

select for himself and probably such selection should never be without the aid of the teacher.

Vocabulary Development—Much of the lack of comprehension on the part of adults as well as children is due to the meagerness of their vocabulary. Imagine a young woman teaching colonial history who gave the writer recently as a definition of "stockade," "a small ornament worn on the hat of the French revolutionists." Yoakam suggests the use of progress books (a) to analyze polysyllabic words, (b) to study prefixes, suffixes, and stems, and (3) to study homonyms.

C. P. SHORTS

CHECKING BASIC VOCABULARY IN THE FIRST GRADE

THE primary purpose in first grade reading is the development of right habits and attitudes: the child should learn to read across the line in an easy rhythm and to make an accurate and economical return sweep; he should read to find out something; and he should derive satisfaction from his reading. Such a program stresses the sentence and the story methods for beginners; it teaches words through context, always making sure that the word is rich with meaning. So far, so good. But often we find children promoted to the second grade so lacking in word consciousness that they are greatly hampered in their progress toward independence in reading.

This paper in no way advocates stress on the *teaching* of words out of context; it would always subordinate phonics to meanings. It does maintain that there must be systematic *checking* of single words if the teacher is to intelligently guide the child in his reading growth. And, for that reason, it offers a simplified scheme for such checking.

All primers contain some words not widely enough used to merit mastery. The teacher should therefore check the word list in her basal primer by some standard list such as the Thorndike list¹ or the Ayres spelling list² using for the checking only words common to the two sources. If she does not have access to such a standard list she can secure an approximate list by using words common to her basal and supplementary primers and first readers.

The words should be numbered in the order in which they occur in the basal primer. The number of words to be used will depend upon the time of the year; at the middle of the year 50 or 100 words is enough, but as many as 200 can be used toward the close of the grade.

The words should next be grouped in blocks of 10 or 20 according to the size of the class; it may take too long to get around a large class checking 20 words at a time.

If the teacher does not have word cards to accompany the basal primer and first reader, her next step is to make a card for each word on her list. Each word should be put on a separate card; the cards should be of uniform size so that the children can not associate a word with its card. The words can be lettered by hand, or a hand printing press can be used. In either case the work must be carefully done—all letters clear, evenly spaced, and well aligned—since a primary child's perception of a word is greatly affected by its legibility.

Each child must be tested individually. The first series of 10 or 20 words is presented to him several times, each time in a different order so that the check is on his recognition of the particular word and not on memory of the order in which the words occur. After checking a few words the teacher can appreciate the individual child's

¹*The Teachers Word Book*, by Edward Lee Thorndike. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University.

²*Buckingham Extension of the Ayres Spelling Scale*. Bloomington, Ill.: The Public School Publishing Co.

rate of response, and any undue hesitation should be checked as an error. In the same way a stumbling or a mispronunciation is counted wrong; mastery of words is the thing being checked and only such words as are recognized automatically should be counted.

Before beginning to check prepare a piece of paper about 4x6 for each child. Put the child's name at the top of the paper; in the lefthand margin, not more than an inch from the top, write the date of the first checking. In one column list the words of which you are doubtful and in another those you are sure the child has not learned. The next day present the same series of words to him again, always varying the order, and draw a line through each word which is now automatic. Then draw a double line below the two columns so that the first checking will stand out from the later ones. (See Fig. 1.)

Fig. 1		
INDIVIDUAL RECORD SHEET		
PHILIP SHERMAN		
Dates	Doubtful Words	Unlearned Words
Jan. 29, 1929	besides	went house mother

Using a sheet of heavy paper at least 18x36, prepare a table something like the one shown in Fig. 2, entering as many of the words as possible so that one table will last for a considerable period of time. As you finish checking the first block of words with a child, put in an "x" for each word mastered. Then tabulate the times each word was mastered, and also the number of words mastered by each child. Write these totals in with pencil since you will want to change them frequently.

The words missed by as many as one-fourth of the class should be used frequent-

ly in class work. (By running down the last column to the right the teacher can easily determine which words need review). One way to reteach these words is to include one or more of them in the daily blackboard supplementary story. By placing a tally after the word each time it is used—see column headed "Times Reviewed"—the teacher can measure the amount of review given. This record will take but a minute, and it will show the teacher whether or not her drill is focused upon real difficulties. (See Fig. 2, page 60.)

Such use of the unlearned words meets all standards for teaching them in context provided the teacher does not sacrifice the point or the style of the story in order to include a certain word. This should never be done; words which are not needed in a story should be taught in some other way.

Much time can be saved by planning seat work to teach particular words. Directions for making one such exercise to teach the word *little* are given here, but for a complete treatment of intrinsic teaching of vocabulary the reader is referred to Gates's new book.³

Cut from a magazine three pictures of small dogs, and mount them on a card to fit a medium sized envelope. (Or make a rough outline sketch of the dogs on the card.) Prepare three phrases and print each on a separate card. Print a number or letter on the upper lefthand corner of the envelope, the picture, and each phrase card, using the same number or letter on all. Use three similar phrases except for one word, e. g.:

1. three big dogs
2. three black dogs
3. three little dogs

The child's problem is to match the card and the correct phrase. It can be seen that this forces him to discriminate carefully between words, yet presents the words in context.

³*The Improvement of Reading*, by Arthur I. Gates. New York: The Macmillan Co.

To teach the word *dogs* the same picture might serve with the phrases as follows:

1. three little dogs
2. three little hens
3. three little cows

When the teacher centers her attention upon these unlearned words, she will generally find a number of errors that come from confusion between a pair of somewhat similar words. The point of similarity may be the initial consonant or blend, as in *stick* and *shovel*, *this* and *there*; it may be in the "family" ending as in *black* and *tack*; it may be in the configuration or pattern of the word as in *fell* and *fall*, *winter* and *water*. In such cases neither supplementary stories nor seat exercises will fully meet the situation; these should be supplemented by a bit of teaching aimed directly at the difficulty. A few cases where pairs of words were so confused are given here with suggestive treatment.

Case 1. *House and Home*—The teacher sounded the "ome" in *home*; then she sounded the word slowly emphasizing the characteristic sound. Next she asked the child to listen how this word—*house*—says "ou" as if he were badly hurt. The child chuckled at the imagery, sounded each

word a time or two and said, "I see." Probably he would remember, but a wise teacher would check on him in a day or so to make sure.

When two words of similar configuration related in meaning as are *house* and *home* become confused, it is essential that the child have help in distinguishing word form. This is also true where words similar in appearance are not rich in meaning as *that* and *what*. In the case just given the class had had no formal phonics. But by sounding the needed elements for the child the teacher was able to help him use a bit of technical knowledge about words. And, after all, this is probably the sanest approach to the more formal phonics teaching.

Case 2. *Time and Tame*—The teacher asked the class to notice the "i" in *time* and the "a" in *tame*, pointing to the central vowel in each word as she slowly sounded the word. She then played a game in which one of the words was used in a sentence and a child was asked to touch the correct word on the blackboard with a pointer. Next she produced word cards, each containing a familiar word belonging to one of the families concerned, (*lime, dime, same, came,*

Fig. 2
TABLE SHOWING FIRST BLOCK OF TEN WORDS

Words	Times Reviewed	NAMES OF THE CHILDREN									Times Mastered
		Mary	Sue	Philip	Rose	Tom	Edith	Frank	Peter	Clara	
apple	2	x		x		x			x	x	5
beside	6		x					x			2
what	3			x							1
from	1	x		x	x			x		x	5
boy	1		x	x	x	x		x		x	6
got	2		x	x					x		3
house	1	x			x	x				x	4
went	5				x			x	x	x	4
mother	2	x				x			x	x	4
then	2	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	7
No. Words Mastered		5	4	6	5	5	5	0	4	7	

N. B. Space should be left between the word "then" and the "Number Words Mastered" to write other blocks of words in.

frame, rime, and lame, and asked the children to put them with the word they were most like, *tame* or *time*.

Case 4. *Saw and Was*—These words have so little "personality" that it is essential that the child who has confused them be given some helping device. This teacher taught the class the "s" sound. She then produced a list of familiar words some having an initial "s," some a final "s," and some neither. She asked the children first to find words beginning with the "s" sound, then those ending with it. This took all the phonics time for a day or two, but the majority of the class mastered both words.

After an interval of teaching, the teacher should recheck each child on the first block of words, keeping a record as before. At the same sitting, she should also check him on the next block. The results are transferred to the table, new totals are found, another period of teaching follows and so on, until the class achieves mastery of the basic vocabulary.

Although this scheme has been simplified as much as possible, it will take considerable time to initiate it. But as the teacher sees the class come to the mastery level in sight vocabulary and child after child begin to do independent reading, she is apt to think it time very wisely expended.

KATHERINE M. ANTHONY.

APPLE FARMING IN THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY

A Fourth Grade Unit in Social Studies

I. The Outcomes

A. The Understandings or General Ideas for Permanent Learning

1. The apple is called the king of fruits, because it is so widely used.
2. The seedlings are budded or grafted in order to produce better fruit.
3. The trees should be transplanted carefully in a well-chosen place.

4. The apple tree requires much care, especially during the annual fruit bearing period.

5. The fruit must be carefully prepared for market.

B. The Abilities and Related Skills

1. Writing business letters.

- a. For information.

- b. For permission to visit places of business.

2. Using books.

- a. Using table of contents and index.

- b. Doing selective reading.

3. Using maps.

- a. Finding distances.

- b. Locating places.

- c. Tracing routes.

4. Doing construction work.

- a. Selecting good color combinations.

- b. Pasting neatly.

- c. Learning good spacing.

C. The Attitudes

1. A spirit of co-operation fostered by the group work and by the contacts with local apple growers and packers.

2. Appreciation of the apple industry in their own community.

II. The Jobs

A. They will answer the following large thought questions:

1. Why is the apple called the king of fruits?

2. Why are the seeds budded or grafted?

3. What are the successive steps for transplanting nursery trees?

4. Why do growers cultivate the soil of the orchard?

5. Why do growers spray apple trees?

6. Why do growers prune apple trees?

7. Why do growers thin apple orchards?