading at the senior levels of high school?

In the question asking, "Should college- or university-bound students have a special reading/writing course?" (see Table VII for teachers' results and Table VIII for students' results), the word "special" was purposely left undefined. English programmes vary widely from school to school and a narrow definition of "special" was felt to be impossible given the variance in philosophy and scheduling. Thus, for some, "special" meant an optional and/or honours English programme in which particular skills were stressed. Others interpreted "special" to mean blocks of instruction in particular skills included in the regular English programme. Other respondents, such as the one cited below, pointed out the difficulty in providing any instruction apart from the general offering:

> Ideally yes, but this would place country cousins at a disadvantage as the school they attend would be unable to offer such a course due to small number of students who head to university from such schools. Thus, though I feel such training is needed by the university student, I feel it should be taught in the freshman year.
>
> Universities are going to have to accept fact [sic] that high schools, particularly smaller ones, can no longer devote majority [sic] of their resources to the university bound student. Thus, they are going to have to provide students with <u>special</u> skills required by universities.

For the students who do well academically, a descriptive remark from a responding teacher that "it should not be necessary (to provide special courses)" is probably quite true. However, 71% of teachers and 71% of students polled (Table VIII) felt that some sort of preparatory course for the

university-bound student should be available in some form. And, indeed, some respondents indicated the existence of well established courses in their schools already.

Students were asked if they felt every student in their senior high school year should have a special reading and writing course in addition to, or accompanying, the regular English programme which is often, not surprisingly, highly literary in focus. Sixty-one percent of the students felt such a course would be useful but felt that more emphasis on reading skills should be "part of the regular course", obviating any necessity for special programmes. Typical of their comments were the following observations on their high school English experience:

> Grade 12 English composition include [sic] only handout sheets on spelling and vocabulary, occasional work out of a book on grammar and only two weeks on essay writing.

> Our English program last year was the pits. We were never taught how to write a proper essay until the last two weeks of school. I think more stress should be made on this.

> Did little essay writing. Few that I did were ever critically marked. I feel that high school preparation of students, in the field of language arts, is inadequate.

> Grade 12 does not adequately prepare students for university. There is not enough grammar taught. There is not enough practise in writing essays. Teachers don't give positive criticism of work so students don't know what they are doing right or wrong (they only grade papers i.e. A,B,C,C+ etc.)

A few students did feel that there was little use in teaching reading skills at all:

> Teaching of reading skills in English is useless unless the student reads in his spare time.

> Most of the items mentioned should be taught before high school and that's where I learned them in elementry [sic] and junior high.

Question 5: How many grade 12 English teachers in the sample have had training in the teaching of reading?

Teachers were asked to indicate the number of reading courses they had taken (Table IX). This question caused some confusion and should have been more precisely worded as some respondents (represented in the histogram as "missing cases") were unsure as to whether the question referred to them or to their students.

Of the sample of grade 12 teachers responding to the questionnaire, 33% have taken no reading courses nor have they participated in inservice training in reading. However, the majority of English teachers have had either one or more reading courses or inservice training. This would suggest that English teachers are showing an interest in the area.

Where teachers marked two categories "inservice training" and "reading course(s)", "reading course" was chosen over "inservice training" to be included in the raw data.

Question 6: Do students and teachers agree on who should teach reading skills during the senior year of high school?

Whether or not reading skills should be taught in a separate programme, in the English class, or in all content areas yielded strongly differing percentage results from students (Table X) and teachers (Table XI). Of the teachers, 59.2% felt that reading skills should be an integral part of all content area teaching. Comments accompanying the replies to this section of the survey indicated that in an ideal world, reading skills would indeed be integrated into subject area teaching. However, it was made clear that we do not inhabit such a world. Many of the responses were accompanied by single word comments such as "ideally", "theoretically" or "unrealistic ".

Of the students polled, 52.0% felt that reading skills fall under the jurisdiction of the English department (Table XII). They seem to see reading skills as part of English composition and this would serve to explain their response to this question. Only 29.0% of the students indicated that reading skills should be included in all content area teaching.

4.2 Related Demographic Information

School Size

The largest number of teacher responses (Table XII) were

received from schools housing 1000 or more students. However, one respondent cautioned that the school size did not necessarily reflect the numbers of grade 12 students enrolled in the school, especially in areas outside the Vancouver region.

Over half of the student population in the study came from large schools, those having 1000 or more students (Table XV).

The student sample was equally divided by sex but no statistical results were concluded from using sex as an independent variable in the analysis of the data.

High School Location

Students in English 100 are drawn primarily from B.C. schools. In this study, 91.1% of the students graduated from a B.C. high school, 5.9% were from another province and 2.6% were from outside Canada. This does not come as a revelation but does show that trends noticed in the student sample do reflect the attitudes of students graduating from B.C. schools.

Reading Ability

To the question of how well they read compared to their university peers, 49.3% felt that they read well or very well (Table XIV) while a further 41.4% felt that they read as well as "the average student". In other words, 90.7% feel they read as well as, or better than their peers at the university. Students also confirmed that they feel they read much better than people of their own age outside the university community.

Recreational Reading

In response to the question of how often they read for recreation 53.5% stated that they read "very often" or "often". A surprising 31.6% read "sometimes", 13.0% "seldom" and 1.9% "never" (Table XV). It may be that, since the students were answering the questionnaire only a few weeks before final examinations, recreational reading was very low on their list of priorities. At another time the percentage of recreational readers might have been more substantial.

4.3 Other Findings

For most of the skills included in this study a significant positive relationship ($p<.05$) is shown to exist between the strength of a skill and its frequency of teaching (Table XVI). This positive relationship exists for all skills on the students' questionnaire and for fourteen of the sixteen skills on the teachers' questionnaire.

Table XVII shows the five skills with the strongest positive correlation between strength and frequency for students and teachers. (One peculiar and inexplicable result was that for word study, strength and frequency showed a negative correlation in the teacher data.)

Agreement between the two groups exists most strongly in the categories literary appreciation and critical reading. In both these, students designate themselves as being weak. They also feel these skills to be infrequently taught (but they also

feel them to be relatively unimportant). Teachers rate the importance and the frequency of the teaching of critical reading higher. They agree with the students in the ranking of the importance of literary appreciation but consider the frequency of its teaching to be greater than do students.

Oral expression, research skills, study aids, library and reference skills show strong correlation of strength to frequency, in the data of both populations.

There is little agreement in the data of the two groups as regards flexibility of reading rate and interpretive reading.

4.4 Discussion

Teachers and students agree to a great extent on the frequency of the teaching of selected skills and about the importance those skills have to a university career. Disagreement begins when students and teachers discuss students' strength in those same skills areas. Some teachers observed that their subjective judgements as to strength were based upon classes of grade 12 students whose post-secondary aims varied widely. That 77.5% of the teachers involved in the study and 71.8% of the students indicated that university-bound students should have extra skills training suggests that in the general programme, skills are not being stressed to the satisfaction of either student or teacher. Students feel that the onus for such training rests upon the English department (Table X). Teachers

(Table XI) feel the need for skills training to be part of all subject area teaching.

Generally, English teachers are not trained in reading. However, inservice training and occasional courses have been taken by the majority of the teachers in this survey. This suggests that there is positive interest in reading as an area of concern. Some respondents pointed out that though they lacked reading training, other members of their staff did have such training.

Of the students involved in the study, 59% came from large schools of 1000 or more students. A further 16% came from schools of 750 or more students. Thus, 75% of the students polled came from schools in which the existence of a sizeable population might argue for the viability of optional programmes for students planning to continue formal education beyond grade 12.

General findings concluded from the data collected from the two populations in this study are:

1. Teachers and students agree on freguency and importance of skills but disagree on strength.

2. Teachers of English at the senior secondary level are more content oriented than skills oriented as shown by the fact that they teach literary appreciation much more freguently than study, reference, research and word skills.

3. Teachers of English would prefer to see the responsibility for teaching skills spread to all content areas. Students feel the responsibility for skills instruction rests with the English department.

4. Both students and teachers feel that there is a need for increased attention to the reading skills needs of university- and college-bound students.

5. English teachers are becoming more interested in reading, as demonstrated by the high percentage who have taken reading courses and inservice training in reading.

4.5 Summary

The validity of results based upon a 76% return of questionnaires from teachers in the province of B.C. is briefly discussed at the beginning of Chapter 4. Questions asked at the beginning of the study (Section 1.2) are then analyzed. Accompanying tables are included at the end of the chapter, immediately following the summary.

Table IV

Rank Order of FREQUENCY of Skills by Means

Students			Teachers		
Q11	2.38	written express.	Q11	1.37	written express.
Q 9	2.51	interp. read	Q 5	1.87	comp.: inferential
Q 5	2.80	comp.: inferential	Q15	1.94	lit. apprec.
Q12	2.96	oral express.	Q 9	1.90	interpretive read.
Q 4	3.00	comp.: factual	Q 4	2.06	comp.: factual
Q15	3.03	lit. apprec.	Q 3	2.12	vocab. development
Q 3	3.06	vocab. devlopment	Q10	2.30	critical reading
Q 7	3.30	research skills	Q 6	2.45	study aids
Q16	3.34	spelling	Q 7	2.53	research skills
Q10	3.36	critical read.	Q12	2.67	oral expression
Q 6	3.45	study aids	Q16	2.83	context clues
Q13	3.52	listening skills	Q 2	2.83	spelling
Q14	3.66	lib. & ref.	Q13	2.88	listening skills
Q 2	3.78	context clues	Q14	2.89	lib. & ref.
Q 1	3.86	word study	Q 1	3.05	word study
Q 8	3.91	flex. read. rate	Q 8	3.45	flex. reading rate

Table V

Rank Order of IMPORTANCE of Skills by Means

Students			Teachers		
Q11	1.35	written express.	Q11	1.21	written express.
Q 4	1.58	comp.: factual	Q 7	1.48	research
Q 7	1.58	research	Q 6	1.53	study aids
Q 6	1.64	study aids	Q 5	1.56	comp.: inferential
Q13	1.85	listening	Q 4	1.57	comp.: factual
Q16	1.85	spelling	Q14	1.71	library & ref.
Q 3	1.91	vocab. development	Q13	1.80	listening
Q 5	1.97	comp.: inferential	Q10	1.94	critical read.
Q14	2.06	library & ref.	Q 3	1.96	vocab. devlop.
Q 8	2.22	flexible read. rate	Q 8	2.13	flexible read. rate
Q12	2.39	oral expression	Q 2	2.15	context clues
Q10	2.45	critical read.	Q 9	2.19	interp. reading
Q 9	2.46	interp. read.	Q16	2.33	spelling
Q 2	2.56	context clues	Q12	2.41	oral express.
Q 1	2.47	word study	Q15	2.43	lit. apprec.
Q15	2.90	lit. apprec.	Q 1	2.46	word study

Table VI

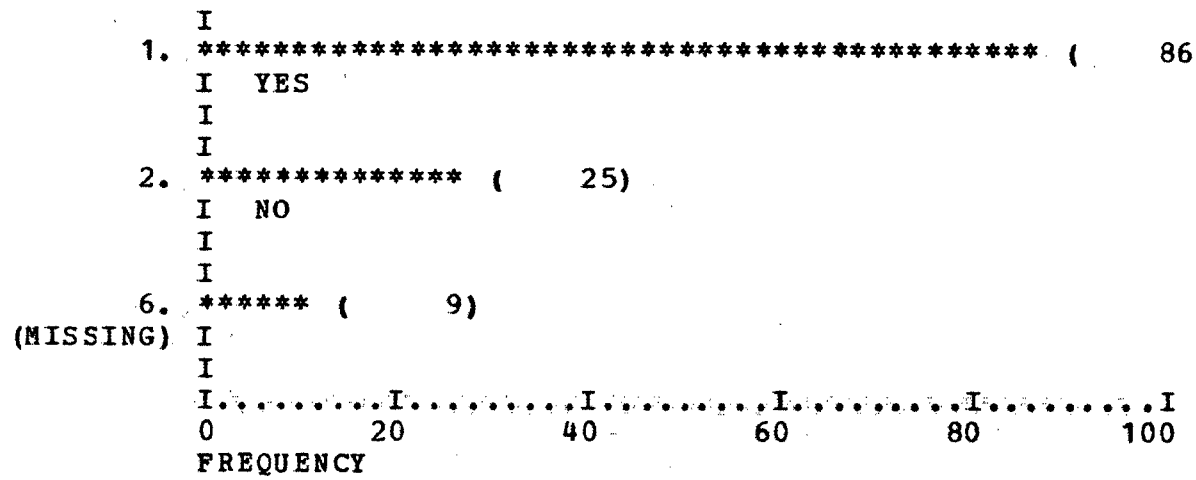
Rank Order of STRENGTH of Skills by Means

Students			Teachers		
	mean			mean	
Q16	2.45	spelling	Q 4	2.26	comp.: factual
Q 4	2.46	comp.: factual	Q11	2.80	written express.
Q 5	2.75	comp.: inferential	Q 5	2.86	comp.: inferential
Q 2	2.76	context clues	Q 9	2.86	interpretive read.
Q13	2.77	listening skills	Q15	2.86	lit. appreciation
Q 3	2.78	vocab. develop.	Q10	2.88	critical reading
Q11	2.80	written express.	Q 2	2.93	context clues
Q12	2.89	oral expression	Q16	2.94	spelling
Q 9	2.90	interpretive read.	Q14	2.94	lib. & ref.
Q10	2.90	critical reading	Q12	2.95	oral express.
Q 6	2.93	study aids	Q 7	2.99	research skills
Q 7	2.93	research skills	Q 6	3.00	study aids
Q 8	2.93	flex. read. rate	Q 1	3.10	word study skills
Q 1	2.97	word study skills	Q 13	3.12	listening skills
Q14	3.00	library & ref.	Q 3	3.17	vocab. development
Q15	3.04	lit. appreciation	Q 8	3.38	flexible read. rate

Table VII

UNIVBOUND READING PROGRAMME - TEACHERS

CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	CUM FREQ (PCT)
YES	1.	86	71.7	77.5	77.5
NO	2.	25	20.8	22.5	100.0
	6.	9	7.5	MISSING	100.0
	TOTAL	120	100.0	100.0	



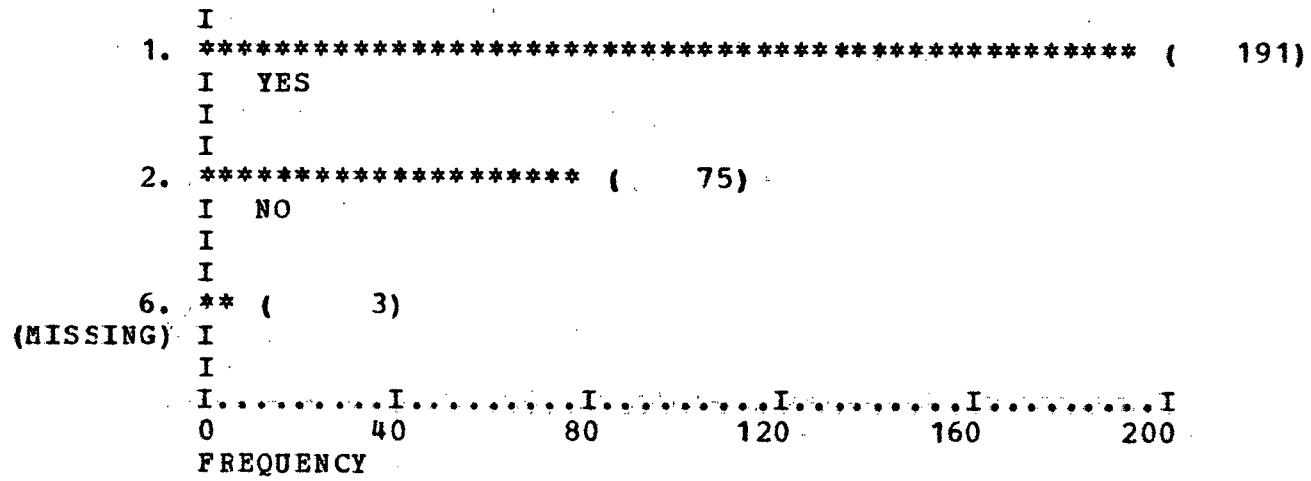
MEAN	1.225	STD ERR	0.040	MEDIAN	1.145
MODE	1.000	STD DEV	0.420	SKEWNESS	1.334
MINIMUM	1.000	MAXIMUM	2.000		

VALID CASES 111 MISSING CASES 9

Table VIII

UNIVBOUND READING PROGRAMME - STUDENTS

CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	CUM FREQ (PCT)
YES	1.	191	71.0	71.8	71.8
NO	2.	75	27.9	28.2	100.0
	6.	3	1.1	MISSING	100.0
	TOTAL	269	100.0	100.0	



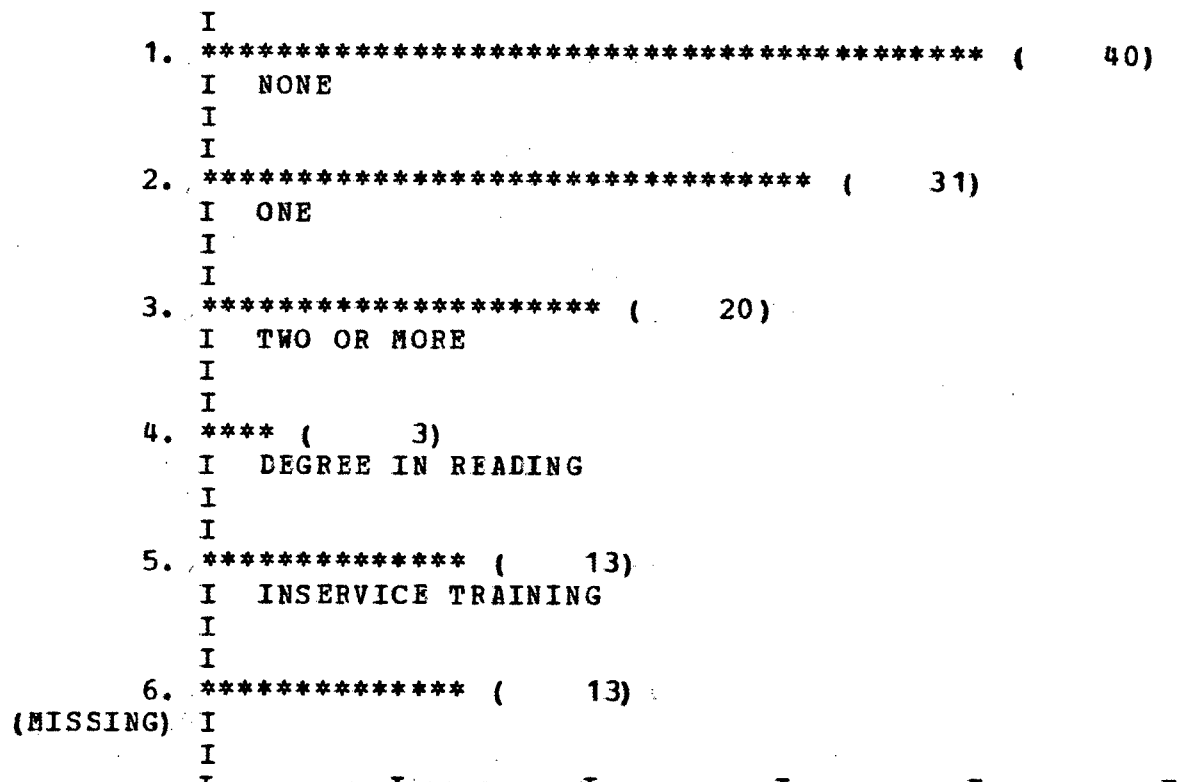
MEAN	1.282	STD ERR	0.028	MEDIAN	1.196
MODE	1.000	STD DEV	0.451	SKEWNESS	0.975
MINIMUM	1.000	MAXIMUM	2.000		

VALID CASES 266 MISSING CASES 3

Table IX

NO. OF READING COURSES TAKEN - TEACHERS

CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	CUM FREQ (PCT)
NONE	1.	40	33.3	37.4	37.4
ONE	2.	31	25.8	29.0	66.4
TWO OR MORE	3.	20	16.7	18.7	85.0
DEGREE IN READING	4.	3	2.5	2.8	87.9
INSERVICE TRAINING	5.	13	10.8	12.1	100.0
	6.	13	10.8	MISSING	100.0
	TOTAL	120	100.0	100.0	



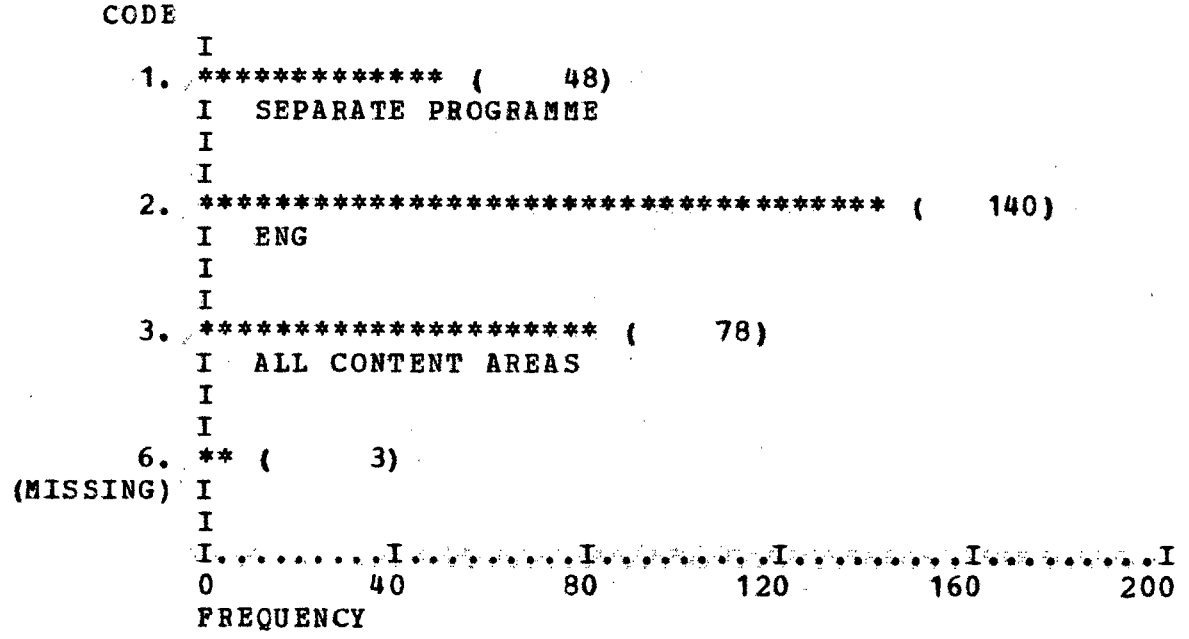
MEAN	2.234	STD ERR	0.127	MEDIAN	1.935
MODE	1.000	STD DEV	1.315	SKEWNESS	0.953
MINIMUM	1.000	MAXIMUM	5.000		

VALID CASES 107 MISSING CASES 13

Table X

READING PROGRAMME SETUP - STUDENTS

CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	CUM FREQ (PCT)
SEPARATE PROGRAMME	1.	48	17.8	18.0	18.0
ENG	2.	140	52.0	52.6	70.7
ALL CONTENT AREAS	3.	78	29.0	29.3	100.0
	6.	3	1.1	MISSING	100.0
	TOTAL	269	100.0	100.0	



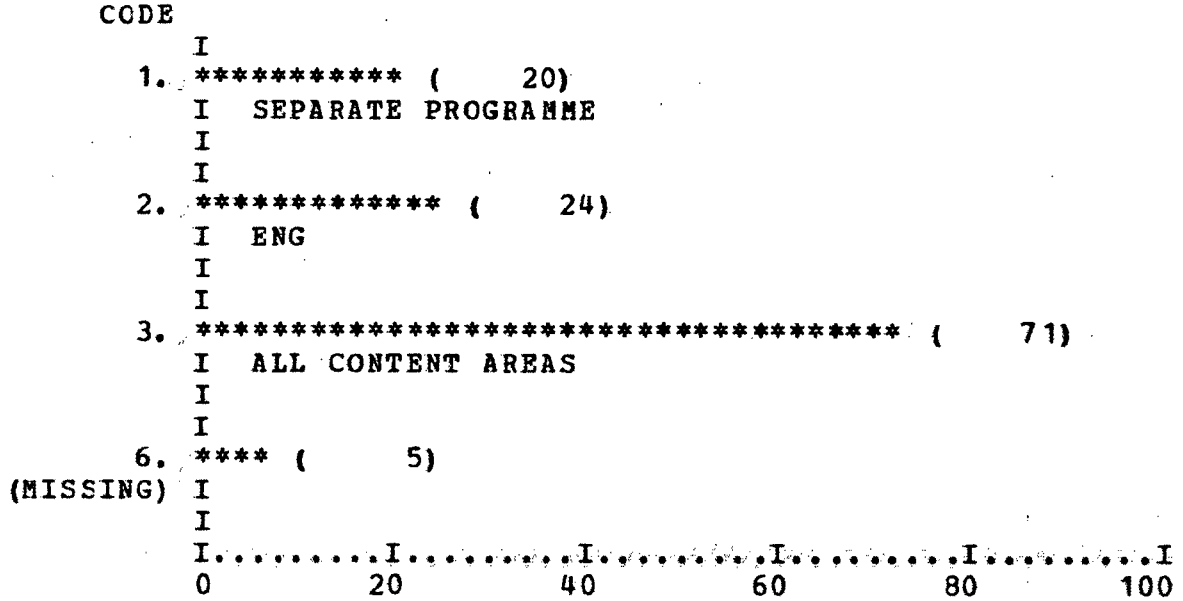
MEAN	2.113	STD ERR	0.042	MEDIAN	2.107
MODE	2.000	STD DEV	0.680	SKEWNESS	-0.143
MINIMUM	1.000	MAXIMUM	3.000		

VALID CASES 266 MISSING CASES 3

Table XI

READING PROGRAMME SETUP - TEACHERS

CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	CUM FREQ (PCT)
SEPARATE PROGRAMME	1.	20	16.7	17.4	17.4
ENG	2.	24	20.0	20.9	38.3
ALL CONTENT AREAS	3.	71	59.2	61.7	100.0
	6.	5	4.2	MISSING	100.0
	TOTAL	120	100.0	100.0	



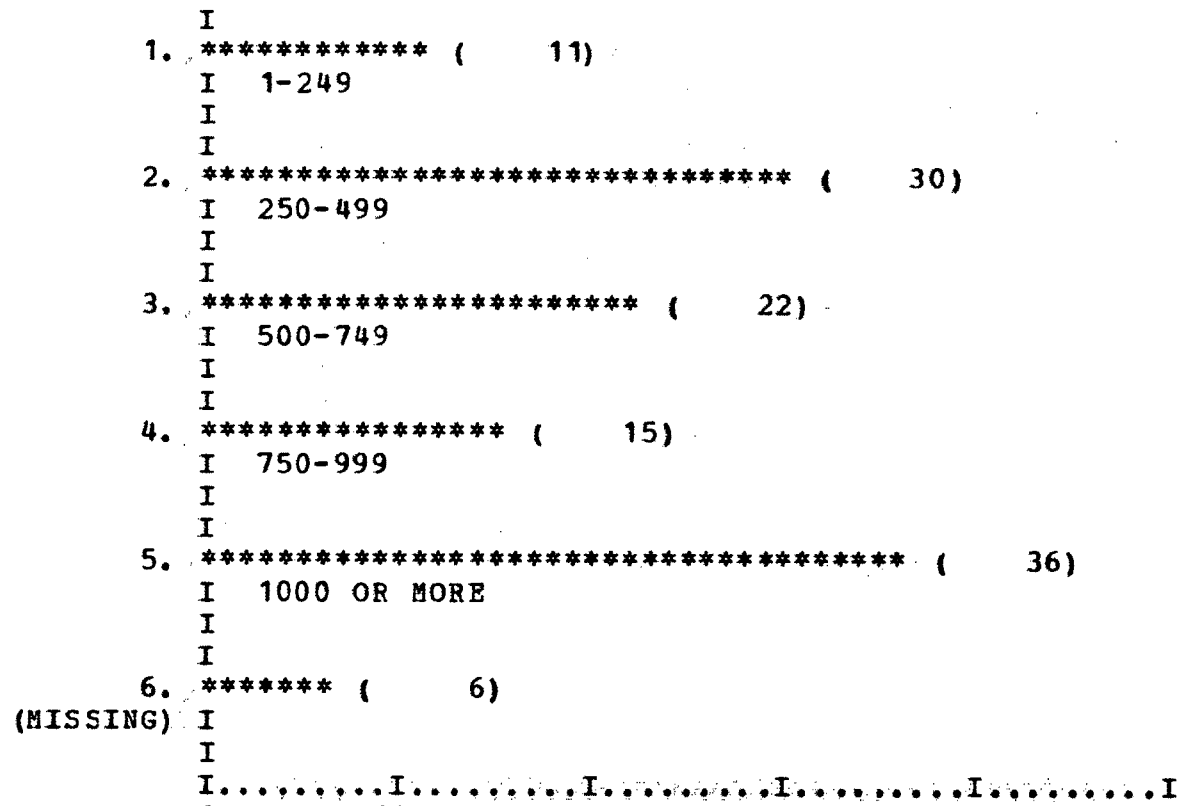
MEAN	2.443	STD ERR	0.072	MEDIAN	2.690
MODE	3.000	STD DEV	0.774	SKEWNESS	-0.961
MINIMUM	1.000	MAXIMUM	3.000		

VALID CASES 115 MISSING CASES 5

Table XII

SCHOOL SIZE - TEACHERS

CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	CUM FREQ (PCT)
1-249	1.	11	9.2	9.6	9.6
250-499	2.	30	25.0	26.3	36.0
500-749	3.	22	18.3	19.3	55.3
750-999	4.	15	12.5	13.2	68.4
1000 OR MORE	5.	36	30.0	31.6	100.0
	6.	6	5.0	MISSING	100.0
	TOTAL	120	100.0	100.0	



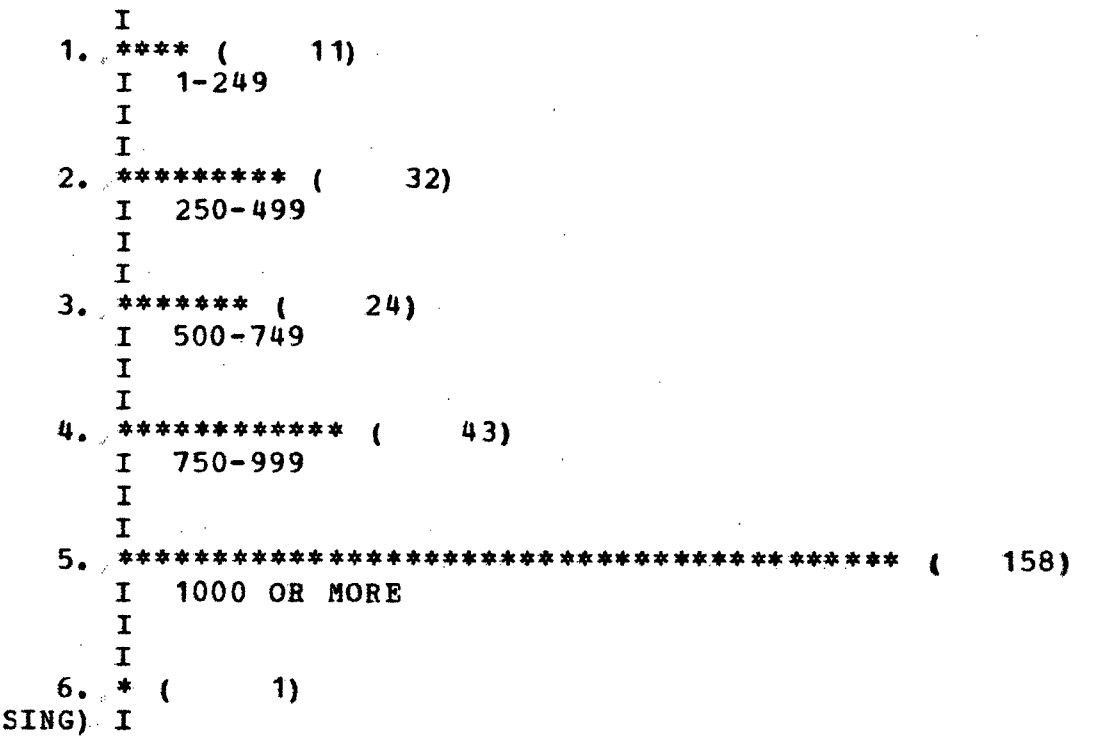
MEAN	3.307	STD ERR	0.131	MEDIAN	3.227
MODE	5.000	STD DEV	1.402	SKEWNESS	-0.075
MINIMUM	1.000	MAXIMUM	5.000		

VALID CASES 114 MISSING CASES 6

Table XIII

SCHOOL SIZE - STUDENTS

CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	CUM FREQ (PCT)
1-249	1.	11	4.1	4.1	4.1
250-499	2.	32	11.9	11.9	16.0
500-749	3.	24	8.9	9.0	25.0
750-999	4.	43	16.0	16.0	41.0
1000 OR MORE	5.	158	58.7	59.0	100.0
	6.	1	0.4	MISSING	100.0
	TOTAL	269	100.0	100.0	



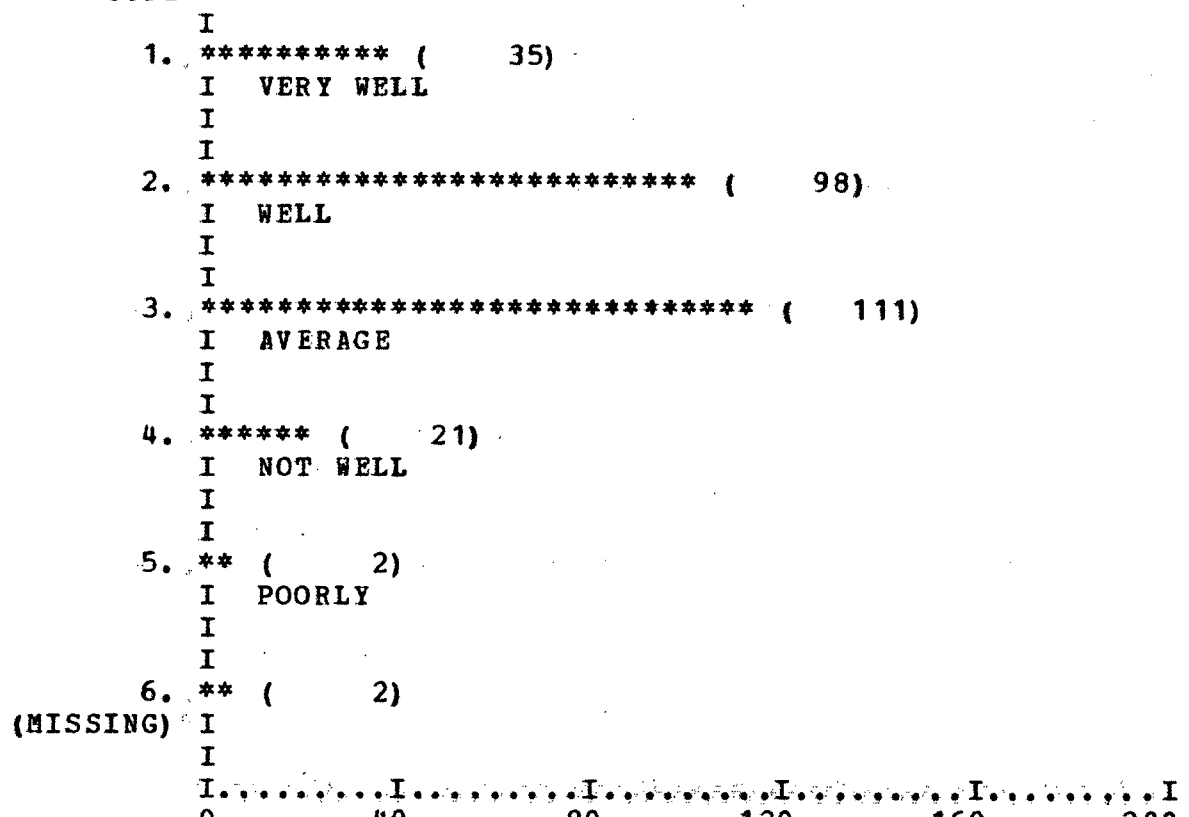
MEAN	4.138	STD ERR	0.075	MEDIAN	4.652
MODE	5.000	STD DEV	1.230	SKEWNESS	-1.191
MINIMUM	1.000	MAXIMUM	5.000		

VALID CASES 268 MISSING CASES 1

Table XIV

READING ABILITY COMPARED TO UNIV PEERS - STUDENTS

CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	CUM FREQ (PCT)
VERY WELL	1.	35	13.0	13.1	13.1
WELL	2.	98	36.4	36.7	49.8
AVERAGE	3.	111	41.3	41.6	91.4
NOT WELL	4.	21	7.8	7.9	99.3
POORLY	5.	2	0.7	0.7	100.0
	6.	2	0.7	MISSING	100.0
	TOTAL	269	100.0	100.0	



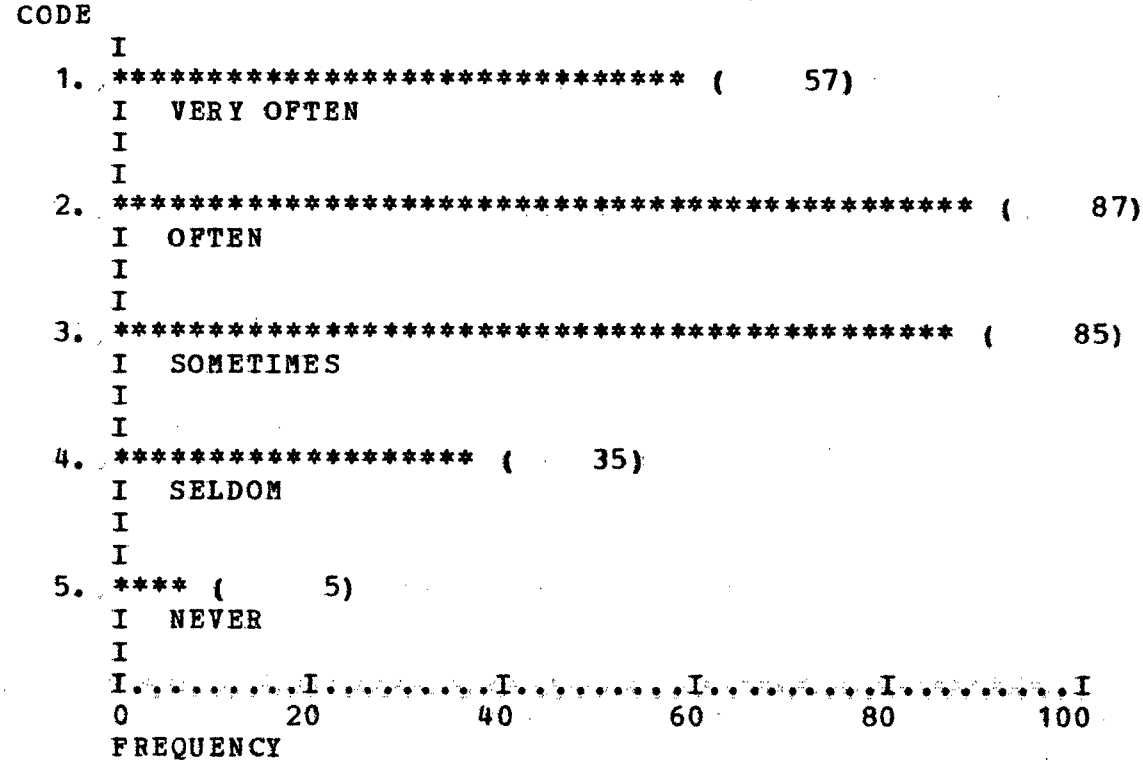
MEAN	2.464	STD ERR	0.052	MEDIAN	2.505
MODE	3.000	STD DEV	0.846	SKEWNESS	0.037
MINIMUM	1.000	MAXIMUM	5.000		

VALID CASES 267 MISSING CASES 2

Table XV

FREQUENCY OF RECREATIONAL READING - STUDENTS

CATEGORY LABEL	CODE	ABSOLUTE FREQ	RELATIVE FREQ (PCT)	ADJUSTED FREQ (PCT)	CUM FREQ (PCT)
VERY OFTEN	1.	57	21.2	21.2	21.2
OFTEN	2.	87	32.3	32.3	53.5
SOMETIMES	3.	85	31.6	31.6	85.1
SELDOM	4.	35	13.0	13.0	98.1
NEVER	5.	5	1.9	1.9	100.0
	TOTAL	269	100.0	100.0	



MEAN	2.420	STD ERR	0.062	MEDIAN	2.391
MODE	2.000	STD DEV	1.021	SKEWNESS	0.250
MINIMUM	1.000	MAXIMUM	5.000		

VALID CASES 269 MISSING CASES 0

Table XVI

Relationship of Strength and Frequency

	Students		Teachers	
	corr.	sig.	corr.	sig.
word study	.149	.00711	-.014	.44058
context clues	.339	.00001	.028	.38028
vocab. develop.	.318	.00001	.227	.00686
comp:factual	.219	.00079	.190	.02065
comp:inferential	.293	.00001	.254	.00296
study aids	.425	.00001	.387	.00001
research skills	.388	.00001	.501	.00001
flex. read. rate	.288	.00001	.430	.00001
interp. read.	.538	.00001	.287	.00082
critical read.	.453	.00001	.427	.00001
written express.	.446	.00001	.257	.00259
oral expression	.454	.00001	.517	.00001
listening	.262	.00001	.337	.00010
lib. & ref.	.360	.00001	.519	.00001
lit. apprec.	.501	.00001	.489	.00001
spelling	.188	.00101	.170	.03538

Table XVII

Skills Showing Highest Correlation:

Frequency to Strength

Teachers

skill	corr.	sig.	slope
lib. & ref.	.519	.00001	.3791
research	.501	.00001	.4880
lit. apprec.	.489	.00001	.4163
flex. read. rate	.431	.00001	.3884
critical read.	.427	.00001	.3532
Students			
interpretive read.	.538	.00001	.4976
lit. apprec.	.500	.00001	.4107
oral express.	.454	.00001	.4069
critical read.	.453	.00001	.3951
study aids	.425	.00001	.3435

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary and Recommendations

Chapter 5 summarizes the study and offers conclusions based upon the data. Recommendations specific to the populations of the study are offered.

5.1 Introduction

Descriptive data, gathered from two distinct populations by means of a questionnaire survey, were collected in order to determine trends in the preparation of senior secondary students for post- secondary education.

Little Canadian information is available through the literature to give insight into how well secondary students are prepared for university work. Moreover, popular media, a reflector or creator of public opinion, support the idea that students are ill-prepared for higher education. The American experience, better documented, does support the claim that there is a need to re-examine the high school curricula. There is a definite need for remedial programmes in reading skills to be made available at the college and university levels. The review of literature examined the preparation of teachers for teaching reading, attitudes held toward the teaching of reading and the position of remedial reading courses on university campuses.

5.2 Objectives

The following questions formed the core of the study:

1. Do students and teachers concur in their estimation of the frequency of instruction of selected reading skills?

2. Do first- year university students and high school teachers rate the same literacy and communication skills as being important to university study?

3. Do grade 12 teachers feel their university-bound students to be stronger in certain skills areas than do the students themselves?

4. Do teachers and students differ in their views concerning the need for increased attention to reading at the senior level of high school?

5. How many grade 12 English teachers in the sample have had training in the teaching of reading?

6. Do students and teachers agree on who should teach reading skills during the senior year of high school?

5.3 Procedure

Two questionnaires, differing only in the demographic

information requested, were used in this study. For the first part of the survey, 269 English 100 students at the University of British Columbia were asked to complete questionnaires. All resultant questionnaires were considered to be usable.

A similar questionnaire was sent to the Head of English at every school in the province housing a grade 12 programme. The data used for analysis and representing this population were based on a return of 121 questionnaires or 76% of the adjusted total.

5.4 Analysis

Data in this study were analyzed by computer using three packaged programmes from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Nie et al,1972): Frequencies, Crosstabs and Scattergram. The results of the statistical analysis were reported in descriptive terms.

5.5 Conclusions

Data collected from the two populations surveyed in this study suggest the following conclusions:

1. Students and teachers agree as to the frequency and importance of most skills, but differ in their opinions of the strength shown by students in those skill areas.

2. Students and teachers feel strongly that there is a need for a programme which prepares students for post- secondary education.

3. This sample indicates that large schools provide the greatest numbers of university entrants. These schools ostensibly have the greatest number of optional programmes available, yet, only a few schools indicated, on their questionnaires, the existence of a skills programme, in addition to the general English programme, designed for students with post-secondary aspirations.

4. The majority of English teachers participating in this study have taken either reading courses or inservice training in reading. Though a large number of English teachers had had no type of reading training, the greater proportion of participating teachers had taken one or more reading courses or, minimally, inservice training. This finding would suggest that provincial English teachers are showing an interest in the area of reading and are supplementing their background training with reading courses.

5. For almost all skills included in this study, a significant relationship ($p<.05$) exists between the judged strength of a skill and its frequency of teaching.

5.6 Recommendations

1. Universities, colleges, and secondary schools should maintain a closer contact in order that each is familiar with the expectations of the other. Several teachers, after replying to the questionnaire, commented that there is a need for more dialogue between teachers and the universities. This would appear to be a neccesity in view of the disillusionment of those first year students who commented upon their poor preparation and weak skills in reading.

2. Universities and secondary schools must decide, with the mushrooming of remedial courses at the university level, which skills are appropriately taught in the schools and which in the universities. The students in this survey were confused by what they considered to be the discrepancy between the expectations of the university and their high school preparation for university.

3. Optional programmes during the final year of high school for students who feel they will be continuing their formal education should be considered for all schools having senior classes. These courses could take many forms depending upon the resources of the school.

4. English teachers, since they are often given the responsibility of teaching skills, should be encouraged to take courses in the teaching of reading during their teacher training year.

5.7 Recommendations for Further Research

This study was intended to examine the area of university preparation. Little research evidence is available in the present literature and further research must be done before any strong statement can be made concerning the present literacy level of university entrants.

Following are possible areas for future research:

1. A comparison might be made of university instructors', grade 12 students' and first- year university students' perceptions of how well prepared grade 12 students are for university.

2. An analysis of the contact between university faculty and provincial teachers would be informative. There is every indication that teachers do not know what universities demand by way of student preparation. The media have stirred up resentment in teachers by publicizing faculty complaints concerning the supposed lack of literacy of incoming freshmen.

3. More information should be gathered concerning the types of programmes teachers and students consider to be valuable in the preparation of students for post secondary study.

4. More information should be gathered concerning the types of programmes for the university-bound already available in British Columbia schools.

5. An investigation of student self-perceptions of ability during grade 12 and during their freshman year would be

interesting. Would these attitudes be affected by pre-university skills training?

6. What are the skills teachers feel to be the "life skills" which must be taught in the general grade 12 programme? Are these radically different from the skills which should be taught to students going on to post-secondary education?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aaronson, S. Vocabulary instruction. In Frank P. Greene (Ed.), College reading: problems and programs of junior and senior colleges. 21st Yearbook of the National Reading Conference, 1972, 134-138.

Alm, R.S. Teaching reading is our business. English Journal, 1957, 46, 11-19.

Allen, S., & Chester, R. A needs assessment instrument for secondary reading inservice. Journal of Reading, 1978, 21, 489-492.

Applebee, R.K. National study of high school programs: a record of English teaching today. English Journal, 1966, 55, 372-378.

Beamer, G. What are the reading needs of college students? , 1955. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 130 222)

Bowren, F.F. The status of reading services in New Mexico secondary schools. Journal of Reading, 1970, 13, 513-518.

Braam, L.S., & Roehm, M.A. Concepts of a high school reading program and the role of a reading teacher. Journal of the Reading Specialist, 1967, 7, 55-61.

Braam, L.S., & Walker, J.E. Subject teachers' awareness of reading skills. Journal of Reading, 1973, 16, 608-611.

Butcofsky, D. Any learning skills taught in high school? Journal of Reading, 1971, 15, 193-198.

Carter, H.L. The impact of todays' students upon college progress in reading, 1970. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 049 004)

Chronister, G.M., & Ahrendt, K.M. Reading instruction in British Columbia's secondary schools. Journal of Reading, 1968, 11, 425-427.

Courtney, L. Meeting special reading needs in the content area classroom. In H.A. Robinson & E. Thomas (Eds.), Fusing reading skills and content . Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1969.

Early, M. What does research in reading reveal? - about successful reading programs? English Journal, 1969, 58, 534-547.

Fahy, P.J. A survey of reading instruction in the senior high

schools of Alberta. Unpublished M. Ed. thesis, University of Alberta, Alberta, 1972.

Freed, B.F. Secondary reading - state of the art. Journal of Reading, 1973, 17, 195-201.

Gay, L. Educational research: competencies for analysis and application. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1976.

Griese, A.A. Reading improvement at the college level, 1967. (ERIC Document Reproduction No. ED 016 584)

Hayward, F.M. Reading and study instruction in Canadian universities and colleges. Journal of Reading, 1971, 15, 27-29.

Henderson, M.A. Individualized reading instruction in two-year colleges. Journal of Reading, 1976, 19, 464-471.

Hodges, P. Cognitive skill development for secondary English teachers. Journal of Reading, 1974, 18, 34-40.

Hodges, P. Reading as an elective in the English program. Journal of Reading, 1974, 18, 30-33.

Huslin, R.A. What's happening in college and university developmental reading programs: a report of a recent survey. Reading World, 1975, 14, 202-214.

Isaac, S., & Michael, W.B. Handbook in research and evaluation. San Diego, California: E. d ITS, 1971.

Kingston, A.J. Significant elements in college and adult reading improvement, 1957. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 130 223)

Kingston, A.J. What do we mean by reading in the content area? Journal of Developmental Reading, 1964, 7, 146-147,158.

Kinzer, C.K. A status survey of reading programs in British Columbia secondary schools: 1976. Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1976.

Larsen, J.J., & Guttinger, H.I. Prevention of reading problems in higher education. In George H. McNinch & Wallace Miller (Eds.), Reading: convention and inquiry. 24th Yearbook of the National Reading Conference, 1975, 123-126.

Lowe, A.J. The use of college reading: the good, the bad, and the indifferent: 1950-1970, 1970. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 040 013)

Michaels, M.L. Subject reading improvement: a neglected teaching responsibility. Journal of Reading, 1965, 9, 16-21.

Ministry of Education, Province of British Columbia, British Columbia reading assessment: summary report. Ministry of Education, Province of B.C., 1977.

Ministry of Education, Province of British Columbia, British Columbia reading assessment: test results. Ministry of Education, Province of B.C., 1977.

Narang, H.L. Reading instruction in Saskatchewan secondary schools. Saskatchewan Journal of Educational Research and Development, 1973, 4, 58-61.

Newman, L.M. Remedial reading in the junior college. In M.P. Douglas (Ed.), 30th Yearbook of the Claremont Reading Conference. Claremont, Calif.:Claremont Graduate School Curriculum Library, 1966, 206-214.

Nie, N.H., Hull, C.H., Jenkins, J.G., Steinbrenner, K., & Bent, D.H. SPSS: statistical package for the social sciences: 2nd Edition. McGraw-Hill Company, 1972.

Palmer, W.S. Teaching reading in the content areas. Journal of Reading, 1975, 19, 43-51.

Robinson, F.P. Study skills for superior students in secondary school. The Reading Teacher, 1961, 15, 29-33.

Robinson, H.A. Teaching reading and study strategies. Boston, Mass.: Allyn & Bacon, 1975.

Shaw. P. Reading in college. Development in and through reading. 60th Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education (Part 1), Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961, 336-354.

Shepherd, D.L. Reading in the subject areas. In Robert Karlin (Ed.), Reading for all, Newark Delaware: International Reading Association, 1972.

Shepherd, F.L. The future of non credit college reading courses. Journal of Reading, 1977, 20, 493-496.

Smith, G.D., Enright, G., & Devrian, M. A national survey of learning and study skill programs. In G.H. McNinch & Wallace Miller (Eds.), Reading: convention and inquiry. 24th Yearbook of the National Reading Conference, 1975, 67-73.

Sweiger, J.D. Designs and organizational structure of junior and community college reading programs across the country. In Frank P. Greene (Ed.), College reading: problems and programs of junior and senior colleges. 21st Yearbook of the National Reading Conference, 1972, 21(2), 1-7.

Toronto Star, Toronto, Ontario, , January 20, 1978

Toronto Star, Toronto, Ontario, , January 24, 1978

Toronto Star, Toronto, Ontario, , February 7, 1978

Tremonti, J.B. The contributions of college reading specialists to pre-college reading programs. In Eric L. Thurston (Ed.), The philosophical and sociological bases of reading. 14th Yearbook of the National Reading Conference, 1965, 14, 81-86.

Ubyssey, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C., March 8, 1978

Vancouver Sun, Vancouver, B.C., February 6, 1978

Vavoulis, A., & Raygor, A. The training of college reading and study skills specialists: a survey of expert opinion. In Phil L. Nacke (Ed.), Programs and practices for college reading. 22nd Yearbook of the National Reading Conference, 1973, 22(2), 163-171.

APPENDIX A
Data Gathering Instrument
English 100 Students

ASSESSING LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

SECTION ONE

Please check one item in each question:

1. A. Male_____ B. Female_____

2. School Size: A. 249 or less_____
   B. 250 - 499_____
   C. 500 - 749_____
   D. 750 - 1000_____
   E. 1000 or more_____

3. High School location: A. British Columbia_____
   B. Not in British Columbia_____
   C. Not in Canada_____

4. College or university bound students should have a special reading/writing course.
   A. Yes_____
   B. No_____

5. Every senior high school student should have a special reading/writing course.
   A. Yes_____
   B. No_____

6. Reading skills should be taught in: A. a separate programme_____
   B. English_____
   C. All content areas_____

7. In comparison with others in your class, how well do you read?
   A. Very well_____
   B. Well_____
   C. Average_____
   D. Not Well_____
   E. Poorly_____

8. In comparison with others of your age outside the university, how well do you feel you read?
   A. Very well_____
   B. Well_____
   C. Average_____
   D. Not well_____
   E. Poorly_____

9. How often do you read for recreation and entertainment?
   A. Very often_____
   B. Often_____
   C. Sometimes_____
   D. Seldom_____
   E. Never_____

DIRECTIONS FOR SECTION TWO

STEP (1)

For each item in Section Two (on the page to your right) indicate in Column I (Frequency of Instruction) the frequency of instruction for that skill during your final year in high school.

1. very frequently
2. often
3. sometimes
4. rarely
5. never

STEP (2)

Indicate in Column II (Strength of Skill) your strength at the time you entered university in each of the skills listed.

A. very strong
B. strong
C. adequate
D. weak
E. very weak

STEP (3)

In Column III (Importance of Skill) rate the importance of each item for success in university.

1. essential
2. important
3. moderately important
4. not very important
5. irrelevant

SECTION TWO: COMMUNICATION SKILLS

	Column I Frequency of Instruction	Column II Strength of Skill	Column III Importance of Skill
1. Training in the use of word-study skills to understand new words (e.g. phonics, prefixes, suffixes, breaking words into their component parts).			
2. Training in the use of context clues to derive the meaning of new words (e.g. using surrounding words, pictures, graphs).			
3. Training in vocabulary development and enrichment.			
4. Training in comprehension of factual information.			
5. Training in comprehension of inferential information (e.g. deducing the meaning through interpretation).			
6. Training in study aids (e.g. notetaking, outlining, précis, organizing information).			
7. Training in research skills (e.g. retrieving, evaluating, synthesizing information).			
8. Training in development of a flexible reading rate (e.g. adapting reading to purpose and material).			
9. Training in interpretive reading (e.g. metaphor, symbolism, imagery).			
10. Training in critical reading (e.g. propaganda, biased versus unbiased reporting, advertising devices).			
11. Training in written expression (e.g. unity and clarity of ideas, punctuation, grammar).			
12. Training in oral expression (e.g. oral reports, class discussion, purposeful dialogues).			
13. Training in listening skills (e.g. listening for main ideas, supporting details; evaluating, sorting information).			
14. Training in library/reference skills.			
15. Training in literary appreciation (e.g. appreciation of various literary forms and stylistic elements).			
16. Training in spelling.			

APPENDIX B
Data Gathering Instrument
British Columbia Grade 12 English Teachers

ASSESSING LITERACY AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS

SECTION ONE

Please check one item in each question:

1. School Size:
   - A. 249 or less _____
   - B. 250 - 499 _____
   - C. 500 - 749 _____
   - D. 750 - 1000 _____
   - E. 1000 or more _____

2. Number of reading courses taken:
   - A. None _____
   - B. One _____
   - C. Two or more _____
   - D. Degree in reading _____
   - E. Inservice training _____

3. College or university bound students should have a special reading/writing course.
   - A. Yes _____
   - B. No _____

4. Reading skills should be taught in:
   - A. A separate programme _____
   - B. English _____
   - C. All content areas _____

DIRECTIONS FOR SECTION TWO

em in Section Two (on the page to your right) indicate
(Frequency of Instruction) the frequency of instruction
ill received by students in their final year of your
.

y frequently
en
etimes

4. rarely
5. never

Column II (Strength of Skill) the average strength of
its (at the time they left high school) in each of the
ed.

y strong
ong
quate

D. weak
E. very weak

II (Importance of Skill) rate the importance of each
ccess in university.

sential
portant
derately important

4. not very important
5. irrelevant

SECTION TWO: COMMUNICATION SKILLS

	Column I Frequency of Instruction	Column II Strength of Skill	Column III Importance of Skill
1. Training in the use of word-study skills to understand new words (e.g. phonics, prefixes, suffixes, breaking words into their component parts).			
2. Training in the use of context clues to derive the meaning of new words (e.g. using surrounding words, pictures, graphs).			
3. Training in vocabulary development and enrichment.			
4. Training in comprehension of factual information.			
5. Training in comprehension of inferential information (e.g. deducing the meaning through interpretation).			
6. Training in study aids (e.g. notetaking, outlining, précis, organizing information).			
7. Training in research skills (e.g. retrieving, evaluating, synthesizing information).			
8. Training in development of a flexible reading rate (e.g. adapting reading to purpose and material).			
9. Training in interpretive reading (e.g. metaphor, symbolism, imagery).			
10. Training in critical reading (e.g. propaganda, biased versus unbiased reporting, advertising devices).			
11. Training in written expression (e.g. unity and clarity of ideas, punctuation, grammar).			
12. Training in oral expression (e.g. oral reports, class discussion, purposeful dialogues).			
13. Training in listening skills (e.g. listening for main ideas, supporting details; evaluating, sorting information).			
14. Training in library/reference skills.			
15. Training in literary appreciation (e.g. appreciation of various literary forms and stylistic elements).			
16. Training in spelling.			

APPENDIX C
Covering Letter: English 100 Instructors

March 1978.

Dear English 100 Instructor:

As part of my graduate thesis research, I am investigating differing perspectives held by Grade 12 teachers, English 100 instructors and English 100 students as to the level of literacy and communication skills of university entrants. However, in order to complete my research, I need your help and co-operation.

Specifically, I am requesting permission to present a short questionnaire to your English 100 class between the 20th and 31st of March, at your convenience. About 20 minutes should be sufficient to complete the questionnaire which I and my colleagues in the Reading Eduactaion Department will distribute and collect. In addition, I am asking you to complete a similar questionnaire. The forms would be completed anonymously.

Since it is late in the school term, this seems an appropriate time to ask the students to reflect upon how well their high school prepared them for the work expected of them during this past year.

I realize that you are busy and already have many responsibilities connected with the conclusion of term. However, I would greatly appreciate your participation in this project. The question of students' competency is of particular importance at this time.

If you are willing to complete a short questionnaire and to allow me to present a 20 minute questionnaire to your class, please fill out the enclosed form. Dr. Parkin has kindly offered his office for the collection of responses.

Yours truly,

Marian Mackworth
U.B.C. Graduate Student

Robert D. Chester
Professor,
Reading Education Dept.
University of B.C.

APPENDIX D
Covering Letter
British Columbia Grade 12 English Teachers

April 17, 1978

HEAD OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FERNIE SEC
SCHOOL
P O BOX 370
FERNIE B C

Dear Head of English,

In response to the recent Provincial Learning Assessment Project, we are currently examining senior English teachers' positions with respect to a set of communication skills. the needs of university and college bound students are of particular interest to us. in connection with this project, we are asking your help with the enclosed questionnaire focusing on three major issues:

1. How often are the listed skills taught in grade 12 classrooms?

2. As judged by their English teachers, how competent in these skills are grade 12 students?

3. As judged by senior English teachers, how important are the listed skills for success in the university academic programme?

We request that you spend a few minutes in filling out the questionnaire and returning it in the stamped self-addressed envelope. Your response will be confidential. We would like to thank you in advance for your assistance at this busy time of year. An abstract of the final report will be made available to you on request.

Yours truly,

Dr. R. D. Chester
Dept. of Reading Education
University of B. C.
Vancouver

Marian Mackworth
Dept. of Reading Education
University of B. C.
Vancouver

APPENDIX E
Covering Letter, Second Mailing
British Columbia Grade 12 English Teachers

May 24, 1978

HEAD OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FERNIE SEC
SCHOOL
P O BOX 370
FERNIE B C

Dear Head of English,

Several weeks ago, we sent you a questionnaire pertaining to the literacy skills of the college- and university-bound students in your school.

We have not, as yet, received a reply from a number of schools. If your department has not yet replied, we would again like to solicit your cooperation in asking a grade 12 English teacher to fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the stamped, addressed envelope.

We realize that this is a busy time of year but we would be grateful if you would assist us. An abstract of the final report will be made available on request.

Yours truly,

Dr. R. D. Chester
Dept. of Reading Education
University of B. C.
Vancouver

Marian Mackworth
Dept. of Reading Education
University of B. C.
Vancouver