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## Success: A Reading and Writing Program Compared to a Basal Reader Program

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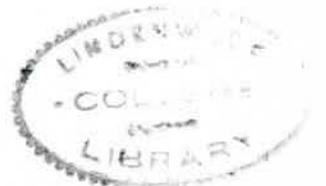
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SUCCESS: A READING AND WRITING PROGRAM  
COMPARED TO A  
BASAL READER PROGRAM

BY  
HELEN JANSEN

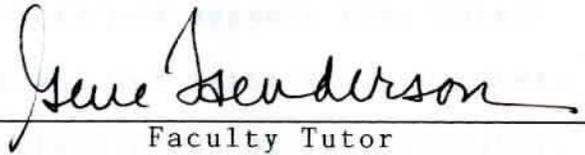
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for the Master of Arts in Education degree  
Lindenwood College

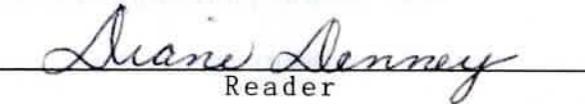
1985



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1985

Accepted by the faculty of the Department of  
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degree.

  
Faculty Tutor

  
Reader

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A special thank you to my husband, Rudy, my daughters, Kathie and Nancy, and my grandson, Shane, for their love, encouragement, and patience throughout the past two years.

I want to thank the nine second grade teachers of the Wentzville Elementary School for working with me in compiling tests information for each of the students and administering the behavioral tests.

And finally, thanks to a special friend and fellow teacher, Gwynn Newman, who encouraged me, inspired me to do the best job possible, and did the final typing of this paper.

## ABSTRACT

The Wentzville R-IV School District initiated a pilot program using the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing approach to teaching reading in the Fall of 1984. This study was conducted to compare the effects of the SUCCESS approach on the vocabulary, comprehension, attitudes, and behavior of the students participating in the pilot program to those who were taught in the Houghton-Mifflin basal reading program. It was predicted that students who experienced instruction in the SUCCESS approach would achieve significantly greater gains in vocabulary and comprehension. It was also predicted that the SUCCESS students would show better attitudes and behaviors towards reading than children in the basal reading series.

This study was conducted at the end of the school year of 1984-85. A nine month period of instruction had been completed from the time the children started the SUCCESS program in September, 1984 to the beginning of the posttesting in May, 1985. The interval between pre- and posttests was 12 months--May 1984 to May 1985.

The entire second grade was involved in the study, 61 students in the SUCCESS classrooms and 121 students

in the Houghton-Mifflin classrooms. The 1984 grade level equivalent scores from the first grade SRA Achievement test for comprehension and vocabulary skills were compared with the spring of 1985 SRA Achievement test. The Independent t-test was applied to this data to determine mean scores using the .05 level of significance.

No statistically significant difference existed between the experimental and control groups in vocabulary and comprehension. The experimental group showed slightly higher gain scores in vocabulary than the control group. The control group showed slightly higher gain scores in comprehension than the experimental group.

The "Estes Attitude Scale" revealed no statistically significant difference in attitudes between the experimental and control groups. The raw score means for attitudes were slightly higher for the experimental group.

"A Scale of Reading Attitude Based on Behavior" was used to measure attitudes and behavior towards reading. Using the Independent t-test, the data analysis proved positive and significant.

With the exception of hypothesis four these results may have been inconclusive because of the time lapse

between the pre-test (May, 1984) and posttest (May, 1985). Other limitations considered were the lack of randomly selected groups, length of study, and the use of supplementary Houghton-Mifflin materials in the program.

Parents and teachers were very pleased with the children's progress in the SUCCESS program. The children displayed additional strengths in creative writing skills, spelling, and positive concept. Although the SUCCESS group did not produce higher scores, it was evident that the language experience approach should be considered a viable alternative to basal reading instruction.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

| CHAPTER      | PAGE  |
|--------------|---|
| I.           | INTRODUCTION . . . . . 1  |
|              | Rationale and Purpose . . . . . 3   |
|              | Hypotheses to be Tested . . . . . 9   |
| II.          | REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE . . . . . 12   |
|              | Early History of the<br>Language Experience Approach . . . . . 13                             |
|              | Description of the<br>Language Experience Approach . . . . . 20                               |
|              | Applications of<br>Language Experience Approach . . . . . 25                                  |
|              | SUCCESS in Reading and Writing . . . . . 30   |
|              | Summary . . . . . 34  |
| III.         | METHODOLOGY . . . . . 40  |
|              | Population and Sample . . . . . 43  |
|              | Data Analysis . . . . . 45  |
| IV.          | FINDINGS . . . . . 47   |
|              | Summary . . . . . 53  |
| V.           | CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS. 55   |
|              | Limitations . . . . . 60  |
|              | Recommendations for Further Research . . . . . 61   |
| APPENDICES   | . . . . . 63  |
|              | A. Hildreth's List of Evaluative Reports . . . . . 63   |
|              | B. Reading Attitude and Behavior . . . . . 65   |
|              | C. Results of Wentzville R-IV Study of<br>SUCCESS in Reading and Writing Program . . . . . 69 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | . . . . . 80  |
| VITA         | . . . . . 86  |

## LIST OF TABLES

| TABLE |  | PAGE |
|-------|--|------|
| 1     | Gain Score Means . . . . .   | 47   |
| 2     | Vocabulary Skills Achievement Gains<br>in Grade Equivalents . . . . .    | 48   |
| 3     | Comprehension Skills Achievement Gains<br>in Grade Equivalents . . . . . | 50   |
| 4     | "Estes Attitude Scale" Raw Score<br>Means Comparison . . . . .           | 51   |
| 5     | Behavior Scale Raw Score<br>Means Comparison . . . . .                   | 53   |

## CHAPTER I

During the past two decades, concern has risen in the United States regarding the level of education we are providing our children. The National Commission on Excellence issued the report, "A Nation at Risk" (1983) stating some alarming facts:

Some 23 million American adults are functionally illiterate by the simplest tests of everyday reading, writing, and comprehension.

About 13% of all 17-year-olds in the United States can be considered functionally illiterate. Functional illiteracy among minority youth may run as high as 40 percent.

Many 17-year-olds do not possess the 'higher order' intellectual skills we should expect of them. Nearly 40% cannot draw inferences from written material.

Business and military leaders complain that they are required to spend millions of dollars on costly remedial education and training programs in such basic skills as reading, writing, and computation. (Missouri Schools, May 1983, p. 5)

The present methods of teaching reading were not meeting the needs of a large number of children. It was time to look at other alternatives for reading instruction that could replace the traditional basal reading approach. The purpose of this study was to investigate a relatively new structured language

experience approach (LEA) to teaching reading called SUCCESS in Reading and Writing. This investigation explored the merits of the SUCCESS program and compared its potential for teaching reading with the Houghton-Mifflin basal series.

The public has been demanding more effective schools while educators have been identifying problems, researching theories, and publishing numerous materials in search of a solution. Legislatures and schools have increased the spending of millions of tax dollars on new equipment and fancy textbook programs hoping for a panacea.

Unfortunately, these efforts have only created additional problems in the classroom (Adams, 1978). Teachers were expected to find time to incorporate everchanging ideas, materials, and organizational patterns into the daily instructional program. To do so teachers had to group their students for instruction according to abilities, basing such decisions on what page has been completed in a workbook. The question being, has the urgency to use the product been given priority above the process?

Frank Smith (1973) lambasted publishers' attempts to produce "teacher proof" materials, adding that "when children learn to read today, it may be despite all of

our sophisticated educational gimmickry, rather than because of it" (p. 28). Anne Adams (1978) stated that we do not need a generation of people who have only developed reading skills to the extent of being able to labor through basal stories, complete a card kit, or fill in blanks in a workbook. She suggested that what we need are first and second graders who are comfortable reading newspapers, fiction and non-fiction books, content-area textbooks, magazines, forms, directions, and all other print with which they regularly come into contact.

Traditionally, a basal reading program comprised of a graded set of books, workbooks, skill sheets, and skill charts served as the foundation of the reading instruction. The teachers' editions of these basal readers are so confining that they tell the teacher the exact words to say when teaching a lesson. These programs in effect tend to control teachers and limit creativity.

#### Rationale and Purpose

For the past twenty years elementary teachers have worked with a number of reading groups in an effort to meet the children's needs. While the teacher is working with one group, the other children must be kept busy

with ditto sheets to give them practice in reading skills at their own level. Hours of planning and running off appropriate ditto sheets have gone into each lesson. However, there must be a better way, because the students become increasingly noisy and inattentive. Many children become bored with the whole reading process.

With the present method of teaching reading, many students who start out in first grade are unable to master the skills necessary for reading. So the teacher slows down, repeats, and reteaches skills until students seem able to grasp them. Therefore, the students are unable to complete the basal reader prescribed for that grade level and are considered below grade level going into second grade. This becomes a trap for the student, creating frustration and low self-esteem. The third grade teachers discover that half of their class is reading from one to one-and-a-half grades below the expectations of the basal reader. The gap continues to widen as the students move up through fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. No matter how you disguise your reading groups, students know they are behind. The child's self-concept is crushed and resentment builds towards school and learning.

There has to be a better way! During the 1984-85

school year, the Wentzville R-IV School District piloted a program called SUCCESS in Reading and Writing (SUCCESS) which began in Durham, N.C. in 1976. It was developed by Dr. Anne H. Adams, Professor of Education at Duke University. Ms. Adams (1978) stated that the key to reading and writing has always been and always will be (1) the teacher and (2) what is taught. Her approach introduced the concept of extensive, in-depth reading/writing instruction with the overall intent to promote growth of knowledge while developing reading and writing abilities. The SUCCESS program has subscribed to the idea that teachers can teach and students can learn when the approaches to teaching and learning are open and flexible rather than restricted.

The SUCCESS program has eliminated the teaching of students in numerous small groups. The four learning modules are presented in a whole class presentation over a two-and-a-half hour time period. As long as some students are placed in groups where expectations are low, they will continue to be under-achievers. Adams (1978) stated that it is extremely doubtful that any human likes to be branded as "behind the others" for nine months each year no matter how subtle the maneuver. She further reported that when we eliminate overt grouping, more time is available for individualized instruction.

One of the main strengths of the SUCCESS program is that it provides more time to work with children individually during each learning module than in the traditional Houghton-Mifflin basal approach that is presently in use at the Wentzville R-IV School District. Students in the SUCCESS program were not limited to textbooks. Magazines, newspapers, catalogs, novels, and books were used as classroom reading material. In the SUCCESS program, children attempted to read 200 to 300 library books. They were taught research skills and developed their own vocabulary of 2,500 words.

Research indicated that reading and writing should be merged to reinforce each other in producing successful learning experiences instead of reading assignments that do not relate to writing lessons and vice-versa. Miller (1982) stated that "Children should learn to read and write just as they learned how to talk, naturally, without awareness of the skills being learned" (p. 5). It is important that children learn that there is more to reading and writing than boring drills and test-oriented activities. Smith (1982) said "The key to learning about writing from reading is to read like a writer" (p. 179).

In a recent review of the current research on writing, Marie Clay (1982) asked the question, "How much

writing do children do?", and answered, "Very little." Her next question was, "How do we get children to write more?" In answer to this question, Clay responded: "Classrooms should be secure and friendly places where the child trusts the teacher to help him develop as a writer" (p. 67).

The present methods of teaching reading with a basal reader have not met the needs of a large number of children. It was of interest to this research study to explore the merits of a new language experience approach called SUCCESS in Reading and Writing. This program appeared to develop a high level of interest for children. The program provided the teacher more time with each individual, guiding his progress in reading and writing activities which were relevant to him and his world. The program allowed the teacher more freedom from grading mountains of seatwork given to students to keep them quiet while they met with reading groups.

Usually the research that has been presented on the language experience approach has been in terms of statistical treatment scores. Hall (1978) felt that there was a need to go further and to examine why one method proved more effective than another method. She wanted to see research that would identify specific pupil characteristics that may be associated with

success in a particular approach.

Hall (1978) indicated that the bulk of existing research of LEA had been concentrated at the primary levels; especially at the kindergarten and first grade levels. She felt that there was a need to study the LEA on into the upper grades. This provided a basis for this examination of the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing program in the second-grade classes at the Wentzville R-IV School District.

Helen Cappleman, one of the co-writers associated with Anne Adams and the SUCCESS program, has encouraged more research in regard to this approach, as very little actual research on SUCCESS was available. She expressed a direct interest in such a study of the pilot program in the Wentzville R-IV School District.

This past year, SUCCESS in Reading and Writing has been taught as a pilot program in seven classrooms in the Wentzville R-IV Elementary School. The purpose of this study was to compare the achievement gain scores of the three second-grade classes, which were participating in the SUCCESS approach with six other second-grades who were using the Houghton-Mifflin basal reading series.

The first grade SRA test scores from the Spring of 1984 were used as the pretest scores for

comprehension and vocabulary. A comparison of the 1984 scores was made with the Spring 1985 SRA test scores to ascertain growth in comprehension and vocabulary. By using the SRA test scores, this study intended to show that the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing classes would show significant gain scores over the Houghton-Mifflin reading classes.

This study was also interested in a comparison study of student attitudes towards reading. The "Estes Attitude Scales" and "A Scale of Reading Attitude Based on Behavior" were administered to the students to determine significant differences in attitudes towards reading.

The over-all parent attitude toward the present reading program in the Wentzville R-IV School District was evaluated as part of a district survey using a district-made questionnaire.

#### Hypotheses to be Tested

The primary purpose of this study was to determine whether students instructed in the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing approach to reading would show significant differences in their over-all achievement and attitudes toward reading as compared to the use of the Houghton-Mifflin basal reading series. This study has provided

teachers with further data on which to base their future decisions regarding the approach to reading they select to use.

#### Hypothesis One

Second grade students instructed in the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing approach to reading will attain a significantly higher degree of vocabulary skills than children taught by the Houghton-Mifflin basal reading program, as measured by the SRA test.

#### Hypothesis Two

Second grade students taught by the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing approach to reading will attain a significantly higher degree of comprehension skills than children taught by the Houghton-Mifflin basal reading program, as measured by the SRA test.

#### Hypothesis Three

Second grade students taught by the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing approach to reading will show a better attitude toward reading compared to those children in the Houghton-Mifflin basal reading program as measured by the "Estes Attitude Scales".

#### Hypothesis Four

Second grade students taught by the SUCCESS in

Reading and Writing approach to reading will show a better attitude toward reading compared to those children in the Houghton-Mifflin basal reading program as measured by "A Scale of Reading Attitude Based on Behavior".

## CHAPTER II

### Review of the Literature

The term "language experience" in essence has been referred to as an experience-based reading approach in which a child's experience and his language were used to teach him/her to read. The cornerstones of language experience learning were language and experience and the interrelatedness of the two. Loban (1966) stated that "through experience and through language we learn. Experience needs language to give it form. Language needs experience to give it content" (p. 7).

The experience of the learner is the core from which all language communication radiates. Hall (1981) indicated that language experience was viewed as a communication process closely related to communication in speaking, listening, and writing. The teaching of reading was integrated with other language arts as children read, write, listen, and speak about their personal experiences and ideas. The way in which a child speaks determines the "language patterns" of the reading materials, and his experiences determine the contents. The Language Experience Approach (LEA) was based on the concept that reading was meaningful to the

pupil when materials being read were expressed in their language and based on their own experiences.

Early History  
of the  
Language Experience Approach

1900-1930

The beginnings of the language experience approach can be traced to the old sentence and story methods popular in the middle of the nineteenth century and to the use of experience story material in the progressive education movement of the 1930's. Throughout the years creative teachers have experimented with teaching children to read through associating print with meaningful experiences and their normal language to express ideas and ask questions.

Sixty years ago, Miss Flora Cooke, a teacher at the Chicago Institute began experimenting with a "natural" method of teaching beginners to read through recording on the blackboard the children's oral expressions relating to current experiences. Miss Cooke determined that children may learn to read as naturally as they learn to talk and for the same reason--the desire to find out something or to tell something.

Hildreth (1965) provided a detailed history of the language experience approach as it developed in the United States. She reported that Dr. and Mrs. John Dewey established a "Learning by Doing" program in their experimental school around 1900. However, it was not until some twenty years later that experience-related instruction came to full being with the spread of the activity movement. The slogan of the day encouraged learning through purposeful activity and through direct experiences. The watchword of the movement was: Observe and listen to the children.

Hildreth reported that about this time (1920's) a development occurred that had a far-reaching influence on the spread of the non-book reading in initial lessons. The introduction of manuscript-style writing in the primary school allowed the children themselves to prepare their own reading material. Instructing the beginners in writing could now be linked with learning to read.

Dr. Nila B. Smith was the first to name this new method in her report of American reading instruction in 1934. She referred to it as "the experience method". More recently the term "language experience approach" has been used. Dr. Smith described the method as "a type of instruction in which reading is taught largely

as it enters into and flows out of children's interest and activities (Hildreth, 1965, p. 292).

In addition to Miss Cooke's experiments before 1900 with hand-written experience-related reading for primary pupils, Dr. Maria Montessori was also pioneering with natural activity and language-related methods of teaching reading.

Hildreth (1965) reported that Miss Annie Moore, a teacher at the Horace Mann School of Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, carried out an experiment with kindergarteners to discover whether it was possible for school beginners to learn to read largely through spontaneous effort, freed of enforced practice with closely regulated methods following a particular system.

Hildreth reported various projects in activity-related reading instruction in a number of different centers throughout the country. The early 1920's mark the period when experience, activity-related methods of teaching were extensively developed in college and university-related demonstration schools and in certain private schools. Among these were the Horace Mann and Lincoln Schools, The City and Country School, Dalton, Ethical Culture, Walden, the "Little Red School House" --and experimental school in the New York City system.

Dr. Clara Belle Baker (1932), in the Children's

School, Evanston, Ill., was busy developing an activity curriculum based on language experience. The Maury School of Richmond, Virginia (1940) ascribed to the experience method because the teachers considered this the best approach to literacy for children of limited background.

In the latter part of the 1920's, Dr. J. L. Meriam worked with Mexican-American children in two public school demonstration centers in California. He described his approach to beginning reading with children of foreign background as the "incidental method".

#### 1940-1960

Moving ahead a decade Hildreth stated that the Curriculum Bulletin No. 95, the Primary Manual, of the Cincinnati Public Schools, (1942) became something of a Bible in primary education during the 1940's because of the enlightened approach to teaching and the many valuable suggestions the book contained. A feature of the curriculum was an activity-linked introduction to reading and writing.

Late in the 1940's, Dr. May Lazar and Dr. J. Wayne Wrightstone made a three year study in the New York City schools of an experiment with the new activity program

for grade one in three Harlem schools enrolling a large foreign speaking population. They indicated that the children readily learned to speak and read.

While experiments were going on in America, a similar movement was developing in Europe and around the world. In England and France, extensive experimentation with experience-related reading was being conducted. People like Decroly, Gardner, and Montessori were blending the activity teaching methods with the experience approach. In Central and South America teachers used the experience-curriculum to introduce beginners to literacy, whether or not a supply of beginning textbooks was at hand. A study of the Decroly Global system was reported by Miss Sonja Karsen of primary education in Costa Rica in 1954.

Hildreth (1965) reported a study in New Zealand in the 1960's of Mrs. Sylvia-Ashton Warner's work and her unique methods of teaching children to read by using the child's favorite words and expressions to create a printed story.

As certainly as new methods and approaches evolved in education, modifications began to develop. This has been true of the language experience approach. As the movement spread to the public schools the original methods of the experimental schools became significantly

changed both in purpose and procedures. Hildreth (1965) explained the language experience approach-

instead of being considered a self-sufficient medium for initial reading instruction, activity related materials were referred to as readiness exercises or pre-reading experience, not 'real' reading at all. Later script text material was used only as supplementary adjunct to reader lessons. This was unfortunate because it created the impression that the charts served only for language training and memory work. (p. 292)

In some New York elementary schools, first graders were divided into mature and immature groups. The less mature children were started in activity-related reading readiness exercises. More mature children began right away in required basal readers.

Another departure that Hildreth (1965) reported was the practice of slanting the vocabulary and contents of the experience chart stories toward the first units of the basal reader series instead of using the vocabulary of current experience in the life of the children. Also, writing continued to be taught as a separate skill and was usually delayed until reading was started.

Why these modifications? Hildreth (1965) explained that the problem for the public schools where the basal readers were deeply entrenched was to reconcile activity-related reading experience with formal methods outlined in traditional basal readers.

Advocates of the traditional reader series voiced the following objections to the LEA:

The method was said to be incidental even accidental: that is not systematic enough to insure steady progress in the sequential steps of learning to read and write. Hence this approach was time wasting.

The vocabulary was not controlled in terms of a standing word list for the first grade based on a composite of beginning reader word lists. There was insufficient drill for mastery of a basic sight vocabulary.

The method was too haphazard to insure the learning of basic reading skills and habits; there was insufficient drill for mastery of essential reading techniques such as use of phonics and knowledge of vocabulary.

The preparation of a sufficient quantity of fresh material daily was beyond the capacity of a teacher in charge of a large class.

It was difficult to adapt the method to small group instruction. (Hildreth, 1965, p. 292)

By 1950, a sufficient number of research studies had been completed to determine the relative merits of the contrasting methods. A summary by Dr. J. Wayne Wrightstone in an article published in 1951 indicated:

that by the end of grade three typical children taught systematically by activity-related methods, followed by the free use of reader units and library books were reading as well as or better than pupils who were taught from the beginning with standard basal reader series as measured by standard reading survey tests. (p. 294)

The research evidence has been of two types: subjective evidence (the observations of teachers and others made for the purpose of evaluating the new methods) and the comparison studies in which the experimental groups were matched with controls and the outcomes were measured with objective tests.

Dr. Hildreth (1965) compiled a list of evaluative reports and references to comparison studies of teaching initial reading through experience-related material in contrast to the use of standard traditional textbook methods (See Appendix A).

In only two cases were the results negative for the experience-related LEA group: the Gates-Batchelder-Betzner study and the J. Murry Lee study. In both cases the achievement scores for the experimental group were inferior to those of the control groups measured with the same tests. In all the other studies, the measured results of the experience approach were very favorable.

#### Description of the Language Experience Approach

The language experience approach is a reading methodology that is highly organized, highly structured, and very systematic, but allows teachers to teach without texts. It is a multiple, variegated set of activities designed to serve one purpose; the instructional use of pupils' own language. (Veatch, 1983, p. 67)

Language experience reading has been based on the use of whole language. Childrens' talk was used to create materials, sentences and stories. There was no attempt to alter sentence structure or control the vocabulary or sentence patterns made by the children. Whole language was necessary in order to use the three cue systems, the graphaphonic, the syntatic, and the semantic. No meaningful language could occur without the use of these cue systems.

If the written language children encounter right from the beginning is whole, real, natural, and relevant, they will be able to use their existing language competence as they learn to read. (Goodman, 1968, p. 19)

Hall (1981) stated that language is systematic and patterned. The language system included graphology, the written symbol of language and phonology, the sound system. Learners must acquire knowledge of both of these systems of meaning. The semantic information of a language and the syntax, or grammatical patterning of language affect a readers' ability to read with meaning. Goodman listed graphonic, syntactic information, and semantic information as the categories of language information.

There were five interrelated aspects of the language experience approach that wove in and out of daily classroom practice.

1. The first was the alphabet, which usefulness laid in its letter names that were there to be heard (Veatch, 1983). Research has shown that children in kindergarten were able to spell remarkably phonetically because of the letter names. Research established that children's writing showed that they proceeded from letter names to letter sounds, especially with words.

2. The second aspect, writing, included "invented spelling" that was original as to topic by the student writer. Invented spelling had some semblance to "phonetic spelling" in that the alphabet became internalized. Veatch (1983) stated that the break down of the rote recital of the alphabet into its component letters allowed the words to be spelled on a letter name basis which eventually led to accurate and correct spelling in later grades.

3. Key vocabulary was the third aspect. The teacher elicited a personal word from the pupil in a specified, organized way. A record or chart was kept of these words for the students' later use. The key words were a supportative activity of letter tracing in words. Research showed that after tracing, copying, and other activities children rarely forgot their own words. Veatch (1983) used tracing to lead to activities that involved changing from manuscript to cursive.

4. The experience chart was the fourth aspect. This activity of pupil-teacher dictation had the greatest potential for teaching reading of any of the preceding elements. Experience charts were best for whole class instruction. Here the teacher could change the spoken language into written language. The result was a chart of 60-70 words that was available as the finest instructional material possible.

5. The final aspect was the use of trade or library books that the children chose and liked. In this way, no one ever needed to read the same book as someone else unless there was a goal of appreciation to be sought (Veatch, 1983).

The major characteristics of the whole language approach involved the following three areas.

#### Pupil-composed materials

The children were encouraged to share their ideas and experiences. The teacher recorded their talk, and the written record was then used as reading material. As children advanced, supplementary reading selections from basal readers, trade books, and newspapers were included in a well-rounded reading program.

#### The interrelationship of all the communication skills

Hall (1981) stressed that the four facets of

language arts could be classified as receptive or expressive. Speaking and writing were expressive and listening and reading were receptive. All these processes were tied together in language experience approach.

#### No vocabulary controls

The only limitation of this phase was the extent of the child's speaking vocabulary. Teachers were discouraged from shortening or altering sentences in an attempt to control vocabulary.

The LEA was considered a personal, communicative, creative, and purposeful way of learning and teaching (Hall, 1981). Each child made the LEA materials unique. The learner was actively involved in the reading process as he created and shared his reading. In this way it was possible to have material of high, personal interest for each child.

Communication required the effective use of language. Reading occurred in a communication context, and words were introduced, not in isolation, but in conjunction with the expression of thought. Dr. Hall believed that children should be provided a rich language environment and an opportunity to articulate their thoughts. Teachers were encouraged to accept the way children expressed themselves. Teachers strove to

realize a child's potential for creating and helped him express himself creatively with language.

Goodman (1973) explained that reading was the reconstruction of a message from print. Hall (1981) believed that regardless of materials and methodology employed in teaching reading, a reader must be able to process information represented by the print. LEA promoted this natural process.

The over-all LEA featured the use of reading materials created by the learner about his experiences. The teaching of reading was an integrated approach that involved communication skills in an instructional framework that stressed the personal, communicative, creative, and purposeful nature of this approach. LEA involved the five aspects (1) alphabet, (2) writing, (3) invented spelling, (4) key vocabulary, and (5) experience chart and a huge wealth of trade or library book reading.

### Applications of Language Experience Approach

#### Prereaders and Beginners

For the most part the LEA has been used to instruct beginning readers. For the beginning reader it stressed the relationship of reading to speaking and later related reading to writing and provided children the

opportunity to write extensively. The report of the National First Grade Studies (1960) conducted by the United States Office of Education indicated that attention to writing experiences in conjunction with reading instruction was valuable, and was an effective addition to a primary reading program.

Research on LEA programs for prereading instruction were relatively limited. Conclusions of the National First Grade Studies (Bond and Dykstra, 1967; Dykstra, 1968) that no one method was consistently superior and that there were more differences within methods, seemed appropriate in regard to reading achievement in LEA programs (Hall, 1978).

Brazziel and Terrell (1962) reported that the low socioeconomic experimental group who used charts obtained higher readiness scores on the Metropolitan Reading Test than did the control groups using other methods.

Hall (1965) concluded that LEA was superior to the basal approach for encouraging the reading readiness of inner city pupils, as measured by the Metropolitan Readiness Test.

Bond and Dykstra (1967), O'Donnell and Raymond (1972), Weber (1975), and Christensen (1972) explored various aspects of readiness gains, but little

differences were shown in these studies.

Supplement other programs

Another application of the LEA was to use it with other approaches. Some teachers may not have wanted to rely on LEA completely, however, they incorporated many of its aspects. Research has proved the value of an enriched reading program that combined features of various approaches.

According to the National First Grade Studies (1960) any approach which was enriched with features of other approaches produced better reading achievement than the use of one approach exclusively. A number of comments and conclusions came from the 27 separate projects; six investigated the language experience approach. Stauffer and Hammond (1966) reported that the LEA, which was effective in grade one, continued to be effective at the second grade level. They found that the pupils taught with this approach through second grade develop better written communication than those taught with a basal reader approach. Vilscek and Cleland (1968) noted that pupils taught with the LEA through second grade demonstrated superiority in comprehension of concepts and in reading in the content areas of science, social studies, and arithmetic (Hall, 1981).

### Help for Remedial Readers

Remedial readers who experienced frustration in reading found success with the language experience. The use of personally created materials removed the fear of failure. Since the remedial students oral language usually advanced beyond the language of the textbook on their instructional level, it gave these children an opportunity to achieve on a higher level. After the student achieved some success, they were able to move into basal readers, trade books, and other reading materials. Stocker (1971) concluded that "students who had experienced severe reading problems could be motivated by stimuli to write and illustrate stories, poems, and essays and read their own materials" (p. 16). Wells (1975) concluded that the LEA was an effective means of developing remedial fourth-grade student's reading abilities, oral language, and written abilities. Calvert (1973) concluded that, for remedial secondary students, LEA enhanced writing achievement, reading, and study skills.

### Applies to children of different cultural backgrounds

Research has shown that the LEA was an important means of reaching children whose language patterns and life experience differed from the language and content

of many commercial materials. Children of different cultural backgrounds had considerable difficulty with traditional methods of teaching reading. The LEA for these linguistically divergent children was of greatest relevance in the beginning stages of instruction. Merriam (1983) used the LEA activity approach with Mexican-American students and reported impressive gains in reading achievement. Calvert's (1973) research concluded that a language experience program enhanced the writing achievement of Mexican-American students, as well as their reading-study skills.

#### Help for children of special populations

The effectiveness of LEA programs for children from low socioeconomic levels was demonstrated by Hall (1965) and by the CRAFT project (A. Harris and Morrison, 1969; A. Harris and Serwer, 1966; and A. Harris, Serwer, and Gold, 1967) maintained that most children from lower economic levels made substantial progress in learning to read in spite of low readiness scores. Except for these studies and the National First Grade Studies (1960) there have been few major research efforts to study LEA in special populations.

### Adult Illiterates

As the number of functionally illiterate has increased, the application of LEA to adult illiterates has become increasingly popular.

The language facility that adults have is an asset drawn upon in teaching reading and the desire adults have for relevant content can be met through language experience learning related to occupational concerns and aspiration as well as to other survival needs. (Hall, 1978, p. 10)

Appropriate, meaningful, and functional materials could be provided through the LEA.

Even though Becker (1970), and Stauffer and Cramer (1967) had investigated the application of LEA to reading for adult illiterates, no recent research relating to the use of LEA with adults had been reported.

### Review of Selected Research

In the 1959-1960 school year under the Reading Study Project, a large-scale investigation of three approaches to the teaching of reading, individualized reading, basal readers, and the language experience approach were studied in San Diego County, California. Sixty-seven teachers in twelve elementary school districts participated. This was the first large-scale

project to employ the LEA. The general conclusion was that the LEA, during the first three years of elementary school, can be an effective way of teaching skills. Children in the LEA showed as much or more progress than children in the other programs, as measured by standardized reading tests (Allen, 1962; San Diego Board of Education, 1961).

Hall (1965) developed and evaluated a LEA for culturally disadvantaged negro children in the Washington D.C. schools for the first semester of the first grade. The five experimental classes had 125 pupils. The experimental group showed significant differences in gains made on measures of reading readiness, in word recognition on the standardized reading tests, and in sentence reading on a standardized reading test. The teachers favored the LEA and felt it was more effective than the basal approach.

No significant differences in achievement and attitude were found in a study conducted by Lamb's (1971) investigation of the effectiveness of LEA for culturally disadvantaged children in five first-grade classes in Indianapolis.

Several studies were conducted at the University of Idaho to investigate the effects of a Communication Skills Through Authorship Project, (CSTA). This was a

supplemental activity where children dictated stories on a cassette recorder and then recited transcripts of their dictation. G. Harris (1972) reported that the reading achievement scores on the Stanford Reading Test for pupils in first, second, and third grade were significantly higher for those involved in the CSTA program.

Willardson (1972) reported that in second-grade, CSTA student's performance was higher on all measures of writing maturity than was the performance of students in the control group. Owen's (1972) study of the CSTA investigated the writing of third-grade students. Teachers rated the CSTA students more creative than the non-CSTA students.

Reading vocabulary was the basis for the study conducted by Henderson, Estes, and Stonecash (1972) in Prince George County, Maryland. The investigation studied the size and nature of the reading vocabulary of 594 pupils in 21 first grade classrooms. These researchers made a comparison to the Lorge-Thorndike list and concluded that the vocabulary learned by mid-year in a LEA program compared favorably with the extent of the vocabulary learned in a basal approach.

Kelly (1975) compared the performance of third grade remedial readers using LEA with the performance of

third grade remedial readers using a basal approach. After 15 weeks of instruction, the experience group had a basic sight vocabulary that was 22% higher than the basal groups vocabulary. The mean word-recognition score was the same for both groups, but 62% of the LEA group exceeded the mean, while only 36% of the basal group exceeded the mean.

Affective factors have been the major focus in some studies. Knight's (1971) study was to determine differences in attitude toward reading after one-year of instruction in four different beginning reading programs. A bilingual program, the Miami Linguistic Readers, language experience, and basal readers were the methods used.

Four schools, with two second grade classes and two first-grade classes were used in the study. Significant differences in attitude favored the biligual and Miami Linguistic Readers approaches as compared by an attitude scale developed by the investigator.

Riendeau (1973) investigated the effects on LEA and basal reader instruction on the concepts of realism, complexity, individualization, social interest, self-esteem, and identification with mother, father, teacher, and friend. The study involved a 124 first-graders who were divided equally into an experimental group using

LEA and control group using basal readers. At the close of the first grade, the LEA group "was found to have developed significantly greater self-esteem, social interest, individualization, realism, identification with friends, and preference for friends than the basal group" (Riendeau, 1973, p. 15). The LEA classrooms appeared to show a positive affective climate for the students involved.

The literature on language experience approach to reading indicated an interest in the following aspects of the method: achievement, readiness, vocabulary, oral language, word analysis, creative writing, spelling, comprehension, the use of LEA with special populations and affective factors.

#### SUCCESS in Reading and Writing

As far back as 1964 when Anne Adams was a first grade classroom teacher, she was bothered by the sense that "something wasn't right" (Adams, 1978, p. ix) in reading instruction. She identified some of the major problems and concerns expressed in the literature with specific reference to beginning reading instruction. She tried to analyze the problems and explored alternatives. In her doctoral dissertation she researched the concept of correlated language arts in

the first grade without use of basal readers.

In 1976, Anne Adams was asked to work with 17 first grade classes in Durham, N. C. City Schools. They had received a Right-to-Read Grant from the Federal government. Miss Adams, Professor of Education at Duke University, availed herself of this opportunity to develop her SUCCESS in Reading and Writing program which was based on the whole language experience approach to teaching reading.

Durham City Schools was an inner-city school district, which was populated with a large number of students who required remedial classes. Approximately 50 percent of all the students in grades 3 to 11 were below the 23rd percentile achievement level on the SRA reading test. Many parents of both black and white students had put their children in private schools. The 1969 enrollment of 14,101 had dropped to 9,389 in 1975. Of the students who remained, about 80% were on government-subsidized lunches. It was under these conditions that the SUCCESS program was begun in October, 1976, in about half of the first grade classes. At the end of the first two years the SUCCESS classes jumped from the twenty-third to the eighty-sixth percentile. No child finished as a non-reader. Miss Adams was so successful that her program moved into

Durham's upper grades as well as other areas of the state and nation. The District of Columbia schools in Washington D.C. incorporated the SUCCESS program in all their elementary schools and the junior high school.

Barbara L. Gottesman (1979), director of New Gordin's Friends School in Greensboro, N. C., reported using the SUCCESS program at her school. It paid off in big increases in reading scores for the students. In one four month period, scores for the students were up from 7% on the PRI Diagnostic (the lowest score in the city) to 80 percent.

The SUCCESS in Reading and Writing program has been based on the assumption that people should be taught to read and write with the kind of materials that will be available to them in the future. Adams worked with magazines, newspapers, telephone directories, comics, etc. "Adams has taken the basal textbook off its pedestal and uses it as just another book of short stories kids can read" (Staff, 1978, p. 112).

Adam's program set out to prove several points about beginning reading: children learn to read faster if they use "real materials"; if beginning reading and language arts are taught simultaneously, children build on their existing oral vocabulary; they can read and write as well as they speak, therefore they can learn

polysyllabic words and read daily newspapers.

### Summary

The literature on the language experience approach to reading features the use of materials created by the learner about his experiences. Emphasis on achievement, readiness, vocabulary, oral language, word analysis, creative writing, spelling, and comprehension have been major concerns when applying the LEA in the classroom.

The literature and studies concerning LEA were primarily interested in achievement gains made by various groups of students using the language experience approach compared to other basal reading approaches or methods of teaching reading. Research on LEA programs for prereading instruction were relatively limited. It was concluded that no one method was consistently superior in relation to prereaders and beginners.

Several studies were made on low socioeconomic groups of children and it was found that LEA was superior to the basal approach for encouraging the reading readiness of inner city pupils.

A number of studies indicated that when LEA is used to enrich features of other approaches there is an increased level of reading achievement in comprehension

of concepts and in reading in the content areas.

Another area of concern in a number of studies dealt with remedial readers. It was concluded that the LEA was an effective means of developing reading abilities in children with severe reading problems.

There were studies dealing with children of different cultural backgrounds who didn't speak English. Research concluded that a language experience program greatly enhanced the writing achievement and reading-study skills of linguistically divergent children in the beginning stages of instruction.

LEA would appear to be a solution for adult illiterates who would benefit from appropriate, meaningful, and functional materials. However, little research relating to adults has been reported. A large study conducted in California concluded that LEA was an effective way of teaching reading skills. Children showed as much or more progress than children in other programs. Affective factors have been the major focus in some studies. In which case, LEA proved to be very effective in increasing a favorable attitude towards reading and developing greater self-esteem, social interest, realism, and individualization.

SUCCESS in Reading and Writing originated in 1976 under the direction of Anne Adams, Professor of

Education at Duke University. Since that time SUCCESS has spread to many areas in the United States and has proven to be a promising alternative to the basal reading program.

The research studies conducted throughout the Washington D.C. schools on SUCCESS demonstrated that children showed sufficient progress on achievement test to justify continuation of the program and expansion into the upper grades. Another study of the Greensboro, N. C. schools showed big increases in reading scores on the PHI Diagnostic test for the students using SUCCESS. A number of articles in various journals indicate that SUCCESS is a promising alternative to basal readers, however, little actual research has been completed on this particular language experience approach.

## CHAPTER III

### Methodology

The Wentzville R-IV School District initiated a pilot program using the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing approach to teaching reading in the Fall of 1984. Three second grade classes participated.

A nine month period of instruction had been completed from the time the children started the SUCCESS program in September 1984 to May 1985. The pre-posttest interval was 12 months--May 1984 to May 1985. To be able to determine the effects of the SUCCESS approach upon the students during the 1984-85 school year, the Science Research Associates, Inc. test (SRA), a nationally normed achievement test was used. A comparison of the 1984 grade equivalent scores from the first grade SRA Achievement test, Level B, Form 1 test from the Spring of 1984 for comprehension and vocabulary skills was made with the Spring of 1985 SRA Achievement test, Level C, Form 1 scores to ascertain growth in comprehension and vocabulary skills.

This study also compared student attitudes towards reading. The "Estes Attitude Scales" (See Appendix B) was administered to all the second grade children in

order to make a comparison of reading attitudes between the experimental and control groups. Attitude toward a content area is here defined as a liking for or a dislike of a given subject in school. The value of using the scales was that their results provided a quantitative measure of the attitudes of individuals or of groups. The "Estes Attitude Scales" consists of a 20 item Likert-type scale (See Appendix B).

Scaled scores provided (a) an estimate of how the attitudes of individuals or groups compared to similar aged peers and (b) a means of comparing the relative attitudes of individuals or groups toward the subject area being surveyed (See Appendix B).

The results of the "Estes Attitude Scales" were tabulated and the resulting raw score means of the experimental group and the control group were compared using a simple  $t$ -test.

It has been recognized that attitude is reflected in children's behavior. Therefore, "A Scale of Reading Attitude Based on Behavior" was chosen to evaluate a selected group of students in the experimental group and the control group. This reading attitude scale consisted of sixteen items which included questions pertaining to reading for pleasure, reading in the content areas, and reading as it takes place in reading classes. The

possible answers to items in the Likert design range from a very negative (1) to a very positive (5) response. The weights of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 were used. The most positive response received the highest score (5) and the most negative response received the lowest score (1). The summated ratings result in the attitude scale (See Appendix B).

The "Behavior" testing was conducted at the end of the school year when teachers were extremely busy with extra duties and paperwork. To avoid additional work by asking the teachers to observe every student in their classroom, it was decided that 12 per room would be an adequate number of students. Therefore, twelve students were selected at random from each of six classrooms, three experimental and three control. This brought the total to 36 students in the experimental group and 36 students in the control group for the purposes of this particular test.

The experimental group and the control group were observed by their respective classroom teachers for a four week period starting April 16, 1985 through May 8, 1985. At the end of the designated time period, the teachers filled out the "Scale of Reading Attitude Based on Behavior". The results were tabulated and the resulting mean raw scores of the two groups were

compared using an Independent  $t$ -test.

The over-all attitude toward the reading program in the Wentzville R-IV School District was evaluated as part of a study conducted by the reading consultant for the school district, using a district-made anonymous questionnaire in the form of a Likert Scale. The questionnaire was sent home in May to the parents of all the children in the SUCCESS program within the district, and the responses (See Appendix C) were returned to school by the end of the school year. An evaluation of the returned responses was tabulated and reported in percentile scores. The results of the questionnaire indicated that parents of children in the SUCCESS program were satisfied with their children's progress and wanted the program continued as well as expanded in the Wentzville R-IV School District.

This information regarding the parent questionnaire has been included as additional information only and not as evidence that the SUCCESS program is superior to a basal reading program.

#### Population and Sample

The participating subjects in the study included the established classrooms in the second grade at the

Wentzville R-IV School District. At the beginning of the Fall school term 1984-85, approximately 184 students were grouped for reading by the reading consultant according to S.R.A. test results and reading level within the Houghton Mifflin reading program into nine classrooms. Six of these classes contained approximately 123 students who were grouped according to reading levels in the Houghton-Mifflin basal reading series, and then participated in that program for nine months. Three of the classrooms contained 61 students who were grouped heterogeneously to take part in the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing approach as a pilot project and they participated in that program during the 1984-85 school year.

The students who participated in the SUCCESS program this year had not been part of a SUCCESS class the year before. This was their first experience with a language experience approach to reading.

The three teachers who participated in the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing approach were volunteers who had a desire to investigate another way of teaching reading. They were instructed in the use of this language experience approach in a one-week summer workshop under the direction of Helen Cappleman. The other six teachers simply continued to use the Houghton-Mifflin

basal series that had been adopted by the school district and in use for a number of years.

#### Data Analysis

In order to ascertain whether the SUCCESS approach produced a statistically significant difference in vocabulary and comprehension skills, the Independent t-test was utilized to compare the mean gain scores of the experimental and control groups. In order to ascertain whether the SUCCESS approach produced a statistically significant difference in attitudes and behavior towards reading, the Independent t-test was employed to compare the raw score means of the experimental and control groups. The .05 level of significance was selected.

## CHAPTER IV

### Findings

The primary purpose of this study was to determine whether students instructed in the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing approach to reading would show significant gains in vocabulary and comprehension skills, or develop a better attitude toward reading as compared to children using the Houghton-Mifflin basal reading series.

The grade equivalent scores from the SRA achievement test, Level B, Form 1 from first grade, 4th quarter of 1984, were compared with SRA test, Level C, Form 1 which was administered to the second graders in the 4th quarter of 1985 to determine gain scores for vocabulary and comprehension skills.

Students used in this study included the children who made up the entire second grade enrollment at the Wentzville Elementary School. There were 61 students in the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing program, who were divided into three heterogeneous classes at the first of the school year by the district's reading consultant. The Houghton-Mifflin basal program consisted of 121 students divided into seven classrooms according to their reading level within the reading series.

The gain scores for vocabulary and comprehension were calculated by determining the difference between the grade equivalents of the pretest and posttest scores. The means of the raw scores for attitudes and behaviors were calculated in order to ascertain whether there was a statistically significant difference to .05 level of significance between the experimental and control groups. The Independent  $t$ -test was applied to this data to determine mean scores using the .05 level of significance. Table 1 exhibits the results.

Table 1

## Gain Score Means

|                | Experimental Group | Control Group | Significant at .05 |
|----------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| *Vocabulary    | 1.395              | 1.150         | no                 |
| *Comprehension | 1.262              | 1.658         | no                 |
| **Attitude     | 2.530              | 2.444         | no                 |
| **Behavior     | 4.610              | 3.410         | yes                |

\*Grade Equivalents

\*\*Raw Scores

All experimental group means except comprehension were larger than those of the control group, however,

the differences were slight in vocabulary and attitude. The difference in the behavior means was large and statistically significant.

### Hypothesis One

There will be no significant difference between vocabulary skills of second grade students instructed in the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing approach to reading and children taught by the Houghton-Mifflin basal reading program, as measured by the SRA test.

Table 2 exhibits the results of the analysis to determine gain in vocabulary skills as tested by the SRA Achievement test, Level C, Form 1.

Table 2  
Vocabulary Skills Achievement Gains  
in Grade Equivalentents

|              | N   | M     | SD    | DF  | <u>t</u> | <u>p</u> |
|--------------|-----|-------|-------|-----|----------|----------|
| Experimental | 61  | 1.395 | 1.055 | 180 | 1.468    | .140     |
| Control      | 121 | 1.150 | 1.067 |     |          |          |

The mean gain scores on the SRA Achievement test, Level C, Form 1, were 1.395 for the experimental group and 1.150 for the control group. The t-test comparison

of the means yielded a  $t$  of 1.468. The probability of  $t$ , .140, was not significant at the .05 level. No statistically significant difference existed between the experimental group and the control group tests at the conclusion of this study. Although no statistical significance existed, the experimental group showed slightly higher gain scores than the control group.

Null hypothesis one was accepted since there was no statistically significant difference between the mean vocabulary scores of the students in the experimental group and the control group.

#### Hypothesis Two

There will be no significant difference in comprehension skills achievement between second grade students taught by the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing approach to reading and children taught by the Houghton-Mifflin basal reading program, as measured by the SRA test.

Table 3 exhibits the results of the analysis to determine gains in comprehension skills as tested by the SRA Achievement test, Level C, Form 1.



Table 3  
Comprehension Skills Achievement Gains  
in Grade Equivalents

|              | N   | M     | SD    | DF  | <u>t</u> | <u>p</u> |
|--------------|-----|-------|-------|-----|----------|----------|
| Experimental | 61  | 1.262 | 1.212 | 119 | -.396    | .0581    |
| Control      | 121 | 1.658 | 1.535 |     |          |          |

The mean gain scores on the SRA Achievement test, Level C, Form 1, were 1.262 for the experimental group and 1.658 for the control group. The t-test comparison of the means yielded a t of -.396. The probability of t, .0581, was not significant at the .05 level. No significant difference existed between the experimental group and the control group test at the conclusion of this study. Although no statistical significance existed, the control group showed higher gain scores than the experimental group.

Null hypothesis two was accepted since there was no statistically significant difference between the mean comprehension scores of the students in the experimental group and the control group.

A total of 217 second grade students were administered the "Estes Attitude Scale" (See Appendix B) by the researcher. The experimental group consisted of

66 students; and the control group, 151 students. Data from the "Estes Attitude Scale" was analyzed using an Independent  $t$ -test to determine whether a statistically significant difference existed between the experimental and control group.

### Hypothesis Three

There will be no significant difference in attitudes between second grade students instructed in the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing approach to reading and children taught in the Houghton-Mifflin basal reading program as measured by the "Estes Attitudes Scales".

Table 4 exhibits the results of the analysis to determine any differences in attitude toward reading, held by the experimental and control groups.

Table 4  
"Estes Attitude Scale" Raw Score  
Means Comparison

|              | N   | M     | SD    | DF  | $t$   | $p$  |
|--------------|-----|-------|-------|-----|-------|------|
| Experimental | 66  | 2.530 | .3853 | 215 | 1.373 | .167 |
| Control      | 151 | 2.444 | .440  |     |       |      |

The raw score means were 2.530 for the experimental group and 2.444 for the control group. The  $t$ -test comparison of the means yielded a  $t$  of 1.3734. The probability of  $t$ , .167, was not significant at the .05 level.

Because a statistically significant difference did not exist between the means, the research hypothesis was rejected and the null hypothesis accepted. Although a statistically significant difference did not exist, the experimental group test performance again was slightly higher than that of the control group.

#### Hypothesis Four

There will be no significant difference in attitudes and behavior between second grade students instructed in the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing approach to reading and children taught in the Houghton-Mifflin basal reading program as measured by "A Scale of Reading Attitude Based on Behavior" (See Appendix B).

Three SUCCESS teachers and three basal teachers evaluated twelve children in their respective classrooms using "A Scale of Reading Attitude Based on Behavior". The names were drawn from the hat to determine the children who would be evaluated in the SUCCESS and basal classrooms. A total of 72 students,

36 from each group, were evaluated. After a four week observation period, the teachers completed their evaluation. These data were then analyzed using an Independent  $t$ -test to determine whether a statistically significant difference existed between the experimental group and the control group. Table 5 exhibits the results of this analysis.

Table 5  
Behavior Scale Raw Score Means Comparison

|              | N  | M     | SD   | DF | $t$   | $p$      |
|--------------|----|-------|------|----|-------|----------|
| Experimental | 36 | 4.610 | .503 | 70 | 9.027 | .0000001 |
| Control      | 36 | 3.410 | .619 |    |       |          |

The "Scale of Reading Attitude Based on Behavior" raw score means were 4.610 for the experimental group and 3.410 for the control group. The  $t$ -test comparison of the means yielded a  $t$  of 9.027. The probability of  $t$ , .0000001, was significant at the .05 level. The mean for the experimental group was significantly higher than that of the control group. The null hypothesis was rejected.

#### Summary

The primary purpose of this study was to determine

whether students instructed in the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing approach to reading would show significant gains in vocabulary and comprehension skills.

A comparison of the mean gain scores of the grade equivalents indicated slightly higher scores in vocabulary skills by the experimental group. However, the control group showed slightly higher scores in comprehension skills.

Although the analysis of the results of the "Estes Attitude Scale" revealed that the experimental group had a slightly higher mean score than the control group, the t-test showed no statistically significant difference in attitudes toward reading.

The "Scale of Reading Attitude Based on Behavior", on the other hand, revealed that the experimental group had a significantly higher behavioral attitude towards reading than the control group.

On the basis of the findings from an over-all examination of the data analysis, the research hypotheses one, two, and three were rejected and the null hypotheses were accepted. The results of the data analysis for hypothesis four proved positive and significant and therefore was accepted.

## CHAPTER V

### Conclusions, Limitations, and Recommendations

The conclusions of this study of the comparable effectiveness of the SUCCESS in Reading and Writing approach and the Basal Reader approach to reading instruction must begin with the fact that only one data analysis revealed statistically significant differences between the experimental and control conditions. Instruction of reading with the SUCCESS approach did not increase the children's vocabulary or their comprehension skills by a significant amount as predicted in this study.

The research hypothesis predicted that second grade students instructed in the SUCCESS approach to reading would attain a significantly higher degree of vocabulary skills and comprehension skills than children taught by the Houghton-Mifflin basal reading program.

Although there was no significant difference between the experimental group and the control group vocabulary means at the end of this study, the experimental group performed slightly better on the posttest with .245 separating the grade equivalent means. Even though there was no significant difference,

the trend of the data did follow the predicted direction of the hypothesis. The daily experiences that the children in the SUCCESS program participated in: sharing and submitting words from their own vocabulary, discussing the meanings, and then constructing sentences using their own language, would account for the differences in scores of the experimental and control groups.

Further analysis which compared the grade equivalent mean gain scores for comprehension skills disclosed contradictory results. In this analysis, the control group performed slightly better than the experimental group with a difference between mean gain grade equivalent scores of .369. Thus, this data did not follow the predicted direction of the hypothesis.

Instruction in the Houghton-Mifflin program puts more emphasis on group discussion and questioning as a follow-up to reading stories in the basal reader. Identification of topic sentences and main ideas of paragraphs is strongly emphasized in the basal program along with sequencing of events. It seems that these skills are necessary for strengthening of comprehension skills and may explain why the control group scored slightly higher than the experimental group.

Another possible explanation for this contradiction

may be the fact that by using the first grade pretest (SRA Achievement Test, Level B, Form 1) and comparing the grade level equivalent data with the second grade posttest (SRA Achievement Test, Level C, Form 1) a computation problem may exist. Because of the difference in levels, a subject could have shown the same raw scores for both the pre- and posttests and actually have achieved a year's growth, therefore, grade equivalent scores were used for analysis.

It was hypothesized that second grade students taught by the SUCCESS approach to reading would show a better attitude toward reading compared to those children in the Houghton-Mifflin basal reading program as measured by the "Estes Attitude Scales".

An analysis of the data did not reveal any statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups. However, the study does indicate that the experimental group performed slightly better on the posttest with .086 difference separating the raw score means. The data did follow the direction of the hypothesis.

In the fourth hypothesis, it was predicted that second grade students taught by the SUCCESS approach would show a better attitude toward reading compared to those children in Houghton-Mifflin basal reading program

as measured by "A Scale of Reading Attitude Based on Behavior."

The results of this data analysis demonstrated that the experimental group achieved a significantly higher raw score of 1.200 than the control group on the "Scale of Reading Attitude Based on Behavior". This particular scale was an individual rating of the students by their respective teachers from both the SUCCESS classrooms and Basal Reader classrooms.

The teachers who participated in the SUCCESS program were highly motivated and somewhat biased in favor of this new reading approach. When evaluating their students, they may have accentuated the level of their students interest in reading which may account for the discrepancy between the children's responses on the "Estes Attitude Scales" and the teacher's evaluation of their attitude. The teachers felt strongly that the children in the SUCCESS program enjoyed their reading experiences and had broadened their knowledge and selection of reading materials.

The following observations were made by the investigator that are of additional interest to the study, but are not part of the hypotheses. While observing SUCCESS classrooms in operation, the investigator witnessed the children using a greater

variety of reading materials. There appeared to be more flexibility in teaching while the children exhibited more enthusiasm for reading and spelling activities. The investigator was impressed with the vocabulary the children were using and their spelling accomplishments. All the students had an equal opportunity to experience success everyday and demonstrated a high level of self-confidence when participating in the activities presented in the learning modules. Teachers in the program felt that the children's creative writing skills had improved greatly because of the daily writing activities.

The Wentzville R-IV School District reading consultant mailed out 125 questionnaires to the parents in the district who had children in the SUCCESS classrooms (See Appendix C). Approximately 80 parents returned the questionnaires. The results of that questionnaire indicated that parents were very pleased with the progress of their children in the SUCCESS program and recommended that SUCCESS be continued and expanded in the Wentzville R-IV School District.

The reading consultant also distributed questionnaires to the teachers who used the SUCCESS program and the Basal Reader program so that they might indicate their feelings about the success of the SUCCESS

program in the Wentzville R-IV School District (See Appendix C). All the teachers responded to the questionnaire. The results were favorable toward continuing the SUCCESS program and expanding it in the elementary grades.

Those teachers who had participated this past year in the SUCCESS program felt very good about the progress their students had made in the program. More than that, they felt very good about themselves and their ability to really "teach" children.

As a result of the over-all findings conducted by the school reading consultant, the Board of Education decided to increase the number of second grade classrooms to five for the coming year and to extend the program to include two additional SUCCESS classrooms in third grade (See Appendix C).

#### Limitations

There were limitations to this study:

1. Subjects were placed into the classrooms without being randomly assigned to experimental and control groups.

2. The SUCCESS program was compared with only one basal reading series.

3. In each of the three SUCCESS classrooms the teachers were expected to supplement the SUCCESS program by using the Houghton-Mifflin reading skills workbook and magazine tests. This, in effect, invalidated the total implementation of the program by supplementing material that affected the outcomes.

4. The testing interval was a limitation to the study because of the time lapse between the spring SRA test and the starting of the 1984-85 school year. This interval of time may have allowed other variables to intervene.

5. Two different reading tests were used for pre- and posttesting; SRA, Level B, Form 1 and SRA, Level C, Form 1. This may have affected the outcome of the data analysis.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

Based upon the limitations and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations for further research are suggested.

1. A similar, more tightly controlled study should be conducted over a longer span of time.

2. The SUCCESS program should be studied in relation to other types of reading approaches besides basal reading programs.

3. Other aspects of the language experience approach to reading may be investigated in relation to the SUCCESS program, such as the development of long-term spelling and writing skills as compared to other approaches.

4. The effect of the SUCCESS program on self-concept should be considered because of the interest and pride demonstrated by children who have participated in the program.

APPENDIX A

HILDRETH'S LIST OF EVALUATIVE REPORTS

The following is a list of evaluative reports compiled by Dr. Gertrude H. Hildreth (1965, p. 293-294).

Flora J. Cooke (In a letter to Dr. E. B. Huey about 1906 summarizing a decade of experience with the method (Huey, 1908).

Annie E. Moore (1916)  
 Emma Watkins (1922)  
 James Tippet and others (1927)  
 R. S. Mosher (1928)  
 Julia E. Dickson and Mary E. McLean (1929)  
 Ruth Hockett (1930)  
 J. L. Meriam (1933)  
 Charles A. Smith (1937)  
 Staff of the Maury School (1941)  
 Board of Education, New York City (1942)  
 D. E. M. Gardner (1942)  
 The Cincinnati Manual (1942)  
 Blanche Harvaux and Marie Noix-Chateau (1958)

The following are references to comparison studies of teaching initial reading through experience-related material in contrast to the use of standard traditional textbook methods:

A. I. Gates, Batchelder, M., and Betzner, J. (1926)  
 James Tippet and others (1927)  
 Julia E. Dickson and Mary E. McLean (1929)  
 Gertrude Hildreth (1930)  
 Mabel V. Morphett and Carleton Washburne (1940)  
 J. L. Meriam (1930, 1933)  
 J. Murray Lee (1933)  
 Board of Education, New York City (1942)  
 D. E. M. Gardner (1942)  
 J. Wayne Wrightstone (1944)  
 Sonja Karsen (1954)

READING ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR TEST

Instructions: Circle the number that best describes how you feel about reading.

| Item  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I like to read.  |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2. I don't like to read.  |   |   |   |   |   |
| 3. I like to read but I don't have time.                          |   |   |   |   |   |
| 4. I don't have time to read.                                     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5. I like to read but I don't know what to read.                  |   |   |   |   |   |
| 6. I like to read but I don't have any books.                     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 7. I like to read but I don't have any money to buy books.        |   |   |   |   |   |
| 8. I like to read but I don't have any friends who like to read.  |   |   |   |   |   |
| 9. I like to read but I don't have any books at home.             |   |   |   |   |   |
| 10. I like to read but I don't have any time to read.             |   |   |   |   |   |
| 11. I like to read but I don't have any books to read.            |   |   |   |   |   |
| 12. I like to read but I don't have any money to buy books.       |   |   |   |   |   |
| 13. I like to read but I don't have any friends who like to read. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 14. I like to read but I don't have any books at home.            |   |   |   |   |   |
| 15. I like to read but I don't have any time to read.             |   |   |   |   |   |
| 16. I like to read but I don't have any books to read.            |   |   |   |   |   |
| 17. I like to read but I don't have any money to buy books.       |   |   |   |   |   |
| 18. I like to read but I don't have any friends who like to read. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 19. I like to read but I don't have any books at home.            |   |   |   |   |   |
| 20. I like to read but I don't have any time to read.             |   |   |   |   |   |

APPENDIX B

READING ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR TEST

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_

ESTES ATTITUDE TOWARD READING SCALE

Instructions: I am going to read some statements about reading to you. Tell me if you AGREE with them, DISAGREE with them, or if you are NOT SURE.

|  | AGREE | NOT SURE | DISAGREE |
|--|-------|----------|----------|
| 1. Reading is for learning but not for fun.                                  | 1     | 2        | 3        |
| 2. Money spent on books is well-spent.                                       | 3     | 2        | 1        |
| 3. There is nothing to be gained from reading books.                         | 1     | 2        | 3        |
| 4. Books are a bore.   | 1     | 2        | 3        |
| 5. Reading is a good way to spend spare time.                                | 3     | 2        | 1        |
| 6. People telling the class about books they have read is a waste of time.   | 1     | 2        | 3        |
| 7. Reading is exciting to me.  | 3     | 2        | 1        |
| 8. Reading is only for those students who are trying to impress the teacher. | 1     | 2        | 3        |
| 9. Books aren't usually good enough to finish.                               | 1     | 2        | 3        |
| 10. Reading is worth my time.  | 3     | 2        | 1        |
| 11. Reading becomes boring after about 30 minutes.                           | 1     | 2        | 3        |
| 12. Most books are too long and dull.  | 1     | 2        | 3        |
| 13. Free reading doesn't teach anything.                                     | 1     | 2        | 3        |
| 14. There should be more time for free reading during the school day.        | 3     | 2        | 1        |
| 15. There are many books which I hope to read.                               | 3     | 2        | 1        |
| 16. Books should not be read unless the teacher makes you.                   | 1     | 2        | 3        |
| 17. Reading is something I can do without.                                   | 1     | 2        | 3        |
| 18. I plan to save some time this summer for reading.                        | 3     | 2        | 1        |
| 19. Books make good presents.  | 3     | 2        | 1        |
| 20. Reading is dull.   | 1     | 2        | 3        |

A Scale of Reading Attitude Based on Behavior

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 School \_\_\_\_\_ Observer \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Check the most appropriate of the five blanks by each item below. Only one blank by each item should be checked.

\*The following code has been used to designate the responses used for the purpose of typing this appendix.

|        |        |              |        |        |
|--------|--------|--------------|--------|--------|
| A =    | B =    | C =          | D =    | E =    |
| Always | Often  | Occasionally | Seldom | Never  |
| Occurs | Occurs | Occurs       | Occurs | Occurs |

- |   | A     | B     | C     | D     | E     |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. The student exhibits a strong desire to come to the reading circle or to have reading instruction take place.                | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. The student is enthusiastic and interested in participating once he comes to the reading circle or the reading class begins. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. The students ask permission or raises his hand to read orally.   | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. When called upon to read orally the student eagerly does so.   | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. The student very willingly answers a question asked him in the reading class.  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 6. Contributions in the way of voluntary discussions are made by the student in the reading class.                              | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 7. The student expresses a desire to be read to by you or someone else, and he attentively listens while this is taking place.  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

|  | A     | B     | C     | D     | E     |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 8. The student makes an effort to read printed materials on bulletin boards, charts, or other displays having writing on them.                       | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 9. The student elects to read a book when the class has permission to choose a "free-time" activity.   | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 10. The student expresses genuine interest in going to the school's library.   | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 11. The student discusses with you (the teacher) or members of the class those items he has read from the newspaper, magazines, or similar material. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 12. The student voluntarily and enthusiastically discusses with others the book he has read or is reading.   | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 13. The student listens attentively while other students share their reading experiences with the group.   | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 14. The student expresses eagerness to read printed materials in the content areas.  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 15. The student goes beyond the textbook or usual reading assignment in searching for other materials to read.                                       | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 16. The student contributes to group discussions that are based on reading assignments made in the content areas.                                    | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

# SUCCESS IN READING AND WRITING

WENTZVILLE R-IV STUDY

1. How many students were successful in the reading and writing program?

|                    |     |     |     |     |     |     |       |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Grade              | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | Total |
| Number of students | 15  | 12  | 10  | 8   | 6   | 4   | 55    |
| Number successful  | 12  | 10  | 8   | 6   | 4   | 3   | 43    |
| Percentage         | 80% | 83% | 80% | 75% | 67% | 75% | 78%   |

2. How many students were successful in the reading and writing program?

|                    |     |     |     |     |     |     |       |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Grade              | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | Total |
| Number of students | 15  | 12  | 10  | 8   | 6   | 4   | 55    |
| Number successful  | 12  | 10  | 8   | 6   | 4   | 3   | 43    |
| Percentage         | 80% | 83% | 80% | 75% | 67% | 75% | 78%   |

## APPENDIX C

3. How many students were successful in the reading and writing program?

### RESULTS OF WENTZVILLE R-IV STUDY

|                    |     |     |     |     |     |     |       |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Grade              | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | Total |
| Number of students | 15  | 12  | 10  | 8   | 6   | 4   | 55    |
| Number successful  | 12  | 10  | 8   | 6   | 4   | 3   | 43    |
| Percentage         | 80% | 83% | 80% | 75% | 67% | 75% | 78%   |

OF

4. How many students were successful in the reading and writing program?

|                    |     |     |     |     |     |     |       |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Grade              | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | Total |
| Number of students | 15  | 12  | 10  | 8   | 6   | 4   | 55    |
| Number successful  | 12  | 10  | 8   | 6   | 4   | 3   | 43    |
| Percentage         | 80% | 83% | 80% | 75% | 67% | 75% | 78%   |

5. How many students were successful in the reading and writing program?

|                    |     |     |     |     |     |     |       |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Grade              | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | Total |
| Number of students | 15  | 12  | 10  | 8   | 6   | 4   | 55    |
| Number successful  | 12  | 10  | 8   | 6   | 4   | 3   | 43    |
| Percentage         | 80% | 83% | 80% | 75% | 67% | 75% | 78%   |

6. How many students were successful in the reading and writing program?

|                    |     |     |     |     |     |     |       |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Grade              | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | Total |
| Number of students | 15  | 12  | 10  | 8   | 6   | 4   | 55    |
| Number successful  | 12  | 10  | 8   | 6   | 4   | 3   | 43    |
| Percentage         | 80% | 83% | 80% | 75% | 67% | 75% | 78%   |

7. How many students were successful in the reading and writing program?

|                    |     |     |     |     |     |     |       |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Grade              | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | Total |
| Number of students | 15  | 12  | 10  | 8   | 6   | 4   | 55    |
| Number successful  | 12  | 10  | 8   | 6   | 4   | 3   | 43    |
| Percentage         | 80% | 83% | 80% | 75% | 67% | 75% | 78%   |

## SUCCESS IN READING AND WRITING

### EVALUATION REPORT 1984-1985 PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Following is a copy of the parent questionnaire with the results indicated.

1. Did your child enjoy participating in the Success In Reading and Writing program?

|                |    |   |    |     |     |     |     |                   |
|----------------|----|---|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------------------|
| Less enjoyment | 1  | 2 | 3  | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | Greater enjoyment |
| Total response | 2  |   | 3  | 8   | 10  | 16  | 41  |                   |
| Percentage     | 3% |   | 4% | 10% | 13% | 20% | 51% |                   |

2. Is your child more confident in himself/herself in reading since he/she has been in the program?

|                |    |   |    |    |     |     |     |                |
|----------------|----|---|----|----|-----|-----|-----|----------------|
| Less confident | 1  | 2 | 3  | 4  | 5   | 6   | 7   | More confident |
| Total response | 2  |   | 1  | 6  | 11  | 17  | 43  |                |
| Percentage     | 3% |   | 1% | 8% | 14% | 21% | 54% |                |

3. Does your child read (books, magazines, or newspapers) more now in his/her spare time?

|                |    |   |    |     |     |     |     |              |
|----------------|----|---|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------|
| Less reading   | 1  | 2 | 3  | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | More reading |
| Total response | 4  |   | 3  | 9   | 11  | 20  | 34  |              |
| Percentage     | 5% |   | 4% | 11% | 13% | 25% | 42% |              |

4. Has the program enabled your child to express himself/herself better in writing?

|                 |    |    |    |     |     |     |     |                 |
|-----------------|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----------------|
| Less expression | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | More expression |
| Total response  | 3  | 1  | 1  | 10  | 14  | 26  | 26  |                 |
| Percentage      | 4% | 1% | 1% | 12% | 17% | 32% | 32% |                 |

7. Have you had other children in the traditional reading program?  
If the answer above is yes, please answer the following questions.

- A. Do you feel that overall, your child in Success has shown more improvement, at this point, in writing ability than your child who was taught with a basal approach?

|                  |    |    |    |     |     |     |     |                  |
|------------------|----|----|----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------------|
| Less improvement | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | More improvement |
| Total response   | 1  | 1  | 2  | 4   | 7   | 4   | 14  |                  |
| Percentage       | 3% | 3% | 6% | 12% | 21% | 12% | 42% |                  |

- B. Do you feel that overall, your child in Success has shown more improvement at this point, in reading ability than your child who was taught with a basal approach?

|                  |    |    |   |     |     |     |     |                  |
|------------------|----|----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------------|
| Less improvement | 1  | 2  | 3 | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | More improvement |
| Total response   | 2  | 2  |   | 7   | 5   | 4   | 13  |                  |
| Percentage       | 6% | 6% |   | 21% | 15% | 12% | 39% |                  |

8. Are you interested in the Success program continuing at your school?

|                |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |                  |
|----------------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|------------------|
| Less interest  | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6   | 7   | Greater interest |
| Total response | 5  | 1  | 1  | 6  | 2  | 7   | 51  |                  |
| Percentage     | 7% | 1% | 1% | 8% | 3% | 10% | 70% |                  |

Responses for questions 5 and 6 were sometimes condensed and paraphrased in order to assist in giving more specific feedback.

5. What did you like most about the program?

Single responses only -

grasped reading faster  
 increased skills  
 encouraged child to read  
 increased writing skills  
 reading daily  
 child thought program fun  
 improvement in reading  
 teacher is involved  
 kept up with reading workbooks  
 bring own interests into their words  
 total program itself excellent  
 liked phonics taught along with Success  
 child reads better and faster than my other children at same age  
 made learning more interesting  
 capable of reading material above her grade level  
 student reads to parents

Dual responses only -

incentive to read more difficult material  
 chance to express themselves in class  
 no grouping - all one group  
 work at own speed  
 choice of materials to read  
 more willing to read  
 increased interest in reading

Responses noted on 3 - 6 questionnaires

impressed with comprehension  
 confidence to express self through writing  
 greater exposure to vocabulary  
 sibling involvement  
 use of dictionary  
 increased spelling  
 use of magazines and newspapers  
 high stress placed on reading

Responses noted on 8 - 16 questionnaires  
 child enjoys reading  
 confidence built up to read  
 increased vocabulary  
 parental involvement  
 greater exposure to phonics  
 creative writing

6. What did you like least about the program?

Single responses only -  
 program wasn't long enough  
 want parent input if program is pulled due to  
 SRA scores  
 didn't care for phonics spelling  
 today's newspapers are not appropriate for 7  
 year old  
 child wasted full year of schooling on program  
 that offered no skills useful in future -  
 has hurt child's education  
 difficult to understand progress of child in  
 classroom  
 confusing to child if Success program not  
 continued next year  
 some letter clusters rather tedious and  
 repetitious  
 no set spelling words or books  
 child lost desire to excel  
 any pilot program should have okay from  
 individual parents  
 more work trying to coordinate program with  
 Houghton-Mifflin (extra worksheets)

Dual responses only -  
at first didn't understand or wasn't impressed with  
 program

The remaining 10 responses dealt with the homework  
 aspect of the program. Most objected to the daily  
 homework assignments stating they felt it was too much.  
 A few felt it wasn't enough to develop good study  
 habits. Other comments included; because of required  
 parental involvement - homework issue became a  
 battleground and detracted from program; time spent  
 would have been more productive reading a book; homework  
 strips so difficult parents had to find words for child;  
 undefined goals and expectations for homework; toward  
 end of year homework strips boring - enthusiasm slacked  
 off.



8. Do you think students are aware of their "reading position" in the classroom?

|                 | <u>Yes</u>   | <u>No</u> |
|-----------------|--|-----------|
| Total responses | 5  |           |
| Percentage      | 100% - primarily because of doing Houghton-Mifflin workbooks and tests |           |

9. Please rate the extent the Success program has improved classroom management.

| Less improvement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6   | 7   | Greater improvement |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---------------------|
| Total responses  |   |   |   |   |   | 1   | 4   |                     |
| Percentage       |   |   |   |   |   | 20% | 80% |                     |

10. Do you feel that overall, students in Success have shown more improvement, at this point, in reading ability than students you have taught in the past with a basal approach?

| Less improvement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6   | 7   | Greater improvement |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---------------------|
| Total responses  |   |   |   |   |   | 3   | 2   |                     |
| Percentage       |   |   |   |   |   | 60% | 40% |                     |

11. Do you feel that overall, students in Success have shown more improvement, at this point, in writing ability than students you have taught in the past with a basal approach?

| Less improvement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7    | Greater improvement |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---------------------|
| Total responses  |   |   |   |   |   |   | 5    |                     |
| Percentage       |   |   |   |   |   |   | 100% |                     |

12. In general, do you feel the Success program has helped to improve your teaching ability?

| Less improvement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7    | Greater improvement |
|------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|---------------------|
| Total responses  |   |   |   |   |   |   | 5    |                     |
| Percentage       |   |   |   |   |   |   | 100% |                     |

13. Have you found that your students choose to read in a variety of materials?

|                 | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
|-----------------|------------|-----------|
| Total responses | 5          |           |
| Percentage      | 100%       |           |

14. Have you encountered any problems utilizing the Success program in conjunction with the Houghton Mifflin skills workbook?

|                 | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u>   |
|-----------------|------------|---|
| Total responses | 4          | 1   |
| Percentage      | 80%        | 20% - primarily because it differentiates students by placing them in Houghton-Mifflin levels for workbooks and testing and takes <u>Success</u> time |

15. Have you encountered any problems utilizing the Success program in conjunction with the Houghton-Mifflin management system?

|                 | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
|-----------------|------------|-----------|
| Total responses | 5          | 3         |
| Percentage      | 100%       | 100%      |

16. Are you interested in teaching the Success program next year?

|                 | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
|-----------------|------------|-----------|
| Total responses | 5          | 0         |
| Percentage      | 100%       | 0%        |

Please list the advantages and disadvantages of the Success program.

Advantages - Most responses were noted more than once.

- exposed to whole scope of activities - reading, writing, and language
- all students experience success
- integration of all subject areas is easy and natural
- much more self-confidence in reading
- spelling greatly improved
- creative writing greatly improved
- whole group interaction plus one to one
- greater variety of reading materials
- discipline much easier
- unlimited vocabulary and spelling lists
- less independent work
- more flexibility in teaching
- more enthusiasm for reading in general
- read more fluently, orally
- comfortable with SRA testing
- words, sentences, paragraphs have more meaning because they are theirs

Disadvantages -

- having to test in Houghton-Mifflin - doesn't allow for testing period
- students with fine-motor problems - because of writing aspect
- more activity and possibly noise (Others did not see this as a disadvantage because the noise is teacher controlled and students are on task.)
- homework sometimes hassle to get students to return - several parental complaints - felt that homework could be modified and problems worked out
- special ed scheduling pulls students out of instruction during certain modules

## SUCCESS IN READING AND WRITING

### EVALUATION REPORT 1984-1985 BASAL TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Following is a copy of the basal teacher questionnaire with the results indicated.

1. To what extent have you observed teacher enthusiasm for the Success program?

|                 |   |   |    |     |   |     |     |                    |
|-----------------|---|---|----|-----|---|-----|-----|--------------------|
| Less enthusiasm | 1 | 2 | 3  | 4   | 5 | 6   | 7   | Greater enthusiasm |
| Total responses |   |   | 1  | 4   |   | 4   | 5   |                    |
| Percentage      |   |   | 7% | 29% |   | 29% | 36% |                    |

2. To what extent have you observed student enthusiasm for the Success program?

|                 |   |   |   |     |     |     |     |                    |
|-----------------|---|---|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------------|
| Less enthusiasm | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | Greater enthusiasm |
| Total responses |   |   |   | 2   | 3   | 1   | 2   |                    |
| Percentage      |   |   |   | 25% | 38% | 13% | 25% |                    |

3. To what degree have you observed classroom management to be easier?

|                 |     |     |     |     |   |     |     |                |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|-----|-----|----------------|
| Lesser degree   | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5 | 6   | 7   | Greater degree |
| Total responses | 1   | 1   | 1   | 3   |   | 2   | 1   |                |
| Percentage      | 11% | 11% | 11% | 33% |   | 22% | 11% |                |

4. Have you observed that overall, students in Success appear to have shown more improvement in writing ability than students taught in the past with a basal approach?

|                  |   |   |   |     |     |     |     |                     |
|------------------|---|---|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|---------------------|
| Less improvement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | Greater improvement |
| Total responses  |   |   |   | 2   | 5   | 1   | 2   |                     |
| Percentage       |   |   |   | 20% | 50% | 10% | 20% |                     |

5. Have you observed that overall, students in Success appear to have shown more improvement in reading ability than students taught in the past with a basal approach?

|                  |   |   |     |   |     |     |   |                     |
|------------------|---|---|-----|---|-----|-----|---|---------------------|
| Less improvement | 1 | 2 | 3   | 4 | 5   | 6   | 7 | Greater improvement |
| Total responses  |   |   | 1   |   | 1   | 2   |   |                     |
| Percentage       |   |   | 25% |   | 25% | 50% |   |                     |

6. Have you observed that students are less aware of their "reading position" in the classroom?

|                 |   |     |     |   |     |     |     |            |
|-----------------|---|-----|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|------------|
| Less aware      | 1 | 2   | 3   | 4 | 5   | 6   | 7   | More aware |
| Total responses |   | 2   | 3   |   | 1   | 1   | 1   |            |
| Percentage      |   | 25% | 38% |   | 13% | 13% | 13% |            |

7. Have you observed that the self concept of students has improved?

|                  |   |   |     |     |     |     |   |                     |
|------------------|---|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|---------------------|
| Less improvement | 1 | 2 | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7 | Greater improvement |
| Total responses  |   |   | 1   | 1   | 3   | 1   |   |                     |
| Percentage       |   |   | 17% | 17% | 50% | 17% |   |                     |

10. Are you interested in the Success program continuing at your school?

|                 |   |   |   |     |    |    |     |                  |
|-----------------|---|---|---|-----|----|----|-----|------------------|
| Less interest   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4   | 5  | 6  | 7   | Greater interest |
| Total responses |   |   |   | 4   | 1  | 1  | 7   |                  |
| Percentage      |   |   |   | 31% | 8% | 8% | 54% |                  |

11. Would you be interested in teaching Success?

|                 |            |           |
|-----------------|------------|-----------|
|                 | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
| Total responses | 8          | 3         |
| Percentage      | 73%        | 27%       |

8. Have you encountered any problems which have occurred because of Success being used in your grade level?  
If the answer is yes, please indicate what problems you have encountered.

Responses -

scheduling of special classes  
problems give teachers of Success planning time together  
problem with handwriting papers  
children could not be pulled out during module time  
at beginning of year, parents questioned reason for Success  
parents questioned no reading books

9. Please list the advantages and disadvantages of the Success program as observed by you.

Advantages -

more creative writing  
incentive to read on own  
know students better  
student interaction  
proof reading  
use less skill reinforcement sheets  
no obvious hi/lo grouping  
saving of ditto paper and xerox machine time  
application of skills by using magazines, newspapers, maps, charts  
continuity of incorporating Success into science, social studies, math  
recreational reading big plus  
students all working together  
no seat work  
children not left alone while teacher is with a reading group  
language experience stories  
longer stories and more details in stories than regular 1st grade  
less papers to grade  
no grouping gives students better self-concept  
involves more product learning than process learning  
child has success at own level  
teacher not tied to rigid basal text with controlled vocabulary  
all experience success  
enthusiasm by students and teacher

Disadvantages -

- substitute not knowing Success
- scheduling problems - students leaving whole group activity
- parents do not see daily progress or even weekly progress
- spelling module
- if student absent - loses the module taught
- classroom management
- not having worksheets to take scores from
- space to hang charts
- dislike of open classroom and talking
- because of newness - long term measurements and effect not studied yet
- more subjective in evaluation
- tests not given at regular intervals like in basal
- doesn't give teacher more class time
- are students learning to read and follow written directions?

Summary

A summary of the advantages and disadvantages of the program is given below. The program is designed to provide a systematic approach to reading instruction for students who are having difficulty learning to read. The program is based on the principles of behavior modification and is designed to be used by teachers in the classroom. The program is designed to be used by teachers in the classroom. The program is designed to be used by teachers in the classroom.

# SUCCESS IN READING AND WRITING

## EVALUATION REPORT 1984-1985 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Recommendations

The overall evaluation indicates that the Success approach has had a positive impact on students in the program. Therefore, the following recommendations are made:

- 1) Those teachers in grades one and two who have expressed a desire to continue teaching Success during the 1985-86 school year be allowed to do so.
- 2) Those teachers in grades one and two who have expressed a desire to begin teaching Success during the 1985-86 school year be allowed to do so.
- 3) The overall number of Success classrooms not exceed more than half of the total classrooms at any grade level.
- 4) Those teachers in kindergarten, extended day kindergarten, and transition rooms who have expressed a desire to attend a Success workshop and implement some of the Success approach in their classrooms during the 1985-86 school year be allowed to do so.
- 5) The program be expanded to include two third grade Success classrooms for the 1985-86 school year.
- 6) The progress of those students who have been in Success during the 1984-85 school year continue to be monitored to insure a smooth transition into our basal program.

### Summary

A common goal in the reading program should be teaching students how to become effective, independent readers. Our basal program employs objectives toward this goal. Success employs the same objectives toward this goal. For many decades, educators have debated the relative merits of different methods of teaching reading. The conclusion most often reached is that no single approach can meet all of the needs of all of the students. Success offers an effective alternative to assist in the attempt to adapt the teaching of reading to the learning styles of students.

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