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THE USE OF INFORMATIVE THEMES IN THE READING
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IN GRADES FOUR THROUGH TWELVE.

The Ohio State University, Ph.D., 1970
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THE USE OF INFORMATIVE THEMES IN THE READING ANTHOLOGIES FOR THE TEACHING OF COMPOSITION IN GRADES FOUR THROUGH TWELVE

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Theresa Anne Fechek, B.S., M.A.

The Ohio State University
1970

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INTRODUCTION

Living in an age consisting of complex communications in which knowledge has increased to enormous proportions, educators have important responsibilities for developing techniques and materials to teach their students improved ways of communicating information accurately and in an organized manner. Palmer defines information as "experience which has been boiled down and crystallized into a set of concepts and regularities, usually expressed in words but sometimes in the form of maps, charts, numbers, or other symbols."\(^1\) From his point of view, information embodies the ordered experience of the human race. Also, he considers a well-balanced education to be one in which experience and information are partners. On the other hand, Rapoport states that "reliable knowledge is knowledge which corresponds to experience."\(^2\) Often, inaccuracies in the contents and the manner in which information is learned can confuse the children and adults whose response to these verbal representations of reality can become distorted. Inaccurate, metaphorical,

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\(^1\)Richard Palmer, "Experience, and the Mass Media,"

archaic, connotative, emotive, obsolete, and symbolic language are means for misrepresentation in one's own verbal awareness.

When fiction and nonfiction prose are classified separately with the former representing experience and the latter conveying accurate, precise information, there seem to be few opportunities for distorting verbal reality; however, one might question verbal realities when nonfiction prose today includes book reviews, newspaper editorials, essays, research reports, term papers, newspaper articles, diaries, autobiographies, biographies, travelogues, political speeches, and narrative factual prose. It is necessary then to question these general classifications in order to decide what types of nonfiction prose can be categorized as precise, explicit informative prose and what types combine information with judgment, inferences, and opinions.

Unless these distinctions between information and experience, between concrete and abstract words, and between fact and fiction are taught frequently and thoroughly, the programs for the teaching of communication skills will weaken considerably.
In 1946, Johnson expressed his concern that problems in the language development of children often continue during their adult years. He wrote:

In order to insure that a child will become a maladjusted adult, he should be trained to confuse the levels of abstraction. So trained, he will indulge persistently in unconscious projection; he will overgeneralize as a matter of course; he will be relatively tense, resentful, and self-defensive in general; he will fail frequently to differentiate sufficiently between past and present, between one situation, person or experience and another. He will attempt to solve his problems of which he will have a great number, not by trying to state clearly and be taking personal responsibility for obtaining reliable factual answers to his own well-hewn questions—but by trusting in a childish way the pills, platitudes, and diverse prescriptions of anyone whom he has been trained to regard as an authority.3

Johnson's concern for distinguishing levels of abstraction in a person's language patterns was later discussed by Helmkep as a result of her experiments at the University of Chicago Laboratory School. In experiments for the teaching of writing to tenth-grade students, she devised the concept of the abstraction ladder in which words are classified into steps ranging from the bottom level at which words are placed at the level of objective reality to the top level of the highest levels of abstraction at which words and meanings become vague and blurred to the writer and reader. As one increases his classes of words

to the highest level of abstraction, the specifics become less noted also. One of the discoveries by the tenth-grade students in the experiment in which they wrote themes using the "language of report" was that close observation and complete reporting of verifiable facts can result in vivid writing and effective word pictures.\textsuperscript{1} Experiments such as this one need to be conducted with students in the intermediate and junior high schools. These are important stages of verbal development in the reporting of verifiable facts especially.

Church expresses the "need to find out whether logically defined parts of speech correspond to classes of experience."\textsuperscript{2} The concern in his study for a person's cognitive development from early years reinforces the need for balance in one's awareness of both information and experience. In conclusion to his theoretical discussion on language and reality, Church states that "sound cognitive development occurs in a context of communication (not merely of factual information) but of the feeling states that are characteristically human."\textsuperscript{3} The importance of verbal expressions


of reality and their relationship to experience seems to be recognized by scholars studying in many different disciplines.

The necessity for encouraging students from the fourth grade through the college years to communicate information accurately seems to be of the utmost importance; therefore one major objective for this research study is to study this problem as research in the use of factual materials in the curriculum for recommending ways to help students learn to develop their skill in reading these materials and in writing informative themes through "learning the content, studying the form or presentation, increasing the knowledge of the verbal tools used, studying the concrete drawing or object, adding new words, and practicing the form with another similar topic and using another set of vocabulary."7 Other objectives are to know principles of efficient reading and writing, to handle factual terms which require different arrangements for presenting information adequately, to gather information, to classify knowledge, and to synthesize the information into well-designed themes.

CHAPTER I

PROBLEM OF THIS STUDY

Background of the Problem

The success of any program in reading and writing in the elementary and secondary schools depends not only upon the number of students whose competence is rated high according to test results but also upon the quality of their choices, the variety in their choices, and their balance of reading in both factual and imaginative materials. In many cases, because the major sources of these materials which are used for the purpose of providing balance in factual and imaginative materials are the basal readers and the reading anthologies used in many public schools, the teachers can help their students to recognize and to study the language through their selections of fiction, poetry, drama, and nonfiction prose in these textbooks.

In school districts located in states and counties where funds for materials and equipment are limited, the textbooks that are used generally include the subject matter which represents the curriculum in language arts, literature, and composition. For the teaching of reading, the basal readers for the elementary students
are the major textbooks. The Harvard Report on Reading in the
Elementary Schools reports that the "basal readers with their
accompanying manuals and workbooks are used more extensively than
any other materials."¹ In the junior and senior high schools,
literature anthologies are the textbooks which are used frequently.
If there are additional funds allotted for improvement of reading
skills, materials such as reading laboratories, controlled readers,
skills workbooks, periodicals, weekly news magazines, dictionaries,
skill builders, companion series, and classroom sets of supplementary
books are then purchased.

In many school districts where funds for additional materials
and equipment are limited, the teachers often view the textbook con­
taining the content representing the quality and quantity of the
prose and poetry that is studied as the learning instrument through
which they work with the textbook authors as partners for the
benefit of all students; consequently the materials within these
books are significant for maintaining a coordinated program from
kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Since these basal readers and the literature anthologies are
used by elementary and secondary teachers for teaching students to
mature in their comprehension of reading, vocabulary development,

¹Mary C. Austin and Coleman Morrison, The First R: The
Harvard Report on Reading in Elementary Schools (New York: The
ability to utilize powers of observation, and personal reading habits and choices of books, there is a need in the textbooks for a specific form of prose that reports verifiable, explicit, and accurate facts in an organized manner as distinguished from prose that conveys inferences, judgments, fantasy, opinions, interpretations, and exaggerations. If employed, these forms might be useful for intensive reading whereby the students could concentrate upon details, a systematic vocabulary suitable to the particular topic, and the design of the presentation arranged in forms which might be chronological, temporal, spatial, or descriptive and presented from the impersonal, objective point of view. These forms also could be examples for students in Grades Four through Twelve to read carefully in order to compose themes containing factual information. The students could read about a variety of topics presented in the anthologies. The results of their efforts might aid them in seeing verbal structures clearly and in increasing their own awareness and knowledge of specific systems of related vocabulary.

For discussion purposes in this study, this form of prose will be called the informative theme. The informative theme is a brief, formal composition consisting of facts limited to one specific topic, organized in a set form suitable to that topic, and written in an objective, impersonal manner as an exercise for communicating precise information without inferences, judgments,
interpretations, or opinions. One function of a reading textbook should be related to composition by including some informative themes as a part of the total content to increase the proportion of nonfiction materials representative in the series. Often, the student who has access to reference books, newspapers, and other sources of knowledge is assisted in increasing his vocabulary growth systematically. These sources of information provide him with an increased awareness of meaning through which this student can disclose his observations accurately and realistically. In many schools, these sources are not available.

At the same time the students mature while progressing through stages of varying reading interests and abilities, they should also mature simultaneously in their stages of ability for writing well-organized factual themes. With limitations in factual information only, students can write themes in many different forms such as those depicting a unity of time or place, spatial organization, classification, and description. Combining specific concrete ideas about one topic and arranging these ideas in a particular type of form, the textbook author would be able to include a variety of worthwhile examples of informative themes presented in an impersonal manner. This would also increase the proportion of nonfiction prose in the reading textbooks.

If informative themes were available at all grade levels in the reading program, the teacher's guidance in assisting the student
in intensive study of this form might play a major part in achieving the purposes for the use of informative themes in the textbooks. While poetry signifies connotative responses, the purpose of the informative theme would be to elicit denotive responses from all who read them.

Statement of the Problem

Because reading for specific information and reading for vicarious experience should be two major purposes of any school program in reading, there is a need in the curriculum from the elementary years through the secondary years for a balance in the selection of representative materials to achieve both of these purposes. This study will seek to find what kinds of informative materials are available throughout the reading series, to determine how these articles are presented, and to find what percentage of informative materials are available in textbooks ranging from Grades Four through Twelve and the average lengths of these informative articles. Based upon the results, recommendations and suggestions will be offered for future work in the development of informative themes for reading textbooks.

By suggesting that the materials for the reading and literature program in the schools might be improved with informative themes in the reading textbooks in Grades Four through Twelve, the writer believes that with the uses of these materials as a part of
the curriculum, the students' communication skills and language development would be improved with their reading and writing competence. Coordination, continuity, and balance of fiction and nonfiction in the reading textbooks are necessary for the improvement of communication. In order to make these recommendations, one needs to know what quantity and quality of informative materials are available in these books at the present time.

Procedures of the Study

Through analysis of the informative contents in five series amounting to sixty-three basic readers, literature anthologies, and several companion series used consecutively in Grades Four through Twelve, the writer will count the number and types of informative articles, the number of pages, and the percentage of pages of informative articles in each book. An additional table will show the average length of words per article in each textbook in the study. The premise is that there are few examples of informative articles which could be classified as informative themes. Informative articles are any forms of composition for presenting information about general or specific subjects of any length from an impersonal point of view. Informative themes are brief formal compositions consisting of facts limited to one specific topic, organized in a set-form suitable to that topic, and written in an
objective, impersonal manner as an exercise for communicating precise information without inferences, judgments, interpretations, or opinions.

As a result of the findings from the content analysis of informative articles, a suggested plan of organization listing standards for developing types of informative themes to be recommended for use in the readers and anthologies will be presented. This plan will be an application of this thesis stating the need for informative themes as a part of the available materials in the reading textbooks to be used as models for factual writing. Details regarding the exact procedures in this study will be discussed in the next chapter.

The major objective of this research is to devise a means for coordinating materials needed for teaching skills in communicating written information accurately.

The primary concern of the writer is that students should learn to identify in their reading textbooks specific subjects presented with exact, accurate vocabulary in different forms of a sufficient length suitable to their stages of reading and writing development. By reading these particular types of themes, students can learn to collect new information and systems of language which would increase their verbal proficiency and understanding. One might assume that children gain confidence when they see that they
can progress in their abilities to write in greater length and with better organization and structure.

Need for the Study

With the success of a reading program being dependent upon the quality and variety of students' choices of reading materials and the balance both in factual and in imaginative materials, the major questions concern the availability of materials and methods used to conduct a research study in order to determine the situation. A lack of knowledge about the appropriateness of the reading materials used predominantly by teachers and students in the elementary through high schools can lead to needless repetition, lack of coordination, and eventually a weakening of the total curriculum. If textbook series are used as the predominant part of the program, the researcher needs to evaluate one or more categories of the materials in the most recently published books in order to make recommendations for their improvement if such is needed. To decide upon the coordination throughout all the grades and the balance of materials with attention to the total curriculum, both elementary and secondary books need to be perused. Westbury expresses his concern regarding the "infrequent appearances of evaluations of actual curricula or curricular materials in either the research or the subject journals listed in the 1969 Review of Educational Research."²

Not only should materials be evaluated for selection purposes but also for the quantity and quality of the materials and the worth of them.

Many research studies of reading as a discipline to be taught to all students have included students' attitudes to reading, their interests, preferences, tastes, habits, skills in comprehension, and others. King questions whether children's reading interests can be effectively studied with limited reading materials, pointing out that the findings need to be considered according to what reading materials are actually available. Mingoia classified five groups of children ranging from the outstanding to the poor in reading abilities and stated the types of research questions appropriate for study of the effectiveness of the basal readers for these children. The two major goals rarely evaluated for research purposes were those "of interpreting what is read in terms of personal experiences and of becoming critical of the appropriateness and worth of what is read."^4

Having chosen to analyze basic readers and literature anthologies for the study of a specific type of materials classified as informative articles, the writer seeks to find the types of changes that have been made in the materials since 1960, a period of ten

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4E. M. Mingoia, "Classifying Development in Reading for Teaching and Research," Education, LXXVIII(February, 1968), 266.
years, in five series of books ranging from Grades Four through
Twelve to find out what types and what amount of informative
articles are available and to recommend a specific set-form for
all levels.

In 1963, a questionnaire survey of selected aspects of the
content and conduct of reading instruction in all school systems
located in cities and counties throughout the United States where
the population exceeded ten-thousand was completed. Included in
this survey were interviews with administrative officers and teachers
and observations in elementary school classrooms in a representative
sample of school systems. The Harvard Report contained forty-five
recommendations for the teaching of reading at the elementary level.
Referring to the controversy regarding the decisions about content,
one recommendation concerning research for this type of study
urges that

publishers of basal books, in conjunction with
a research group such as the National Conference on
Research in English, make an extensive examination
and re-evaluation of the contents of such books; and
if there is evidence supporting a need for change,
modifications of their materials and suggested pro-
cedures should be made in keeping with the study.5

Similar questions for research in reading were stated in
Hunnicutt and Iverson's list of research questions taken from a
bulletin called Areas of Research Interest in the Language Arts.
Types of questions asked about the reading of the essay or article

5Austin, 224.
were: Who reads these types? When and where do they read them? How many are available and in what books? Concerning writing, some questions were: Are there any trends in the present writing or reading habits? How often do students write? In what styles? Concerning information and communication, the questions were: At what age and by what means might they develop the ability to distinguish between facts and judgments? At what age and by what means might they develop the ability to organize data into prescribed patterns or forms of written communication? These are some of the questions the writer seeks to answer through the use of content analysis techniques used for communications studies.

Definitions of Terms

The following terms used throughout the study are defined specifically as they relate to the context of the investigation.

1) **Accuracy.** Accuracy means a correspondence of statement with fact or reality which requires that words used in communication have the same meaning.

2) **Basal readers.** Basal readers are used for instruction in reading and usually are a part of a grade series. In this study, the grade levels range from Grades Four through Eight.

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3) **Content Analysis.** Content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the readily perceived content of communication.  

4) **Form.** Form is a relatively invariable, set pattern for the execution of a work of art.  

5) **Informative articles.** Informative articles are any forms of composition for presenting information about general or specific subjects of any length from an impersonal point of view. In this analysis of content, informative articles included general and explanatory articles about a variety of topics in categories such as science, biology, zoology, cybernetics, space travel, aeronautics, language, geography, expeditions, sports, and architecture. Also included were reprints of newspaper reports and explanatory introductions about social history preceding literary and historical periods.  

6) **Informative themes.** An informative theme is a brief formal composition consisting of facts limited to one specific topic, organized in a set-form suitable to that topic, limited in word length, and written in an objective, impersonal manner as an exercise for communicating precise information without inferences, judgments, interpretations, or opinions.

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7) **Literature anthologies.** Literature anthologies are books of reading selections chosen for their excellence of expression and general interest.

8) **Orders of abstracting.** Orders of abstracting are steps or levels involved in the process of developing successively broader generalizations. The abstracting proceeds from more detailed and specific levels or orders to higher levels by a process of leaving out details.9

9) **Textbooks.** Textbooks are books dealing with a definite subject of study, systematically arranged, intended for use at a specified level of instruction, and used as a principal source of study material for a given course. In this study, basal readers and literature anthologies are considered reading textbooks.

**Limitation of the Problem**

Five series of basal readers and literature anthologies, Grades Four through Twelve, were used for this study. Several sets of supplementary and companion series were also examined since they are used for students who have difficulties in reading. All textbooks were published from 1960 to the present and the most recent revision in most cases was used. The texts of these volumes were analyzed for the percentage of pages of informative articles defined in the previous section. Besides the percentage of pages, the number of

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articles and pages containing informative articles were tallied.
The average number of words in each article was approximated and
the average length of articles in each book was determined and placed
on one table. Sixty-three books were analyzed.

Assumptions

It is assumed that at each grade level, there is a minimum
amount of specific, factual materials which represent forms suitable
for the students to use as models for writing informative themes.

It is assumed that the average lengths of the majority of
articles analyzed exceed the usual required minimum lengths ranging
from three-hundred to eight-hundred words for the students' require­
ments in writing themes for school assignments.

Organization of this Study

Justifying a need for basic research in the macro or total
design of the curriculum, Eash has identified eight macro-curriculum
design problems. From these eight problems which he lists, four
significant design problems concern this research. They are:

1. Assessment of internal and external pressures to effect
change in parts of the curriculum and the impact on
the total curriculum design.

2. Balance: concern for relationships of general education
to special education, vicarious and firsthand experiences,
product and process learnings.
3. Continuity: preserving and expanding threads of experiences from grade level to grade level and lower school to upper school, observing principles of learning in concept presentation allowing for structural development of fields of inquiry.

4. Coordination: concern for commonalities as well as duplications with emphasis on wholeness in the curricular experiences for the student as he pursues the various subject areas.\(^{10}\)

Recognizing the possibility of a need for including informative themes in the reading anthologies and a plan for developing these materials in the future according to these four macro-curriculum design problems, the writer will discuss these problems in Chapter Two as they relate to this study. The review of literature relating to textbooks in the curriculum and content analysis and methodology of the investigation will be included.

Chapters Three, Four, and Five will describe the findings from the analysis of the textbooks. Chapter Three will include the findings and a discussion of the study of the basal readers and companion series used in the intermediate grades. Chapter Four will include the findings of the study of the basal readers, companion series, and literature anthologies at the seventh, eighth, and ninth-grade levels. Chapter Five will include the findings of the study of the reading anthologies and companion series at the senior high level.

\(^{10}\)Maurice J. Eash, "Supervision: A Vanishing Breed?," Educational Leadership, XXVI, No. 1(October, 1968), 79.
Chapter Six will include proposed criteria for future developments of informative themes and a plan of organization for recommendations for use in the reading textbooks from Grades Four through Twelve.

Chapter Seven will consist of conclusions and future research needed as a result of this study of informative articles in the textbooks and the recommendation for the use of informative themes.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Curriculum Research

Research and studies relating to the curriculum can be represented in many ways, some of which are macro-curriculum problems described by Eash,¹ special programs and projects, curriculum theory, development, or design, curriculum materials, and planning. Because the choices are so diverse, one should set limitations to his own research in order to acquire as much information as possible for making recommendations for improvement.

Although this study is concerned with evaluating a specific type of materials used in reading textbooks in Grades Four through Twelve, other concerns related to materials include pressures for effecting change in curriculum design, balance in the relationships of the materials to their uses by the students, continuity in the gradual growth of students in stages of reading and writing from their elementary through their high school years, and a better coordination in the relationships of the materials containing information to the procedures developed for proper use of these types of materials.

¹Eash, p. 79.
Present curricula for the teaching of reading might include a textbook series either used separately or accompanied by supplementary books and workbooks, a syllabus written by a teacher of the specific grade or course taught by that teacher, a series of objectives or goals to be achieved with choices of materials left to the teacher, or an elective course represented by a discipline such as a course in teaching composition or teaching the novel.

Some studies relating to research of materials used for the teaching of reading and composition have been significant for their thoroughness and background. In her comprehensive historical study of reading instruction in the United States, Smith describes the periods of development in reading materials depicting types of values such as religion, nationalism, and others which were emphasized since the beginning of the public schools in America and approaches to the teaching of reading in elementary and secondary schools with the types of reading materials used during the different stages of reading development. Austin and Morrison's report of a survey of the practices in teaching reading in the elementary school at the present time offers forty-five recommendations for improvements. In their study of one-hundred and fifty-eight high schools, Squire

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3Austin, et al.
and Applebee list different categories of reading and literature materials most frequently used and describe the instructional methods for presenting them. Evans and Walker describe trends in the teaching of English in secondary schools and comment upon the new materials requiring approaches to teaching language, literature, and composition as disciplines to meet the criticisms and demands for excellence in English by critics of the schools such as Rickover and Conant. Curriculum centers funded by the government have also been conducting research in order to develop materials for different purposes for the teaching of language arts and English. Shugrue reported the projects and types of curricular developments at the twenty-five study centers and demonstration centers.

Although these studies have explained the usefulness of materials in general, the recent research for the relative effectiveness of various kinds of materials or specific kinds of materials has been sparse. Through study and evaluation of informative types of reading materials in reading textbooks from Grades Four through Twelve, the writer will seek to gain more understanding about the

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continuity, balance, and coordination needed for further curriculum development and uses of specific types of materials.

Relationship of Macro-Curriculum Problems to this Study

The first design problem, described as internal and external pressures for effecting change in parts of the curriculum should be considered in relationship to how these influences might determine the balance, continuity, and coordination needed for establishing a well-unified curriculum.

Ewer and Latorre present reasons for a need for materials useful in providing instruction in the kind of English required by students in the scientific disciplines. This article resulted from their experiments at the University of Chile for development of an extensive reading program in nonfictional literature (including science). They reported that according to UNESCO, English is now established as the principal international language of science. The major points to be established are the kind of linguistic material to be provided, the amount of material to be included, and the way this is to be presented. Trying to find ways to create or acquire these materials has been one of the authors' problems. Although this point of view is an international one, the tendency to associate informative writing with scientific topics can result from this type of pressure.

J. R. Ewer and G. Latorre, "Preparing an English Course for Students of Science," English Language Teacher, XXI (May, 1956), 223.
On the other hand, Lynch and Evans, after examination of high school English textbooks, stated that the neglect of literature was the greatest fault in textbooks. In their opinion, all activities in the teaching of English must evolve around literature as the topic to be studied with all composition directly related to writing about literature.

Discussing the importance of fashioning a means of communicating knowledge that will serve more adequately the needs of our times, White states that "the communications pattern of a political democracy of the future will require not only the ability to read, but the ability and the will to read more complex materials and to understand more complex patterns." Other critics present arguments for courses which are necessary for utilitarian purposes, especially vocational purposes rather than artistic or aesthetic purposes. Before making recommendations for change, one should assess these pressures for change thoroughly and carefully and seek ways to find adequate evidence regarding the recommendations.

Developing a better balance in the curriculum design requires attention in the teaching of language arts, composition, grammar, and literature relative to the proportion of time which can be spent

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for this instruction. Cultivating a variety of reading interests and developing an appreciation of good literature are goals to achieve a better balance between reading for information and reading for experience. Any possible subject can be included in informative materials and in this study, informative materials are not identified only with scientific topics.

In his report from the Dartmouth Conference, Muller referred to this particular attitude. He regarded this distinction between literature and science as a question concerning how to "bridge the gap between the personal and impersonal." The members of the conference did not resolve the question of the English teacher's role in teaching impersonal writing. Neither did they discuss the means for teaching composition to students interested in science.

Ewer and Latorre succinctly state their concerns regarding this imbalance in the following:

. . . Most of these courses all over the world have an overwhelmingly 'literary' content and approach, largely due to the fact that both textbook writers and teachers are traditionally trained exclusively on the arts side. However, in the light of the actual uses which pupils make of their knowledge of English in adult life, viz., to deal with business correspondence, catalogues, technical handbooks, newspaper and magazine articles, or (in the case under discussion) scientific literature, it is obvious that in most cases there is an urgent need for a more balanced distribution of subject-matter between the 'everyday,' the literary, and the technico-scientific.


11Ewer and Latorre, 228.
Although this might be the case with the materials available for teaching English as a second language, one of the purposes of this study is to discover to what extent informative materials are used in reading textbooks from Grades Four through Twelve.

Continuity, the third curriculum design problem, is important for this study because accessibility to materials is necessary for establishing some form of continuity from one grade level to the next and especially during the transitions from one grade to the next and especially during the transitions from elementary school to junior high school and to senior high school. What materials are selected for the textbooks and how these materials are presented can either lessen or increase the difficulties during these periods of changes in the students' education.

Assuming that the textbook can provide the basis for continuity, the researchers can analyze the merits and limitations of the different types of organization plans for these books. In her article discussing the merits and limitations of textbooks, Cook justifies the use of textbooks for the reasons that the average teacher lacks the ability to organize materials in a satisfactory total design and that the schools are unprepared to build their own materials. Her case against the textbook's use is lack of providing for individual differences and "cover the book" learning.12

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Expressing his concern for the transition period when individual reading declines in Grade Nine, Diederich recommends that the publishers and anthologists "should provide books . . . that bridge the gap between juvenile and adult reading by easy stages, and that furnish guides to interpretation and teaching."\(^{13}\)

By studying several series of books, one can look for similar characteristics and decide if adequate provisions are made to insure a reasonable amount of continuity.

Coordination, the fourth design problem with which this study is concerned, characterizes the selection and arrangement of courses designed to achieve the goals of the program. Redding presents his view about the decisions needed for improvement of the textbooks in the future:

What is now needed is a reaffirmation of the place of the book in teaching, as well as in a series of essentially constructive proposals from the schools to the publishers which will help shape patterns of the books of the future. Whether these books are to be large or small, bound in paper or cloth, issued singly or in series, colorful or austerely black and white, programmed or traditional, singular in purpose or designed for a variety of uses, made to stand alone or created to be used in conjunction with other teaching aids—all these answers must come from the schools.\(^{14}\)


In this paper, Redding was alluding to the many changes in publishing practices due to the mergers of many companies since 1959. According to him, the publishers' concern is to make books with "sufficient intrinsic merit to capture the imagination of large segments of all the educational market."\(^1\)\(^5\) As a result, the textbook industry has become more influential during the last ten years.

Stating the need for research to give directions or guidelines for changes in textbooks, Zimet assigns the responsibility for this task to the education profession. He states:

\[\ldots\text{Research scholars' tasks are to follow through on ideas generated by teachers and researchers and to develop and improve research methods and techniques. Communication of the significant results to educators, to authors of children's books, and to publishers of instructional materials should then become the responsibility of the education profession.}\]\(^1\)\(^6\)

In order to provide communication with the education profession, the American Textbook Publishers' Institute was established. Some of the purposes of this Institute are to provide a clearing house for ideas and recommendations by both educators and publishers for more effective use of printed materials and to stimulate research directly affecting the use of such materials and to cooperate in every way possible with

\(^1\)\(^5\)\textit{Ibid.}, p. 4.

educational authorities and citizens in sound educational planning.\textsuperscript{17} Since there have been many mergers of companies, one might assume that maintaining this cooperation may become increasingly more difficult in the years to come.

The role of the textbook in instruction, especially in reading instruction, is a major issue in education today and the topic in many articles in periodicals. The function of the textbook, based upon principles of its organization, is to present organized knowledge in a selected, orderly way.

Criteria for textbook preparation relate to selection of the material, organization, presentation, style, and accuracy. The problems in preparing a reading series are indeed complex. Limiting one's research to a specific category of materials throughout a series can be useful for studying these four macro-curriculum design problems.

Content Analysis and Reading Textbooks

"Content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of readily perceived content of communication.\textsuperscript{18} This particular research technique has been an important method for the study of communications during the past thirty years. Often journalists have used this type of research for


\textsuperscript{18}Berelson, p. 18.
analyzing bias in newspapers, propaganda in mass media or quanti-itative studies relating to values of organizations determined by the number of times a specific idea was mentioned and with what words or terms.

Textbook analysis has often been associated with the use of a form for selection of textbooks by school personnel. This form might include a series of categories and subcategories. Also, some method is utilized for determining quantitatively through numerical ratings the quality and contents of the textbook. Malmstrom's guide to this type of systematic analysis of a language textbook includes the major headings as follows: Authority and Reliability of Authors, Physical Format, Diction and Style, Adaptability, Motivation of Students, The Teaching of Usage, The Teaching of Grammar, The Teaching of Communication Skills, The Teaching of Communication Applications, and The Teaching of Rhetoric. This particular rating was limited to language textbooks and literature textbooks were not considered. In Social Education, a list of categories was developed for the evaluation of social studies textbooks in which the authors divided the points to be considered for judging books into "Definites" and "Indefinites." Under the category of "Definites" were listed such items as page format, binding, maps, illustrations, and availability of manuals and others. Under the category of "Indefinites," the content was classified into five major categories followed with

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questions about these groups: style, scholarship, organization, teaching aids, and philosophy. Content analysis which concerns the "Indefinites" requires special skills in designing the textbook research for quantitative, systematic, and objective study.20

A third type of analysis of textbooks is related to the work of the International Textbook Institute at Braunschweig, Germany. The purpose of this organization is to evaluate and to improve history and other social studies textbooks. Sponsored by the German Teachers Association and founded in 1947, the members qualitatively analyze textbooks used internationally and recommend improvements in scholarship for factual reliability and points of view relative to peaceful coexistence, international understanding, and others.21

Morrisset and Stevens recognize that the two major sources of information about curricula are examination of materials and classroom experience.22 They present a guide for acquiring these types of information and stress the urgency for research especially for improvement of urban schools.


A bibliography by Finkelstein and others has included studies of the social, moral, political, and intellectual content of materials written for school use, as well as materials such as books which children or youth might read. The authors agree that books and textbooks of a nation embody, in some measure, the ideals, aspirations, dreams, taboos, and values which an older generation seeks to transmit to a younger one.23 Much of the work presently being done in content analysis of textbooks seems to be research in social studies and in the social sciences.

Before discussing the methodology for the content analysis of this study, other types of textbook analyses should be listed and some further examples of specific studies done in social studies, language, and reading should be given. Rummel writes about a group of seven types of textbook study and after these types are listed, descriptions of studies which use these types of analyses follow. These categories are: Frequency of concepts, kinds of concepts, classification of techniques, tracing of historical trends, status studies based on definite criteria, studies of errors, distortions, and biases in printed materials and story content studies.24

Cogan used frequency of concepts in his thesis in which he searched for frequency and types of specific concepts and related

economic ideas in five series of twenty-six elementary social studies textbooks. Some of those concepts which he listed and counted were scarcity, resources, and income. \(^{25}\) Although much of his analysis after his defining of terms was somewhat subjective, he did establish some specific standards to complete his systematic and quantitative analysis. In her study relating to kinds of concepts, Williams analyzed ten series consisting of eighty basic readers for critical reading skills totaling one-hundred eighty-six skills. She listed thirty-three skills and the number of series which contained these skills. Findings and implications for teaching were listed as resulting from this study. \(^{26}\)

Using classification of techniques, Smith made an analysis of fifty-two science textbooks, sixty social studies textbooks, forty-nine mathematics textbooks, and forty-five literature textbooks to learn whether or not there might be special patterns of writing in the content of other subject fields. The study included analyses of questions, directions, explanations, and various types of exercises that the books contained. These aids were used because they are indicative of the ways in which the subject specialist wants


students to think and work with materials in that special field.
Different patterns of writing were described.  

A special study for the purpose of investigating psychological
variables to predict the cultural changes observed in the United
States from 1800-1952 was done by deCharms and Moeller. Four
reading books for each twenty year period at the fourth-grade level
were scored for achievement imagery, affiliation imagery, and moral
teaching based upon Riesman's inner-directed and other-directed
types.  

A final example of content analysis was a survey of eight
sets of language textbooks completed by Slothower. His purpose was
to answer a series of four general questions about the contents in
the books. He especially stressed the responsibility of the teachers
to know the book and the series well and to be selective in the uses
of these materials.  

This technique of content analysis research seemed suitable for
this particular study and thus an explanation of the specific method-
ology for the analysis of basic readers and literature anthologies
from Grades Four through Twelve will follow.

27Nila Banton Smith, "Patterns of Writing in Different Subject
Areas," Critical Reading, ed. Martha King, et al., (Philadelphia:
R. deCharms and G. Moeller, "Values Expressive in American
William R. Slothower, "Language Textbooks: a Survey,"
English Journal, LIV, No. 1(January, 1965), 8-16.
Methodology of this Study

With the informative theme defined as a recommended type for use in the reading textbooks, the major problem for designing a form of content analysis was to find a way to determine in an objective and systematic way what kinds of informative articles are in the reading textbooks.

One particular reason for selecting the informative theme as a possibility for recommendation was to originate the idea that a specific single topic can be written in a set-form suitable to the topic and have a definite function which is to help students develop in their minds a verbal picture in the systematic way which is represented in the theme. A set-form in a literary type "characterized by invariable structure, organization, and style." Although these particular characteristics of a set-form may seem insignificant and uncreative for children and adolescents, recognition of verbal realities precedes higher levels of thinking and perhaps this would be most useful from the elementary through the high school years. Constructing a theme in which the style, organization, and structure represent a type of verbal reality for the reader can be beneficial to all those who use the textbooks.

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Before the specific details are given about the way this analysis of informative materials was pursued, the writer finds it necessary to define several problems which had to be resolved before the study was undertaken.

Prior to this study, decisions had to be made for distinguishing informative articles from the remainder of the nonfiction prose in order to decide whether one could use the essay or article as a set-form for the analysis. It was necessary also to find factual materials for particular grade levels and to determine, in some cases whether the materials did or did not contain inferences, opinions, and judgments. These decisions were necessary in order to establish quantitative percentages of informative articles.

Lynch and Evans listed miscellaneous materials found in textbooks such as biographical sketches, biographies and autobiographies, descriptive sketches, excerpts from accounts of true adventures, excerpts from scientific books, newspaper and magazine articles, extracts from journals and diaries, letters and excerpts from letters, orations, addresses, excerpts from political documents, and extracts from reference works.31 Fowler expressed concern for putting the heading, nonfiction, in a section of the textbook and including everything as parts of biographies, excerpts from essays

31 Lynch and Evans, p. 71.
without specifying the particular form, and articles either partially factual or poorly-organized. She does make a distinction between formal and informal types of essays and notes differences in subject, style, and structure.\textsuperscript{32}

One element seldom considered is the blending of fiction and nonfiction. These types of works are called either factual prose, narrative factual prose, or prose narratives. One textbook publishing company promoting its program for this "blend" or for using nonfiction articles written in a fictional style stated in its brochure that since the poor reader has to be enticed to read, this "enticement is most complete when fiction is the mainstay of his diet."

Trying to limit the study to essays and articles proved even more difficult since there were many disagreements as to the definition of essays and articles. Fowler makes a distinction between literary essays and expository prose. In her opinion, expository prose "provides most of the material used in teaching reading for comprehension and much of what we use to teach the principles of writing, speaking, and listening ..."\textsuperscript{32}

Carlin talks about modern essays in connection with articles and feature stories in a newspaper. His directions to teachers are

\textsuperscript{33}Ibid., p. 311.
to introduce them as articles and then make clear later that these expressions of ideas are called essays. Other persons who discussed essays and articles referred to the personal opinions and moods being conveyed to the reader by the writer and regarded the essay as a conversation form in which the essayist talks to the reader.

After much deliberation, the eventual decision was to use only those materials presented from an objective, impersonal point of view in styles which explain or describe rather than narrative forms employing the first person point of view.

An analysis of the textbooks for the informative contents in five major series and four supplementary series of reading textbooks totaling sixty-three books was designed to provide the number of informative articles in each book, the total number of pages containing these articles, and the percentage of pages of articles based upon the total number of pages in each book. The approximate number of words was tabulated for each article and the average length of the articles in each book was computed. The basis for the selection of the books was to have major companies represented and to include supplementary texts for purposes of comparison to see if more factual articles are represented in supplementary series for special reading purposes. The textbooks were either published for the first time or...

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34 Jerome Carlin, "This I Believe about the Essay," *English Journal*, 51, No. 6 (September, 1962), 410.
revised editions from 1960 to the present. As previously stated, preference was given to the most recent edition. To provide continuity within a series, the complete series was used when available.

The factual informative materials include impersonal approaches by authors as they tell about specific or general topics in categories such as science, biology, zoology, cybernetics, space travel, aeronautics, historical landmarks, types of communication, geography, expeditions, weather, sports, architecture, and others, reprints from newspaper reports, explanatory introductions to units in literature which include commentaries about social history or descriptions about the reprints of paintings by great artists, and excerpts from books and periodicals. The impersonal style is one of the most important characteristics which helped to determine this decision for what materials to include.

Materials excluded from the percentage results were biographical sketches, narrative factual material, personal diaries, exercises of the workbook type for the teaching of composition, exercises in dictionary work, preliminary talks from the author of the text who gives explanations about the literary form or the materials to be read, or explanations placed after the work or poem, annotated bibliographies of books to be read, biographies and autobiographies of great persons, fictionalized articles containing facts, articles which describe procedures for telling
how to build or create some idea, and critical reviews about literature.

Factual reliability regarding the informative materials in the textbook used for this study was not tested.

The next three chapters will report the findings of this analysis.
CHAPTER III

INFORMATIVE ARTICLES IN READING TEXTBOOKS

GRADES FOUR, FIVE, AND SIX

In this chapter, the results of the data collected from the analysis of five series of basal readers and two series of companion readers used in Grades Four, Five, and Six are presented in Table 1. Each series is arranged alphabetically according to the publishing company, with basal readers and companion series listed following the name of the company.

The results of the information collected from these seven series are found in Table 1. In this table are the three headings: Grade Four, Grade Five, and Grade Six. For each of these grades, specific information was collected related to the following questions:

1) How many informative articles were found in each book?
2) How many pages of informative articles were there?
3) What was the percentage of the pages of informative articles in each reading textbook?

In order for this information to be presented systematically, each series will be described and the findings presented quantitatively. Other findings regarding the styles of presentation, topics used in the articles, and general organization of the textbooks will be given.
Following the discussion of these findings, a summary of the results within each grade will be given and some significant relationships to the general findings will follow.

Description, Findings, and Organization of Each Series

The Sheldon Basic Reading Series, first published by Allyn and Bacon, Inc. in 1957, was revised in 1963 and again in 1968. The latter edition was used for this study. This series runs from Kindergarten through Grade Eight.

Percentages of informative articles in the Sheldon Series were two per cent in Grade Four, thirteen per cent in Grade Five, and two per cent in Grade Six. Each book is organized around major themes such as "Animal Friends," or "Friends to the North," in Grade Five or "Adventure All Around" in Grade Six. The emphasis on travel to different parts of the world and upon history tend to account for this larger number in the fifth grade.

General categories of topics used in all the articles were ancient people, archaeology, early Indians, growth of American industry, history of language, ranchers, stamp collecting, the space monkey, Project Sealab, and the history of the banana industry. In some cases specific persons were identified as authors of the articles and in one case, an article was adapted from another article.

The intermediate textbooks called The Read Series, published in 1968 by American Book Company, were developed for Grades One
### TABLE 1. - The number of informative articles and pages and percentages of pages of informative articles in reading textbooks in the intermediate grades

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<td>Basic Reading Series</td>
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<td>Scott, Foresman and Co.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basic Reading Series</td>
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through Six. In each textbook in this series, approximately seventy
to ninety pages are used as exercises for developing special skills
in reading and writing and for discussing stories.

Percentages for the informative articles were sixteen per cent
in Grade Four, six per cent in Grade Five, and ten per cent in Grade
Six. The pattern of the organization of the series consists of large
divisions such as "Sports," "Space Stories," or "Machines," which
set the theme for the materials to be read. General subjects about
which informative articles were written in the fourth-grade textbook
includes space research, brief articles about words and language,
spiders, underwater exploration, cars, and chimpanzees. In the other
two grades, some topics written about were Telstar, insects, heli­
copter cops, penicillin, the deep sea, machines, and the new Metro­
politan Opera House.

In style, the articles were not as lengthy and were more
frequent than in the Sheldon Series previously analyzed. Some of
the articles were excerpted or adapted from informational books such
as Ley's Our Work in Space and Poole's Frontiers of Science.

The Ginn Basic Readers, first published in 1948-49, have been
revised several times. The present edition, the 100 Edition, was
published in 1966; the series program covers first through the
eighth grades.

Because this particular series uses a narrative style or
nonfiction articles written in a fictional style in presenting
the stories and the factual materials, the percentages for Grades Four and Five were zero. In Grade Six, however, there were four informative articles. The specific content included an article about an expedition to the Antarctic, another about the sea, another about space stations, and an adaptation from *Gods, Graves, and Scholars* about archaeology.

The organization of the materials in each section centers around themes such as "Fun and Nonsense" and "Adventure Waits" in the fourth-grade book, "Bright Heritage" and "Outer Space" in the fifth-grade book, and "Rural America" and "Adventures in Living" in the sixth-grade book.

The Macmillan Company began to develop its reading series for primary grades in 1965 followed by development of the readers for the intermediate grades in 1966 and 1967.

The percentages of the informative articles vary from six per cent in Grade Four and seven per cent in Grade Five to nineteen per cent in Grade Six, which is the highest percentage of any single textbook in the intermediate grades. The eighteen articles in Grade Six were twice the total in either Grades Four or Five.

In the fourth-grade text, some of the general topics were the history of languages, dinosaurs, details about the Eskimos, a volcano, and squirrels. Included in the fifth-grade reader were articles about the early settlers, the immigration to America in 1930, railroads, clipper ships, baseball, and the state of Idaho.
In the sixth-grade reader, subjects ranged from facts about the printing press, cameras, and the desert to moon exploration and "Project Mohole," the seven seas, life of the aquanauts, the fishing industry, Pearl Harbor, the United Nations, types of scientists, elections, crystals, and computers. These particular books contained the largest number of informative articles and the range of topics seems to be the one that is also the broadest. A particular characteristic of the Macmillan Series is that each author is identified with his particular work. In some cases, there are maps and diagrams which clarify factual details; in others there are excerpts from encyclopedias.

The Macmillan Reading Program has recently introduced the 1970 Edition of its reading series, which consists of fourteen levels of development. The intermediate grades would, in the new series, be considered levels twelve, thirteen, and fourteen.

Scott, Foresman and Company is represented in this study by a basic reading series with two special series designed for specific purposes. Because the uses of informative materials may vary in amount and types, studying other series can be helpful for purposes of comparison. These series have been in the process of development since 1965. The basic reading program extends from Grade One through Grade Six. The Wide Horizons Series is provided for readers who meet and exceed the expectations of their particular grade. This series
also covers Grades One through Six. *Open Highways* is a series developed for children who are not achieving to the expectations of their grade. This series continues into Grades Seven and Eight and will be discussed also in the next chapter.

The percentages of informative materials for the basic reading series published by Scott Foresman were four per cent for Grade Four, two per cent for Grade Five, and five per cent for Grade Six. The frequency of articles included a total of twelve articles for all three books. Some of the subjects were quite specific, such as the Liberty Bell, the White House, Monarch butterflies, and the Statue of Liberty. More general topics were farm life in India, L'Enfant's Plan of Washington, D.C., and the forest. A theme for each section set the tone for the sections; such titles as "Thresholds," "Conquests," and "Frontiers" were used.

*Wide Horizons* contained fiction, biographies, or parts of stories but did not contain informative articles of the types included in this study; therefore, no percentages are given for the *Wide Horizons* Series.

Percentages for the informative articles for the *Open Highways* Series were seven per cent in Grade Four, nine per cent in Grade Five, and two per cent in Grade Six. Shorter lengths of the articles and more pictures characterize the materials in these books. General topics in the fourth-grade book were mechanical baseball pitchers, children in the White House, and dinosaurs. In book five were
articles about a little league ball team, the capture of animals
for a zoo, early days of railroading, an earthquake in Anchorage, and
types of medals awarded to servicemen. Book six had articles about
floods, falcons, and the Cooper Union.

In summarizing the patterns in each series, one might notice
from Grades Four through Six that there are few consistent patterns
of increase or decrease in the number of articles and percentages.

Summary of the Results

Some comments seem appropriate concerning the findings for
each grade and the similarities or differences among the different
series. In Grade Four, the number of articles ranges from none
to fifteen, the number of pages from none to sixty-nine, and the
percentages from none to sixteen per cent. In Grade Five, the
number of articles ranges from none to thirteen, the pages from
none to sixty-four and the percentages from none to fourteen per
cent. In Grade Six, the number of articles ranges from none to
eighteen, the number of pages from none to one-hundred and three,
and the percentage of pages from none to nineteen per cent.

Thus the quantities vary considerably from one publishing
company to another, but it is important to note that informative
articles do make up five to six per cent of the total reading
materials.
Methods of presentation of this material vary considerably according to styles of presentation of informative materials. A number of articles were taken from informational books, adapted from magazine articles, or reprinted from encyclopedias. There seemed little evidence to support the uses of any set-form for the presentation of the information.

The topics or categories about which the information was presented were quite diverse; however, the tendency to use topics relating to some type of science seemed prevalent in each textbook. Travels to both inner and outer space seemed a topic used most frequently. Since information can be about any subject, the arts were not represented except for music, which was the topic of the article written about the Metropolitan Opera House.

In some cases especially in the Open Highways Series, there were limitations in the length of the articles to approximately five-hundred words; however, many of the articles in other books exceeded a thousand words or more. (See Table 4). In this series where the length was limited, there was a tendency to limit the subject to a single topic and hence fewer abstract terms were used. Open Highways was developed for the reader with problems.

It may be noted that there was no mention or use of the word "essay," in any of the books. In some readers, there are skills programs for growth and practice in composition but the
actual representation of themes or set-forms of what is to be read is lacking.

Discussion of the possibility of using informative themes as specific forms of the reading materials will follow the analysis of informative materials which are presently in the reading textbooks at the junior and senior high school levels.
CHAPTER IV

INFORMATIVE ARTICLES IN READING TEXTBOOKS

GRADES SEVEN, EIGHT, AND NINE

In this chapter, the results of the data collected from the analysis of five series of literature anthologies and four sets of basic readers and companion books used in Grades Seven, Eight, and Nine are presented in Table 2. Each series is arranged alphabetically according to the publishing company, with basic reading textbooks, companion books, and literature anthologies listed following the name of the company.

In this table are the three headings: Grade Seven, Grade Eight, and Grade Nine. For each of these grades, specific information was collected relating to the following questions:

1) How many informative articles were found in each book?

2) How many pages of informative articles were there?

3) What was the percentage of the pages of informative articles in each reading textbook?

In order for this information to be presented systematically, each series will be described and the findings presented. Other findings regarding the styles of presentation, topics used in the articles, and general organization of the textbooks will be given. Following the discussion of these findings, a summary of the results
within each grade will be given and some significant relationships to the general findings will follow.

Description, Findings, and Organization of Each Series

Selecting different series of reading textbooks for Grades Seven, Eight, and Nine resulted in some decisions concerning the different types of series. Some of the basic reading programs continue through the eighth grade, while literature anthologies begin in either the seventh grade or the ninth grade. Companion series, such as Open Highways, New Companion Series, and the Galaxy Series, have been developed to be used for students with reading problems.

The Allyn and Bacon Series is representative of the two types of programs. The textbooks for seventh and eighth grades, published in 1968, are continuations of the basic reading program from the elementary school grades. The ninth-grade anthology is the first of a series of four high school literature anthologies. The high school series, published in 1963, has been discontinued recently.

The percentage of informative articles in all three books was minimal. There were two per cent of informative articles for the seventh grade, four per cent for the eighth grade, and one per cent for the ninth grade.
TABLE 2. - The number of informative articles and pages and percentages of pages of informative articles in reading textbooks in grades seven, eight, and nine

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General organization of the seventh and eighth-grade readers was similar to many types described in the reading textbooks. Examples are "Science in Action" and "The Sporting Way" in the seventh-grade textbook and "Man and Beast" and "In Search of Knowledge" in the eighth-grade textbook. The ninth-grade anthology was organized by types of literary forms.

Specific subjects, such as fossil hunting in the seventh grade and Krakatoa in the eighth, were few in number. The ninth-grade textbook had a biographical introduction preceding each literary selection and other types of prose but only two informative articles, one about the sea and the other about Annapolis.

The American Book Company has a sequential series of literature anthologies published in 1963. The contents are grouped into ten large units of major themes such as "Adventure in Science" or "Time for Sport." In seventh grade the percentage of informative articles was six per cent; in eighth grade, it was one per cent; and in ninth grade, eleven per cent.

One particular characteristic of the informative articles in this series was the length of each one. They usually included a wide range of vocabulary and many concepts within a single article. Some particular topics were about space, the sun, the Nautilus, chemistry and food, atomic energy, space, the atomic project, the weather satellite, plastics, and robots. Travel articles were
written from the first person point of view and were not included. The eighth-grade text was limited to only one article.

As with Allyn and Bacon's basic reading series, the basic reading textbooks published in 1967 by Ginn and Company extend to the eighth grade. Also, the company has a literature anthology series, published in 1964, which includes the seventh grade through the ninth grade. The basic readers will be discussed first. In the seventh-grade textbook, the percentage of informative articles is seven per cent. Articles deal with topics such as Braille, "Blue Angels," and a reprint of a news article while the eighth-grade reader had five per cent with major articles about underwater spaceships and about words. The general organization is quite similar to the intermediate program in the basic reading series.

Although the books of the Ginn anthologies are approximately a hundred pages longer than the basic readers, the percentage of informative articles is less with two per cent for the seventh grade and three per cent for the ninth grade. (The eighth-grade textbook was not available.) The type of organization emphasizes the teaching of literary forms. In the seventh-grade book, there were two informative articles about American history and in the ninth-grade book, the articles were about Schliemann's excavations and about the Trojan Women. Arrangement was in two parts. The first part dealt with three themes: "The Individual," "America," and "Far Lands."
The second part was about types of literary forms. Recently, there has been a revision with some changes although the format is quite similar.

The Classic Series and the New Companion Series of Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc. are similar in format to Ginn's. The New Companion Series has four per cent factual material for Grade Seven, two per cent for Grade Eight, and one-tenth of one per cent for Grade Nine. The organization of the textbook is arranged in units such as "Enjoying Short Stories," "Mystery and Wonder," or "Enjoying Plays." The selections are varied and there are suggestions for the study of literary forms. Examples of topics are articles about helicopters, jets, animals, the Washington monument, and airplanes.

In the Classic Series, the anthologies have two per cent of informative articles in Grade Seven and four per cent in both Grades Eight and Grade Nine. Articles about the art paintings reprinted in the Classic Series for studies in art appreciation seem to be about the only kind of informative writing in the three books. The writing assignments are based upon the themes and ideas presented in the literature and pupils are asked to imitate the writers and their styles. There are no set-forms of factual writing in the series.

Three series published by Scott, Foresman and Company were represented in this part of the study: Open Highways, a supplementary series for those who are not working at the specified grade level,
continues at the seventh and eighth-grade levels; the literature anthologies are used consecutively from Grades Seven through Twelve, and the Galaxy Series is designed for the students who need additional work in the development of reading skills.

Beginning with the seventh-grade text in the Open Highways series, one can notice the highest per cent of informative materials, which is thirteen per cent. The eighth-grade text has eight per cent. This series is divided into sections which are colorfully introduced with abstract designs. The primary goal seems to be to encourage high interest. Topics include the moon, the Loch Ness monster, helicopters, volcanoes, skyscrapers, espionage, snakes, handwriting analysis, and tornadoes. Again, specific topics are recognizable here, as in the elementary textbooks in this series.

The literature anthologies are divided into specific units in Grades Seven and Eight while the ninth-grade textbook contains divisions into literary forms. The percentage of informative materials is quite sparse in these books, with none in the seventh-grade book, in which there was heavy concentration upon stories and poetry. The percentage in the eighth-grade anthology was eight-tenths of one per cent and in the ninth-grade anthology six-tenths of one per cent.

The Galaxy Series was quite similar to the regular anthologies. This series had onetenth of one per cent for Grade Seven, three per cent for Grade Eight and four-tenths of one per cent for
Grade Nine. There were sections for helping the student improve his reading skills but informative materials were not included.

Summary of Results

By studying the characteristics of informative materials used in reading textbooks in the junior high school, one can observe a more diverse set of statistics in these results compared with the intermediate grades. There are both transition sets of books and series of literature anthologies. One can observe that, except for American Book Company, the informative articles in the literature anthologies range from zero per cent to four per cent. Ginn Basic Readers and Open Highways represent the highest percentage of informative materials ranging from five per cent to thirteen per cent.

Even with the increased length of the reading textbooks, the highest number of pages about informative topics is sixty-eight pages.

In view of the fact that the junior high years are very important for the transition stages of growth in reading and writing, the diversity and inconsistency at this particular period are surprising. Style and organization patterns show a marked change for the students who use anthologies in the seventh grade from those who use basic readers. The latter keep some type of
continuity and balance of factual concrete materials while the anthologies tend to concentrate upon literature as a discipline.

Expressing concern regarding the decision about whether literature or reading should be taught at the junior high school level, Jenkins states:

As my colleagues may attest—emphasizing literature to the neglect of reading—is the usual situation in the high school, while the junior high school frequently assumes the characteristics of no-man's land where neither literature nor reading is highlighted; where a stand has been taken, it is usually in favor of literature in the junior high school.

The next chapter will discuss the uses of informative materials in the senior high school and summarize the findings from intermediate grades through the senior high school.

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CHAPTER V

INFORMATIVE ARTICLES IN READING TEXTBOOKS

GRADES TEN, ELEVEN, AND TWELVE

In this chapter, the results of the data collected from the analysis of five series of literature anthologies and two sets of companion books used in Grades Ten, Eleven, and Twelve are presented in Table 3. Each series is arranged alphabetically according to the publishing company, with basic reading textbooks, companion books, and literature anthologies listed following the name of the company.

The results in this table are placed under three headings: Grade Ten, Grade Eleven, and Grade Twelve. For each of those grades, specific information was collected relating to the following questions:

1) How many informative articles were found in each book?

2) How many pages of informative articles were there?

3) What was the percentage of the pages of informative articles in each reading textbook?

In order for this information to be presented systematically, each series will be described and the findings presented. Other
findings regarding the styles of presentation, topics dealt with in the articles, and general organization of the textbooks will be given. Following the discussion of these findings, a summary of the results within each grade will be presented and some significant relationships to the general findings will follow.

Description, Findings, and Organization of Each Series

The Allyn and Bacon high school series called the Cavalcade Series is classified into three specific groups of literature. Tenth-grade students study war literature, eleventh-grade students study American literature, and in the senior year, the concentration is upon British literature.

Except for the companion series or other supplementary materials this pattern seems to predominate in all anthology series at the senior high school level. The most noticeable characteristic is the extreme length of many of the textbooks.

In order to approach this section of the analysis, one must recognize the complications involved in making the decisions as to what styles of informative materials and what kinds of informative materials should be included in this study. At the end of this study, some additional information about the variety of contents in the many books is given.

As mentioned before, although the Allyn and Bacon series is no longer available, an important characteristic to notice is the
TABLE 3. - The number of informative articles and pages and percentages of pages of informative articles in reading textbooks in grades ten, eleven, and twelve

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repetition of form in each book. The emphasis is on the study of literature by types: short story, poetry, drama, and the like. Each book contains a similar format with a biographical sketch preceding each work by the author. Essays seem to be primarily personal and the totals of this series for the percentages of informative articles range from less than one per cent to five per cent. The only article in the tenth-grade anthology was a factual report about Hiroshima. There was also an essay by Bacon. The eleventh-grade anthology had no informative articles. This series is quite a contrast to the earlier reading series compiled by authors for Allyn and Bacon.

In the series of anthologies published by American Book Company in 1963, there are increases in the numbers and percentages of informative materials. The tenth-grade textbook contains four per cent. The textbook is organized according to specific units. Some of the topics treated are the Dalai Lama, Denmark cows, the reasons for the importance of mathematics, and Shakespeare's London. Articles were reprinted from such publications as Time, the World Almanac, and The New Yorker. The eleventh-grade anthology contained fourteen articles and totaled ten per cent. The first part was by special units and the second part was chronological. Articles were quite long and varied from historical commentary in the introductions to atomic furnaces and Burdick's article reprinted from Holiday called "Smells of the Pacific." In the senior anthology, the
percentage of informative materials was nine per cent. The stress was on British literature but there was also a section presenting world literature. Special articles about London, Westminster Abbey, and the background of the historical periods comprised the information content. The topics were treated in a general fashion.

Literature anthologies published by Ginn and Company continue the series described in the analysis of junior high school anthologies. The approach emphasizes the study of the types of literature. Chute's "Introduction to Shakespeare" and Robert Coffin's "The Lobstering Man" are the only two informative articles; they comprise two per cent of the total content. The American literature anthology, designed for use in the eleventh grade, has an informative content of four per cent. In the senior anthology, there are twelve informative articles, constituting fourteen per cent of the textbook. Many are historical introductions to periods such as the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the Victorian Period, and the Twentieth Century. Those are very involved and complicated articles which would challenge the students' ability to read with understanding.

One tenth-grade textbook represents the companion series of Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc. with one per cent of informational content. The article mentioned is called "Operation Deepfreeze." The book is divided into units. Thirty-one pages are devoted to composition skills, which are exercises rather than informative articles.
The literature series of Harcourt, Brace and World is the Classic Series, a continuation of the one previously described for use in the junior high school. The tenth-grade textbook contains three per cent of informative materials, dealing chiefly with the reproductions of famous paintings in the textbooks. The eleventh-grade anthology increases to six per cent and besides the information about the paintings in the series, there are a few factual reports in the area of history.

The twelfth-grade anthology increases the proportion of informative articles to twelve per cent; there are twenty-eight articles dealing with specific periods of literature and the growth of the English language. Others continue to present information about famous paintings reproduced in the textbooks.

The Scott Foresman series includes three literature anthologies and two textbooks in the Galaxy series. The literature anthologies will be discussed first.

The organization of the literature anthologies centered upon literature as a discipline. In the tenth-grade anthology, the percentage of informative articles was nine per cent with twenty-seven articles. The subjects included information about costuming for Shakespeare's plays, Woolf's "Waxworks in the Abbey," effigies in the Abbey, the Russian peasant, and "The Pearl of La Paz." In the eleventh-grade anthology, informative articles totaled six per cent and the informative articles were about the Nobel Prize in literature, the Pulitzer Prize, the "Book of Psalms," introductions
to periods in American literature, several articles about the magazine in America, the Walden idea, the factory girls of Lowell, the English Maypole, and the DC-3 airplane. In the twelfth-grade anthology, the percentage of informative articles was fourteen per cent with a total of thirty-six articles about the treasure of Sutton Hoo, the cathedrals of medieval England, the Elizabethan manor house, the growth of theater, the masque, the coffee houses, The Edinburgh Review, the Poet Laureate, Wagner's Ring, Coventry Cathedral, Pritchett's "River of History," an excerpt about the Thames River, articles introducing each period, and facts about the English language.

In the tenth-grade textbook in the Galaxy Series, the percentage averages are quite minimal with respect to informative materials which totaled six per cent. Subjects for these articles were superstition, types of magical tricks, Captain Kidd's treasures, and ways to detect language traps. In the eleventh-grade reading book in the Galaxy Series, the informative articles totaled four per cent. Subjects were archaeology, the "American Turtle," a type of submarine, and the Kensington Stone. These articles were excerpts from books.

Summary of the Results

At the tenth-grade level in the series, the percentages ranged from one per cent to nine per cent. Articles were lowest in number at this level compared with either the eleventh-grade
or twelfth-grade anthologies. The eleventh-grade series ranged from three per cent in the Galaxy Series to ten per cent in the American Book Company anthology. The highest number of articles was twenty-seven in the Scott Foresman literature anthology although the percentage of articles was six per cent. Shorter articles were a significant characteristic in American literature textbooks with many introductions to the periods of history preceding the literature. At the twelfth-grade level, the percentages ranged from one per cent in the Allyn and Bacon Series to fourteen per cent in the Scott Foresman English literature anthology, which also had the highest number of articles, totaling thirty-six. Four out of the five senior anthologies contained a higher number of articles and percentages due to the significance of introductory materials to the literary periods and to the change in the history of the English language.

Although the eleventh and twelfth-grade textbooks are higher in percentage of informative articles, the types of articles differ considerably from those in the intermediate table and in the junior high school table. The latter two included more articles about other subjects especially in general categories such as science and sports.

An additional table was designed to represent the average length of words in informative articles in each textbook. The
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purpose of Table 4 was to learn whether or not one might know whether or not there was a consistency in the length of articles in each series from fourth through twelfth grades and to what degree the lengths varied at the grade levels.

In the Allyn and Bacon series, the averages were from none at the eleventh-grade level to over four-thousand words at the eighth-grade level. The seventh and eighth-grade averages were considerably higher compared with all other grades.

The basic reading series for American Book Company averaged from nine-hundred to eleven-hundred while the series from seventh grade through twelfth grade ranged from fifteen-hundred to three-thousand words.

The Ginn Basic Reading Series ranged between eleven-hundred and nineteen-hundred from Grades Six through Eight; however the literature anthologies from seventh through twelfth grade ranged from twenty-two hundred to forty-five hundred words.

The New Companion Series from seventh through tenth grade contained articles with average lengths from five-hundred to twenty-three hundred words. The Classic Series of the literature anthologies was consistent at the junior and senior high school levels with average lengths between six-hundred and twelve-hundred words. Most of the informative articles in this series, however, were articles written about the art reprints.
The Macmillan Basic Reading Series ranged from eight-hundred to eighteen-hundred in Grades Four through Six, while the Scott Foresman Basic Reading Series increased from approximately four-hundred fifty to nineteen-hundred words.

The Open Highways Series from Grades Four through Eight had consistent lengths under six-hundred words and the literature anthologies from eighth grade through twelfth grade ranged from four-hundred to approximately eight-hundred fifty words. The informative articles in the Galaxy Series ranged from five-hundred to nineteen-hundred words.

The results of the findings in Table 4 show that the lengths of the articles vary according to grade levels and types of series. The Scott Foresman Open Highways Series and the literature anthologies seem to maintain a consistent length throughout the grade levels; however, among the other books, there seems to be an inconsistency in the average lengths of articles.

With the varieties of types included in the informative articles, there is reason to doubt the frequency of the use of set-forms for presenting information according to a specific style, organization, or word length.

Summary of the Findings

The organization of the materials in a textbook series can provide continuity and balance when a clearcut decision has been made as to the theoretical basis of the series and the nature of the materials to be included.
This study attempted to find out whether there was coordination of informative materials in some of the series of reading textbooks and literature anthologies in Grades Four through Twelve. The examination of sixty-three textbooks reveals that objective impersonal presentations of information are inconsistent in emphasis, content, and style within the reading programs especially during those transition periods between elementary and junior high school and junior high school and senior high school. There is little indication of an effort upon the part of editors to develop a rationale for the utilization of informative articles.

The study also sought to determine the proportion of articles which were suitable for reading and for use as models for pupils' compositions. The findings suggest very strongly that there are few materials for that purpose.

Completion of this analysis of the informative articles in reading textbooks leads the investigator to believe that there is a need for definite guidelines in the use of informative themes in reading textbooks from Grades Four through Twelve. In Chapter Six, recommendations regarding these guidelines will be presented. Chapter Seven will present a summary and further research which might be undertaken as a result of this study.
CHAPTER VI

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND USES
FOR INFORMATIVE THEMES

The findings from the study of reading textbooks summarized at the end of Chapter Five show that more attention might be given to the selection, organization, presentation, and style of the informative articles used in these textbooks. In the selection of informative materials recommended for future use, one should not only be attentive to the types and varieties of subjects used but also to the methods of organization of the factual information, the style and clarity of expression, and the accuracy or reliability of the factual information.

Since the verbal proficiency of the students for achieving competence in reading and writing requires a knowledge of vocabulary, systems for organizing one's language, the ability to comprehend many types of verbal expressions, and appreciation of the power of language for conveying meaning in many different ways, well-developed informative themes can be very useful at all stages of verbal development.

Although attention in this study up to this point has been centered upon the quantity and types of informative materials
presently available in reading textbooks for students in elementary and secondary schools, the concentration in this chapter will be upon a set-form of presenting information called the informative theme. The style of presentation of this type of theme should include a variety of approaches for conveying information accurately for students at different stages in the elementary and secondary schools.

One purpose of this chapter is to review the literature for background concerning a need in the curriculum for this form for use in teaching composition. Further discussion of the informative theme and ways this form might be developed and evaluated will follow.

Important to the total balance in the curriculum design for the contents of reading textbooks in the future is the distinction made by the publishing industry between literary books and nonliterary books. The literary category includes fiction, biography, poetry, drama, and general literature. The nonliterary books include practical and professional works in such subject areas as agriculture, business, economics, education, law, medicine, science, and technology. Also in the nonliterary category are included handbooks, manuals, directories, statistical reports, and textbooks. Benjamin reports that since 1930, the "annual nonliterary book production has increased by some three-hundred eighty per cent, while literary
production increased by only forty per cent.\(^1\) At this rate of increase, students need to have variety in reading materials to prepare them adequately for the years ahead.

The classification of types of writing into personal and impersonal is often used to separate experiential writing from informative writing. In his discussion of personal and impersonal writing, Meckel also refers to the latter as a form to be mastered.

It should be pointed out, however, that objectivity in writing and the use of illustration and proof naturally place more responsibility on the writer and call for greater effort and control than does the expressions of feelings and opinions. Skill in such writing, even though more difficult to attain, has to be learned; the real instructional issue involves judgment as to when instruction should begin and to what extent it should be interspersed with assignments calling for less demanding writing.\(^2\)

Burrows defines two general categories called personal and practical in her book about teaching children how to write. Personal writing is individual and imaginative while the practical is utilitarian, realistic, intellectual, and mechanical.\(^3\) These two types are often combined in the basic readers.

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Helmkamp refers to a type of impersonal writing which informs us of facts and employs the "language of report." The language of report is used less frequently than the language of feeling.

Referring to coordination of composition programs, Hach proposes a program from the seventh grade through the twelfth. This program begins with the paragraph and, at the eleventh-grade level, he recommends the teaching of the informational essay for helping students organize facts. Relating the informational essay to factual magazine articles and newspapers, he suggests the teaching of a five-paragraph expository theme ranging from two-hundred fifty to three-hundred words. Regarding the five-paragraph theme, Anderson and Wigington explain a methodology for teaching this theme to high school sophomores and juniors, who need to study the organization of this form and to learn the techniques for employing it. The intention is to teach expository writing and to omit the narrative and descriptive in order that students may write in this manner systematically and well. The length of the theme is strictly limited so that students may learn to present facts clearly and concisely.

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4Helmkamp, p. 102.
Important to this chapter is the definition of a form useful for both elementary and secondary school students. Distinctions in forms seem to be carefully made in connection with compositions for eleventh and twelfth-grade students and college students, but the general categories of personal and impersonal writing are terms used to refer to the writing of students in the intermediate grades or the junior high school. Creative writing is also often identified with personal writing, although one might be creative in writing in an impersonal, objective, informative form. The use of these general labels often confuses students. In talking about kinds of compositions, one should be quite specific in explaining the form to be used.

Analyzing twelve books containing collections of essays used in college, Larson questions the goals and strategies for the teaching of composition. He recommends the reorganization of collections of essays and suggests arranging essays in groups "by overall design, by kinds of tone, by kinds of audience addressed, or by the occasion that prompted them." Most collections of essays at the present time seem to be organized either by subject or chronology or according to methods of exposition employed.

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Because such terms as the essay, article, report, expository essay, factual prose, and persuasive essay are misleading in their definitions and connotations, the writer wishes to make clear the nature of the informative theme. Basically, it is used for the communication of accurate information.

Although the essay can reveal the author's moods, personality, observations, points of view, philosophy of life, or humorous outlook, the informative theme is the outcome of the author's attempt to collect, review, relate, combine, classify, organize, or present facts about a topic. The purpose of the essayist can be to teach, demonstrate, persuade, inform, or stimulate the thinking of the reader. The writer of the informative theme must understand the facts about a subject and present them objectively with precision and clarity.

One might define a fact as a statement whose truth or falsity can be proved by objective means. Facts can be related to persons, places, objects, or occurrences that actually exist or existed in the past. Facts can lead to new ideas through the discovery of certain patterns that they form when put together in a distinctive arrangement.

Different types of subjects require particular patterns of presentation. In her analysis of textbooks, Smith discusses the types of patterns that can be found in informative writing. An article on a scientific subject may utilize classification patterns, explanations of technical processes, instructions for carrying out
an experiment, statements of facts, and techniques for problem-solving. A social studies textbook may employ picture and map displays, cause and effect patterns, sequential events with dates, comparison patterns, and propaganda analyses. A mathematics textbook may stress the presentation of a problem, the explanation of a process, and the reading of graphs and charts. Although textbooks deal with broad topics they can be useful in helping a student to become familiar with the special techniques used in informative writing.

These patterns, models, or examples of informative themes, however, must contain material that is factually accurate. Invalid statements obviously give a distorted picture of reality. Gulley expresses his concern for the deceptive, irresponsible statements sometimes found in the mass media when he states that "America's public statement making is less dependable, reliable, and candid than it was two decades ago." He also declares that "we are witnessing a national drift toward irresponsibility in public utterance." He believes that the public schools must provide better courses in speech and communication. In order to learn how to read intelligently, student should have experience in both elementary and secondary schools in the critical analysis of informative materials.

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8 Smith, 275-85.
10 Ibid., p. 3.
In writing factual compositions, students should learn to limit their topics judiciously, search diligently for needed information, and present this information in a clear, systematic way. They should become familiar with reference sources, study different methods for presenting findings, and develop a constant awareness of the necessity of accurate observation and clear description. Thus, the informative themes that the students read should contribute to the furthering of their skill in communication. To see these themes, to study the way they are presented, to listen to examples read aloud, and to note unity, coherence, and accuracy exhibited therein are ways of developing sensitivity to the principles of effective factual writing.

The subjects about which they are learning should be interesting and varied enough to stimulate interest in further reading of both fiction and nonfiction. The growth in vocabulary that stems from wide reading should be helpful to students when they come to write their own themes.

Just as communication of abstract thoughts can be challenging to both writers and readers, so can the presentation of facts by means of concrete words and images be a significant experience. Through her work with deaf children, Groht came to believe that such children can develop a real interest in language, a feeling for
words, a desire for self-expression, and an appreciation of good writing. She states:

All deaf children whom I have taught have enjoyed any work that has enriched their vocabularies. They have loved acquiring new words. They have been enthusiastic to learn about the choice of words, the different pictures made by changing words, and the descriptions of the same picture in different language.11

Consideration of the methods used by persons who teach the deaf can be valuable in the study of techniques of informative writing, for no word can be confusing or ambiguous. Reading materials that are factually accurate, well-organized, and effectively presented can serve as models for student writing. Since reading textbooks are used consistently from the fourth grade through the twelfth grade, informative themes would be useful not only for increasing pupils' knowledge of a variety of subjects but would serve as examples of good writing.

Tilley states that "a rudimentary principle of writing is to distinguish the difference between writing to inform and writing to influence."12 As he concentrates upon writing that informs, the student learns how to collect and arrange information, how to define and limit a subject to a specific topic, how to present facts effectively and how to employ concrete language.

Haman gives some of the techniques for reading a theme. The reader should determine the precise meaning of the author's words, know the relationships of the words to one another, note the sections and the order of their arrangement, observe the interdependence of structure and content, and recognize the basic idea and the pattern used to present it. For writing, the student needs to write at some appropriate length and arrange ideas by structural units in a logical order.\textsuperscript{13} When informative themes are analyzed carefully, the student should be able to perceive the form and arrangement that have been employed and accordingly increase his own sensitivity to the importance of these elements in effective communication.

Most important to this awareness is the growth in word perception, defined as the discerning of differences between symbols and of distinguishing one from another. Russell has defined the percept as "what is known of an object, a quality or a relationship as a result of sensory experience."\textsuperscript{14} He classifies percepts into nine categories. Four of these, important especially in organizing information, are percepts of space, time, movement, and number.

Information about space involves the size, shape, relation of the object to other objects in space, and knowledge of the words needed for specifying these aspects of reality. In dealing with

\textsuperscript{13}James B. Haman, "How to Read a Theme," \textit{Creative Writing}, XVI, No. 6(December, 1961), 4-8.

\textsuperscript{14}David H. Russell, \textit{Children's Thinking} (Waltham, Massachusetts: Blaisdell Publishing Co., a Division of Ginn and Co., 1956), p. 36.
spatial relationships, the writer might include information about
the shape, the similarities of objects to one another, the names
and uses of parts within an object, and the design used in the
construction of a complex entity such as a building or a machine.
The order of presenting this information should be logical and refer
to the relationships of physical objects in space.

Information about time includes a chronological presentation
of events, the divisions of time in one's environment through
mechanical devices such as clocks, and observations of the sequence
of actions of animate beings. Since the child slowly develops an
understanding of units of time, he may need help in conveying factual
information about time. Accuracy is necessary for creating themes
containing facts about time.

Observations of movement such as the size and actions either
in nature or machines can be difficult to present. The facts might
include the naming of parts, describing their function, shape, and
action, or comparing of similar objects in motion. In this parti-
cular category, a vocabulary relating to the phenomenon of sounds
would be important in conveying precise impressions.

The arrangement of any set of items is affected, in most
cases, by the number of items presented. The classifying of numer-
ical facts requires special attention if there is to be exactness in
the presentation of this information. Pratt discusses the importance
of determinate numbers in communicating information accurately.
He explains that indeterminate numbers are, by nature, vague and indefinite. Such terms as plurality, scarcity, function, repetition, and infinity are usually difficult to comprehend. Overuse of these terms without further clarification can lead to many false impressions. Pratt comments upon the extreme relativity of the use of indeterminate numbers and raises questions regarding their "utility or communicative function in human affairs." Since numerical facts are used frequently, accurate and exact presentation is an important requirement. Percepts and factual information are only a part of the informative theme. The order of presentation must also be considered in writing. Upton has classified seven types of order, of which four might be useful for developing factual themes: structural order, which is a logical order concerned with the relation of physical objects in space; numerical order, which is a logical order in which a set of items has been arranged according to a regular series of numbers; scalar order, which is a logical order of rank, degree, intensity, and value; and conventional order, which comprises orders of arbitrary arrangements such as alphabetical orders. Principles of good organization require a

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constant use of order and these types of arrangements of order can assist one in writing about subjects which require listings of specific chronological, numerical, or personal facts, naming of the parts of an object, describing buildings and animate beings, grouping types of information, and comparing two items.

Intensive reading requires a particular set-form which can be studied. Assuming that the informative themes have been developed as set-forms ranging in number of words from two-hundred to one-thousand, one would have to know what characteristics can be analyzed in the themes, what procedures are necessary before writing them, and what standards might be available to evaluate informative themes.

First of all, the characteristics of the theme should include a specific number of details arranged in a logical order, a vocabulary appropriate to the subject of the theme, a design and form of presentation suitable to the perceptions needed such as space or time, a balance in the use of facts, and the subject at the lowest levels of abstraction so that there can be denotative responses and literal meanings.

Before writing the theme, careful research is needed for accuracy. Several sources should be used for factual reliability. Since information is received by the senses of a person, the writer should utilize words having appeal to one or more of the senses. Often, the use of illustrations lessens the need for words representing visual images. As noted earlier, studying the verbal needs of
blind and deaf can lead to improved writing. Deciding upon the form and order for the topic selected and designing the theme accordingly constitute the third step. The use of varied sentence patterns and of concrete language is important for achieving success in this form.

The standards for evaluating the themes should be literary quality, excellence in format, authenticity of content, suitability of length, and appropriateness of vocabulary. Also important are the use of precise sensory observation and the relationships of the parts of the theme to the complete theme.

Consistently reading about many subjects written in this form, students should become familiar with criteria for judgment appropriate to the type and purpose of the work. Some topics and styles of writing can be specified as required reading at various grade levels. The informative theme could be developed as a set-form to be included as a part of the students' reading program in the curriculum. Continuity is needed for its use from the intermediate grade levels through the twelfth grade.

Standards of evaluation for informative themes in high school were developed in an experiment conducted by Barrilleaux. A group of teachers were asked to check papers written by ninth graders about their science projects. One group used only library references and the other used only textbooks. The purpose was to evaluate the groups to see which could write more effectively. The panelists formulated the criteria by which, in their opinion, the quality of
writing about scientific topics could be judged. The criteria were:

1) The need for accurate evidence to support conclusions.
2) The ability to separate conclusions from mere opinions that are unsubstantiated by factual information.
3) The ability to evaluate factual information for relevancy and accuracy.
4) The ability to make comparisons and to note cause and effect.
5) The ability to find and create knowledge.  

Although these criteria were specifically directed to scientific studies only, the application of these standards would be useful for evaluating the effectiveness of any composition which is designed to inform.

The teachers' evaluations of the quality of the students' writing served to reveal the significance of clear thinking and effective use of language as factors in written communication. Johnson also stresses the element of language in a program aimed at better communication:

Ability...to use language clearly and with validity is basic to personal efficiency and general development. It is basic to sanity itself and it is fundamental to intelligent social organization and to the adequate management of national and international problems.18

17Louis E. Barrilleaux, "Experiment on the Quality of Student Writing as Related to Reading Materials," School Science and Mathematics, LXVII(December, 1967), 772.
In conclusion, it seems feasible to use informative themes consistently in reading textbooks from Grades Four through Twelve to assist students in their stages of development in reading and writing. The mutual cooperation of teachers at all levels is necessary in order to achieve the objectives relating to the curriculum design problems of balance, coordination, and continuity and to the communication of information with these types of themes.
CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS
FUTURE RESEARCH

This study was undertaken to ascertain what amount, types, and styles of informative articles were available in the basic readers and literature anthologies of nine series of textbooks ranging from Grades Four through Twelve. In addition to this purpose, another objective was to determine whether or not a specific form called the informative theme might be appropriate for use in reading textbooks as an example or model for presenting factual information about specific topics.

Summary of Procedures

Content analysis was the research technique used in the examination of sixty-three basic readers and literature anthologies to determine the number and percentages of informative articles in the books and the average length of such articles in each book. Only those informative articles written in an impersonal style were included.

The collected data were arranged in tabular form for the purpose of reporting this information. Following the report of the analysis, an explanation of procedures for the development of a set-form of writing called the informative theme was presented.
Findings and Conclusions

Several conclusions may be drawn from the data. Although there are informative articles in most of the reading textbooks, these articles vary considerably in quantity, style of presentation, number of words, and type of subject treated. The results reveal that, as far as objective, impersonal presentations of information are concerned, there are inconsistencies in emphasis, content, and style within the reading programs.

Guidelines were suggested for developing informative themes of a quality suitable for use in all reading textbooks in order to help provide continuity, coordination, and balance in the curriculum.

Recommendations

Since the textbook serves as an important educational instrument in most schools and in some instances acts as the reading and literature curriculum, careful planning of these series with a specific rationale for the total series seems to be necessary. The textbook has a vital role in providing content for a program in reading. The quality of the form in which the content is presented during the years of the students' development will determine whether students are to have the well-balanced education needed for better communication now and in the future.
Future Research

Black has predicted that by 1980 schools will have to educate approximately 73,600,000 children.\(^1\) This is almost twice the number going to school at the present time. The urgency of the need for improvement in ways to communicate information cannot be overestimated. Combined with this projected increase in school population is the increase in knowledge and the need for all future citizens to be able to interpret and to communicate information effectively. Meredith states that

> the nation which first adapts the flow of information to the resonance of minds will create the new culture, not by mechanizing the mind but by humanizing the machine. For information is merely the material on which the mind works. To create a new culture, there must be no barriers to information.

The responsibilities of the education profession to recommend ways to improve the approaches to this process are evident.

Future research for improvement of the curriculum should include more studies of textbooks at all grade levels in order to develop objective standards for the selection of suitable texts by school systems and states. Another purpose of textbook research

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is for the improvement of communication between the publishers and the educators so that a better education may be provided for students in all subjects.

In order to develop informative themes, more attention should be given to the measurement of the level or degree of abstraction in written communication. According to Gillie, no completely acceptable method of measuring abstraction has yet been devised; however, he has developed a formula that attempts to simplify the measurement of abstraction in language through the use of a few carefully selected elements, derived from the Flesch abstraction formula, which discriminate between abstract and concrete writing. The formula involves counting the nouns of abstraction, arbitrarily defined as those ending in certain suffixes which are used to denote generalizations, abstract conditions, and qualities. These suffixes are: -ness, -ment, -ship, -dom, -nce, -ion, and -y.\(^3\)

The utilization of this formula for the selection of informative materials for textbooks might do much to provide more suitable curricular materials.

Further study is also needed to determine the extent to which students can communicate accurately the knowledge they possess of a given subject. Gillie's formula might be applicable to learn at

what level of abstraction students write. Monks analyzed the content of essays written by adolescents from the Netherlands. The title of the essay was "From Now to 2000 A.D." The purpose of this study was to clarify the role which future time perspective has in the behavior of adolescents anticipating their own futures. Additional studies of this type might provide insight into what students know and how well they can communicate this knowledge.

Tests are needed to measure students' ability to select and classify information, to recognize distortions in advertising, to employ the vocabulary of special fields, and to note and retain factual information.

In their work with the retention of factual details, Schachtel and Richardson have been concerned with verbal memory. Schachtel expresses his concern for the causes of childhood amnesia among adults of Western cultures and the reasons for the limited verbal recall of childhood days. Richardson points out the categories that the language of a society provides and indicates that this factor

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is important in "influencing the degree of concreteness or abstractness of memories." More research in this area might lead to new approaches for the teaching of specific types of composition.

Informative themes might be designed to be used for longitudinal research in school systems in order to study the effects of the use of these forms over a period of several years. This type of curriculum research requires a period of five to ten years to discover to what extent the use of such themes might help students acquire more facility and proficiency with their language.

Simeon Potter states that "Thinking in words without images is the highest form of conceptual cognition of which a human being is capable." If this is true, the students' factual accuracy and their verbal precision will determine the degree to which our society becomes a more articulate one in which its members are able to communicate with one another.

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APPENDIX

READING TEXTBOOKS USED IN THE STUDY

Series A. - Allyn and Bacon, Inc.


Series B. - American Book Company


Series C. - Ginn and Company

Basal Reading Series. 100 Edition


Literature Anthologies


Grade 8. Not available for perusal.


Series D. - Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc.

Literature Anthologies - Classic Series


New Companion Series


Series E. - The Macmillan Company


## Basic Readers


## Literature Anthologies


Wide Horizons - Companion Series


Open Highways - Companion Series


Galaxy Series


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