AN INDIVIDUALIZED READING PROGRAM FOR TENTH-YEAR PUPILS
OF TIMKEN VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

A Thesis Presented for the
Degree of Master of Arts

By

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Approved by:

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

From its very origin, vocational education in the United States has had a struggle for its existence.¹

Vocational education has received an unfortunate connotation in this country; it suffers from lack of prestige. In thousands of school systems students study the liberal arts even though they might better benefit from more practical subjects, because of the rather specious belief, that the "brain" courses are more genteel and more prestige satisfying than are the menial "hand" subjects.²

The first of these statements presents the opinion of an educator; the second, that of a layman. Statistics seem to indicate that in Ohio vocational high schools are losing ground in their struggle for existence. In the school year 1939-1940 the Ohio Educational Directory listed eighteen vocational high schools with an enrollment of 10,709; in the 1942-1943 Educational Directory there were eleven vocational high schools listed and the total enrollment was 8,463 pupils; in this past school year, 1945-1946,


²Benjamin Fine, Democratic Education, p. 217.
the list of vocational high schools consisted of ten names and the total enrollment had dropped to 6,753.

This drop in the number of vocational high schools and in the number of pupils enrolled is difficult to explain in the face of two advantages which vocational education enjoys at this time: (1) For the past twenty-nine years the federal government has been unusually generous in its financial assistance to public vocational education.² (2) Now that the war is over, the industrial arts and vocational education departments of our schools have received much favorable comment for their indirect contribution to victory. A highly mechanized army such as ours could not have been mobilized so rapidly if it had not been for the fact that many of the men had already received specialized training in the industrial arts and vocational education departments of our schools.

Lieutenant General Brehon Somervell wrote in the October 1943 issue of The Journal of the National Education Association as follows:

Far reaching industrial and educational changes have been necessary to meet the needs of our Armed Forces and the schools,

²Smith-Hughes Act of 1917.
like industry, have done a remarkable job...... In the relatively few months since the Army first stated its needs for preinduction training, more than 600,000 boys have been studying electricity, radio, machines, shopwork, mechanics, Morse code, driver education, and Army clerical procedures in high schools throughout the country. Two hundred fifty thousand boys in vocational schools have been learning trades useful to the Army. But the need for such training grows more critical. 4

Although the fighting war is over, the need for the skills developed in vocational schools remains.

"THE BIG PUSH to advance the frontiers of postwar vocational education in Ohio began March 1." 5 The preceding sentence is the introductory one in an article by Melvin C. Koch of the State Department of Education in the Ohio Schools for April 1946. It remains to be seen whether the BIG PUSH succeeds in advancing the frontiers. The tendency in the past few years has been to retreat.


Both Cleveland and Cincinnati have fewer vocational high schools today than they had five years ago. Vocational education has been relegated to a department of the general high school.

The word *vocation* means regular or appropriate employment, one's regular calling or profession; it is customary to use it when referring to such callings as those of doctor, lawyer, teacher, nurse, minister, artist, and musician. The adjective *vocational* on the other hand when used with the nouns *education* or *training* refers to jobs (waitress, welder, salesman, stenographer, etc.) rather than professions. The writer feels that teaching is her vocation; but a vocational education (as the term is used in this thesis) would not have prepared her for her vocation. A vocational education at Timken Vocational High School prepares young women for the following jobs or positions: restaurant or cafeteria manager, waitress, beauty operator, saleslady, commercial artist, dressmaker. The young men have a wider choice. They may prepare for these jobs: retail salesman, auto mechanic, pattern maker, welder, sheetmetal worker, commercial artist, draftsman, electrical worker, print shop employee, tool grinder, and other jobs
connected with a machine shop. There are two other choices that are open to both boys and girls: secretarial training and accounting. Since these two curricula do not receive federal support, they do not have to meet the requirements of the Ohio State Plan for Vocational Education. Only the courses that receive federal aid are called vocational at Timken. This is misleading to an outsider because the commercial courses prepare for specific occupations just as surely as all the others.

The Report of the Commission on National Aid to Vocational Education, volume 1, pages 19-20, (1914) defined vocational education as follows:

Wherever the term "vocational education" is used in this Report, it will mean, unless otherwise explained, that form of education whose controlling purpose is to give training of a secondary grade to persons over fourteen years of age, for increased efficiency in useful employment in the trades and industries, in agriculture, in commerce and the commercial pursuits, and in callings based on a knowledge of home economics. 6

6Quoted in Ellwood P. Cubberley, The History of Education: Educational Practice and Progress Considered as a Phase of the Development and Spread of Western Civilization, p. 506.
When the terms vocational education and vocational training are used in this thesis, they will have the meaning just quoted. The secretarial and accounting curricula will not be called vocational since they are not under the rulings of the Ohio State Plan for Vocational Education. They are the only exceptions.

The idea of devoting entire public high schools to the training of a selected group of young people for profitable employment in a limited number of occupations, such as welding, restaurant management, commercial art, and automobile mechanics, is recent. The history of vocational education in the United States gives 1881 as the date when the first trade school was established privately in New York City. By 1900 a half dozen others had been established in different parts of the country. In 1902 a trade school for girls was founded in New York City, and in 1906 Massachusetts created a State Commission on Industrial Education. Wisconsin enacted the first trade school law in 1907; New York state followed in 1909.7

7Ibid., p. 809, footnote 1.
Cubberley gives this account of the part the Federal Government has played in the development of vocational education in the United States:

After a number of sporadic efforts in different parts of the country, and the introduction of a number of bills into Congress which failed to secure passage ............a Presidential Commission was appointed (1913) to inquire into the matter, and to report on the desirability and feasibility of some form of national aid to stimulate the development of vocational education. The Commission made its report in 1914, and submitted a plan for gradually increasing national aid to the states to assist them in developing and maintaining what will virtually become a national system of agriculture, trade, commercial, and home economics education.8

The findings of the Commission paved the way for the Smith-Hughes Act9 three years later.

Much credit for the advancement of vocational education in the United States should be given to the National Society for the Promotion of Trade and Industrial Education, which was organized on November 16, 1906. In an address at the annual banquet in Buffalo in February, 1946, J. C. Wright, Assistant Commissioner for Vocational Education, said:

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8Ibid., p. 809.

The National Society, now known as the American Vocational Association, has a right to be proud of its leadership during the four decades that have passed since 1906...... As a means of implementing its program, it sponsored and secured the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act, and other acts supplementary thereto.  10

No history of vocational education in this country is complete without frequent reference to the Smith-Hughes and the George-Deen Acts. The preamble to the Smith-Hughes Act reads:

An Act to provide for the promotion of vocational education; to provide for co-operation with the States in the promotion of such education in agriculture and the trades and industries; to provide for co-operation with the States in the preparation of teachers of vocational subjects; and to appropriate money and regulate its expenditure.

The Act carries provisions for annual grants that will continue indefinitely unless Congress decides otherwise. Since the passage of this Act, the attitude of Congress has changed with respect to grants in perpetuity, the view being taken now that circumstances may change. When the

George-Deen Act was passed, it merely authorized the appropriation "for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1937, and annually thereafter, the sum of $12,000,000." Additional action on the part of Congress is required to make the funds actually available for the purposes specified. The preamble to the George-Deen Act reads: "An Act to provide for the further development of vocational education in the several States and Territories."

This chapter began on a slightly pessimistic note. Since the writer proposes to take no sides on the question of the vocational high school versus the general high school, she feels it only fair to conclude the discussion of the development of vocational education with a statement that is a little more optimistic in tone. The late F. Theodore Struck in his last book *Vocational Education for a Changing World* made this prediction:

There are reasons to believe that in the years ahead the vocational schools will be called upon to render services far greater than those given so far. This development is expected because the schools have demonstrated what they can do; they have won wide public approval; certain forms of instruction can be given best under school auspices; industry is

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Public No. 673, 74th Congress, H. R. 12120, Approved, June 8, 1936.
organizing more and more for production and less for instruction; and labor, employers, and the general public believe that the recognized vocational schools are best able to render the services for which they are equipped and staffed.\textsuperscript{12}

It is not the purpose of this thesis to discuss the relative merits of the general and the vocational high school nor to indicate a preference for one over the other. The writer is a teacher of English II on the faculty of Timken Vocational High School in Canton, Ohio. She proposes in this thesis to suggest revisions in one phase of the tenth-year English program as it now exists; namely, the units on reading. At present the English I and the English II courses for all four high schools of the city are the same. The writer's feeling is that the English II in a vocational high school should be a different course from the English II in a general or academic high school. She will attempt to support her contention by presenting (1) evidence from authorities in the field of English education indicating that the present English program does not meet the needs of the pupils in

\textsuperscript{12}\textsuperscript{12}F. Theodore Struck, \textit{Vocational Education for a Changing World}, pp. 524-525.
the vocational high school, and (2) an analysis of the reading habits of her pupils with special attention to their reading interests as expressed through brief written reports or books they read and through their choice of books during a unit on individualized reading. The weaknesses of the present English course in its relation to the other English courses of the school will be pointed out, and definite changes in the present units on reading will be suggested. (It is the English I and English II courses that are the same in all four high schools of the city at the present time. Vocational pupils have only three years of high school English--English I, English II, and Practical or Related English.) Emphasis throughout the discussion will be on a free or individualized reading program with a minimum of required reading.

In the first part of this chapter a few pertinent facts regarding the rise and growth of vocational education in the United States have been given. The present status of vocational education in Ohio has also been mentioned. The chapter will be concluded with a brief outline of the contents of the remaining five chapters.
Chapter II will contain a description of Timken Vocational High School in Canton, Ohio. The occupational survey which preceded the planning and construction of the building will be discussed and three findings of special interest to teachers of English will be listed. They will be referred to again in a later chapter. Other items of information will include (1) the character of the faculty, (2) the size of the student body as compared with that of other vocational high schools in the state, (3) the vocational choices offered the students, and (4) the character of the student body with special reference to the entrance requirements. An attempt will be made to describe the philosophy of vocational education as it is revealed in the literature of the past thirty years. Industrial arts courses and vocational education courses will be compared and contrasted, and the writer will endeavor to clarify the differences in (1) their philosophy and (2) their basic aims and objectives.

In Chapter III the three English courses offered to the vocational pupils of Timken Vocational High School will be described; that is, English I, English II, and Practical English. Since this thesis proposes to deal
only with the reading units in the English courses, the basic objectives of a high-school literature program will be discussed with special emphasis on the role of leisure reading. The present program at Timken Vocational High School will be analyzed in the light of the objectives stated. The writer has no classes in English I or in Practical English and therefore has no control over the contents of those courses. It is assumed that the English I and Practical English courses will continue to be as they are now; any lacks in the present program will be compensated for by changes in the English II program or through additions to it. The discussion throughout this thesis will be limited to the literature section of tenth-grade English.

Chapter IV will deal with methods and classroom procedures, many of which have been used with gratifying results by the writer. Chapter V will be devoted for the most part to a discussion of the reading interests of vocational pupils. The last chapter will contain a summary of the revisions suggested for the literature section of the English II course at Timken Vocational High School.
CHAPTER II

THE HIGH SCHOOL

On October 7, 1937, the Timken Foundation of Canton announced that it would build and equip a vocational high school to serve the needs of the youth of the community. Since an adequate vocational program cannot be developed in any community until the vocational opportunities of that community are determined, the Canton Board of Education immediately arranged for an occupational survey. This was undertaken at once under the direction and guidance of E. L. Huesch, Supervisor of Trades and Industries, Division State Board for Vocational Education, and with the financial assistance of the State Board of Vocational Education.

The late Herbert W. Benedict, then vice principal of McKinley High School, was given a leave of absence from his regular position and was named director of the survey. He was assisted by one full-time secretary, five part-time secretaries, eight high-school teachers, and a number of pupils, all of whom helped in tabulating data or in following up questionnaires that had not been returned. G. F. Malick, the present Director of Vocational Education in
Canton, and D. L. Downing of Akron University assisted in the planning and carrying out of the study.

The plan which was adopted for the survey consisted of these five elements:

I. A careful analysis of the 1910, 1920, and 1930 United States Census statistics for Canton on selected occupations to discover relative distribution of skilled and semi-skilled types of work and to determine trends away from or toward the various occupational classifications.

II. A survey of the Canton high-school graduates of the classes of 1931 (620 in number), of 1935 (1010 in number), and of 1936 (1032 in number) through a questionnaire to determine (1) the occupational distribution of these graduates at that time; (2) the relationship, if any, between the study in high school of various vocational subjects and later occupational adjustment; and (3) the relationship between high marks and later occupational adjustment.

III. A survey of the occupational distribution of the 513 young people of ages sixteen and seventeen who were issued working certificates during 1936-1937.

IV. A survey of all pupils who were in high school during 1937-1938 (approximately 6,400) to determine
their occupational choices and the occupations of their fathers.

V. A survey of the graduates from the Vocational Department of McKinley High School in 1937, the first group to graduate from that department, which was then functioning in its second year as a unit trade school under the Ohio State Plan for Vocational Education.

All the information obtained from these five sources was tabulated and analyzed, and the results were published in a mimeographed book of 316 pages under the title Canton Occupational Survey 1938. Some of the recommendations are as follows:

1. A study of the data of the survey would seem to indicate that the Timken Vocational High School should provide training for boys in Machine Shop; Electric Shop; Automobile Shop; Welding and Sheet Metal work; Refrigeration and Air Conditioning; Printing; some of the building trades, especially Carpentry, Brick Masonry, and Painting; Pattern Making and Foundry; Retail Selling; and clerical or office work including office appliance operation.

2. An examination of the statistics would also indicate that provision should be made in the new school for girls' training in power sewing machine operation; tea room, restaurant, and house maid service; beauty parlor work; retail selling; and
clerical or office employment including the use of the various modern office appliances.

3. It would be our recommendation that any special training for the occupations of nurse, doctor's or dentist's assistant, laboratory technician, and nurse's aide be provided in the regular high schools of the City, and that this training should be furnished by enriching the curriculums of these high schools with some additional appropriate courses such as Physiology, Bacteriology, Hygiene, etc. ............

4. Since our study of high school undergraduate occupational choices has shown these to be so badly out of line with the local occupational opportunities, and since there will be an especial need, with the opening of the new Timken Vocational High School, of some plan of intelligent assistance to pupils in choosing among the various types of special training offered in the schools, it is strongly recommended that a greatly enlarged pupil counseling and guidance program be organized in the Canton schools under expert direction.............

5. Our statistics show that over 50% of the various office positions of the City are filled by men despite the fact that the public high school commercial graduates we are sending out are predominantly girls.............

On the basis of the information obtained (a small part of which was quoted here), a prediction was made as to the

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1Herbert W. Benedict, Canton Occupational Survey 1938, pp. 286 and 287.
occupational opportunities for future Timken High School graduates. The Foundation then decided what shop courses to plan for in the new building and how many pupils each shop should be made to accommodate.

In a vocational high school, pupils are not accepted on the basis of interests and abilities alone. A third factor, opportunity for employment after graduation, also enters the picture. In the case of Cosmetology Shop this year, at least twenty sophomore girls who requested the course could not be scheduled for it because of lack of space in the shop. They were put into the shop which they had listed as their second choice. In a few instances girls were able to get neither their first nor second choices, in which case they were given the alternatives of making a third vocational choice or of going to the general high school in their district. The same is true of the more popular shops for boys.

The purpose of the Canton Occupational Survey was to discover the employment possibilities for future Timken Vocational High School graduates. As is so often the case with surveys, interesting items of information, other than those particularly sought, were brought to light. Some of
the data that will be of special interest to teachers and supervisors of English follow. (These will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.)

I. The members of all three graduating classes studied\(^2\) were asked what high school subject had proved most helpful in their employment. There were five subjects that were listed by more than one hundred graduates each. They are as follows:\(^3\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typewriting</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. When the undergraduates were asked how they had arrived at their choice of life work, 3,972 said through observation, which included actual work experience after school or in the summer and their own personal observation, as opposed to advice from their parents and others. Ninety said that they had arrived at their choice of life

\(^2\)The number of replies to the questionnaires sent to the high-school graduates were as follows: Class of 1931--538 replies or 86.8\% were returned; Class of 1935--923 or 91.4\% were returned; Class of 1936--943 replies or 91.4\% were returned.

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 143.
work through reading.\textsuperscript{4} (There were 6,013 undergraduates who answered this question.)

III. The study of the high-school undergraduate occupational choices showed them to be badly out of line with opportunities for employment locally.\textsuperscript{5}

After the survey was completed, Timken Vocational High School was planned and built under the direction of the Timken Foundation. The cost was $1,300,000, of which $350,000 was expended for equipment. The building stands on the site of old Central High School about three blocks from the center of the city. It extends to the sidewalk on all of its four sides and covers a small city block. After its completion it was given to the Canton City Board of Education and through the Board to the boys and girls of Canton by the Timken Foundation. The school came into existence through the vision of the late H. H. Timken, founder of the Timken Roller Bearing Company, who was interested in education that prepares for employment in business and industry.

\textsuperscript{4}Ibid., pp. 178 and 200.

\textsuperscript{5}Ibid., p. 286.
The vocational program is administered by the Canton Board of Education in cooperation with the State Board for Vocational Education through its divisions of Trades and Industries, Distributive Education, and Home Economics and with the State Board of Cosmetology. Consultants representing labor, industry, business, and civic groups have given of their time and continue to give of their time through advisory committees. The types of vocational training offered and the enrollment in each shop were based on the probable annual replacement as indicated in the survey referred to previously.

Timken was the largest vocational high school in the state during the first year of its existence, 1939-1940. In that year the Educational Directory for Ohio listed eighteen vocational high schools. Timken had an enrollment of 1392; Parker Cooperative of Dayton was second with 1182; and Cleveland's largest vocational high school, Jane Adams, East Side, was third with an enrollment of 1124.

Last year's Educational Directory for the state of Ohio, 1945-1946, listed only ten vocational high schools. General high schools having a vocational department were not
designated. The enrollments of the ten vocational high schools were as follows: 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akron</td>
<td>Hower</td>
<td>644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canton</td>
<td>Timken</td>
<td>1504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>1076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Graphic Arts and Printing</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
<td>Cleveland Trade Extension</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Jane Addams</td>
<td>583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayton</td>
<td>Parker</td>
<td>725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toledo</td>
<td>Harriet Whitney</td>
<td>634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Irving E. Mecomber</td>
<td>872</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 1946-1947 Program of Studies for Timken Vocational High School gives the following capacity enrollments in the various curricula:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Arts</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Economics</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total capacity enrollment is 1600 pupils, 900 boys and 700 girls. In the faculty of sixty-five members, thirty-four are certified under the provisions of the Ohio State Plan for Vocational Education. Teachers of academic subjects are required to meet the same standards as they would meet if they taught those academic subjects in one of the other

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6Educational Directory, School Year 1945-1946, State of Ohio, Department of Education, Columbus, pp. 52-58.
three general high schools. Vocational teachers must
meet the standards as set forth in the Ohio State Plan for
Vocational Education.

Only juniors and seniors at Timken Vocational High
School are enrolled in the vocational curricula. The
freshman and sophomore courses are the same as those that
are offered in the other three general high schools, the
only difference being that there is very little choice at
Timken. All freshman and sophomore boys interested in voca-
tional shop take English, mathematics, mechanical drawing,
and shop both the ninth and tenth years. All freshman and
sophomore girls interested in vocational tea room,
cafeteria, dressmaking, or cosmetology take English, mathe-
matics, and two units in home economics their ninth year
and English, biology, and two more units in home economics
their tenth year. Both boys and girls interested in the
secretarial or the accounting curricula or in vocational
retailing or vocational commercial art take English,
mathematics, business practice, and mechanical drawing or
home economics the ninth year and English, commerce and
industry, biology, and bookkeeping the tenth year.
As was mentioned before, all curricula except the secretarial (stenography and typing) and the accounting (bookkeeping and office machines) are vocational the eleventh and twelfth years. There are fourteen vocational curricula offered. They are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Boys</th>
<th>For Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Automobile shop</td>
<td>Tea room and restaurant management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drafting</td>
<td>Cafeteria management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric shop</td>
<td>Dressmaking and power sewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machine shop</td>
<td>Cosmetology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pattern shop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing</td>
<td>For Boys and Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheet metal</td>
<td>Retailing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welding</td>
<td>Commercial Art</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All pupils in the ninth and tenth years and commercial pupils in the eleventh and twelfth years may elect Latin as a fifth subject if their grades warrant this extra work. (Two years of Latin are offered.) These same pupils may elect a total of five periods a week of extracurricular activities. All vocational pupils are limited to two periods of extracurricular activities each week; namely, dramatics, chorus, band, and orchestra. Pupils in the ninth and tenth grades are assigned two periods of physical education each week unless they are excused by a
physician. Vocational pupils spend one-half of the day in related courses (shop mathematics, related science, and related drawing), and approximately two-tenths in general courses (English, social science, and health).

Every eighth-grade pupil in the city has an opportunity to visit Timken Vocational High School for part of a school day some time before he makes out his schedule for the following year. When the time comes to make out his ninth-year program, he has the right to apply for admission to Timken; however, he also makes out a tentative schedule for the general high school in his district to be followed in case his application is not accepted. Each pupil who applies is advised to mark two vocational choices so that in case the shop he prefers is full, he may have a chance in another shop. A limited number of pupils are also admitted to Timken at the beginning of their tenth year or eleventh years provided their grades are high enough and they have the prerequisite courses to admit them to the shop they wish to enter.

Admittance to Timken is based almost entirely on the pupil's previous scholastic record. The data gathered
in the Canton Occupational Survey, previously described, seemed to indicate that high marks were a reasonable basis for predicting favorable adjustment to one's future occupational choice.

The student body at Timken is not like that at any of the other three general high schools. In the first place, there are no college-preparatory students in a vocational high school. Timken students plan to go to work immediately after they graduate; in fact, many hold part-time jobs while they are still in school as a part of their vocational training. Pupils with very low I.Q.'s (dull-normal or borderline) are seldom admitted. The applications for admission are arranged according to the applicants' previous scholastic records and are considered in this order. The shops are filled before the bottom of the file is reached. This means that the student body is made up of many superior pupils (I.Q.'s above 110) and of many with average or normal intelligence. There are, of course, a number of pupils who could be rated as brilliant and a very few with extremely low I.Q.'s.

In the first part of this chapter the writer has given a brief history of Timken Vocational High School, starting
with the preliminary survey which preceded the construction of the building. In the seven years that the school has been serving the needs of "work-minded" boys and girls, it has been a source of pride not only to the pupils who have benefited from its modern facilities but also to the adult citizens of Canton as well. Its beautiful auditorium has been the scene of many community activities, such as lectures, concerts, church services, and plays; its tea room has served luncheons and dinners to many women's clubs, college alumni groups, professional societies, and small civic and religious organizations. Located as it is in the downtown district, the building is ideally situated to be of maximum service to the adult citizens of the community as well as to the pupils who come to it from all parts of the city. It has often been described by visiting educators as "a schoolmaster's dream."

The purpose of a vocational high school as stated in the Ohio State Plan for Vocational Education is to fit the pupil for useful employment.7 Americans have been a hard-working people. They hold the conviction that man achieves

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7The State Plan for Vocational Education in Agriculture, Home Economics, and Trades and Industries, Ohio State Department of Education, Columbus, 1933, p. 8.
his fullest self-realization and renders his greatest ser-
vice through socially useful, efficient work. There is
strong emotional reaction in America to such words as
idler, drone, dilettante, and loafer. It is no wonder
that the Federal Government has been so generous in its
support of vocational education, which is education for
work.

In a recent, authoritative book *Emotional Problems*
of Living: Avoiding the Neurotic Pattern, the two authors
(without setting out to do so) offer a good argument for
vocational education during the high-school years. Since
the authors are physicians, their chief concern is the
physical and mental health of young people. They write as
follows:

It is important that adolescents of both
sexes prepare to do some specific kind of
work. Some young people go through adoles-
cence having a marvelous vacation. They
expose themselves to the classroom but do
not catch any ideas. They do not look into
the future and see themselves as playing
any active, useful role in life. This
unfortunate attitude is often fostered by
the American parent who sometimes has a
strange pride in the thought that his
children won't have to work......In the
last twenty years the American people have
become a little more realistic about work--
but only a little. One of the most important ways of feeling worthwhile in this world is to be able to make a contribution to the social order through work.\textsuperscript{8}

No students in a vocational high school can have the idea that school is a long vacation. The very atmosphere of a vocational school is charged with activity. The student population looks like any other group of workers. Boys from auto shop can be seen in the halls during their three-hour shop period in dirty coveralls; the welders have grease-stained faces and can scarcely be recognized by the end of their vocational shop period. Girls from the beauty shop are very efficient-looking in their white uniforms; pupils from the cafeteria are equally attractive in their checkered pinafore aprons. Somehow the well-groomed senior retailing students look more like young business men and women than they do like high-school students. Bobby socks and sweaters cannot be their school attire. Since they spend their afternoons working in various stores in the city, they must come dressed for their work in the morning, as they go directly from school to the stores.

\textsuperscript{8}O. Spurgeon English, M. D., and Gerald H. J. Pearson, M. D., Emotional Problems of Living: Avoiding the Neurotic Pattern, pp. 280 and 282.
Even the odors about a vocational high school are not those that one associates with the average school. If the tea room has a luncheon scheduled, the second floor begins to give off the odor of cinnamon rolls around noon. The third floor usually smells like strong washing soap, for the laundry is there and it is in use every day. The front of the fourth floor has the characteristic odor of a beauty parlor and the back of the fourth floor smells like the welding shop. All these sights and smells and sounds (the buzz saws in particular) are a constant reminder that there are many and varied activities connected with the workaday world being carried on in Timken Vocational High School.

Only half of a vocational student's day is spent in such interesting places as the tea room, the welding shop, the beauty shop, or the office machines room. According to the Forty-second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, "mere training of the muscles is not vocational education. Vocational training concerns the entire human being in relation to all of
society."9 The Ohio State Plan for Vocational Education provides that one half of a student's day shall be spent in related training; that is, related science, related mathematics, practical English, trade information, materials, management, American history and civics, and extracurricular activities (not more than two periods a week).

Again the writer quotes from the Forty-second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education:

"If the vocation is to give scope to personality........... then the vocational school should give attention to personality through the so-called cultural subjects."10 Some of the related subjects afford more opportunity for personality development than others because there is less pressure felt to teach certain specific bodies of knowledge (as in related science) or to develop certain specific skills (as in related mathematics) that will be of use in the shop the pupil has chosen. Since September, 1945, the English and American history and civics courses have not received federal aid; therefore they are no longer considered related courses.

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10 Ibid., p. 6.
The Practical English course for cosmetology students has been devoted mainly to (1) letter-writing (especially letters of application), (2) using the telephone, (3) giving directions and explaining procedures to other workers, (4) writing advertisements, (5) conversing with customers, and other similar activities. Very little time has been spent on literature. Now the content of the course may be changed, if the teacher so desires, to include more reading of literature and more oral and written composition. Time will show how many changes will be made. If the Practical English continues to be taught by vocational teachers, the course is apt to remain as it has always been given. If academic teachers are assigned to teach Practical English, that course will have a tendency to become cultural rather than practical. As far as the writer knows, there were no changes in the Practical English courses at Timken after the withdrawal of federal support last September. (Now that federal support has been withdrawn from the English and the American history and civics courses, they need no longer be vocational in character. The writer feels that they will continue to be vocational in nature and content if they are taught by vocational teachers.)
When stating the problem to be discussed in this thesis, the writer assumed that the Practical English courses would continue to stress the useful rather than the cultural aspects of English. Since vocational pupils have only one year of English after the tenth grade and since each shop has certain language skills that it wishes its pupils to acquire—(1) writing business letters, (2) filling out order blanks, etc., (3) giving directions to others, (4) explaining procedures—there will not be much time left in that one year for the more cultural aspects of English. It is the writer's opinion that the tenth-year teacher should assume the task of stressing the cultural, especially in the field of literature. The last year of English will probably be as practical as it was when it was a vocational subject and received federal support.

Vocational education assumes the double responsibility of (1) teaching the pupil a useful occupation and (2) at the same time providing for the character and personality development that a general education affords. When one of the two responsibilities is slighted, it is the latter. The first purpose of vocational education as stated before, is to fit the child for useful employment. Many are unsympathetic
with vocational education as it is interpreted at the present time, yet they feel that children should have some kind of instruction that will give them (1) contacts and experiences with a wide variety of industrial products, manipulative experiences, and skill in using the tools of manufacture and (2) an intelligent understanding of our modern industrial civilization and the problems that have resulted from it. The answer to this need is the industrial arts course of the general high school, which attempts to develop a number of skills on a sub-vocational level. These courses occupy the same position in the curricula of the school as social studies, English, mathematics, or languages. They do not attempt to train the pupil to hold a job. The courses may develop an interest in the child which may lead to a vocation or even to an avocation, such as that of tinkering in one's own basement workshop or of making minor repairs about the house; but the pupil is not expected to equal or excel the trade skills of the average worker, as is the case with learners in vocational classes.\textsuperscript{11}

There is a tendency in America to look upon education as a cure-all. There seems to be a general belief that almost any maladjustment in society can be corrected by proper

\textsuperscript{11}Struck, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 28.
education. People who do not understand the purpose of vocational education have a tendency to expect too much of it. The specialized high school is not meant to be a place where the general high schools can unload their problem children. A warning against this possibility was issued a third of a century ago in a University of the State of New York Bulletin. It is still timely.

Vocational instruction is not given with the idea, primarily, of holding children in school; nor is it expected that it will be a general corrective of shortcomings in any scheme of public education. Nor is a vocational school, any more than a public school, intended for backward or defective children........It should be distinctly recognized that the differentiating, justifying purpose of specialized vocational instruction is to fit persons for profitable employment in particular occupations.12

As a summary to this review of the basic philosophy of vocational education, the first three paragraphs of an article by James Marshall, former president of the New York City Board of Education, will be given. The writer of the article prophecies a bright future for

vocational education. The article appeared in the June 1941 issue of *Harper’s Magazine* in answer to several by the president of the University of Chicago which stressed the importance of the classics in education. Mr. Marshall gave his article the intriguing title, "Plato, Buddha, and President Hutchins." The introductory paragraphs follow:

The dramas of machinery and the test tube have in the present generation seized the limelight from the classics in education. The classics are still in the schoolroom but they no longer occupy the front seat. The growing emphasis on vocational education is neither an attempt to liquidate classical learning nor surrender to inferior minds and standards. Vocational education is indigenous to life among the mechanisms and gadgets, just as schooling in the scientific method must be a part of education in a world turned topsy-turvy every half generation by the findings of the laboratory. Some students who are verbally minded can absorb the classics readily and those who can think in the symbols of science can absorb science readily; but everyone whether verbally minded, scientifically minded, manually minded, or with very little mind at all, needs a skill that will enable him to earn a living.

Such skill, whether verbal or manual, whether predominantly intellectual or physical, cannot readily
be picked up today; it is rarely passed on from father to son. Of course ability to earn a living and capacity for a given vocation are by no means guarantees of employment. The fact that young people are made more employable does not in any great measure make jobs where the economy of the world does not otherwise provide the incentive or means to create employment. But the possession of skill is essential, not only as a means toward bread and shelter and greater stability in job holding, but also toward the achievement of that sense of capacity which raises the self-esteem and stabilizes the character of people.

These are the aims of vocational instruction. To deny them a place in the scheme of education and a respected place, is to live among shadows. Some day the schools and colleges will recognize that all students are entitled not only to acquaintance with their cultural background but to vocational skills—each in accordance with and to the extent of his capacities, whether they be hand, head, or machine skills, highly specialized or more general. Such recognition should come because cultural background without vocational interest and skill is inevitably sterile; and vocational skill without some understanding of the relation of things and people is invariably servile.13

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CHAPTER III

THE ENGLISH PROGRAM

The purpose of vocational education is to give training of a secondary grade to persons over fourteen years of age for increased efficiency in useful employment. Vocational courses are not exploratory in character; that is, a month or so of electric shop, the same of automobile mechanics, several months of machine shop, and a half year of woodworking. Their purpose is not to give pupils a number of skills, none of which are highly developed; it is rather to give the students specialized training in one occupation or in one family of occupations. Pupils in vocational courses have already made their occupational choices. The work they do in the shop of their choice should approximate the type of work done in industry, and at the close of their learning period they should equal or excel the trade skills of the average worker employed in that industry. As they continue to work at the occupation of their

\footnote{Cubberley, loc. cit.}
choice after graduation, it is hoped that they will eventually become highly skilled, resourceful workers.²

The shop courses are therefore intensely practical in nature. All those who are sympathetic with vocational education agree that this should be the case. Only half of a pupil's day is spent in the shop, however; the other half of his day is spent in related courses such as science, mathematics, and drawing and in general courses such as history, English, and health. Those who are sympathetic with vocational education, on the other hand, do not agree as to the nature of the related and the general courses. There are two views on the matter: (1) that these courses should be the same as they are in any other high school, and (2) that the contents of the related and the general courses should be based on the needs of the vocation in which the pupil is receiving his training.

Those who favor the second alternative would say that Practical English, which all vocational pupils are

²Struck, op. cit., p. 28.
required to have, should not be the same for the welders and the beauticians, for example. It is very necessary that a beauty operator be able to carry on some kind of conversation with her customer during the half hour (for a facial) to the three hours or more (for a permanent wave) when they are alone together. If the operator is a good conversationalist, she can often win the confidence of her customer and in a courteous way suggest other beauty services which bring extra money to her as well as to the shop. Even if she does not succeed in getting her customer to spend more money, the customer feels more pleased with the work if her operator has been courteous and friendly. If the operator is tongue-tied, the customer may feel uncomfortable and may decide to have her work done elsewhere.

A waitress or a hostess in a restaurant must also learn to make courteous remarks to her customers and so must a clerk in a store; but none of these is apt to be alone with one customer as long as a beauty operator is. When an inexperienced operator gets a job in an exclusive
shop, the prospect of being tongue-tied and ill-at-ease with her customers often disturbs her more than the prospect of not being able to do the kind of work that will please them. A boy in the welding shop or the machine shop faces no such problem. If he talks while he is working, it is only with his fellow-workers or with the foreman.

The Practical English courses emphasize many different phases of English. The course for girls studying cosmetology includes practice (1) in conversing with customers, (2) in taking appointments, (3) in explaining procedures and giving directions to fellow-workers, and (4) in writing business letters and advertisements. The Practical English course for retailing students also emphasizes oral English rather than written; but more time is spent by retailing students on the kind of English which used to be called argumentation, or in other words, the "sales talk." The Practical English course for print shop boys, on the other hand, emphasizes written English, much time being spent on punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and
other items included in the mechanics of written English.

Those who favor the regular academic courses for vocational pupils in all subjects other than shop or closely related courses such as drawing, management, trade information, etc. will argue that a vocational education is too narrow and too one-sided if all the subjects are streamlined to make them of direct benefit in the learning of a certain occupation. Those who favor the regular academic courses would feel that in the case of English, if students have a good general knowledge of English, they will be able to handle the informal conversation in a beauty shop and the sales talk in a store as well as the capitalization in an advertisement which they are setting up in the print shop. There is a chance that the pupil may not succeed in getting the kind of job he is preparing for. He may have to take a different kind of job. In that case a general knowledge of mathematics, a general knowledge of science, and a general knowledge of English will be of much greater benefit to him than
the specific kinds of information now included in the related courses.

Thirty years ago John Dewey wrote in Democracy and Education as follows:

Put in concrete terms, there is danger that vocational education will be interpreted in theory and practice as trade education: as a means of securing technical efficiency in specialized future pursuits.

Education would then become an instrument of perpetuating unchanged the existing industrial order of society, instead of operating as a means of its transformation.  

In his latest book, Problems of Men, Dewey again points out the fallacy of our separation in thought and operation of vocational and liberal education. He feels that one of the most important problems facing education today is to "fill education having an occupational direction with a genuinely liberal content." He writes:

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4John Dewey, Problems of Men, p. 32.
Inspiring vocational education with a liberal spirit and filling it with a liberal content is not a Utopian dream. It is a demonstrated possibility in schools here and there in which subjects usually labeled "practically useful" are taught charged with scientific understanding and with a sense of the social-moral applications they potentially possess.\footnote{Loc. cit.}

The Practical English course for girls taking cosmetology, described previously, is neither filled with a "liberal content" nor inspired with a "liberal spirit." It is extremely technical. It is concerned only with the part of the pupil's life which is to be spent within the four walls of the beauty shop. The hours spent at all activities other than working at that one trade are ignored by the Practical English course.

Those who favor the regular academic courses for vocational pupils in all subjects other than those related to shop feel that the content of the related courses is too narrow and restricted. The mathematics for girls in the tea room course is much simpler than that for the boys in electric shop. The girls are
concerned mainly with computing the cost of food and the amount of profit different items on the menu will bring. The mathematics in electric shop is far more complicated but is also limited in scope. The cost of materials is a small part of the related mathematics of that course. The boys must figure the resistance of wires of various diameters, the load a line can carry, and how much, if any, electricity is lost in transmitting it over miles of various kinds of wire. If a pupil graduates from one particular course and then does not get a job which enables him to use the specific knowledge he learned in that course, he would find himself at a definite disadvantage. There are no figures at present to indicate how many Timken graduates have followed the vocation for which they prepared themselves in high school. There is no attempt in any of the related courses to stress the cultural aspects of the subject. It is possible for pupils to learn more than the working out of formulas in a mathematics course; in geometry, for example, pupils may learn how to arrive at justified conclusions.
by the use of proved facts. They can be taught to avoid jumping at conclusions in a general course in geometry, and to detect weaknesses in the arguments (both written and oral) to which they are subjected as part of daily living in a democracy. In related courses, then, the pupil has inadequate training for jobs other than the one he is preparing for and he receives little training for the hours of his life when he is not actually working at his job.

In Ohio the related courses are not outlined by the state or by any other agency; therefore the content of each course is left to the discretion of the teacher. This has led to the practice occasionally of having the same teacher teach all the courses in a certain shop. A teacher of machine shop may have a particular group of boys in the shop all morning for their regular vocational machine shop. In the afternoon he will be in classrooms with these same boys where he will teach them their trade information, related science, related mathematics, practical English, or whatever else their program calls for.
The situation approximates that in the lower grades of an elementary school. The advantage of this plan, in the opinion of those who favor it, is that the teacher of machine shop is in the best position to know what to include in trade information, related science, etc. for machine shop boys. When this plan is followed, all the learning is useful and practical.

Those who do not favor related courses of an extremely practical and highly technical nature offer the objection that too much responsibility is placed on each individual teacher for the type of material to be presented in each related course. D. L. Downing in the September 1943 issue of *Industrial Arts and Vocational Education* recommends that it be made mandatory that courses in every vocational school in Ohio be revised every five years, preferably at the rate of one fifth of each course per year. This means much extra work, as no teacher at Timken, for instance, has only

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6D. L. Downing, "Professional In-service Improvement of Vocational Teachers in Ohio," *Industrial Arts and Vocational Education*, XXXII (September, 1943), pp. 288 and 289.
one related subject. Those who are attending the extension course for vocational teachers in order to obtain credits toward their vocational certificates might undertake the revision of a shop course or a related course as part of their extension training.

(At Timken one extension course is given each year by a member of the faculty of the University of Akron for teachers who are working toward a vocational certificate. This past school year, 1945-1946, the course was given by D. L. Downing, the author of the article previously quoted. The hours were 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. on Wednesdays and the course was given at Timken Vocational High School.)

Those teachers who already have their vocational certificates are not as apt to spend time outside of school hours making methodical revisions of each course they teach at the rate of one-fifth of each course per year. All conscientious vocational teachers have to spend time outside of school as it is, keeping up-to-date on changes, improvements, new ideas, etc. in connection with the vocational courses they teach. They must read
many magazines and pamphlets. The courses they teach, more than any others in the high school, are in need of frequent revision. The question is this: Will this revision be thorough and systematic or will it be hit-and-miss, since in most cases it must be done on the teacher's own time?

Three objections to related courses of a highly technical nature have been presented. They are as follows: (1) The related courses do not meet the general needs of vocational pupils in such fields as science, mathematics, English, and history. (2) Pupils may have to take jobs different from the ones which they have been trained to hold. In that case a general knowledge of English, science, mathematics, etc. would be preferable to the streamlined information of the related courses. (3) The contents of the related courses are governed too much by the personal opinions of the vocational teacher, who often has very little training for his job other than approved experience in industry. Other objections which will not be discussed but which should be mentioned are as follows:
4. There are very few adequate texts in the field of related work.

5. Often there is confusion among vocational teachers themselves as to the aim of these related courses.

6. There is disagreement among vocational teachers not only as to aims but also as to what should be included in each course.

7. Vocational teachers have difficulty in getting professional help with the related courses. Almost all the space in the periodic literature for vocational teachers (there is only one professional magazine of importance in the vocational education field\(^7\) is devoted to the various shop courses.

8. Convention programs seldom deal with the problems of teachers of related courses. They stress the shop courses.

9. Many teachers of related courses do not have the proper training for their jobs. They are either former academic teachers who have been

\(^{7}\text{Industrial Arts and Vocational Education.}\)
recruited for teaching in the vocational school (in which case the courses will not be intensely practical anyway) or they are vocational teachers who have the right background as far as actual experience in industry is concerned but little training in the art of imparting information to class-size groups. In the article by D. L. Downing, which was quoted before, the following information about vocational teachers in Ohio was presented: Of the 291 vocational teachers, teaching in 1943, fifty per cent had taught five years or less in vocational schools; nearly sixty per cent had taught in other schools before coming to the vocational schools; and the average of the trade experience of the group was ten years and seven months.8

It is not the intention of the writer to indicate that all the related courses taught in vocational high schools are inadequate. Many of them are excellent. Where this is the case, there will be a conscientious, hard-working, interested teacher directing the class,

8Downing, op. cit., p. 286.
one who is in reality a pioneer in his field. With inadequate help from textbooks and from other professional literature he must supplement the shop work with all the additional experiences that his pupils must have to enable them to become better than average workers in their chosen fields.

The related courses will continue to vary greatly from one vocational high school to another and from one classroom in a school to another as long as there is neither a basic course of study nor a basic text to serve as a guide to the teacher. Nine objections to the present related courses have been listed. It is the writer's opinion that the needs of vocational pupils are better met in the present academic courses than they are in the present related courses. In the Forty-second Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education this statement is made: "If the vocation is to give scope to personality........then the vocational school should give attention to personality through the so-called cultural subjects."9

The present program of English for vocational pupils at Timken Vocational High School consists of the following three courses: English I, English II, and Practical English. The literature sections of these three courses will be examined in the light of the thirteen basic aims formulated by the Basic Aims Committee of the National Council of Teachers of English and published in the English Journal of January 1942. Suggestions will be made for improving the literature sections of these three courses with special emphasis on the individualized reading program for tenth-grade pupils.

Each of the thirteen aims, is followed by an explanation of from three hundred to seven hundred words. Only the aims will be given here. Where special reference is made, in the explanation of the aim, to reading or literature, that aim will be marked with an asterisk. The thirteen basic aims are as follows:

I. Language is a basic instrument in the maintenance of the democratic way of life.
II. Increasingly free and effective interchange of ideas is vital to life in a democracy.

III. Language study in the schools must be based on the language needs of living.

*IV. Language ability expands with the individual’s experience.

*V. English enriches personal living and deepens understanding of social relationships.

*VI. English uses literature of both past and present to illumine the contemporary scene.

*VII. Among the nations represented in the program in literature, America should receive major emphasis.

VIII. A study of the motion picture and radio is indispensable in the English program.

*IX. The goals of instruction in English are, in the main, the same for all young people, but the heights to be attained in achieving any one of them and the materials used for the purpose will vary with individual need.

*X. The development of social understanding through literature requires reading materials within the comprehension, the social intelligence, and the emotional range of the pupils whose lives they are expected to influence.
XI. English pervades the life and work of the school.

**XII.** English enriches personality by providing experience of intrinsic worth for the individual.

XIII. Teachers with specialized training are needed for effective instruction in the language arts.10

From the explanatory paragraphs accompanying each aim and from the statement of the aims themselves, the following generalizations have been formulated. These will be used as guides in judging the acceptability of the literature section of the present English program.

1. **There should be continuous and constructive teaching of reading to all young people at all levels of the school system.** Reading skill is not a static thing that is learned in the elementary school and then practiced in the later years. Facility in reading is

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the result of continuous growth. It must increase as the reader's problems become more involved and as the materials which he reads assume greater difficulty in each successive stage of his development.

2. **Literature should be chosen with the peculiar needs and capacities of each pupil in mind.** Through reading, young people may run the whole gamut of social and personal experience. Ideals basic to an adequate philosophy of life take form as the reader follows with admiration or dislike the actions or motives of people in books. Home and family relationships are clarified through the reading of good literature. The reader becomes acquainted with persons and places far removed by geographical, temporal, or social limitations.

The kind of reading material which will bring about these understandings will vary greatly from one pupil to another; the goal, however, will be the same for all. Reading materials so easy and so familiar as to present no challenge should be avoided, as well as selections so difficult and foreign to the experience of the adolescent that they elicit no intelligent response.
3. The literature program should promote an understanding of contemporary life. The future of America depends largely on the attitude of young people toward the problems that challenge the intelligent men and women of today. There must be not only an intellectual grasp of these problems and an emotional response to them but also an acceptance of responsibility for their solution. In fostering a critical understanding of the contemporary scene, the teacher can illuminate the present by reference to the past and by fostering an appreciation of the continuity of human experience and aspirations from generation to generation. Young people must seek to understand America first. Teachers of English have always been mindful of our literary heritage from Great Britain. It is essential that young people be given an appreciation of the part played by other countries in Europe, as well, and by countries in other parts of the world, especially the Orient and South America.

4. The literature program should provide the pupil with a wholesome means of enjoying his leisure
hours. Anyone who is himself a lover of good books knows the stimulation, entertainment, and genuine pleasure reading affords throughout life.

The academic English classes of the four Canton high schools are now following the courses of study that are the result of four years' effort by a committee of eight high-school teachers of English. The English I course was ready in the fall of 1944; the rest of the courses were ready in the fall of 1945 and have therefore been followed for only one year. The committee took advantage of all the help that was available from the National Council of Teachers of English. They based their proposed courses on the thirteen aims of the Basic Aims Committee, quoted previously. The library which they acquired during their four years of work contained all the recent publications of the National Council of Teachers of English, as well as many others of current interest. The committee received practical suggestions from George Salt of the Ohio State University High School, from Dorothy McCuskey of the Texas
College of Mines, and from Lennox Gray of Columbia University.

All the high-school teachers were given an opportunity to make suggestions and to pass judgment on such important matters as basic texts and minimum essentials. The courses of study are considered to be in the experimental stage at the present time; however, they are set up in such a way that there is a wide range of choice especially in the field of literature, and consequently no changes of importance are contemplated in the near future. The few suggestions that have been offered so far are in the form of additional choices in the present course rather than changes in them. The texts in the English I and English II courses are as follows:

**ENGLISH I**

*English in Action, Course One, by J. C. Tressler,*  
*D. C. Heath and Company, 1940.*

*Following Printed Trails by Carol Hovious,*  
*D. C. Heath and Company, 1936.*

*Adventures in Reading, edited by J. M. Ross and Blanche J. Thompson,*  
*Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1942.*
ENGLISH II

English in Action, Course Two, by J. C. Tressler, D. C. Heath and Company, 1940.


ENGLISH I and ENGLISH II

Current magazines (the list will be given later)
Current newspapers (the list will be given later)

The present English I and English II courses will now be examined in the light of the four generalizations (given previously), which were based on the explanations accompanying the thirteen basic aims.

1. There should be continuous and constructive teaching of reading to all young people at all levels of the school system.

At the suggestion of the English teachers who had had an opportunity to try out Following Printed
Trails by Carol Hovious, this book was made a basic text in the ninth-year English classes. There are enough copies for all ninth-grade pupils in the city to have the opportunity of using this text at some time during the year. This book affords an opportunity for teachers to give much practice and training in reading to classes that show a need for this kind of instruction. In classes that are made up of better-than-average readers, the book can be used as a means of testing their reading ability, pointing out their minor weaknesses, and offering suggestions on how they can increase both their speed of reading and their comprehension. Pupils often speak of this particular book as the one that helped them the most during their freshman year.

In 1944-1945 the schools were short several hundred copies so that not all the freshmen had an opportunity to use this book. Some of the sophomores during the past year (1945-1946) who had not had \textit{Following Printed Trails} as freshmen, asked if they might use the book during their tenth year. From conversations with students who had had it, they reached the conclusion that they had missed a great deal by
not having used it. This was arranged wherever enough extra copies were available.

There is another text (at Timken Vocational High School only) which may be used for teaching reading skills the sophomore year. The title is *Reading Is Fun*; the editor, Frances Bragan Richman.\textsuperscript{11} This does not contain the many suggestions and self-tests of *Following Printed Trails*, but it can be adapted to the teaching of reading skills if the teacher feels the need of such a text. This book of easy-to-read selections is also very popular with the students; it contains plays, poems, descriptions, short stories, simple essays, and articles of all kinds reprinted from newspapers and magazines. Some of the selections can be classed as literary English; most of them, however, are of a more popular nature.

There is no text for the teaching of reading skills to junior vocational pupils and no provision for this type of instruction, to the writer's knowledge, in the Practical English courses. Every vocational teacher, however, must be a teacher of

\textsuperscript{11} Published by the L. W. Singer Company, 1940.
reading to some extent; he must at least teach the vocabulary of his particular subject, and in the case of advanced shop mathematics and other similar subjects that call for the working out of difficult and complicated problems and projects, each teacher must teach analytical reading in his own classes.

2. Literature should be chosen with the peculiar needs and capacities of each pupil in mind.

The literature textbook for freshmen is Adventures in Reading, edited by J. M. Ross and Blanche J. Thompson. The course of study calls for the reading of five short stories and of one novel. In 1945-1946 most of the freshman English classes read Ivanhoe, copies of which (rather worn) are still available in the book rooms. The teachers report that there seems to be less and less interest in this novel, especially in classes of all girls. If the teachers prefer, they may choose the novel included in Adventures in Reading. They are expected to read also some of the poems, plays, and other selections in the literature text.

The minimum requirement for outside or home reading is
one book each six-week period. This may be handled
in any manner the teacher wishes. The way the course
is arranged at present slightly over half of the
school year is devoted to reading, speaking, and
listening; the rest of the time is devoted to writing,
grammar study, review, and tests.

One week is set aside for the study of magazines,
and one week is allowed for the study of the newspaper
in the freshman year. There is a little help in the
basic text English in Action, Course One, on magazines
and newspapers. No provision is made at the present
time for procuring current issues of suitable magazines
and late issues of the daily papers, which are recom-
mended for use in these two units. Each teacher is
expected to meet this problem in his own way. In all
four high schools the libraries cooperate as far as
their meager supplies permit. Of course no high
school library has more than two or three copies of
any one issue of a magazine, and no library can permit
the very latest copies of all its magazines to be taken
out of the library for use in English classrooms.
In the sophomore year provision is again made for newspaper and magazine study, the guide being the basic text *English in Action*, Course Two. There is a list of periodicals and newspapers recommended by the course of study to be included in the libraries of each of the four high schools with the understanding that each librarian is to add other magazines which seem to meet the specific needs of pupils of that particular school. Timken Vocational High School, because of the need for up-to-date information in so many of the vocational courses, has the largest magazine collection in the city. The recommended list of periodicals and newspapers follows:

**MAGAZINES**

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<th>American Girl</th>
<th>Poetry</th>
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<tr>
<td>American Home</td>
<td>Popular Mechanics</td>
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<td>Atlantic Monthly</td>
<td>Popular Photography</td>
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<td>Boys' Life</td>
<td>Popular Science</td>
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<td>Business Week</td>
<td>Radio News</td>
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<td>Consumers' Guide</td>
<td>Reader's Digest</td>
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<td>Current History</td>
<td>Saturday Review of Literature</td>
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<td>Flying</td>
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<td>Good Housekeeping</td>
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<td>Harper's</td>
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<td>Inter American</td>
<td>Scientific American</td>
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<td>Life</td>
<td>Seventeen</td>
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<td>Mademoiselle</td>
<td>Theatre Arts Monthly</td>
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<td>National Geographic</td>
<td>Time</td>
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<td>Nature Magazine</td>
<td>Travel</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Writer's Digest</td>
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NEWSPAPERS

The Cleveland Plain Dealer
The New York Times (Sunday issue)
The Christian Science Monitor

There is no anthology of literature for sophomores, corresponding to *Adventures in Reading* for the freshmen English pupils. The course of study suggests the intensive study of two novels, one character novel, *Silas Marner*, and one novel of action, *A Tale of Two Cities*. The home or outside reading requirement of one book each six-week period is the same as it was in the previous year. Copies of *Julius Caesar* are available for teachers who feel that their classes will profit from the reading of a Shakespearean play. (The writer has read Shakespeare at Timken only with classes of commercial students.) Eighteen days are allotted to the reading of poetry; this is in addition to the time allotted to the reading of a Shakespearean play. There are enough copies of *Lady of the Lake* for all the pupils in the classes of teachers who still prefer to spend the time set aside for poetry on one long poem. There are copies of *Poems for Modern Youth* (at Timken only) for
teachers who prefer a number of short poems. Free reading is suggested either as an addition to the requirements of the course or as a substitute for a work of literature that is too difficult for a particular class.

In Practical English (which takes the place of the junior English course of a general high school) there is no literature requirement. The pupils quite often read a news magazine (school edition) or Reader's Digest once a week. They do free reading from time to time with the choice of books left entirely to the pupils. There is much reference work involving the use of encyclopedias and trade journals; but to the writer's knowledge, there is no attempt made to see that all kinds of literature are met during the course.

As was explained at the beginning of this chapter, the Practical English course was a vocational subject and received federal aid up to September 1945, and for this reason the course had to be useful to the students in the vocation they were following. Now that federal aid has been withdrawn, no change has been made in the
third-year course. The Program of Studies for 1946-1947 still lists Practical English in all the vocational curricula.

3. The literature program should promote an understanding of contemporary life.

There might be a criticism of the English II course in this connection. The following books are available for intensive class study the tenth year: Silas Marner, A Tale of Two Cities, Julius Caesar, and Lady of the Lake. All of these deal with the past rather than the present, and all were written by English or Scotch rather than by our own authors. They are neither contemporary nor American. Only college-preparatory classes would be likely to read all of these; in fact, some classes read only Silas Marner of the four classics that are available. The books chosen by the individual pupils for home reading are usually both contemporary and American. The fact that the four classics provided for intensive reading were written by foreign authors a century or more ago does not mean that they are of no use in promoting an understanding of
contemporary life. The following statement is taken from the explanation accompanying the sixth basic aim:

On the other hand, in fostering a critical understanding of the contemporary scene, the program in English cannot fail to seek illumination of the present by the past and intelligent appreciation of the continuity of human experience and aspirations from generation to generation.\(^{12}\)

One pupil said of *The Count of Monte Cristo*, "I keep forgetting that it was written years ago in France. The people seem just like people I know now."

\(^4\) The literature program should provide the pupil with a wholesome means of enjoyment for his leisure hours.

Surely there is nothing in the literature program as it stands now to make pupils dislike reading. If a teacher feels that the classics suggested in the course are not suited to the needs of his class, he can permit the pupils to do free-reading instead. If the free

\(^{12}\) *Basic Aims for English Instruction in American Schools,* op. cit., p. 46.
reading program, however, is to amount to more than a
time when every pupil just reads whatever he wishes and
as little or as much as he wishes, the class must have
expert guidance. The thirteenth basic aim states that
"teachers with specialized training are needed for
effective instruction in the language arts."\(^{13}\) The
course of study makes adequate provision in the ninth
and tenth years for a well-rounded literature program.
It is the fault of the teacher if pupils leave the
English I and English II courses with a one-sided
acquaintance with the writing that makes up our liter-
ary heritage.

Vocational pupils as a group do not take kindly
to reading of any kind, whether it be the reading of
an assignment in history, the reading of a short
magazine article for science class, or the reading of
a novel for English. This characteristic of vocational
pupils, along with several others, will be discussed at
length in the fifth chapter. Since vocational pupils
seem to have a special aversion to reading, there is a
tendency on the part of all English teachers in a
vocational school to cater to the interests of the

\(^{13}\text{Ibid., p. 54.}\)
pupils and overlook their needs in order to entice them to read in spite of their antipathy. Almost any kind of reading seems better than no reading at all.

Some vocational pupils come to their third year of English (Practical English) without having read any classic other than Silas Marner. All their free reading and their home reading has been in extremely simple books by contemporary American writers, such as sports books by Sherman and the sentimental novels of Grace Livingston Hill. Since there is no definite provision for the reading of literature in the Practical English courses, these pupils will have read only one classic during their high school careers. It is not likely that they will choose classical novels for the free reading they do in their junior year.

In the case just mentioned, the literature study has been too one-sided to meet the requirements of instruction as set forth in the thirteen basic aims. It seems evident that a special effort should be made in connection with both the free reading and the intensive reading to have pupils read the kinds of books
that will do more than just entertain them for the brief duration of the actual reading. The students have shown by their choice of books during free reading periods that they will not choose these books of their own accord. Many of these pupils are capable of reading and enjoying books much more difficult than those they are in the habit of choosing. The teacher of tenth-grade English classes seems to have the special responsibility of encouraging pupils to read material more suited to their native intelligence. The boy who made the remark previously quoted about The Count of Monte Cristo thanked the writer for telling him about the book and for urging him to keep at it until he had generated enough interest to go on of his own accord. He wrote at the end of his brief written report, "I will remember this book a long time. I hope I can read some more like it some day."

Every experience leaves its mark. We cannot help being better people after having read even one great book. Yet when we have leisure time most of us do not turn to reading. Witty and Kopel in Reading and the
Educative Process have this to say about reading for recreation: (The underscored is the writer's.)

The recreation of the average adult is truly desultory. Adults, with more leisure than ever before, have succumbed to commercial exploitation. A study described in 1932 found adults professing freely an almost universal interest in listening to the radio, reading the newspapers, attending the cinema, playing bridge, motoring, and attending parties. We seem to have become the victims of advertising experts and to have given our leisure to many pursuits which demand the use of mechanical devices and other commercial products. Thus reading, our most important avenue for continuous growth and understanding, falls low in the list of preferred recreations.\(^\text{14}\)

The reading of "cheap" literature is assuredly not an important avenue for continuous growth and understanding.

It seems unpardonable to allow pupils of good native ability to sit through two years of English and to have met in that time only one or two literary works.

\(^{14}\text{Paul Witty and David Kopel, Reading and the Educative Process, p. 10.}\)
works that challenge them to think deeply. A book has not met the needs of high-school boys and girls if it merely catches their interest. In this connection Frederick Houk Law writes:

Many of our pupils really have no ambition whatever to read good books. That has led us to follow a will-o' the-wisp known as Interest, with a capital "I." We must interest our pupils in the great books, and there is no doctrine in education that is more important and more sane, but interest is a starting point to be followed by work. There is no royal road to learning. Every person must be self-educated, either for good or bad. Many teachers of the great books have led pupils to expect to be entertained mildly in class, rather than to learn to read for themselves.15

One of the aims of the individualized reading program, which will be described in the remaining chapters, is to persuade pupils to read and to help them to appreciate books of increasing difficulty and complexity, with special emphasis on the books that are

designated as classics. It is of importance that pupils be directed in their individual reading, as well as in their intensive reading in class, to become acquainted with and to be given an opportunity to profit from and enjoy literature of a higher quality than that produced by such authors as James Oliver Curwood, Zane Grey, Kathleen Norris, and Temple Bailey.

In discussing the individualized reading program for tenth-year pupils, the writer will consider the ways in which vocational pupils differ from academic pupils. Since the individualized program is based on the needs and interests of each particular pupil in the group, it will be necessary to picture the pupils for whom this program is being outlined. Most of the literature on the teaching of reading to secondary school pupils deals with boys and girls from the academic or general high schools. The writer will attempt to show how the problem of arranging an individualized reading program in a vocational high school differs from what it would be if the school were a general or an academic high school. All the suggestions and recommendations made
in connection with individualized reading for general high-school pupils are of use in vocational high schools. The goal is the same. If there is a difference, it is the manner in which we travel. The next chapter will deal with techniques which may be used to generate an interest in reading and to keep the pupils reading once interest is aroused.
CHAPTER IV

ONE PHASE OF THE ENGLISH PROGRAM -

INDIVIDUALIZED READING

Twenty years ago Hughes Mearns wrote as follows in the foreword of his Creative Youth:

Almost everyone believes in the teaching of literature to high school pupils. Almost no one is convinced that we have succeeded in doing this with anything like satisfactory outcomes in enjoyment and appreciation of good literature.¹

Twenty years ago teachers drilled, analyzed, dissected, and philosophized upon and within the world's great literature. This taking apart and examining of the literary masterpieces might seem to indicate a lack of respect. This is not the case. Teachers never seemed to forget and they never let their classes forget that they were dealing with a very special brand of written English, something set apart from the ordinary product that the average writers turned out.

In 1927 Charles Swain Thomas wrote: "One of the first things for us to realize is the necessity of creating

¹Hughes Mearns, Creative Youth, p. viii.
in our pupils an intelligent reverence for the works that have become classic.\(^2\) The following is one of the methods suggested by Thomas for the teaching of such a masterpiece. After a few introductory remarks by the teacher, the pupils were to read the book outside of class. They then were to prepare questions on various parts of the book and take turns teaching the class. The teacher would offer help when it seemed to be needed.\(^3\) Knowing the kind of questions pupils would be apt to formulate, one cannot help wondering how "an intelligent reverence" for a work of fiction could be fostered in a classroom situation like this. Perhaps the teacher's "reverence" somehow inspired a similar feeling in members of the class.

Twenty years ago the goal in the teaching of literature was appreciation and enjoyment, just as it is today. Teachers and pupils failed to reach the goal then, just as they sometimes do today. The classroom methods then in use succeeded in giving to the pupils much factual information about a book but little else. Factual information by itself is not conducive to enjoyment or appreciation.

\(^3\) Ibid., pp. 248-281.
At the end of a six-week unit on *A Tale of Two Cities* the pupils' acquired knowledge would have enabled them to answer such questions as the following:

1. Which character called himself a "man of business"?

2. What is the meaning of 105 North Tower?

3. How old was Lucie when her father was "recalled to life"?

4. What was John Barsad's real name?

The better pupils would have acquitted themselves rather creditably on an examination of this kind; yet their grades in appreciation and enjoyment (if it were possible to measure these intangibles) might have been close to zero.

In the attempt to revise the literature courses so that they would better meet the needs of high-school boys and girls and would come closer to reaching the stated goal (appreciation and enjoyment of literature), two major changes of significance have been made in the past two decades. They are as follows:

1. The content of the literature course has been changed. The classics have been taken from their pedestals
and have been allowed to compete with the more popular kinds of literature for the pupils' interest and attention. More and more time is being given to contemporary American literature. It is no longer obligatory in all English classes for every high-school pupil to read such authors as Shakespeare and Dickens and Emerson. The reading program now is flexible enough to meet the needs and catch the interest of all the pupils, even when the differences in background, tastes, and abilities are extremely great.

(2) An attempt is made to read and discuss fiction in school as it is read and talked about in real life. Reed Smith points out: "Of all literary types the novel gains least from careful, prolonged study and most from rapid, spontaneous reading."4 Instead of having all the pupils read Ivanhoe, for instance, at the rate of fifteen to twenty pages a day (which would require over a month), the present tendency is to have only those pupils read Ivanhoe who can do it with comparative ease within about a week. There would be no question-and-answer recitations

4Reed Smith, The Teaching of Literature in High School, p. 239.
over the material read. There would be class discussions to stimulate thoughtful responses to the significant ideas and ideals revealed in the novel. No attempt would be made to cover all the minor details in any book, such as the color of the hero's eyes and the maiden name of the heroine's grandmother. The class would not be forced to concern itself with the many niceties of literary technique, such as the exact places where the various plots join or overlap and whether the hero's father should be called a major or a minor character. The emphasis throughout the discussion would be (1) on coordinating the pupils' own experiences with those of the characters they meet in their reading and (2) on helping them to understand themselves and their own world better through the vicarious experiences of individuals they come to know in books.

Two examples from classroom discussions of A Tale of Two Cities will serve to indicate the recent trend in attempting to make the experiences of characters in books meaningful to pupils. First will be given the type of question that elicits only factual information; next will be given the more recent attempt to enable the pupil to experience an emotional response which is one basis for
appreciation and enjoyment. The scene is Mr. Stryver's lodging; the time is the night after the Old Bailey trial. Mr. Carton has just referred to Lucie Manette as a "golden-haired doll" (not an especially complimentary term) in order to conceal his growing love for her from his boorish companion, Mr. Stryver. To unsympathetic readers this is just an incident in which two half-intoxicated lawyers talk about the beauty of a blond witness who had testified in court that day. If there is no emotional response to this incident (or any other in a work of fiction), the reader needs help (1) in picturing the scene as it is portrayed in the story and (2) in linking the happenings in the novel to similar incidents within his own experience. Questions such as these will not bring about the desired result:

1. What did Carton call Lucie that night at Mr. Stryver's lodging?

2. What comment did Mr. Stryver make about Lucie?

The pupils might be helped to a better understanding and appreciation of the scene if the discussion took
the following turn: (The first question is given with the purpose of hinting at Carton's interest in Lucie.)

1. Who was the first person in the Old Bailey Court to notice that Lucie had fainted?

2. Did Carton really think that Lucie was a golden-haired doll? Why did he call her that?

3. Mention some occasions in real life when people have done what Carton did; that is, they have belittled someone they liked very much to avoid being made fun of?

Everyone has been in a predicament similar to Carton's. Most people would react in the same way that Carton did. When this is made clear to the pupil, he begins to feel a certain sympathy for Carton; as a result of this response the pupil begins to look upon Carton as a flesh-and-blood person rather than as a character in a book. Respect for this man increases. The pupil begins to realize that his first impression of Carton, which was based on the lawyer's slovenly appearance and his bored attitude in court, is beginning to change. Carton is more of a gentleman than the pupil suspected at first. Clothes do not make the man (Hart, Schaffner, & Marx to the contrary
notwithstanding), and one should not judge a person on
his appearance alone. (This does not negate the fact,
however, that one’s appearance is extremely important,
since it is often responsible for the first impression
that one creates, which may be a very deep one.)

The incident in Mr. Stryver’s lodging is a rather
minor one in the general scheme of the novel. The writer
does not wish to give the impression that every scene
should be discussed in this manner. The recent trend is
away from much discussion of minor incidents. The writer’s
purpose is to show (1) one method of developing apprecia-
tion and giving more enjoyment to the reader of a difficult
novel and (2) one kind of classroom discussion that would
produce a thoughtful response to a significant idea rather
than a small body of factual information. Hilda Taba
writes: "Hamlet is a beautiful analysis of human behavior;
if the student does not respond to it or appreciate it, he
may come to hate it." In What the High Schools Ought to

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5Hilda Taba, "Significant Aspects of Growth in Learning," Reading and Pupil Development, Proceedings of
the Conference on Reading, Volume II, Supplementary Educational Monographs, No. 51, October, 1940, The
University of Chicago, p. 13.
Teach this statement appears: "Good literature fails to be appreciated and enjoyed because of the analytical treatment that the best books received in secondary school classrooms."  

The attempt to break away from the traditional method of teaching literature in high school has resulted in a kind of program called free reading. Pupils are allowed more choice in what they read, and there is less analysis of what has been read, especially in the case of the novel. Since all the pupils in a class do not read the same book, each pupil progresses at the rate that suits him best, and he can choose books (with the help of the teacher) that best meet his individual needs. Free reading does not take the place of intensive reading but should be considered a supplement to it. A small amount of intensive reading (two or three classics) is still considered desirable. Lucia E. Mirrieles writes in this connection:

Pupils, remember, are social beings, and for many of the antisocial ones learning

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to work with others and learning to talk about ideas with others are all-important. For this reason it is almost imperative that some small body of literature should be read by all members of the class in order to provide a common fund of interest. 7

In an article which appeared in the English Journal of May 1939, Robert C. Pooley listed the following advantages of free reading: (1) It is the least artificial of the school programs in literature. (2) The student uses books as he wishes; he employs his own initiative and discovers his own resources. (3) The library becomes for him a workshop and a storehouse. The author of the article feels that "with all its advantages, free reading is still very much on trial." 8 Supporters of the program can point to only a few successful experiences, while its enemies can find many failures. Few teachers have the energy or resources to direct a program of this kind. The teacher

7Lucia B. Mirrelees, Teaching Composition and Literature, p. 389.

must have an almost boundless knowledge of adolescent literature of all kinds. Many classes find continuous, silent reading dull and monotonous; they lose the stimulation of attacking and discussing a common problem as a group activity. There is difficulty in persuading students to include poetry, drama, and the essay in their program of voluntary reading. There is need for enormous resources in books of all kinds.

None of the obstacles (or disadvantages) mentioned in Pooley's article are insurmountable. In the seven years that have passed since the article appeared, the original idea of free reading has remained essentially the same. Now the professional literature on the subject of literature, however, often uses the term individualized in place of, or in addition to, the term free. When free reading is the only term employed, one feels that the emphasis is on the fact that pupils are not required to read certain books but are permitted to make their own choices. But people are inclined to select what they like instead of what is good for them. This is true in the choice of reading matter as well as in the choice of food,
recreation, etc. A pupil's interests sometimes lead him to choose books of doubtful value or books of just one type (such as all mystery stories), so that his reading program is unbalanced. A new emphasis has entered the picture. The pupil must be guided, persuaded, encouraged, and otherwise influenced to choose books that will do more than entertain him. No two pupils have exactly the same needs; therefore in a perfectly administered free-reading program, no two pupils would read the same books.

It is evident that a successful individualized reading program places much more responsibility on the teacher than did the old traditional literature program. Twenty years ago the teachers of literature were not much concerned over what to teach; the books were listed for them in the course of study. Their chief concern was how to teach. Now the teacher of reading in an individualized program has the double responsibility of what and how to teach. In theory this means helping to work out and check on between one hundred fifty and two hundred different reading programs a year and then starting in the next year and doing the job all over again. It seems that so
much time and energy is spent on this first phase of the present reading program that little time or strength is left with which to develop better methods of making the discussions of books more meaningful to the whole class. Teachers of English will find more professional articles giving lists of books for adolescent readers (what to teach) than those giving definite suggestions on how to conduct meaningful discussions in class groups where the pupils have not read the same books.

The role of the teacher is of greater importance in a free reading program than in the traditional program of literature. He himself must be a lover of good books and a reader of good books; otherwise he finds himself in the embarrassing situation of urging his pupils to do, not as he does, but as he says. A teacher who is himself a constant reader of books is in a good position to understand the difficulties his pupils encounter as they are at their reading. He appreciates (1) how many hours it takes to read a long, difficult books like Les Misérables, for example; (2) how difficult it is to find time in which to do one's reading; (3) how aggravating it is to have one's reading
periods frequently interrupted; (4) how much satisfac-
tion one experiences in reading a truly great book; and
last of all (5) how important it is to be able to talk
about a good book with someone else who has read it. The
teacher who continues to read good books after his college
days are over never loses sight of the peculiar kind of
pleasure reading brings, and his enthusiasm cannot help
but make its impression on his pupils. This friendly
relation between the teacher and the pupils encourages
them to express themselves freely in regard to their read-
ing and to be unashamed of their own emotional responses to
good books. This is a most important factor in the develop-
ment of appreciation.

The teacher of literature should not hesitate to
admit that he has not read all the books that his pupils are
reading. However, it is surprising how much he will come to
know about literally hundreds of juvenile books after he has
guided several sets of English classes through programs of
individual reading. His most valuable source of informa-
tion is the pupils' own books reports. Another valuable
source is the reviews found in such magazines as the Saturday
Review of Literature (which has excellent sections on juvenile books from time to time), the English Journal, and Harper's. It is not necessary for a teacher to be able to say of every book he recommends, "This is a book you will enjoy. I know because I have read it." Any intelligent pupil soon realizes that the teacher could not possibly have read all the books in the school and city libraries. It is desirable to be able to say something like this, "I believe you will enjoy this book. It is a story of a boy who had a problem similar to the one that is troubling you right now. Tom and Dominick both have read it. Perhaps you'd like to ask one of them about it."

The teacher of literature should not hesitate to admit that there are some books that he has disliked. He might even mention occasionally that he did not finish a certain book and he might give his reason: (1) the book did not interest him or (2) he did not have time to complete it. When girls hesitantly ask if books by Temple Bailey, Grace Livingston Hill, and Kathleen Norris (thorns in the flesh of a certain eighth-grade English teacher) will be accepted, the writer of this thesis feels that she loses no caste in the eyes of
her students when she admits that when she was their age she found Kathleen Norris highly entertaining and read every new book of hers as it came along. (To some she adds that she couldn't be persuaded to read one now for all the rice in China.) In An Experience Curriculum in English this statement appears: "For a graduate never to have read a sentimental, improbable, or badly written book is a misfortune. We should let the boys and girls make choices between good and poor books while we are still at hand to help them establish standards."9

William Lyon Phelps in an article entitled "The Virtues of the Second-Rate" said that all popular writers from Shakespeare to Harold Bell Wright have a Greatest Common Denominator; that is, they appeal to thousands of readers of all ages and conditions of life, whether they create works of genius or lesser books. Many cultivated readers no doubt began in their youth by reading "enchanters." From these they learned the delights of reading and

once having learned that, having found that a book, easily procurable, is the key to a happy recreation, they obtained a never failing source of happiness.

Once a taste for reading is formed, it can be improved. But it is impossible that boys and girls who have never cared to read a good story will later enjoy stories by good artists. The Greatest Common Divisors are not corrupting youth; they are in many instances leading youth into the garden of literature.10

Since the role of the English teacher is of such importance in an individualized reading program, several qualifications that he should possess have been discussed in detail. They are as follows: (1) The teacher himself must love and read good books. (2) He must have an almost boundless knowledge of juvenile literature. (3) He must create an environment conducive to reading. (The maintaining of the proper rapport is largely dependent on the teacher's own attitude toward reading.) There are three additional qualifications which a teacher of free or individualized reading should possess. These will be enlarged upon in connection with the discussion of classroom procedures. They will merely be mentioned here.

(4) The teacher must be sensitive to the problems and needs of his pupils. (5) He must be in a position to spend extra time and energy on this project in order to make a success

of it. (6) He must not expect too much of his pupils in the way of rapid improvement in the quality of books read. He should realize that the direction of travel is more important in this project than the distance travelled.

Timken Vocational High School shares with hundreds of other secondary schools the disadvantage of limited library facilities. The building has been overcrowded ever since its opening; most periods of the day from fifty to sixty pupils are regularly assigned to the library because there is no room for them in the regular study halls. Since from one-half to two-thirds of the chairs in the library are occupied by these regularly assigned study hall students, few places are available for the use of occasional visitors. The last two periods of the day the library is filled to capacity; many students having passes must return to their regular study halls because there is no place for them to sit. This situation is not an unfortunate one for all students, however; those who are regularly assigned to a study hall in the library have the advantage of all its resources five days a week.
As was mentioned in the preceding chapter, the Timken library has an unusually good magazine collection. There is also a good selection of reference books. The fiction collection is inadequate. The popular books have eight to ten names on the waiting list all the time. Pupils who are not especially enthusiastic about reading are apt to lose interest in a book if they do not get it soon after they decide they would like to read it. Instead of two or three copies of popular books, there should be seven or eight, so that pupils may read them while they are timely. It is discouraging to both the teacher and the pupils to have pupils go to the library, armed with lists of five or six books which might catch their interest, and then to have them return with poor substitutes with which to fill in the time until more appropriate books are available. It would be impossible to carry on a free-reading program without the assistance of the public library, several rental libraries, and the numerous books that find their way into pupils' home as Book-of-the-Month Club or Literary Guild selections or in the form of Christmas and birthday presents. The
increasingly popular Pocket Book editions are also a valuable means of stretching the resources available for individualized reading.

It is best to start free reading at a time when the library shelves are not too bare. The leanest time at Timken is the last week of each six-week period, as some teachers expect the outside reading reports (in case they do no free reading that period) to be in that week, and many pupils wait until the last minute to take the books out. The earliest this program should be attempted, in the writer's opinion, is the thirteenth or fourteenth week of the school year. It takes a teacher that long to know his pupils well enough to be able to guide them in their selection of material to read. Before the program is begun in class, the writer spends an hour or so in the library, selecting from eighty to one hundred books which will form the original classroom collections. These books are chosen with definite classes in mind and are arranged in five piles, one for each English class. This means that there will be fifteen to twenty books for each class of thirty to forty pupils to be used as a starter.
It should be made clear at the beginning that the writer's five English classes meet in four different classrooms; therefore it is not possible to have the kind of classroom library that is always recommended as an invaluable aid in a free reading program. The librarian is very cooperative. Pupils are permitted to go to the library at any time during a period, select a book, have it checked out, and then return to the class or study hall from which they came. The disadvantage of this plan is that the teacher cannot go to the shelves with the pupil and, after noting what books are available at the time, help him select his next book. This creates a problem in the case of pupils who cannot seem to find anything they want to read, by themselves. As it is now, the teacher must recommend five or six books that he knows the library owns and trust the pupil to find them after he gets there. It is disheartening for both teacher and pupil when none of the suggested books are in. This means that the teacher must make out another list of books and the pupil must make another trip to the library. This procedure gives the pupil the feeling that the book he
finally procures is definitely not the best choice for him.

Some time must be spent the day the class begins the unit on individual reading in explaining its purpose and the mechanical details of its operation. Each pupil is given a four-by-six file card on which he keeps his own individual record. These cards are given to the pupils each day at the end of the class period so they may record their reading or other activities. These are then returned to the teacher, who finds them an invaluable aid in following each student's progress. At the end of the first week a card might have the following notations:

Mary Smith

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title of Book</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>Meet Corliss Archer</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/7</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/8</td>
<td>Absent from school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/9</td>
<td>Meet Corliss Archer</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/10</td>
<td>Wrote report and went to library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rest of the first class period is spent in talking about books, the fifteen or twenty that were previously selected for the class having been brought up from
the library. There is no difficulty in placing all of the books if they are selected with the particular class in mind. Many of the books have already been read by some of the class members. The comments offered by these students usually induce others to read them. As there are not enough books to go around, members of the class who do not have books are given library passes. Some boys and girls seem to prefer selecting their own books. Pupils are permitted to read for credit any book in the Timken library. If they obtain books elsewhere, they are urged to have them approved by the teacher before they begin reading them; thus if the book is not approved, they are saved the disappointment of having their report marked NO CREDIT. The three most common reasons for marking books "not approved" are as follows: (1) The book is too juvenile for a high school student. (This might be a copy of Barry Blake of the Flying Fortress that Aunt Emma gave Junior for his birthday.) (2) The print is too fine or indistinct. (This is apt to be a copy of Cooper's Last of the Mohicans that Mom found in the attic last spring when she cleaned house.) (3) The
contents are not suitable for adolescent readers.

(This would be true of Forever Amber or some of the more lurid murder mysteries.)

As each book is finished during a free-reading period (or any other time during the year), the pupil is expected to hand in a written report of not more than a page (five and one-half by eight and one-half inches). Two reports are reproduced here as examples:

I

UP FRONT Bill Mauldin
Very good 228 pages

Up Front is a wonderfully impressive report on the lives of the doughboys, the boys in the front lines, the infantry. It was written by a man who lived with them for nearly two years. Mauldin writes of the complaints, the misery, the humor, and deaths of that group of fighting men. He tells of the days and weeks they lived in foxholes filled with rain, of the danger of having a grenade explode in their foxholes, and of having to eat the most unearthly food in the world, K and C rations. His book tells of their kindness to the natives of the countries they invaded, and of their sharing their meager rations with them.

This book has filled me with greater respect for our fighting men.

John Jones March 7, 1946
II

What’s on Your Mind? 
Good 
Dunninger 
200 pages

In What’s on Your Mind Dunninger tries to explain mental telepathy and simplify it so everyone can do it. He shows pictures all through the book on how a thought looks when you send it and how it looks when you receive it. He tells about color, lights, shadows, etc. and how a thought is received. This might be all right for Dunninger, but I don’t think anyone reading the book can produce mental telepathy. Anyway, I don’t think it can be done.

Bill Johnson 
April 18, 1946

All the reports are graded each day so that they may be returned to the pupils the following class period after they are handed in. Brief comments are written on each one. Occasionally the teacher prefers to discuss the report further with the writer of it during the class period. This would be the case if the pupil missed the point of the book or if he seemed to have skimmed over it too rapidly. Care is taken to praise pupils as often as possible and to encourage frankness, truthfulness, and originality in the writing of the reports. Pupils are expected to return the graded reports to the teacher at
the end of the class period. (The Good Book says, "Lead us not into temptation.")

A chart recording the number of pages read by each member of the class is brought up-to-date each day. (Each class has its own chart.) In order to encourage pupils to read better literature, the writer has been counting difficult books as worth one and one-half to twice as much as simpler ones. A pupil who reads a hundred pages of Tunis's *Yea, Wildcats!* is credited with a hundred pages on the chart; one who reads a hundred pages of Hersey's *A Bell for Adano* will find that he has credit for one hundred fifty pages; and one hundred pages of Roberts' *Oliver Wiswell* or Melville's *Moby Dick* would give the reader two hundred pages of credit on his class record. These books, which receive extra credit, are called "plus books." Occasionally the teacher gives a little favorable publicity to the readers of difficult books by mentioning the names of those who are reading "plus books" at the time, or by reading the names of pupils who have read several since the beginning of the year or since the beginning of the free-reading period.
This method of conducting individualized reading takes about one and one-half hours of extra time each day. No attempt is made to grade book reports or to start on charts during the class periods. The teacher's time is spent (1) discussing book reports with the student writers, (2) suggesting books to those who need help or to those who do not seem to be interested in the books they are reading, (3) encouraging the few who find it boring to read silently, (4) writing out library passes, (5) looking over books brought in from outside sources to see whether they rate an APPROVED, (6) helping pupils with reading problems, and best of all, (7) talking about a good book with an interested student reader. Two study halls, which give the writer one-half hour of free time each, offer enough time in which to check over the class file cards to note how certain pupils are coming along and to bring two or three class charts up-to-date. Part of the teacher's free period is spent in the school library during the periods of individualized reading helping those who are able to come to the library at that time to find books to their liking. The written
book reports (twenty to forty or more a day) are marked each evening and the remaining class charts are brought up-to-date. The teacher brings books from the public library occasionally when the school library doesn't seem to have the right book for a hard-to-please reader and that reader does not have a library card of his own.

Class discussion on the reading is not begun until almost everyone has finished one book. In checking over the file cards the teacher often finds that a number of books of the same type are being read in a class. For example, in a boys' class one might find a preponderance of sports books, airplane stories, and simple biographies; in a girls' class one might find a large number of career books, mystery stories, and "sentimental" novels. Topics for class discussion can be formulated according to the type of reading being done in each class. The topics are announced the day before the discussion is to take place so that pupils may be better prepared to make a worth-while contribution. Occasionally a class seems to resent this interruption of their reading; in that case, the discussions may be postponed until the end of the individualized reading
period. If the first day's attempt shows that the pupils are not going to enter into the class conversation but seem to wait to be called upon, more definite plans can be worked out. Definite topics can be assigned to individual pupils or to groups of pupils.

It is impossible (without a stenographic record) to reproduce a typical class discussion which has been motivated by general topics. A few of the topics, however, will be given.

1. Does the story seem true to life? (In the case of sports stories, boys often object to the hero's making the winning touchdown in the last minute of play. Girls, however, do not object to the poor secretary's marrying the boss's son in book after book.)

2. What qualities do you expect to find in a good mystery story? (Two large rental libraries in Canton reported that their calls for mystery stories had more than tripled during the winter of 1945-1946.)

3. The hero or heroine of every novel must solve many problems. What are some of the problems in your book? (These are listed on the board as they are mentioned. Typical ones are (1) lack of enough money to live comfortably, (2) the loss of one or both parents in one's childhood, (3) illness or
physical handicaps, (4) parental indifference, (5) a feeling of inferiority, (6) being blamed for something one did not do, (7) fear of ridicule, and (8) inability to make friends.)

4. Do you feel that one generation is not understood by the preceding one? Where is your opinion borne out in books?

5. What does the world mean by success? Do the standards of success vary from time to time? Is it possible that a man may be a success yet the world may consider him a failure?

6. Who is the most admirable character you have met in a book? The meanest?

7. Do you feel that you know certain characters in books better than you know your own relatives or friends? (Here can be stressed the fact that one can know in books people that one would never have an opportunity to meet in real life. Since friends make such a great impression upon us and influence our lives so deeply, it is wise to choose one's book-friends carefully.)

The topics are never announced to the class in the brief form in which they are given above. The writer usually leads up to the announcement of topics by telling an incident from a book she has read recently, which illustrates the point in question. Sometimes reference is made to classics that have already been read by the group or to recent news stories. It is also a good idea to mention
several books that will furnish good examples, books which have been read or are being read by members of the class during the free reading unit. These members are more apt to give serious thought to the suggested topics if they know that their books do contain pertinent incidents or relevant material.

Teachers conducting class discussions on free reading will meet a number of problems. There is a tendency for the young people just to talk and not come to any conclusions. There are always a few pupils who insist on giving the class a condensed version of the book which they have occasion to mention; they cannot seem to stop with just the right incident to illustrate the point they are trying to make. The talkative members have a tendency to monopolize the class's time. When the teacher attempts to draw out the quieter members, the discussion often deteriorates into a question-and-answer recitation period. As every teacher knows, it is far, far easier to get a good class discussion going and to keep it going in some classes than in others. If the class has a share in the selection of the topics, the class conversation is bound to be more stimulating to them.
The last period of free reading each year has without exception been the most successful. (This has been verified by the pupils' comments.) This is true in spite of the fact that the pupils become more restless as the school year draws to a close and some of them find the prospect of several weeks of silent reading a bit dull, even though the monotony is broken occasionally by trips to the library during class time and by class discussions. There are two advantages which are enjoyed by the last period of individualized reading that may be responsible for its greater success. They are as follows:

1. By the end of the year the teacher is more aware of her pupils' problems and needs and is in a better position to help them find books that will interest them and at the same time be of actual help to them.

2. Many pupils realize that they have made progress in their reading during the year, and they take pride in excelling their own records. Success begets success. Pupils know by the end of the year (and so does the teacher) what kinds of books they are going to like; therefore they start fewer books that do not interest them. Many are reading more mature books by the end of their
sophomore year, and they more often experience that exquisite satisfaction which comes from the reading of a truly great book. Some experience pleasures and satisfactions that are denied them otherwise. Louise M. Rosenblatt writes in *Literature As Exploration*:

> Our lives may be so monotonous, so limited in scope, so concentrated on the drudgery of practical survival that the experience of profound and varied emotions, the contact with rich and subtle personalities, the understanding of the wide range of human activity and human problems may be denied us except through the medium of literature.\(^{11}\)

The next chapter will be devoted to ways of generating and sustaining interest in pupils who do not care about reading. A special problem in connection with the vocational pupil will be discussed.

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CHAPTER V

THE VOCATIONAL PUPIL

As soon as the education laws compelled children to remain in school until they were sixteen, the high schools were confronted by a tremendous problem. The courses had been planned to meet the needs of academic students, students who seemed to enjoy "book learning" and could profit from it. Almost over night many "non-bookish" pupils were added to and mixed in with the regular school population. These pupils, who were forced to go to high school against their will in many cases, found little in the secondary school to interest them. They were not able to keep up with their academically inclined peers and had a tendency either to become apathetic or to become actively rebellious. It did not at first occur to educators that some of these nonacademic pupils were as talented in their own way as their fellow students who made much higher marks, but that they had no opportunity to display or to develop these talents in a curriculum designed for the verbal-minded. The two outstanding examples that come to mind are Thomas Edison and Charles Lindbergh, both failures in schools designed to meet the needs of only one class of school children.
These nonacademic students did not like school and got little out of it. They experienced great difficulty in almost all of their high school courses, for these courses required much reading and memory work, and in these two fields the newcomers were not at home. Their failure in the academic courses was often attributed to low intelligence, and educators began to plan other courses for them in which less reading and memory work were required. The idea gained ground that these pupils, who were considered dull (this included some who were very intelligent but who were not interested in academic pursuits and therefore did not make good grades), should be taught to work with their hands. Thus industrial arts, home economics, trade, and vocational courses were often welcomed into a school system as a means of taking care of the problem that had been created when all the pupils were forced into a mold originally designed for the academically inclined.

It is no wonder that when vocational high schools were started, the regular academic courses were rejected. These had been shown to hold little of value for students "who thought with their hands." The vocational high school, therefore, decided to make the English, history, science,
etc., more practical. Quite naturally, then, these were linked up with the vocation for which the pupils were preparing themselves. Thus the related courses came into being more or less as a protest against the academic courses as they were taught two or three decades ago.

The English department of the general high school was experiencing the same difficulties as the other departments of the secondary school. When pupils failed the English courses, the blame was first placed on the students, not on the course of study or the methods of teaching, for these had both succeeded previously. The cause of pupils' failure was felt to be lack of intelligence, lack of interest, or just plain laziness. Gradually, however, teachers of English began to talk more and more about revising the courses to meet the needs of the students. In the case of literature, the teachers had to admit that not all pupils were able to profit from an intensive study of the classics then in use. In the first place, some of the pupils were not capable of reading such classics as A Tale of Two Cities and Julius Caesar and therefore were in a position to get little or nothing from that part of the
English course; in the second place, when some teachers attempted to make the literature study more meaningful by reading aloud and explaining such classics as Julius Caesar and Lady of the Lake (at the rate of six to ten pages a day), they found that the students still did not respond. These pupils were not interested because the content was too far-removed from their own experience.

When free reading was introduced, two of its primary purposes were to meet the needs of those who would not read and those who could not read, or in other words, those of average or good intelligence who were not interested in books and those of low intelligence whose reading ability was limited. Because they had failed to make satisfactory progress in academic English courses, both groups of pupils were considered dull; therefore, they were to be given simpler books, easy books they would have little difficulty in reading. But there were not many books of that kind that appealed to older boys and girls. In 1939 Lou L. LaBrant and Frieda M. Heller wrote in An Evaluation of Free Reading in Grades Seven to Twelve, Inclusive:
Comparatively few books are written for the young person from twelve to twenty. He therefore finds himself inclined either to fall back upon too simple material—adventure, the series, detective stories, short stories in light magazines—or to find some difficulty in understanding and selecting books intended for adults.¹

In the seven years since the above statement appeared, many books have been written with the nonacademic high-school reader in mind. Simplified versions of well-known classics have continued to appear. The teacher of free reading certainly has an easier time of it today than he had ten years ago. There are more books to choose from now; some of them, at least, are worthwhile, and many of them are extremely interesting to adolescent readers.

The original assumption in regard to free reading seemed to be that pupils would read if they were given books that were simple enough that they could get the meaning without too much difficulty. (It is assumed that the

¹Lou L. LeBrant and Frieda M. Keller, An Evaluation of Free Reading in Grades Seven to Twelve, Inclusive: The Ohio State University School, Ohio State University Studies, Contributions in Education No. 4, 1939, p. 7.
material would be of a type that would appeal to high-school pupils. No one would expect a high-school girl who read with great difficulty to enjoy "Little Black Sambo" just because it was easy to read. It was felt that pupils were apathetic or dissatisfied during the intensive reading of a classic because they were not able to get the meaning from the page and therefore they could not hope to understand it. If pupils were given material that they were capable of reading and understanding, once interest was aroused they would read without compulsion. This task of arousing interest is not always an easy one. William S. Gray writes in Reading and General Education:

No greater evidence is needed of the potency of interest than the growing efficiency of the poor reader after his interest in reading has been aroused and he sees clearly its value and significance. To stimulate and to develop desirable reading interests is, of course, no simple undertaking. It requires an enriched reading environment, an abundance of worthwhile materials adapted to the abilities of individual students, learning situations that challenge
students to undertake discriminat-
ing reading, and a continuous
program of individual guidance by
teachers who know and understand
both students and books.\textsuperscript{2}

It is the responsibility of the teacher to take each
student at whatever level of reading he happens to be
and lead him to the next level, and the next, by means
of books that interest him.

It is of course agreed that not all books are
suitable for high-school consumption; however, many that
were previously frowned upon and were grudgingly placed
on high-school library shelves are now given a warmer
welcome. Books by Temple Bailey, James Oliver Curwood,
and Zane Grey, which were labelled as "injurious to
literary taste"\textsuperscript{3} in the September 1930 issue of the
\textit{English Journal}, are no longer treated as unwanted step-
children. Other books similar to them have been added

\textsuperscript{2}William S. Gray, "Reading and Factors Influencing
Reading Efficiency," \textit{Reading in General Education}, American

\textsuperscript{3}Carrie Belle Parks, "Reading Escalators,"
to high-school collections because they are the only kind that really appeal to part of the school population. Cross and Carney write: "The student of low general ability cannot hope to become an excellent reader. We must, therefore, supply simple materials for him." 4

The literature program is now at this stage of development in many American high schools; some free reading is being done in place of the more difficult of the required classics, but one or two of the required classics have been retained for intensive study. In the English II course at Canton, Ohio, at the present time, no classic is absolutely required the sophomore year. This means that if, in the teacher's judgment, none of the four classics listed in the course of study is suitable for intensive reading, he may do only free reading with his class. As was mentioned before, there are enough copies of *Reading Is Fun!* (at Timken Vocational High School only) that each pupil in a class may have one; thus class or group reading of some of the short selections in

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that book is possible in classes where all the suggested classics are rejected. The high-school libraries all over the city have gradually been adding more and more of the simple books that appeal to pupils who find reading difficult. Teachers of English cannot help but realize the power of interest in conducting a successful reading program, and most of them make some attempt to guide the pupil in his individual reading so that the quality of his reading will gradually improve.

The general problems a teacher meets in setting up and carrying on a free-reading program are the same whether the class is a ninth-grade or a twelfth-grade group, whether it is made up of commercial students or general, vocational pupils or college-preparatory. Each class, however, presents one or more specific problems: (1) the pupil who has not read a book through (since he was in the primary grades) and does not intend to read any, (2) the boy who will read only sports stories or the girl who is interested only in sentimental novels, (3) the boy who refuses to read any kind of fiction but is not afraid to tackle extremely technical volumes on airplane
motors and diesel engines, (4) the music student who comes alive only during band and orchestra practice and will condescend to read only biographies of famous orchestra leaders and other books dealing directly with music, and (5) the art student who brings to class many lovely books on drawing, painting, and sculpture (three-fourths pictures and drawings and one-fourth reading) and will not have anything to do with any book that does not directly serve to further his career in art.

These and several other kinds of problem readers one meets over and over again, year after year. They serve to make the class more interesting for they present a challenge to any experienced teacher of reading. When they do finally respond to patient guidance (and they almost always do), the reward in satisfaction to both teacher and pupil is enough to justify all the extra effort expended in their behalf. Quite often in working with these rebellious readers the teacher himself picks up new ideas or tends to perfect old techniques, and he is almost bound to add much to his fund of information about juvenile and adolescent books in his efforts to find something that will interest these hard-to-please readers.
Besides all the problems that have been enumerated, a vocational high school English class presents one more. The writer realizes that she is about to step from solid ground to an extremely precarious footing on a frail ladder marked OPINION. She also wishes to state that in the three years she has been a teacher at Timken Vocational High School this opinion has undergone three minor changes. There is every chance that this will happen again, but of course it does not seem likely at the present time. The particular idea about to be presented is not unadulterated opinion, however. It will be partially supported by information gained through a questionnaire which the author's pupils answered near the end of the school year 1945-1946 and by the opinions of a frequent contributor to the *English Journal*, a writer whose articles on the teaching of vocational or nonacademic pupils have always exemplified that happy combination of the scholarly approach and practical, down-to-earth solutions to classroom problems.

**VOCATIONAL PUPILS DO NOT LIKE TO READ.** Leisure reading will not be a source of great satisfaction to many
graduates of a vocational high school. The percentage of vocational high-school graduates who will turn to reading as a means of enjoying spare time will be much smaller than the percentage of general high-school graduates. This is ventured as an opinion in spite of the free-reading records of fifteen classes of vocational students (covering a period of three years), which records show that the vocational students not only read many books but that they read good books, that is, many classics and many sophisticated adult books. But these books were read on “company time” for the most part and these future members of the A. F. of L. and the C. I. O. were intelligent enough to realize that this particular job (free reading) meant more pleasant, and perhaps easier, work for the same pay (a grade on the report card).

At the conclusion of the last free-reading period of the year, a period when there seemed to be less active opposition to reading than at any other time and when the pupils seemed to be getting more out-and-out enjoyment from this activity than at any other time, there
were many disappointing answers to the question, "Do you really enjoy reading?" Only twenty-three out of one hundred forty-nine pupils who answered the questionnaire said, "Yes." These twenty-three boys and girls gave the following "lukewarm" reasons:

- It is relaxing.
- It helps pass the time.
- Reading takes up a lot of spare time.
- It is interesting.
- It is educational.
- It is restful.
- A good book keeps you on edge.

This last reason was given by a boy who had read seven war books, three sports books, and five miscellaneous books. These were the answers given after the pupils had recently read and had seemed to enjoy such masterpieces as *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *Les Misérables*, *Oliver Twist*, *Anthony and Cleopatra*, *A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Old Wives' Tale*; such modern best-sellers as *The Yearling*, *The Valley of Decision*, *A Lion Is in the Streets*, *Mrs. Miniver*, *Show Boat*, *The Human Comedy*, *All This and Heaven, Too*, *The Good Earth*, *Black Boy*, *Drums Along the Mohawk*, *A Tree*
Grows in Brooklyn, and A Bell for Adano; and such adolescent books as Uncharted Seas, Junior Miss, A Star for Ginny, Lassie Come Home, Career for Jennifer, Seventeenth Summer, Angel of the Navy, Trooper: U. S. Army Dog, Wilderness Champion, One Minute to Play, Iron Duke, and Gridiron Glory. No one in answering the question, "Do you really enjoy reading?" wrote: "Yes, because I love to read," or "Yes, because I meet such interesting people in books," or "Yes, because it is easier for me to bear my own misfortunes when I have read of the misfortunes of others in books." The last three answers are not in the wording of students; however, the ideas expressed therein were all given in answer to a similar question asked of a college-preparatory class in McKinley High School five years ago.

Of the one hundred forty-nine answers, one hundred twenty-six were "No," or "Not very much," or "Not usually." A partial list of comments made by pupils who do not enjoy reading follows:

It takes too long and I get restless. (5)
When there is nothing else to do. (5)
I do not have enough time. (2)
It takes up too much time I could be spending out of doors. (8)
I can't sit still long enough. (5)
It is too tiresome, in my opinion. (4)
I like excitement and sports, and therefore I do not like to read very well. (4)
Only if I can find a good book. (7)
Sometimes when the weather is bad and I don't have anything else to do. (3)
I prefer to spend my leisure time practicing (music). (3)

The problem of influencing vocational pupils who dislike reading to become interested in books is no different from that of encouraging pupils from any other high school. If these vocational pupils have access to suitable books, they will read during their class time; some will take the books along to study halls; and some will even take one home occasionally. They do read many of the better books and talk intelligently about them afterwards and voluntarily express enjoyment during the reading of a really good book; but if their enjoyment and appreciation of literature stops with graduation from high school, the situation is no different from what it was twenty years ago when Hughes Mearns wrote:

Almost everyone believes in the teaching of literature to high school pupils. Almost no one is convinced that we have
succeeded in doing this with anything like satisfactory outcomes in enjoyment and appreciation of good literature.5

There is no doubt that the time spent in literature class brings more enjoyment to pupils today than it did when the traditional literature course called for the analyzing of a particular classic. But the results do not seem to indicate any notable improvement in the enjoyment and appreciation of literature after graduation or even in leisure hours while the pupil is still in school.

A girl who had read and who seemed to enjoy and appreciate such books as The Citadel, The Valley of Decision, They Were Expendable, What Makes Sammy Run?, Keys of the Kingdom, Our Hearts Were Young and Gay, China Sky, and Invasion Diary during her sophomore year (1944-1945), reported that she had read exactly one book during the present school year (1945-1946), The World, the Flesh, and Father Smith. Her junior English course, for she is a commercial student, called for one book report each

1Hughes Mearns, op. cit., p. viii.
six-week period in addition to the reading regularly required in an academic American literature course. The other five books she reported on were some that she had read during the summer of 1945. This girl, who will have one of the highest averages in her class and may even be salutatorian, claims she likes to read; yet she does not turn to reading as a leisure-time activity.

There is a boy in the same class whose record is more startling. During his freshman year he read thirty-four books, mostly adventure stories. There were, however, seven war books among the thirty-four, with Mein Kampf (one hundred pages only) the most difficult of the lot. During his sophomore year (1944-1945) his record contained fifty-seven books. At the beginning of the year he continued to read adventure stories and war stories in spite of the efforts of the teacher to persuade him to try something more mature. As for his physical development, until almost the end of his sophomore year he seemed like a child rather than a young man; he not only was young-looking for his age but he was rather childish in his actions compared with the other boys in his class. He
boasted that he had read every sports story by Tunis and Sherman and every book by Pease that the school library owned.

During the last free-reading period of the year he asked the teacher to suggest a good book. He said he was tired of sports stories and war books and wanted something different. There was an additional stipulation that there was to be no "mush" in the book. The Count of Monte Cristo was suggested as a story that would be a desirable change from what he had been reading. This boy was entranced with Dumas' novel. It was as if a whole new world had opened to him. He immediately followed this novel with two others by the same author, The Three Musketeers and Memoirs of a Physician. He then read the first part of Don Quixote with considerable help from the teacher. At the end of May 1945 he started Gone with the Wind, in spite of the teacher's warning that there were some "mushy" parts; and finished it before the close of school. He listed The Count of Monte Cristo and Gone with the Wind as the two books he had enjoyed most during the year.
The fifty-seven books on this student's record were not all read during periods of free reading. In his class book reports are handed in at any time during the year, whenever the pupil has finished a book. There are very few school days when several reports are not turned in, and few pupils wait until the deadline to get their reports done. There are times during each six-week period when there is no home work, when the class is writing paragraphs or descriptions, for instance. The teacher encourages the students to get their outside reading done during those times, and most of them do take care of this before the period ends.

The account of the boy who read fifty-seven books his sophomore year has not been finished. During the past year as a vocational student he had no study halls and no homework. His mornings were spent in the machine shop and his afternoons in related courses. (Part of each related subject period is devoted to study and part to recitation.) He had just as much time this past year (1945-1946) as he did when he was a sophomore because he
held the same job both years, helping deliver bundles of local papers to the newsboys in one section of the city. When he was asked if he had read many books this year, his answer was three. During the fifth six-week period of this year he received all 100's on his report card!

Jessie W. Boutilier suggests a reason why very bright students sometimes show little interest in reading fiction. She says "lack of interest in vicarious experiences might be found in the type of mind we identify with genius, an abnormal interest in one field of endeavor." In spite of the perfect record on our Timken student's report card, he does not bear the earmarks of a young genius. He mixes with the other boys and is very eager to be considered one of the gang. He gave his reason for not reading that he did not have time this past year.

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Lou LaBrant tells about a bright student who did not care to read at first but who later became a "vigorous reader."

I recall a boy who made the highest score of any pupil in our high school on the Thorndike-McCall Reading Scale. Yet for twelve weeks this boy read not a single novel, biography, play, poem, or volume of essays under a free-reading program. Only with definite assignments would he approach a book of any kind. Urged to read, he made reports of the events or repeated facts about which he read, insisted that he disliked books, and waited for another assignment. Finding books which helped him solve the conflict between the materials which he was studying in science and the highly conservative religious doctrines which his dead father had implanted was a long and difficult process. At the end of two years his score showed no significant change, but he was reading eagerly, sincerely. Today, eight years later, he is still a vigorous reader.7

The boy described by LaBrant was not a vocational student. Doctor LaBrant's pupil did not like to read at first but was persuaded to do so and eventually found satisfaction in this activity. The Timken student was a "vigorous reader" before he entered high school and continued to

7Lou LaBrant, "Implications of Individual Differences in Promoting Interests and Tastes," Adjusting Reading Program to Individuals, Supplementary Educational Monographs, No. 52, October 1941, The University of Chicago, p. 224.
make progress until the end of his sophomore year. His case is discouraging because he made such remarkable strides at first and now is losing much of the ground he had gained.

The Timken student who read and reported on fifty-seven books during his sophomore year did not do so because he was under any kind of pressure from the school or his teacher. A pupil who had read only the minimum of six books for outside reading would be more apt to feel compulsion than one who had read so many more than were required. This particular boy under discussion gave several indications of enjoyment and appreciation as he was reading. He sometimes laughed softly to himself during periods of silent reading, or he would slip quietly up to the teacher's desk to have her read a phrase or paragraph that struck his fancy. He occasionally asked the meaning of an idiomatic phrase which fact showed that he was reading carefully and wanted to get all of the meaning from what he was reading.

There is a third pupil, a girl with above-average grades who was a junior in commercial art this past
year (1945-1946). During her sophomore year, in
addition to seven sentimental novels, she read *Tess of the
D'Urbervilles*, *The Robe*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Show Boat*,
*Mr. Lincoln's Wife* (by Colver), *Oliver Twist*, *Old Wives' Tale*, *The Silver Spoon*, and *Clayhanger*. She has told
the librarian repeatedly that she enjoyed her sophomore
English more than any other course except art. Yet this
year, her junior year, she read only the few books
required in her related English course. She passed her
enthusiasm on to a younger sister who announced to her
teacher the first day she was in class that she wanted
to read all the books her older sister had read. The
younger sister, whose reading ability was not as well-
developed as that of her older sister, insisted on reading
*The Forsyte Saga* in spite of the teacher's attempt to dis-
courage her. After striving valiantly for about one
hundred pages, she gave up the attempt with this remark:
"I can read all of the words, but I don't know what they
mean and I can't keep track of all the people in the
book." The younger sister eventually read *How Green Was
My Valley*, *The Robe*, *Old Wives' Tale*, *Jane Eyre* (after
seeing the movie), Ramona, and The Rains Came (after seeing the movie) with considerable help from the teacher.

Fifteen above-average junior pupils, whose reading records were excellent during their sophomore year, were questioned. Not one of these students read more than was required of him during his junior year. Most of them were rather apologetic about their failure to read, and they gave as their reason that they were too busy. It is true that the junior year is considered much more difficult than the preceding one. In the commercial courses the pupils start either stenography and typing or office machines and advanced accounting, and they are under strong pressure during the entire year to meet the high standards set by the instructors of these subjects. In the vocational courses, on the other hand, there are no study halls scheduled. Part of each related period is devoted to study, but the pupils have no regularly scheduled study periods when they may control their own time.

The writer has noted a peculiar antagonism to reading on the part of the vocational high-school pupils.
(This does not include the commercial students at Timken Vocational High School, who are not classed as vocational and who seem to have attitudes more like the students in a general high school.) Teachers of related subjects at Timken who have been asked about the attitude of the pupils toward reading report the same antagonism. The first year the writer was a member of the Timken faculty she had a tendency to attribute the pupils' dislike of reading to poor scholastic ability. Her experience in a general high school had borne out the fact that many pupils of low I. Q. are not interested in reading. Consequently most students were guided toward the simpler books in their free reading. As the writer noted the ease with which students occasionally read extremely technical shop books, her opinion began to change and she had a tendency to suggest some of the more difficult books for reading in English class. A gratifying response on the part of many students to the more difficult books indicated that their aversion to reading was not due to the fact that they read with difficulty. The pupils were capable of reading and
enjoying many of the books that were formerly listed for the junior and senior years. Their indifferent attitude toward most of the work in English was the result of a dislike of the subject or a lack of interest in it rather than a lack of ability.

The second year the writer's program consisted of two commercial groups, one of which was especially gifted, and three other very poor vocational groups. There was a great contrast between the quality of work done, the enthusiasm over the subject, and the general attitude in class of the two groups. The tendency was again to consider the vocational groups inferior. This past year all the writer's classes were made up of vocational pupils, two being rather superior groups. The best vocational class of this year exceeded the record of the better commercial class of last year in both the quantity and the quality of books read during the individualized reading periods. The attitude toward reading was the same as that which had been encountered before. In even the best vocational classes there is the feeling that English is to be endured rather than enjoyed. This is particularly true of reading.
Shop teachers realize that vocational students do not care about reading when there is a day spent reading texts instead of doing work at the machines; related subject teachers are aware of this. The opinion of these two groups of faculty members is that vocational pupils are restless and find it difficult to stay in one spot as long as they have to in order to do any worthwhile amount of connected reading. The pupils themselves justified this opinion when one hundred twenty-six out of one hundred forty-nine said they really did not enjoy reading and gave as their reasons that they found it difficult to sit still very long.

It is assumed that enjoyment and appreciation of literature are worthy objectives of any high-school English program. Since vocational high-school pupils will read many books and good books (with seeming enjoyment) as a part of the English classwork when most of the reading can be done during school hours, the question to be answered is this: Why do not pupils continue to read when reading is no longer a class activity? These pupils have been introduced to the best literature in our
language; they have read many good books, both old and modern, with seeming enjoyment at the time. They have seemed to appreciate the books they were reading. Yet the pupils do not seem to feel the need of turning to reading as one of their leisure-time activities. Surely restlessness is not the only reason why pupils do not read.

Simon Certner, a teacher at Bronx Vocational High School in New York City, has these things to say about nonacademic pupils in an article entitled "Adapting the Curriculum to Nonacademics: Idealism, Democracy, and the Common Man": "Our young common man does not like to talk about, write about, or think about the spectacular or the unusual, because the spectacular and the unusual never happen to him."8 This might be a reason why fiction seems to lose its charm for a vocational pupil as he grows older. Another part of the article might tend to throw an unfavorable light on the way the class is conducted:

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He (our nonacademic pupil) cannot stand failure. In class he must be marked continuously, marked for every word he says, for everything he does favorably, even if it requires giving as many as five grades in every period for having recited five times. These marks should always be marks of merit--only rarely of demerit--for he is mentally a fragile flower and will wilt under contrary climates........ Praise is your only wear for him.9

Perhaps one reason for his attempts to establish a good reading record is that he does get credit for everything he accomplishes and praise is always generous at the conclusion of a "plus book." It is extremely difficult to get some of these students interested in reading anything; but once they get started on a book that they like, they seem to read like all other people who are enjoying themselves. However, there are more pupils in the vocational classes who find it difficult to get settled, and there are more days when one or two pupils just never seem to get down to business. This is true at times of all of us, but it somehow happens more often in vocational groups.

9Ibid.
There seems to be a possibility then that the excellent class records established by vocational pupils during free-reading periods are due not so much to a growing love for and an appreciation of good books as to (1) the pleasure they experience upon making a good record, (2) the praise that the reading of a "plus book" is bound to bring, and (3) their realization of the fact that, since they must take English, free reading is easier and pleasanter than some other activities to which they have become accustomed in English classes. It is to their advantage, therefore, to prolong the individualized reading as long as possible. One way to do this is to seem to be profiting from the experience. As was mentioned before, the compulsory education laws created a tremendous problem for the high schools. In the literature field, an attempt has been made to meet the individual reading needs of the varied school population through free reading. This type of program not only offers a happy solution to the problem of conducting the English class in a manner that seems to offer maximum help and benefit to every pupil in the class but this activity develops habits
which supposedly carry over into real life in the form of greater enjoyment and appreciation of good literature. This is not true in the case of vocational pupils, who seem to dislike reading all through their high-school years. In spite of the fact that these pupils respond beautifully to a school program of reading during their sophomore year and often excel the reading records of similar classes in the general high school, they do not show much tendency to read good books outside of their English classes.

Bearing in mind that vocational pupils can be counted on to do little reading of the better books as a leisure-time activity, the writer will suggest a few changes in the present English course at Timken, changes made with the knowledge that at the present time the vocational pupil has an opportunity to read very little fiction of any kind in school hours after he leaves the tenth grade. The sixth chapter, then, will be devoted to changes recommended and to a summary of the main points developed in this thesis.
CHAPTER VI

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY

The vocational high school differs in many respects from the academic high school. The purpose of both high schools is the same, preparation for living. It is in the manner in which the schools propose to accomplish this objective that the differences arise. In the vocational high school the emphasis is placed on training for the forty hours or more pupils will eventually spend each week at their jobs; the rest of their waking hours are not entirely neglected by the school, but there has been the feeling that if pupils are prepared to make a good living, the rest of their lives will more or less take care of themselves. The academic high school, on the other hand, assumes responsibility for preparing pupils to use all their hours well, not just the ones spent at work. The other hours are considered to be of just as much importance as the ones when they are working, and the school undertakes to help them to make the best use of all parts of their adult lives.
The vocational high school emphasizes preparation for work. Since no two communities offer the same opportunities for employment, and since the vocational high school undertakes to furnish workers for the industries of its own community, a survey should precede the construction of a vocational school building in order to determine what occupations are to be taught in that particular school. Thus from its beginning the vocational school is intended for the education of only a part of the young people of the community it serves; that is, those who wish to prepare themselves for the specific occupations in which training is offered. Since there usually are more pupil-applicants than can be accommodated in the vocational school building in a given community, this particular unit of our public school system is in a position to set up standards for the selection of its pupil population and to reject those that do not meet its standards.

Vocational or specialized schools are the only public secondary schools that are in a position to establish entrance requirements; the academic or neighborhood high
schools must be prepared to make a place for all students who live in the district they serve. The student body of a vocational school, therefore, does not represent a cross-section of the population of its age-group in the community; there are no college-preparatory students and no pupils of extremely low I. Q.'s. The program of studies of a vocational school does not offer many electives. It proposes to train its graduates to hold positions in a limited number of occupational fields, and each curriculum leads directly to employment in one of these fields. The scheduling of pupils is much simpler in a vocational school than it is in an academic school, for as soon as the occupational choice is made, the pupil must take (with minor changes) the courses outlined for him in the curriculum which prepares him for this occupation. In an academic high school it is possible to have homeroom sections of thirty to forty students in the general course where every pupil has a slightly different schedule from every other one in the room, and where no two students offer the same credits for graduation. In a vocational school this is not possible;
all the students enrolled in and graduated from the auto shop curriculum, for instance, will have had the same subjects with the exception of mathematics their freshman and sophomore years, when they have a choice between algebra and plane geometry or shop mathematics and algebra. With the possible addition of physical education and art, Latin, or music, their schedules will otherwise be identical in all four years of their high-school career. The same pattern is followed in the other vocational curricula.

In the field of English at Timken Vocational High School in Canton, Ohio, the vocational student has no choice; his curriculum (no matter which one he chooses) calls for three courses: English I, English II, and Practical English. In the academic high schools the student has the opportunity of taking four or more years of English, if he so desires. In addition to the three required courses, English I, English II, and American Literature, he may select others from the following list: Creative Writing, Dramatics, Journalism, Debate, Public Speaking, English Literature, and World Literature.
Pupils whose future occupation will require that they have a specialized knowledge of their mother tongue and its literature do not go to a vocational high school; that is, students interested in law, library work, writing of all kinds, acting, etc.

Although vocational pupils are not interested in occupations that are directly concerned with the use of language, a number of students surveyed at Timken mentioned English as one of the two subjects that they have liked the best. Of 151 sophomores who were asked to list the two subjects they enjoyed the most during their preceding three years of school (eighth, ninth, and tenth grades), forty-four boys named shop and twenty-six girls named home economics, making a total of seventy votes for the subjects that are the most directly related to the occupational choices of the students. The list of subjects with the number of times each was mentioned follows. (The pupils were first asked to name the one subject that they had enjoyed most; when some protested that there were two that they had particularly liked, it was agreed that they should
name them both if this was the case. Most pupils listed two.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shop</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Economics</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and Civics (8th)</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drafting</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatics</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hygiene</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If this same question were asked of these pupils at the end of their junior year, no doubt first choice would be such subjects as cosmetology, retailing, commercial art, auto shop, and dressmaking. At the end of their sophomore year, however, thirty-five pupils or approximately one-fourth listed English as first or second choice.

The writer made the observation in connection with a description of the vocational pupil that Timken students do not seem to enjoy reading. This opinion was based (1) on the attitude of the pupils themselves at the beginning of each period of free reading and (2) on their
failure to turn to reading as a leisure-time activity after they leave the sophomore year. By the time students reach the junior year almost all of them are old enough to be employed regularly as part-time workers. There is a possibility that these students would do more reading if so much of their leisure time were not devoted to their jobs.

Of the sophomores referred to previously all but one boy and girl said that they spent some time each week working, housework being the type of employment listed most often. The number of hours of work each week (paid and unpaid) ranged from four to forty, the forty hours being reported by a girl whose mother was dead and who, in addition to doing most of the housework for a large family, assisted her father in his laundry. Other jobs held by these sophomores during hours when they were not required to be in school were as follows: delivery boy, stock boy, "soda jerk," clerk in a market or a store, "baby sitter," attendant at a parking lot, tray boy at a "drive-in," hospital worker (preparing and delivering trays and cleaning up), gas station attendant, theater employee, et al.

As was mentioned before, most of the reading done by these
students during periods of free reading took place either during English class or during study halls.

Eighty-one of the sophomores spent several hours each week at the movies. The following is a record of their attendance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than once each week</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twice a month</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than once a month</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to these figures over half of the sophomores who answered the question attended the movies once a week or oftener. Thus their interest in vicarious experiences was at least partially satisfied through a means other than reading.

Although the pupils do not read many books after they leave the sophomore class, they no doubt read magazines and newspapers regularly, if their reading habits as sophomores carry over to the following year. All except five of the one hundred fifty-one sophomores said that they read the Canton Repository regularly. (It was agreed that anyone who spent ten minutes or more on the Repository each day was entitled to say that he read it
regularly.) Other newspapers listed most often were the Cleveland Plain Dealer and the Akron Beacon Journal. All except eight of the sophomores said that they read magazines regularly, Life being the one mentioned most often. Other periodicals frequently listed were Reader's Digest, Collier's, Popular Science, Seventeen, Look, Glamour, sports magazines of various kinds, movie magazines, and Newsweek.

The literature experiences afforded vocational pupils during school hours (in the three required English courses) at Timken are as follows:

**English I--Adventures in Reading**
Following Printed Trails
(remedial reading)
Free reading

**English II--Silas Marner (optional)**
Julius Caesar (optional)
A Tale of Two Cities (optional)
Lady of the Lake or Poems for Modern Youth
Reading Is Fun! (easy reading)
Free Reading

**Practical English --Reader's Digest or a news magazine for high school students or both**
Free reading
If the recommendations incorporated in the thirteen

**Basic Aims** of the National Council of Teachers of

English are accepted, the pupils must have an opportunity to become acquainted with all the different types of

literature: novels, biographies, plays, essays, news

stories, poems, short stories, etc. The English I course

makes ample provision for these experiences and needs no

additions or changes. **Adventures in Reading** provides

excellent examples of every type of literature that should

be presented to freshman classes, and **Following Printed

Trails** may be used as a text for the teaching of remedial

reading to classes that show a need for this kind of training. Since the pupils will have an opportunity to get

acquainted with all the more common types of written

English as they study the anthology together, it will not

be necessary that the teacher be too insistent that they

choose examples of all the different types of literature

in their program of free reading also. The teacher's chief

concern during this program should be to see to it that

pupils gradually turn from adolescent books to those in-
tended for more mature readers.
In the sophomore year the literature program, as outlined in the course of study, is unbalanced; a well-rounded program is possible only through a wise choice of books during periods of free reading. There is no provision for the reading of any play other than *Julius Caesar*, which is too difficult for most vocational classes. The books provided for the teaching of poetry are adequate, but there is no provision for the teaching of essays, biographies, news articles, and short stories. It is true that examples of all these types of literature may be found in *Reading Is Fun!* but the selections are so simple that they offer no challenge to gifted classes. In the statement of the *Basic Aims* it is suggested that most of the reading be done in the field of contemporary literature rather than in the literature of the past, and that writings of Americans be given preference over the writings of Englishmen. In this case, the two novels offered for intensive study are a poor choice for they were both written almost a hundred years ago and they both have English authors.

It is suggested, therefore, that the teacher make a special effort during periods of free reading to
encourage pupils to get acquainted with the kinds of literature that are not offered for intensive class study. If *Julius Caesar* is not read by the whole class, pupils should be urged to read at least one other full-length play; and since there are no essays or short stories listed in the sophomore course of study, there should be some individualized reading in these two kinds of written English. It is not necessary to urge the average high-school student to read more contemporary American novels; he has a tendency to favor them over all other full-length books. If *Silas Marner* and *A Tale of Two Cities* are rejected for intensive class reading, pupils should be encouraged to read several other classics at some time during periods of free reading. Many high-school pupils enjoy biographies, but they do not think of turning to them of their own accord; therefore teachers should remember to recommend them more often. It is evident from the preceding suggestions that the task of the tenth-grade teacher of free reading is much more exacting than that of the ninth-grade teacher in the same school.
The Practical English course offers only meager experiences in the field of literature; therefore, a special effort should be made during the sophomore year to introduce the pupils to as many of the finer pieces of writing as they are capable of enjoying. The tenth year will be the last time during the pupils' high-school career that they will have the opportunity to read the more mature books with the help of an English teacher. Experience has shown that most freshmen favor adolescent books. Sophomores are old enough and mature enough that many of them are ready to leave the sports stories and sentimental novels for books that are more challenging to them; however, they need much help from the teacher of English as they make this transition. Les Misérables is a far cry from Gridiron Glory.

The kind of individualized reading program that is recommended for tenth-year pupils of Timken Vocational High School cannot be put into operation without better library facilities than the high school has at the present time. There should be more collections of
short stories, essays, and plays of interest to vocational students. What biographies the library owns are acceptable, but there are not enough copies that a teacher dare recommend them to many students during any one period of free reading. Until recently there were too few humorous books, such as *The Egg and I*, *Chicken Every Sunday*, *Mama's Bank Account*, *See Here*, *Private Harrgrove*, and *Mr. Winkle Goes to War*. The boys in particular have shown a preference for historical novels during 1945-1946, most of which had to be borrowed from the public library and from rental libraries. These novels are usually long and require more reading time than many of the other contemporary books; therefore, fewer students have the opportunity to enjoy them if there is just one copy of each in the school building. Timken, like many other secondary schools in the United States, suffers from inadequate library facilities.

Robert C. Pooley makes this prophecy in regard to the school of the future:

The secondary school of the future will have a library. It will be a larger, more attractive library than we find in many schools today. There will be a
librarian, too, trained in the specific field of adolescent literature....He or she will be the intermediary between youth and books, or better still, the magnetic force to draw youth and books together. But the finest library and the most skilled librarian obtainable do not of themselves make good readers. They are there for youth to come to, but who starts the young people toward the library? Many teachers will awaken curiosity and the demand for information about facts and things: trees, plants, machines, processes, hobbies, arts, wars, and politics.¹

The teachers of English are ready to assume the major responsibility and sustaining this interest in books; but they cannot do the job alone. They will need the help of all the other teachers in the school.

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