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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN READABILITY OF
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UPPER-MIDDLE CLASS ADULT READERS.

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, PH.D., 1978

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN READABILITY OF WRITTEN MATERIAL AND READING COMPETENCY OF UPPER-MIDDLE CLASS ADULT READERS

DISSERTATION

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

By

Marie Joanne Abram, B.S., M.A.

* * * *

The Ohio State University

1978

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Introduction

A recent study by Gotts and associates (1977) indicated that parents preferred to read books on childrearing above nine other methods of learning about the parenting role. Gotts et al used a purposive sample selected to be representative of the national population. They found that parents ranked the reading of parenting books first regardless of their educational level, socioeconomic status, or race. The nine educational methods in descending order of preference were: viewing of television specials on parenting, reading a four to eight page parenting article in a newspaper or magazine, parent group meetings, movies on childrearing shown near home, slide shows on childrearing with a narrator in attendance, the playing of games that teach, special radio series on childrearing, records or tapes on childrearing, and counseling in the home.

Although the Gotts study indicated that parents prefer to read parenting books above all other methods of learning about childrearing, a review of the writings of major parent educators revealed that little had been done to include reading materials in parent education programs. Pickarts and Fargo (1971) appeared to view reading and parent education programs as dichotomous activities. They discussed the problems
parents have had with reading on their own and they discussed parent education in the group setting. At no place in their book did they suggest the use of reading within a parent education program.

Similarly, Auerbach (1969) did not include any suggestions for the use of readings in parent education programs. Auerbach mentioned reading as a "broadside approach" indicating that reading can only be a form of mass media. The Hendricksons (1970) also made no comment on the use of reading in parent education programs.

As a result of the lack of emphasis on the use of reading materials by practicing parent educators the investigator chose to search the literature to determine what research had been conducted for the purpose of increasing the effective use of reading materials in parent education. The literature was also searched for studies concerning parents' choice of reading materials outside of parent education programs.

Only two studies were found that addressed the issue of reading within parent education programs. In 1932 Clark, Thurston, and Woodruff (Witmer, 1934) reported that 65 percent of parent education programs used reading materials in one form or another. The primary source for this study was not available. The Witmer review does not give the exact wording of the question asked of the parent educators nor does it analyze how the reading materials were used.

Ojemann (1934) studied the difficulty of reading materials used in a parent education program. He found that 51 percent of all women in his sample scored less than two-thirds of their responses correct on a measure of comprehension. The two-third criterion had been predetermined as an adequate measure of comprehension. The women of the Ojemann
study had a higher than average educational attainment. Ojemann reported that all but three of the 16 materials studied were too difficult for the readers with low educational backgrounds. Ojemann also identified 14 factors within the reading materials that were associated with reading difficulty.

The 14 factors identified by Ojemann as being associated with reading difficulty in parenting materials have been found by other researchers to be associated with reading difficulty of non-parenting materials. Since 1934 a readability literature has emerged from the study of these and other factors associated with reading difficulty in a variety of subject areas. Thus the readability literature was believed to be a fruitful avenue through which to study the use of reading materials in parent education programs.

An analysis of the major readability studies of the past 25 years was recently completed by Klare (1976). From this analysis Klare proposed a reader performance model to describe how five factors and their interactions effect reader performance (i.e., comprehension or learning). The five factors of the Klare model were: (1) the test situation, (2) reader competency, (3) the content of the material, (4) reader motivation, and (5) readability level of the material. Klare's model is presented in Figure 1.

The literature review centering around the reading materials parents chose to read netted three studies. In 1931 Waples and Tyler surveyed a cross section of the population concerning their reading preferences. The study indicated that high school and college educated housewives placed child training and parent-child relationships on their
preferred list of reading. The study indicated that high school and college educated housewives placed child training and parent-child relationships on their preferred list of readings.

![Diagram of Klare's Reader Performance Model]

**Figure 1**

Klare's Reader Performance Model

In 1933 Fillmore surveyed Iowa libraries to determine how often parenting materials were withdrawn from the libraries. She reported that the average parenting book circulated between six and fifteen times per year.

In 1936 Anderson studied the number of books mothers were reading on the subject of childcare. Anderson noted that more books were read by women with higher socioeconomic background than with lower socioeconomic background.

As a result of the literature search the investigator concluded that: (1) no research on reading materials within parent education programs had been done since the Ojemann study in 1934 and that considerable new research existed in the area of readability that could be
tapped to study the effective use of reading within parent education programs, (2) no research had ever been done to connect parents' choice of reading material to the readability level of the book chosen, and (3) no current data existed regarding the books parents chose to read in the area of childrearing.

Consequently, the present study was designed to fill these identified areas of needed research. The study was designed in three parts: (1) an experimental portion, (2) a survey portion, and (3) a descriptive analysis of the books chosen by parents.

The experimental portion of the study was designed to test the Klare model in an effort to study the parents' comprehension of reading materials when readability of material was manipulated and reading competency of the parent was measured.

The survey portion of the study was designed to study the relationship between readability level of books reported as having been read by the parent and the reading competency of the parent. This portion of the study was seen as a "real-life" test of the same variables studied in the experimental portion of the study insofar as parents were reporting books they had chosen to read whereas in the experimental portion of the study parents were assigned reading materials.

The third portion of the study was a descriptive analysis of the 32 books on the survey instrument. Two separate analyses were made. First, books were described according to the following three categories: 1. the educational and professional experience of the author(s) 2. the topic area of the book using four categories: (a) emotional health and growth
3. readability level of the book.

Second, the books were rank ordered according to the number of times they were reported as having been read. Separate rank orderings were made for books reported partially and totally read.

**Problem Statement**

Three areas were examined:

1. The relationship between readability of written material and reading competency of subjects involved in a parent education program when comprehension served as the dependent variable.

2. The relationship between the readability of written materials reported as having been read by the subjects and the subjects' reading competency. Separate analyses were made for books reported partially and totally read.

3. A descriptive analysis of 32 books according to the author(s) background, topic area of book, and readability as well as a rank ordering of the books according to the number of times each book was reported as having been partially and totally read.

**Objectives**

1. To determine the effect that levels of readability (ninth grade versus fifteenth grade) have on the comprehension recorded by women enrolled in a parent education program.

2. To determine the relationship that level of reader competency (low reading competency versus high reading competency) has upon the
comprehension recorded by women enrolled in a parent education program.

3. To determine whether there is an interaction of readability and reader competency such that women with lower reading competency will score higher on the measure of comprehension with lower readability materials than with higher readability materials and that women with higher reading competency will score approximately the same on the measure of comprehension under both readability conditions.

4. To determine the relationship between the readability level of books reported as having been partially read and reading competency of the women. (Partially read being defined as having read less than half the book.)

5. To determine the relationship between the readability level of books reported as having been totally read and reading competency of the women. (Totally read being defined as having read half or more of the book.)

6. To describe each of 32 books in terms of (1) educational and professional experiences of the author(s), (2) the topic area of the book, and (3) the readability level of the book.

7. To rank order 32 books according to the number of times the books were reported as having been read by the women. Separate rank orderings were made for partially and totally read books.

**Research Hypotheses**

1. There will be significantly greater comprehension of reading material recorded by women receiving lower readability materials
than by women receiving higher readability materials.

2. There will be significantly greater comprehension of reading materials recorded by women scoring higher on reading competency than by women scoring lower on reading competency.

3. There will be a significant ordinal interaction such that women with lower reading competency will score higher on the measure of comprehension with lower readability materials than with higher readability materials and that women with higher reading competency will score approximately the same on the measure of comprehension under both readability conditions.

4. There will be a significant correlation between the mean readability of the books reported as partially read and the reading competency of the women such that women with higher reading competency will report more books with a higher mean readability and women with lower reading competency will report more books with a lower mean readability. (Partially read being defined as having read less than half of the book.)

5. There will be a significant correlation between the mean readability of the books reported as totally read and the reading competency of the women such that women with higher reading competency will report more books with a higher mean readability and women with lower reading competency will report more books with a lower mean readability. (Totally read being defined as having read half or more of the book.)
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study has been designed to determine how readability of written material and reading competency of the individual doing the reading are related to comprehension and choice of written materials. The study also contains a descriptive analysis of 32 parenting books.

To provide a theoretical frame of reference for the proposed study a review of the literature was made in several disciplines.

The literature will be reviewed in the following sequence:
1. Definitions and delimitation of the field of education.
2. Factors associated with parents seeking parent education.
3. Educational methods used in parent education.
4. The attitudes of major parent educators toward the use of written materials in parent education programs.
5. Research relating to the use of written materials in parent education.
6. Research relating to the concept and use of readability.

Definition and Delimitation of the Field of Parent Education

According to Brim (1959) parent education is, "... an activity using educational techniques in order to effect a change in parent role performance." Brim goes on to say that the term parent education in and
of itself does not imply that educational techniques are to be directed toward any one specific end but that rather they are, "... customarily employed in the pursuit of a variety of ends." Brim delimits the field of parent education as follows:

1. Brim places parent education as a subdivision of the broader field of adult education. Brim states that parent education is limited to influencing adults in a specific role (parenting), whereas adult education attempts to influence adults in all adult roles.

2. Brim makes the distinction of separating parent education from pre-parent (or parenthood) education. Brim defines preparent education as the education of individuals who are not yet parents.

3. Brim draws the distinction between parent education and family life education. Family life education is seen to be a broader category in that it attempts to influence the performance of many roles within the family (such as the role of the child, sibling, parent, husband, and wife). Parent education is seen to be a narrower category in that it attempts only to influence the role of the parent.

4. Brim separates parent education from mental health education. Whereas parent education and mental health education may at times have the same specific objectives (improving the mental health of the child) each area frequently includes objectives not within the other's realm. In essence, parent education focuses on a specific role (that of the parent) but is directed to influencing this parenting role to a variety of ends, whereas mental education focuses on specific ends (mental health) but may be directed to
influencing changes in a variety of roles.

5. Brim draws the distinction between education and therapy. Educational techniques are described by Brim as those techniques which are directed to the conscious (and near-conscious) aspects of personality as compared to therapeutic techniques which would be directed toward motives, expectations, and attitudes.

To summarize, parent education is education and not therapy. It is directed only at influencing parents in their parenting role. It does not include the education of nonparents. Within these limits parent education seeks to influence parents in a positive manner.

Referring to the primary objective of parent education, Brim says:

The primary objective of those parent education programs generally acknowledged as successful and outstanding in quality is to make the parent more conscious of his role performance, to make him more autonomous and creative, to improve his independent judgment, to increase the rationality of the parents' role performance.

Factors Associated with Parents Seeking Parent Education

Four publications were located which described a variety of conditions which the authors felt created a need for parents to seek help with their parenting roles. Each of the publications will be reviewed separately.

A paper by Davis (1940) listed eleven sociological variables related to parents' need for help in the parenting process. These eleven variables were:

1. The rate of social change.
2. The decelerating rate of socialization of the parent in contrast to
that of the child.

3. A combination of physiological and psychological differences between parent and child.

4. Adult realism versus youthful idealism.

5. The nature of parental authority.

6. Conflicting norms.

7. Competing authorities.

8. Lack of uniform acceptance of age where adulthood begins.

9. Concentration within the small family.

10. Vertical social mobility.

11. Sex tensions.

LeMasters (1974) built on Davis' work and compiled the following list of twelve sociological changes which he felt made the parenting role difficult.


2. The concept of progress.

3. The cult of the child.

4. Judgment by professionals.

5. Marital instability.


7. America is no longer a rural society.

8. Rise of the mass media.

9. Emergence of the youth peer group.

10. Parents today have to deal with experts on child rearing.

11. Poor preparation for parental roles.

12. The complexity of the parent role.
In a less formal listing Hendrickson and Hendrickson (1970) reported the following changes influencing parents: increasing distance between home and school, work, church, or social activities; family patterns breaking down; societal changes coming too rapidly to be assimilated; increasing sexual freedom; youth being given more freedom and fewer guidelines; divorce rates increasing; increasing communication difficulties between generations; and family values being challenged by children.

Pickarts and Fargo (1971) discussed several factors they believe influence parents to seek parent education: a new understanding of the importance of early childhood learning; a new look at parents as the first and prime teachers of their children; the radical structural changes in American society; and structural changes within the family unit.

Each of these authors point to change as a major factor motivating parents to seek parent education. The extended family with all its folk wisdom is not always available to parents and even when available has not always been able to keep abreast of the many social changes in society today. Parents in world of today need to seek help from each other and professional parent educators in order to perform their parenting role.

Educational Methods Used in Parent Education

The last major review of the educational methods employed in parent education was written by Brim in 1959. A discussion of his work will follow.
Brim (1959) stated that there are three major methods used in parent education: (1) mass media, (2) counseling, and (3) group discussion/group study.

Mass media refers to those methods which are designed to reach a mass audience. They are methods in which the sender directs his message to an anonymous audience such that he is unable to know his clientele as individuals. The specific techniques include television, radio, all forms of reading materials, and lectures. Mass media are generally credited with being the most frequently used form of parent education as well as being the least expensive method per parent reached.

Brim believed educational counseling ranked second in the number of parents reached. Counseling consists of parents receiving information concerning their parenting role on a one-to-one basis. Counseling usually is conducted in conjunction with other services given to parents such as visits to the doctor and conferences with the teacher. Under these conditions counseling is a low cost educational method. However, the use of counseling as the major form of teaching parents would be prohibitively expensive.

Group study takes place when a group of parents come together under the leadership of a lay or professional person for the purpose of learning more about the parenting role. The content of the program may be initiated by the leader or it may be initiated by the parents. At times, the leader may chose to introduce the topic of the day through the use of mass media, such as a film, readings, or group activities such as role playing.
The choice as to which of these three major methods are to be used in the program should ideally come as a result of an understanding of the goals and objectives of the program, the clientele to be served, and the knowledge of the effectiveness of the various methods under a given set of conditions.

Brim, however, states that in actuality parent education methods are not chosen in a logical or scientific manner. Various reasons can be offered for the more intuitive choice of method selection noted by Brim. At times the choice is made in terms of practical considerations such as limits of time, money, facilities, or trained personnel. Many times, however the decision remains intuitive as a result of insufficient data regarding the effectiveness of the various methods in meeting particular goals and objectives with a particular clientele, and for a specific topic area. Brim also notes that the information parent educators do have regarding the choice of methods has been borrowed from allied field. Brim states that research in allied fields can only provide hypotheses for parent education and that the effectiveness of the methods must be tested on a sample of parents involved in parent education.

The Attitudes of Major Parent Educators Toward the Use of Written Materials in Parent Education Programs

What is the position of major parent educators with regard to the use of reading in parent education programs? To answer this question the work of Pickarts and Fargo (1971), Auerbach (1968), and Hendrickson
and Hendrickson (1970) will be reviewed.

Pickarts and Fargo (1971) do not discuss the possibility of including reading within a parent education program. They do have some definite statements regarding parents reading the available popular parenting literature on their own. They indicate that parents may get lost in the maze of abundant and conflicting advice. They are concerned that solitary reading does not allow for an interaction between communicator and parent which they feel may result in the communicator arousing the anxiety level of the parent without being able to provide for the necessary resolution of the anxiety. They also feel that solitary reading does not lead to parents growing in decision-making, weighing and testing, consideration of alternatives, and individualizing solutions.

Pickarts and Fargo (1971), however, are strong advocates of study groups. They state that the primary long-range goal of parent education is to make the parent role-conscious and autonomous. They believe the study group is the best educational method for achieving this stated goal. At no point in their book do they suggest that reading materials might be used as an auxiliary technique in the parent education program.

Similarly, Auerbach (1968) appears to see mass media as distinctly separate from parent education programs. She says:

... mass media is a broadside approach, offered on as wide a basis as possible in the hope that it will meet the needs of those who hear or read it. There is no feedback to show what the 'consumer' takes from it, or what he makes of it, and he cannot ask questions to clarify what he does not understand. By contrast, what is provided in parent groups is closely related to the needs of those who attend, since they themselves determine the content and provide the material that is
discussed...(they) also have an opportunity to respond and digest the matters discussed and...to report their continuing reactions, the effect on their ideas and behavior...

According to the Hendricksons (1970) over 300,000 parents participate annually in study groups sponsored by the National Congress of Parents and Teachers and hundreds of thousands more parents participate in parent education programs sponsored by other social service organizations and government agencies. The Hendricksons see the most identifiable trend in recent years within parent education as a tendency to combine group activities with some auxiliary method of education. They specifically mention the use of films, plays or skits, role-playing, and resource persons. The use of reading materials is conspicuous by its absence from their list.

None of the three major publications reviewed mention the use of reading materials within the parent education study group. This lack of emphasis on the use of written materials leads to the question of why an educational technique so inexpensive and readily available has not become more popular within parent education. Although the literature does not lead to a definite answer to this question, it may be that when individual parent educators have attempted to include written materials in their study group the materials were not well received and/or they failed to bring about the desired results. Consequently, parent educators may have stopped including written materials in their programs. In addition, no research has been done regarding the conditions under which reading materials could be effectively incorporated into study groups.
Research was reviewed in two divisions: (1) studies that related to the use of reading within a parent education program and (2) studies that related to the choice of reading material parents make outside of parent education programs.

Two studies were located that dealt with the use of reading materials within parent education programs.

A 1932 study by Clark, Thurston, and Woodruff (Witmer, 1934) reported that some form of reading materials was included in 65 percent of the parent educational programs surveyed. The Witmer review of the study appeared to indicate that respondents were asked to check all of the methods used. Because the primary source is not available it is unknown exactly to what question the respondents were replying. Consequently no conclusions can be drawn concerning how frequently readings were used, how they were used, or whether they were considered the primary method of instruction.

Ojemann (1934) was concerned with how much of the available parenting reading materials fell within the reading competency of parents. To this end he designed a series of studies to answer the following three questions: (1) what is the distribution of reading ability among parents, (2) what factors are most closely related to reading difficulty, and (3) what are the characteristics of reading factors identified in the second research question.

Two-hundred-nine mothers attending a study group in an Iowa city of approximately 30,000 were used to answer the first research question.
The mothers had the following educational levels: 25 percent had eight grades of school or less, 45 percent had from nine to twelve grades in school, and 30 percent had more than a high school education. Compared with other mothers in Iowa (using the 1925 census) the mothers in the study were substantially better educated. The subjects also enjoyed higher socioeconomic status than the average Iowa citizen when the occupation of their husband was used as the criterion.

Mothers were given three readings (chosen as being representative of the available parenting literature). The materials represented three levels of reading difficulty. After each reading a 15-question test was administered. A perfect score for the three materials was 45. Data indicated that 51 percent of the subjects scored below 30 (two-thirds of a perfect score). Subjects with eighth grade or less education averaged 18.98 ± 1.02, subjects with ninth through twelfth grade education averaged 29.25 ± .68, and subjects with education beyond high school averaged 34.97 ± .83 indicating that parents attending the study group varied considerably in their reading ability.

The second and third research questions used a smaller sample of mothers (n = 156) having approximately the same educational level. The mothers were given six of 16 possible reading selections. Selections were randomly chosen from 15 parent education books judged to be representative of the books available to parents. Readings were randomly assigned to the mothers until such time that 15 to 20 cases were secured with a comprehension measure between 9 and 12 (a prede-termined score representing satisfactory comprehension). Mothers were also given a reading test to measure reading ability. Following data
collection the 16 reading selections were ranked in order of difficulty using the average score on the reading test of the mother as a measure of difficulty. Results showed that only three selections were at or below the comprehension of subjects in the low educational group, eight were at or below the comprehension of subjects in the middle educational group, and eight required reading ability beyond high school.

A qualitative analysis was made of the 14 factors found to be associated with reading difficulty. Eight factors were related to composition and sentence structure and six factors were concerned with vocabulary difficulty. Results showed that eight of the 14 factors studied were correlated .60 or higher with reading difficulty. These eight factors were number of simple sentences, number of prepositions, and all six vocabulary factors.

An additional analysis of the data found that materials comprehensible to parents with eighth grade or less education showed the following characteristics: (1) low vocabulary difficulty, (2) simplified sentence structure, and (3) a small number of prepositional phrases.

The Ojemann research indicates that much of the available parenting material was beyond the reading ability of the sample of parents who were better educated than the average Iowan. The study also indicated that there were factors that can be isolated within parenting materials that are associated with reading difficulty. Subsequent research in the area of readability has shown that the factors isolated by Ojemann in parenting materials are common to reading difficulty in non-parenting reading as well. The study of these and similar factors has become a research area in its own right; the area of readability.
Three studies were located that dealt with reading material parent chose to read outside of parent education programs.

Waples and Tyler (1931) surveyed a cross section of the general population and found that high school and college educated housewives placed child training and parent-child relationships on their preferred list of readings.

Fillmore (1933) surveyed Iowa libraries to determine the availability of parenting materials. She reported between one and 412 parenting books per library and noted that the average parenting book circulated between six and 15 times per year.

Anderson (1936) studied the number of books and pamphlets parents were reading on the subject of childcare. Using a carefully selected sample of parents with preschool children Anderson found the frequency of books and pamphlets being read by American mothers differed across seven different socioeconomic levels. He noted that mothers with the highest socioeconomic level read considerably more books than mothers with the lowest socioeconomic level. A similar trend was found for the use of pamphlets by parents with the exception that more pamphlets than books were read at every socioeconomic level.

All five studies reviewed were conducted in the 1930s. Consequently it was decided that more current data on the use of reading materials within parent education programs and parents' choice of reading materials was needed. The present study was designed to begin to fill this need.

The Ojemann study appeared to be an attempt to probe the area of reading difficulty when written materials were used within a parent
education program. Since the 1930s the factors identified by Ojemann have been expanded and absorbed into the area of readability. It was decided that the concept of readability would be a useful variable with which to study the use of reading materials used in parent education programs.

None of the three studies that focused on the choice of parenting materials were current and therefore did not describe the type of parenting book parents of today prefer to read. Consequently, the present study was designed to survey parents concerning their choice of parenting books.

Studies Relating to the Concept and Use of Readability

Introduction to Readability and History of Readability Formulas

According to Chall (1949) the concept of readability in its broadest sense is:

.  .  the sum total (including the interactions) of all those elements within a given piece of printed material that affects the success that a group of readers have with it. The success is the extent to which they understand it, read it at an optimum speed, and find it interesting.

Klare (1963) believed that the term "readability" has come to be used in three ways:

1. To indicate the legibility of either handwriting or typography.
2. To indicate the ease of reading due either to the interest-value or the pleasantness of the writing.
3. To indicate the ease of understanding or comprehension due to style of writing.
Although each of these three usages is legitimate, a considerable body of research has grown up around the third meaning. This paper is concerned with this third meaning.

In particular, the research into readability as it applies to comprehension of material has become one of searching for language factors which correlate highly with reading comprehension and devising formulas which measure the readability of written materials. As such, these formulas provide a quantitative estimate of the level of reading ability an individual must possess in order to adequately comprehend a particular piece of reading material.

The history of readability formulas spans many years. Lorge (1949) traces the use of word counts back to 900 A.D. In 1921 Thorndike published his list of the most frequently used words in the English tests (Hansell, 1976) on the assumption that the more frequently a word was used the easier it was to read. During the 1920s there was an initial effort to develop "formulas" based solely on vocabulary factors. According to Chall (1959) the first wave of research into readability occurred in the years 1922 to 1928. The second wave came between 1928 and 1939 during which time there was an extensive search for the many factors of language that might influence readability. During this time the Dale-Tyler and the Gray-Leary formulas were published. This is also the time that the Ojemann study, previously reviewed, was undertaken. Chall believes that the third wave of readability research began in 1938 with the reduction of factors that could be used in readability formulas and still give an adequate readability measurement. This period began with the Lorge formula (1938) which used
three factors to measure reading materials for grades three through 12. In 1943 Flesch (1948) published his two-factor Reading Ease formula for adults which he revised in 1948. Also in 1948 the Dale-Chall (1948) two-factor formula appeared. The Flesch Reading Ease and Dale-Chall formulas remain the two most widely used and most accurate two-factor formulas today. Also during this time Gunning (1952) published his easy to calculate two-factor Fog Index.

According to Klare (1963) the period of time after 1953 represented a fourth period in the history of readability in that the field turned its attention to specialized formulas. The Spache formula (1953) was designed especially for the primary materials, the Devereaux formula (Smith, 1961) was designed to count only character spaces in an effort to increase the ease with which readability calculations could be automated, the Rogers formula (1962) was designed for oral materials, the Fry Readability Graph (1968) was designed for quick calculations, the Easy Listening formula (Fang, 1966-67) was designed for mass listenability.

Several sophisticated formulas came into being during the late 1960s and early 1970s. The Coleman formula (1965) became well known because it was the first formula to be standardized against the newly developed cloze procedure. In 1969 Bormuth (1969) published a series of 24 formulas using a wide variety of predictors. The Bormuth formulas were also standardized against the cloze procedure.
The Flesch Reading Ease Formula

Introduction

The choice of a readability formula to measure the difficulty level of the reading materials used in the experimental design of this study and the difficulty level of the 32 books was difficult to make because there were so many formulas available. Klare (1963) advised researchers to choose according to need. Generally he advised the use of a two-factor formula. Both the Flesch Reading Ease and the Dale-Chall formulas have been shown to be highly sensitive two-factor formulas for adult materials. The Flesch Reading Ease formula was chosen for this study because it was considerably easier to computerize than the Dale-Chall formula while being equally reliable.

Reliability

1. Sampling

Over the years many studies have been done concerning the proper sampling techniques for passages to insure an adequate readability measure. When a short article is to be measured it is suggested that the entire work be used (Dale and Chall, 1948). However, to measure an entire book would be excessively costly in terms of both time and money. Therefore, various sampling techniques have been studied.

It would appear that sampling 100 word passages throughout a book is an adequate technique for measuring readability of the book. Klare (1963) has shown that as few as seven 100-word passages will give reliable measurement.
2. Analyst Reliability

Klare (1963) studied the Flesch Reading Ease formula for analyst-to-analyst reliability using both experienced and inexperienced analysts. The results showed high analyst reliability.

Validity

It should be noted that no formula is perfect in that it accounts for all variance in a passage. The maximum correlation reported for any readability formula is .70 (Klare, 1963). The Flesch Reading Ease formula was originally calculated to correlate .70 using the McCall-Crabb Standard Test Lessons of 1925 (Flesch, 1948). Later Powers, Sumner, and Kearl (1958) showed the Flesch Reading Ease formula to correlate .64 with the McCall-Crabbs 1950 reading tests.

Miller (1975) correlated the Flesch Reading Ease formula with the cloze procedure as well as with the 1961 McCall-Crabb reading tests. He found the Flesch formula correlated .75 with the cloze and .64 with the McCall-Crabb reading tests.

Studies compared the Flesch Reading Ease formula with other readability formulas. Consistently the Dale-Chall and the Flesch Reading Ease formula have correlated very highly with each other, in one case at .98.

The Cloze Procedure

In 1953 Taylor (1953) presented a new idea in readability; the cloze procedure. Whereas previously all readability formulas had been tested against the McCall-Crabb reading materials, Taylor proposed the use of the cloze procedure as a new and better criterion measure. The
cloze procedure is a method of systematically deleting every nth word (usually every fifth word) in a passage, replacing the word with a blank of a standard length, and then submitting it to a reader with instructions to replace the words as best he can. The cloze procedure is scored as the number of correct fill-ins, counting only exact replacements as being correct (with the exceptions of minor spelling mistakes).

The cloze procedure is theoretically based on the gestalt psychology principle of closure; the tendency to complete a familiar but not-quite-finished-pattern (i.e., to see a broken circle as a whole by mentally closing the gaps). Taylor defined the cloze procedure as:

A method of intercepting a message from a 'transmitter' (writer or speaker), mutilating its language patterns by deleting parts, and so administering it to 'receivers' (readers or listeners) that their attempts to make the patterns whole again potentially yield a considerable number of cloze units.

Taylor defined a cloze unit as:

Any single occurrence of a successful attempt to reproduce accurately a part deleted from a 'message' (any language product) by deciding, from the context that remains, what the missing part should be.

Taylor (1953) clearly stated that the cloze procedure is not a formula for readability -- in fact it is not a formula at all. Rather it is a measure of elements which effect reading.

Bormouth (1965) studied the administration of the cloze procedure. He found that a 250 word passage was necessary for the measurement to be reliable. He further suggested that the first word of the 250 word passage not be deleted and that the print be in black ink on white paper.
The cloze procedure is a versatile instrument and has been used in many ways. Bickley, Ellington, and Bickley (1970) listed the following uses that have been made of the cloze procedure:

1. In readability research - as a criterion of reference of reading difficulty (increasingly the cloze procedure has been replacing the use of standardized multiple-choice reading tests as the measure of grade level difficulty).

2. As a measure of reading comprehension - as a "test" to determine what has been learned following the reading of materials.

3. As a diagnostic tool - as a measure of language factors in normal and exceptional individuals.

4. As a teaching device - used as an evaluative, diagnostic, and instructional tool in the classroom.

5. As a measure of reading competency - to measure the skill the reader brings to the reading task.

The present study used the cloze procedure as a measure of reading competency, the fifth use reported above. Bickley et al (1970) in their review of the cloze procedure summarized the findings of this fifth use by saying, "... evidence indicates substantial correlations between general reading comprehension as measured by standardized reading tests and as measured by cloze tests." They quoted studies that found correlations ranging between .61 and .87 contrasting a variety of standardized reading tests with the cloze procedure.

The cloze procedure appears to be an excellent yet simple measure of reading competency. Therefore it has been chosen as the procedure to be used in measuring reader competency in the proposed research.
Moreover, the cloze procedure may be less experimentally reactive than other tests of reading competency insofar as people appear to enjoy taking a cloze 'test' (personal communication with Klare, 1977).

Klare's Reading Performance Model

Readability is only one factor that influences whether a piece of material gets read or how much it is enjoyed, how quickly it is read, or how much it is enjoyed.

The individual involved in reading the material must be taken into account when one wishes to study the effect of reading materials on a population. In a recent and extensive analysis of the readability literature, Klare (1976) developed a reader performance model that isolated five important factors that influence the performance of a reader. Klare saw each of the five factors as being important in and of themselves. He also believed that each of the factors can interact with the other four as well. Klare graphically illustrated his model as shown in Figure 1. The five factors identified by Klare were: (1) the test situation, (2) reader competence, (3) content of material, (4) readability level of material, and (5) reader motivation.

The model was proposed by Klare after he had made an in-depth analysis of 36 post-World War II studies in the field of readability. Klare looked at 28 variables and attempted to determine their relation to each other. All of the studies reviewed used reader comprehension as a dependent variable. Many of the studies also used reading efficiency (speed or eye movements) and acceptability (preference for material) as well. Klare believed these later dependent variables were also important in judging the "performance" of a reader.
Each of the five factors is reviewed in turn. The 28 variables Klare noted as being important in the study of readability are listed under one or more of the factors depending on its importance to the factor.

The Test Situation

Klare (1976) found three variables to influence the test situation: (1) length of time allowed for the reading of the text and test, (2) motivational factors, and (3) level of readability of the test in comparison to the level of readability of the text.

Klare noted that many of the expected significant differences were not found in studies in which subjects were allowed to reread the test and/or the text. He advised a comfortable but restricted period of time for each.

Reader motivation is a complex variable. Klare saw it as being confounded by (1) level of motivation, (2) time available, and (3) reader preference. Each of these three variables will be discussed in the next division (Reader Motivation).

The level of readability of the test in comparison to the text is very important. Klare stated that the comprehension test must be constructed at approximately the same level of readability to be sensitive enough to pick up the differences in reader comprehension.

Reader Motivation

Reader motivation is influenced by three variables: (1) level of motivation, (2) time available, and (3) reader preference.
It has been shown that highly motivated subjects did not show significantly different comprehension scores under low and high readability conditions but that subjects who were not highly motivated did show significant differences at different readability levels (low motivation and low readability subjects showed higher comprehension than low motivation and high readability subjects).

Reader preference has been shown to be a major variable in the study of readability in that greater gains have been consistently found in materials with lower readability under conditions of low interest-value than under conditions of high interest-value. Klare made a special point that readability was especially important in reading materials when both motivation and interest were low. However, he was concerned lest readability not appear to be an important factor when motivation and interest were high. He noted that studies have consistently shown that more readable materials were preferred (assuming that the writing was skillfully done) even when no significant comprehension differences were found.

Readability

Readability is associated with four factors: (1) control of content, (2) control of technical terms, (3) number of readability categories varied (words only, sentences only, or both), and (4) readability levels used (in relation to reader skill level).

Content is often difficult to control when varying the levels of readability. Klare stated that it was of upmost importance to maintain similar content when producing materials at differing readability levels or one would be introducing a major confounding variable into
the study.

In the presentation of his model Klare did not discuss whether unfamiliar technical terms should be used or whether they should be replaced with more standard terms. In an earlier manual Klare prepared to give specific suggestions on writing readable material he suggested the inclusion of technical terms in both the more and the less readable version (Klare, 1975).

Researchers in the area of readability have studied the effect of varying words, sentences, and both words and sentences to produce more readable writing. They consistently have found significant differences when both words and sentences were varied to produce more readable writing. When only words or sentences were varied significant differences were generally not found. Moreover, changing only word or sentence factors in a passage often results in stilted or artificial writing that is not preferred by readers.

The level of readability needs to be carefully chosen to locate the significant differences expected in readability research. Klare noted that the average difference between readability levels was six-and-one-half grades for positive findings and only in one case as low as three grades. Klare believed that comprehension tests were not sensitive enough to pick up significant differences with less than a five year spread of readability levels.

Content

Content of the material needs to be considered in relation to four variables: (1) new information, (2) interest-value, (3) nature of content (in relation to the reader's intellectual level), and (4)
maturity of content (in relation to the reader's maturity).

Prior knowledge of the material has been shown to wash out the significant differences expected between levels of readability. Klare suggested a pretest when prior knowledge was in doubt.

Interest-value has previously been reviewed.

Neither intelligence nor maturity of the reader has received any systematic research. Klare, however, believes both are important. He cited the Funkhouser and Maccoby (1971) study which showed that scientists did not like more readable material. To this can be added the Hansell study (1976) that found children with higher than average reading abilities preferred original (as compared with abridged) materials.

Reader Competency

Reader competency is associated with four variables: (1) knowledge of subject matter (i.e., content), (2) reading skill level (in relation to readability level), (3) intellectual level, and (4) maturity level. These variables have all been previously reviewed. Klare believed that this fifth factor, reading competency, was the most important factor in the five factor model.

Summary

The literature was reviewed in six sections. First, parent education was defined as, "... an activity using educational techniques in order to effect a change in parent role performance." This definition was taken from the work of Brim (1959), a well known authority in the field. Parent education was differentiated from the larger area of
adult education of which parent education is a part. Distinctions were
drawn between parent education and pre-parent or parenthood education,
family life education, and mental health education. A distinction was
also drawn between education and therapy for parents.

Secondly, four well-known authorities in the field of parent educa­
tion were cited concerning their beliefs as to why parents seek
education for their parenting role. The concept of change ran through­
out all the listings.

In the third subdivision the three major educational methods used
in parent education were reviewed. According to Brim the major methods
are: (1) mass media, (2) educational counseling, and (3) group study.
The scope of the proposed research was narrowed to the use of written
materials in a parent education study group and a survey of the reading
materials parents chose to read on their own.

The fourth subdivision reviewed the works of five major parent
educators regarding the current use of written materials in parent
education programs. No mention was found of this intuitively appealing
idea. The question was raised as to why reading materials had not
become more popular.

In the fifth subdivision the parent education literature was
searched for studies that dealt with the use of reading in parent
education programs and parents' choice of reading materials. Five
studies were reviewed. The major study located in the review of liter­
ature was by Ojemann (1934). Ojemann found that 51 percent of the
reading materials distributed to mothers in a particular parent
education study group were too difficult for the average mother who was
found to have a higher-than-average educational level. He also located factors within the parenting materials that appeared to be highly correlated with reading difficulty. Ojemann's work was in actuality an early study in readability, a concept that was determined to be useful in the proposed research.

In the sixth subdivision, the concept of readability was reviewed. Simply stated, readability refers to the ease with which a person can gain understanding or comprehension of a piece of writing. A brief history of readability formulas was given. The Flesch Reading Ease formula was chosen as the preferred instrument for the proposed study. The formula itself was given as well as data on the readability and validity of the formula. The cloze procedure was explained and it was chosen as the preferred instrument for measuring reader competency. The Klare Reading Performance Model was explained in detail. The five factors (and their interactions) making up Klare's model are: (1) the test situation, (2) the content of the material, (3) reader motivation, (4) readability level of the material, and (5) reader competency.
CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The Design of the Study

This study was designed in three parts: (1) an experimental portion, (2) a survey portion, and (3) a descriptive analysis of the 32 books that formed the survey instrument. The primary objective was to explore whether readability of written parenting materials and reading competency of the women in the study combined to increase comprehension (learning) and frequency of use of written parenting materials.

The Experimental Portion of the Study

The experimental portion of the study tested the Klare model of reading comprehension. The Klare model posited that five factors and their interactions contribute the reading comprehension. These five factors are: (1) the test situation, (2) the reader's motivation, (3) the content of the material, (4) the readability level of the material, and (5) the reader's competency. A graphic illustration of the Klare model can be seen in Figure 1.

The five factors in the Klare model were studied in the following way:
1. the test situation was the same for all subjects.
2. the motivation of the readers was similar for both groups in that all subjects were kept naive concerning the experiment until after
the reading had taken place in an attempt to reduce test anxiety
which might have affected higher and lower reading competency
subjects differently. Reader motivation was also assumed to be
approximately equal in both groups of subjects because all of the
women had chosen to attend the parent education program.

3. the content of the material was controlled by testing the two levels
of readability for comparability prior to their use in the experi­
ment.

4. the readability of the material was manipulated through random
assignment of two levels of reading materials.

5. reading competency was measured following the assignment of reading
materials.

More specifically, a 2 x 2 factorial design was set up using two
levels of written materials and two levels of reader competency as the
independent variables of the study. The dependent variable was scores
on a measure of comprehension.

The first independent variable of the study, readability of written
materials, used ninth and fifteenth grade reading materials. The
readability levels of the written materials was determined through the
use of the Flesch Reading Ease formula. The women in the study were
randomly assigned one of the two levels of reading materials.

The second independent variable of the study, reader competency,
was measured following the assignment of reading materials. Two sep­
parate measures of reading competency were collected and separate
analyses were conducted for each measure. The first measure of reading
competency was the administration of the cloze procedure, a reading test.
Women were divided into "lower" and "higher" reading competency groups depending on whether their cloze score fell above or below the median for the group. The second measure of reading competency was the determination of the number of years of academic schooling completed. Women were divided into two groups depending on whether or not they had completed a baccalaureate degree.

The dependent variable in the experimental portion of the study was the number of errors the women made on a comprehension instrument.

The Survey Portion of the Study

The survey portion of the study was designed as a "real-life" test of the Klare model. As such it was expected to complement the experimental study and show similar trends. It was expected that the women of the study would choose reading materials that matched their reading competency. More specifically, it was expected that women with lower reading competency would have chosen to read a greater number of books with lower readability and that women with higher reading competency would have chosen to read a greater number of books with higher readability.

The women were given a survey instrument that contained the titles and authors of 32 selected parenting books. The books had been selected from a more comprehensive list of suggested readings compiled by the instructor of the parent education group of which the subjects were members. Books were selected for inclusion on the survey instrument only if the authors were concerned with general childrearing concepts and if the books were available at the local library. Books were presented in alphabetical order according to the last name of the author.
In keeping with the purpose of the study, the survey data were analyzed using the same two variables of the experimental study, i.e., readability of written material and reading competency of the reader.

Readability of the books was determined by averaging seven randomly selected samples of written material from each of the 32 books. The Flesch Reading Ease formula was chosen as the readability formula.

Reading competency was measured in two ways using exactly the same procedure used for the experimental portion of the study.

Four Pearson product-moment correlations were calculated to analyze the survey data. The mean readability was computed for the books reported as partially read and for the books reported as totally read. These mean readability scores were correlated with (1) the women's score on the cloze procedure and (2) the women's educational attainment.

The Descriptive Analyses of the Books

Two separate descriptive analyses were made of books appearing on the survey instrument. First the 32 parenting books were described in terms of:

1. the educational and professional experience of the author(s)
2. the topic area of the book using four categories:
   (a) emotional health and growth
   (b) intellectual growth
   (c) physical growth and health
   (d) comprehensive (emphasizing more than one of the above)
3. the readability level of the book using the Flesch Reading Ease score.

Secondly, a rank ordering of books was made according to the number of times the books were reported as having been read. Separate rank
orderings were made for books reported as having been partially and totally read.

The Sample

The sample of women in the study consisted of 28 women who attended a regularly scheduled parent education meeting on March 13, 1978. The meeting was sponsored by a church in an upper-middle class neighborhood in a major midwestern metropolitan area. The parent education program was held in conjunction with a preschool also sponsored by the church.

The parent education program at which the data were collected was part of an on-going series that had begun in September and was scheduled to continue until May. The women met for two-and-one-half hours one morning a week for the express purpose of increasing their knowledge of parenting.

The format of the parent education program was informal adult education in which mothers were involved in choosing the topics to be covered. Immediately after the Christmas vacation, the women, in conjunction with their instructor, drew up a calendar of topics for the remainder of the program. One of the topics was values. This topic was chosen by the researcher and the instructor to be the focus of the written material needed for the experimental portion of the study.

A survey had been conducted in 1967 of the entire sample of parents who had children attending the preschool associated with the church (Evans, 1967). The parent education sample studied in 1967 was not necessarily representative of women attending the parent education group in 1978 but appeared to be the best available indication of the women who would be attending the parent education meeting on the day that data
would be collected for this study. In particular, the researcher wished to have some idea of the educational attainment of the women in order to prepare reading materials at suitable levels of difficulty.

The Evans study reported the following characteristics of the sample studied:

1. The women's ages were between 20 and 45, with the majority falling between 25 and 35. Evans found that 4 percent were between 20 and 25, 31 percent were between 26 and 30, 27 percent were between 36 and 40, and 7 percent were between 41 and 45.

2. Most women had two children. There were approximately an equal number of boys and girls in the sample. Ten percent of the women had one child, 42 percent had two children, 32 percent had three children, 9 percent had four children, and 7 percent had five or more children.

3. Women generally had college degrees. Eight percent were high school graduates, 28 percent had attended college but did not receive a baccalaureate degree, 49 percent had received an undergraduate college degree, and 15 percent had done some graduate work.

4. The women enjoyed a comfortable living. Seventy-five percent reported incomes in excess of $10,000 per year and 39 percent reported incomes over $15,000 per year.

5. Marital status was very high with 98 percent of the women reporting themselves as married, 1.5 percent as separated, and 0.5 percent as divorced.

An examination of the Evans data appeared to indicate that the women were well educated. Consequently, it was decided that the reading
materials should be written at the ninth and fifteenth grade reading levels.

The women in the present study were found to have the following characteristics:

1. The women's ages fell within the range of 25 and 43. Seven percent were 25 and younger, 43 percent were between 26 and 30, 36 percent were between 31 and 35, and 14 percent were 36 and older.

2. Most of the women had two children. Over the entire sample there were approximately equal numbers of boys and girls in the family. Twenty-one percent of the women reported having one child, 68 percent reported having two children, and 6 percent reported having three children. None of the women reported having more than three children.

3. The women generally had college degrees. Eleven percent were high school graduates, 21 percent had attended college but did not receive a degree, 46 percent had received a baccalaureate degree, and 22 percent had done some graduate work.

4. The women enjoyed a comfortable living. Thirty-two percent reported family incomes between $10,000 and $19,999, 29 percent reported incomes between $20,000 and $29,999, and 39 percent reported incomes in excess of $30,000.

5. The total sample reported their marital status as "married and living with their husband".

The sample of this study contrasted with Evans' earlier study as follows:

1. The women in this study were younger than the women in the Evans'
study. Fifty percent in the present study were 30 and under contrasted with 35 percent reported by Evans. Evans reported 28 percent in the 36 and over category as contrasted with 14 percent in the present study. The 30 to 35 age range was approximately the same in both studies; 36 and 37 percent.

2. Considerably more of the women in the present study reported having one and two children. Evans reported a total of 52 percent of her sample as having one or two children whereas the present sample reported 89 percent in the same category. Conversely, the present sample reported having fewer large families. Six percent had three children as compared with 48 percent reported by Evans. None of the women in the present study had over three children compared with 16 percent of the 1967 sample.

3. The sex of the children of both groups of women showed an equal number of boys and girls.

4. The educational attainment of the women was similar in both studies. Approximately the same percentage of women had high school diplomas and college degrees. Slightly fewer women in the present study had some college and slightly more women had graduate work as contrasted to the sample studied by Evans.

5. Both studies indicate that the women enjoy a comfortable living. Evans reported only 25 percent of her sample had less than a $10,000 yearly income. No one in the present sample reported under $10,000. Evans reported 39 percent of her sample had less than a $15,000 yearly income whereas only 14 percent of the present sample reported a yearly income under $15,000. Income was a difficult
variable to contrast because the method of reporting differed in the
two studies and because economic conditions have changed a great

6. Marital status was similar in both studies. Evans reported 2
percent of her sample as separated or divorced. The entire sample
in the present study was composed of married women living with their
husbands.

Overall, the differences in the present sample as contrasted to the
earlier sample studied by Evans showed women to be younger and to have
smaller families.

The two studies reflected similarities in the populations in terms
of educational attainment of the women, the ratio of boys and girls in
the families, and the marital status of the women.

The Procedure

A four and one-half page document was prepared at two different
levels of readability (see Appendix A). These texts were randomly
distributed to women attending the weekly morning parenting program.
The women were told that the reading would be used to introduce the
discussion of the day. The reading was titled Value Clarification in
line with the topic they had previously determined they wished to have
on this particular day.

The randomization was accomplished by alternating ninth and
fifteenth grade materials in a stack of handouts and passing the read-
ings among the women. The outside appearance of the handouts was
identical in that the same cover page was used for both levels of read-
ability. The inside reading matter was spaced and paragraphed as
similarly as possible in an attempt to make the global appearance of the texts identical. Comments by the group of women after the experiment indicated that no one was aware that different reading materials had been distributed. Fourteen of the women received ninth grade materials and fourteen of the women received fifteenth grade materials.

The women were given six minutes to read the written material. All of the women completed the reading within this time frame. The women were then asked to take a series of posttests. Until this request no indication had been given to the group that an experiment was in progress. This precaution was used to help eliminate intensive study of the materials.

The four posttest instruments were distributed following the reading. Respondents were asked not to sign their names or to indicate their identity in any way on the forms. In order to keep data from each respondent separate, paperclips were provided and the women were asked to hand in their instruments as a unit. Twenty-eight pieces of usable data were collected. Completion of the four posttest instruments took between 20 and 45 minutes.

The Instruments

Reading Materials

The reading materials were carefully prepared by the researcher to represent two levels of readability; ninth and fifteenth grade reading materials. The reading levels were determined by applying the Flesch Reading Ease formula to both forms.

The researcher had met prior to the data collection with the instructor of the parenting class to discuss the possibility of the
research. The researcher had informed the instructor that she was seeking a general topic area that was relatively new to parent education and a specific topic that had not been directly touched upon in the on-going series that the instructor was conducting. Both the instructor and the researcher believed that the topic of values already on the schedule met these criteria.

The researcher did a search of the literature on values to locate different approaches to the teaching of values. She found that value clarification was a specific method of teaching values that was just beginning to surface within the academic community.

Value clarification has its basic theoretical underpinnings in the work of Louis E. Raths. Raths in conjunction with Harmin and Simon (1966) wrote a book for teachers that has become the classical work in value clarification. The book is called *Values and Teaching* (1966).

The researcher abstracted what she judged to be the major concepts of the book and rewrote them at both the ninth and fifteenth grade reading levels. Copies of the two texts can be found in Appendix A.

The two levels of reading materials were tested to determine whether a single comprehension test could be used with both ninth and fifteenth grade reading materials. Comparability of the reading material was established by allowing a group of good readers to take an "open book" test using one of the two levels of reading materials. Readers were asked to read the materials once and then take the comprehension test. They were told they could refer back to the text if they chose. The readers were given about 20 minutes which made it possible for them to refer back to the written materials but did not give them
enough time to look up each answer individually. The cloze procedure was also given to the readers to identify persons with low reading competency. Meyers (1976) reported that a cloze score of 43 percent or less indicated that a person was working at a frustration level whereas a cloze score of 44 to 57 percent indicated that a person was working at the instructional level.

Twenty comprehension tests were obtained from good readers (scoring over 43 percent on the cloze procedure). Three comprehension tests were obtained from persons scoring less than 43 percent on the cloze procedure. These tests were not included in the comparability analysis.

An item by item analysis of the data revealed similar scoring on all but three questions of the comprehension test. An inspection of the three questions showed that two of them did not have comparable content material. The researcher adjusted the texts to bring each of these questions into greater comparability. In one place the ninth grade material was adjusted and in another the fifteenth grade material was adjusted. The changes that were made reflected an almost word-for-word repetition of the material at the other level of readability. The third question, in the opinion of the researcher, showed no textual differences between the two levels of reading material. Therefore no adjustment was made.

The Cloze Procedure

The cloze procedure was developed by deleting every fifth word from a descriptive passage having a Flesch Reading Ease score of 74 or a sixth grade level of reading. The cloze passage was given to all
subjects as one of the four posttest instruments.

In the experimental portion of the study the median point on the cloze procedure was determined and used to divide the women into lower and higher readers. The median score was 60.78. Five pieces of data fell at the median and were randomly assigned to the two groups.

The following descriptive statistics were computed for each group:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lower Reading Competency</th>
<th>Higher Reading Competency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>54.41</td>
<td>65.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>7.62</td>
<td>4.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>56.86</td>
<td>64.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>58.82</td>
<td>62.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the survey portion of the study the cloze values were used to calculate the Pearson product-moment correlations.

See Appendix B for a copy of the cloze procedure used.

Comprehension Posttest

The content of the written material was tested by means of a 32 item multiple choice instrument. The test instrument was designed to cover all of the major concepts in the written material.

The readability of the comprehension instrument was measured by the Flesch Reading Ease formula at 67 or at the seventh grade level of readability. The posttest should have been easily read by all of the
women in the study.

The reliability of the comprehension instrument was established using the revised ninth grade reading text. Twenty-three pieces of data were collected from women who had children in a preschool similar to the preschool designated for the study. The internal consistency of the instrument was computed by the use of the Kuder-Richardson 20 formula (Nunnally, 1967). The data showed a correlation coefficient of .8021 indicating high reliability. See Appendix C for a copy of the comprehension instrument.

The Survey Form

The survey form consisted of a listing of 32 parenting books in alphabetical order according to the last name of the author. The listing represented all of the general childrearing books on a reading list distributed to the women about five months before the data were collected. The women were instructed to check the book(s) they had (1) read half or more and (2) read less than half. See Appendix D for a copy of the survey instrument.

The Demographic Survey Form

The women's age, educational level, number of children, sex of children, marital status, and socioeconomic level were asked on the demographic survey form. With the exception of educational level, all of this information was collected to describe the sample. Educational level was collected and used as an alternate measure of reading competency in the testing of the hypotheses. See Appendix E for a copy of the demographic survey.
Data Analyses

The Experimental Portion of the Study

Two separate 2 x 2 analyses of variance were used to test the three hypotheses of the experimental portion of the study. Ninth and fifteenth grade reading materials formed the two levels of readability for both analyses. One analysis used "lower" and "higher" reading scores as determined by the cloze procedure as the two levels of reading competency. The other analysis was "less than a baccalaureate degree" and "at least a baccalaureate degree" as the two levels of reading competency. The number of errors the women made on the test of comprehension was the dependent variable in both analyses. Both main effects and interaction were interpreted in both analyses.

The Survey Portion of the Study

The two hypotheses of the survey portion of the study were tested with four Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients. The mean readability level of the books reported to have been partially and totally read was calculated and correlated with both the women's scores on the cloze procedure and the women's educational attainment.

The Descriptive Analyses of the Books

A descriptive analysis was reported on each of the 32 books according to the following criteria:

1. the educational or professional experience of the author(s).
2. the topic area of the book using four categories:
   (a) emotional health and growth
   (b) intellectual growth
   (c) physical growth and health
   (d) comprehensive (emphasizing more than one of the above areas).
3. the readability level of the book.

The 32 books were also rank ordered in terms of the number of times the women reported having totally and partially read them. Each of the rankings were divided into four categories and a descriptive analysis on each of the categories was reported using the three criteria previously reported for the individual book analysis.
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The Experimental Portion of the Study

The first hypothesis stated in the null is as follows:

There will be no significant difference in comprehension scores between women receiving lower readability materials and women receiving higher readability materials.

The second hypothesis stated in the null is as follows:

There will be no significant difference in comprehension scores between women scoring low on a measure of reading competency and women scoring high on a measure of reading competency.

The third hypothesis stated in the null is as follows:

There will be no significant interaction when readability of reading materials and reading competency are compared using women's comprehension scores as the dependent variable.

Cell and marginal means, standard deviations, and n's are shown in Table 2 when the cloze procedure is used as the measure of reading competency.

Cell and marginal means, standard deviations, and n's are shown in Table 3 when educational attainment is used as the measure of reading competency.

Table 4 is the summary table for the analysis of variance using the cloze procedure as the measure of reading competency.
Table 5 is the summary table for the analysis of variance using educational attainment as the measure of reading competency.

Non significant F ratios were obtained in all comparisons. Therefore, it was concluded that all three null hypotheses could not be rejected.

Table 2
Means, (standard deviations), and n's When Two Levels of Readability of Reading Material and Two Levels of Reading Competency were Contrasted Using the Women's Comprehension Scores as the Dependent Variable.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Material</th>
<th>Reading Competency Using the Cloze Procedure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth Grade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.80 (2.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifteenth Grade</td>
<td>7.29 (3.45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.25 (3.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Comprehension score is number of errors made by subjects.
Table 3
Means, (standard deviations), and n's When Two Levels of Readability of
Reading Material and Two Levels of
Reading Competency were Contrasted
Using the Women's Comprehension Scores
as the Dependent Variable.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Material</th>
<th>Reading Competency Using Educational Attainment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth Grade</td>
<td>5.50 (3.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifteenth Grade</td>
<td>7.80 (3.90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.78 (3.63)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Comprehension score is number of errors made by subjects.
Table 4

Analysis of Variance Summary Table
Contrasting Two Levels of Reading Materials and Two Levels of Reading Competency Using Women's Comprehension Scores as the Dependent Variable.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Material</td>
<td>0.958</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.958</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Competency (The Cloze Procedure)</td>
<td>0.985</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.985</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>22.644</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22.644</td>
<td>2.098</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>259.085</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10.795</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>284.000</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Comprehension score is the number of errors made by subjects.

Table 5

Analysis of Variance Summary Table
Contrasting Two Levels of Reading Materials and Two Levels of Reading Competency Using Women's Comprehension Scores as the Dependent Variable.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Material</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Competency (Educational Attainment)</td>
<td>7.584</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.584</td>
<td>0.693</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>12.430</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12.430</td>
<td>1.136</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>262.699</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10.946</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>284.000</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Comprehension score is the number of errors made by subjects.
The Survey Portion of the Study

The fourth hypothesis stated in the null is as follows:

There will be no significant relationship when readability of book and reading competency of the women are contrasted using the number of times the women report partially reading a book.

A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient of -0.02 was computed between the mean readability score of the books women reported having partially read and the reading competency of the women as measured by the cloze procedure. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient of 0.13 was computed between the mean readability score of the books women reported having partially read and the educational attainment of the women. Neither of these correlations was significant at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore it was concluded that the null hypothesis could not be rejected.

The fifth hypothesis stated in the null is as follows:

There will be no significant relationship when readability of book and reading competency of the women are contrasted using the number of times the women report totally reading a book.

A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient of 0.13 was computed between readability of the mean score of the books women reported totally read and reading scores of the women on the cloze procedure. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient of 0.12 was computed between readability of the mean score of the books women reported totally read and women's educational attainment. Neither of these correlations was significant at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore it was concluded that the null hypothesis could not be rejected.
The Descriptive Analyses of the Books

The 32 books on the survey instrument will be described in three ways. First, a description will be given of the number of books reported partially and totally read. Second, the 32 books will be described in terms of:

1. the educational and professional experience of the author(s)
2. the topic area of the book using four categories:
   (a) emotional health and growth
   (b) intellectual growth
   (c) physical growth and health
   (d) comprehensive (emphasizing more than one of the above areas)
3. the readability level of the book using the Flesch Reading Ease score.

Third, the 32 books will be rank ordered according to the number of times they were reported partially and totally read.

Descriptive data on number of books read

The entire number of books reported as having been read by the entire group of women is as follows:

1. 106 books reported as totally read.
2. 158 books reported as partially read.
3. 264 books reported either partially or totally read.

The number of books reported as having been partially and totally read by women in lower and higher reading competency groups could not meaningfully be contrasted due to the unequal number of women in each of the reading competency categories. Therefore, the mean number of books reported as having been read was calculated and can be seen in Table 6 and Table 7. (Table 6 uses the cloze procedure as the measure of
reading competency and Table 7 uses educational attainment as the measure of reading competency.)

It should be noted that in both Table 6 and Table 7 women with higher reading competency read more books partially than totally. It should also be noted that women with higher reading competency read more books than women with lower competency in either the partial or total categories.

Table 6
Mean number of books partially and totally read by women with lower and higher reading competency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Reading Competency Using the Cloze Procedure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partially Read</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totally Read</td>
<td>4.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.83  5.38  4.71
Table 7
Mean number of books partially and totally read by women with lower and higher reading competency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Reading Competency Using Educational Attainment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partially Read</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totally Read</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.44  5.32  4.71

Descriptive data on the 32 books on the survey instrument

The 32 books were described in terms of author(s) educational or professional experience, the topic area of the book, and the readability of the book. These data are presented in Table 8.

Fifteen of the books were classified as dealing with the area of emotional health and growth, four with intellectual growth, none with physical growth and health, and thirteen were classified as comprehensive in that they dealt with two or more of the previously mentioned topics.

Of the 32 books on the survey instrument 11 were written by psychologists, seven were written by psychologist/educators, five were written by educators, six were written by medical doctors, three were written by writers, two were written by social workers, and one book was
Table 8
Descriptive Analysis of the Thirty-Two Books on the Survey Instrument According to Author's Background, Topic of the Book, and Readability of the Book

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)' Background/Experience</th>
<th>Topic Area of Book</th>
<th>Readability</th>
<th>Approximate Grade Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ames, Louise B.</td>
<td>Is Your Child In the Wrong Grade?</td>
<td>Psychologist I.D.</td>
<td>I.D.</td>
<td>59.86</td>
<td>Some H.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baruch, Dorothy W.</td>
<td>New Ways of Discipline</td>
<td>Psychologist E.H.</td>
<td>E.H.</td>
<td>67.97</td>
<td>7 or 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beck, Joan</td>
<td>How to Raise a Brighter Child</td>
<td>Writer I.D.</td>
<td>I.D.</td>
<td>36.25</td>
<td>H.S. or College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bettelheim, Bruno</td>
<td>Dialogues with Mothers</td>
<td>Psychiatrist/ Educator E.H.</td>
<td>E.H.</td>
<td>79.19</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Briggs, Dorothy C.</td>
<td>Your Child's Self-Esteem</td>
<td>Psychiatrist/ Educator E.H.</td>
<td>E.H.</td>
<td>59.65</td>
<td>Some H.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnett, Dorothy K.</td>
<td>Your Preschool Child</td>
<td>Parent Comp.</td>
<td>Comp.</td>
<td>65.75</td>
<td>7 or 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dobson, James</td>
<td>Dare to Discipline</td>
<td>Psychiatrist/ Educator Comp.</td>
<td>Comp.</td>
<td>62.24</td>
<td>7 or 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dodson, Fitzhugh</td>
<td>How to Parent</td>
<td>Psychiatrist/ Educator Comp.</td>
<td>Comp.</td>
<td>59.21</td>
<td>Some H.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dreikurs, Rudolf</td>
<td>The Challenge of Parenthood</td>
<td>Psychiatrist E.H.</td>
<td>E.H.</td>
<td>59.71</td>
<td>Some H.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dreikurs, R. &amp;</td>
<td>Children the Challenge</td>
<td>Psychiatrist E.H.</td>
<td>E.H.</td>
<td>71.35</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoltz, V.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author(s)' Background/Experience</td>
<td>Topic Area of Book</td>
<td>Readability</td>
<td>Approximate Grade Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faber, A. &amp; Mazlish, E.</td>
<td>Liberated Parents - Liberated Children</td>
<td>Educator</td>
<td>E.H.</td>
<td>76.92</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraiberg, Selma H.</td>
<td>The Magic Years</td>
<td>Psychologist</td>
<td>E.H.</td>
<td>47.97</td>
<td>H.S. or College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardner, Richard A.</td>
<td>Understanding Children</td>
<td>Psychiatrist</td>
<td>E.H.</td>
<td>42.53</td>
<td>H.S. or College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gesell, A.</td>
<td>Infant and Child in the Culture of Today</td>
<td>M.D.</td>
<td>Comp.</td>
<td>55.74</td>
<td>Some H.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilg, F. &amp; Ames, L.</td>
<td>Parent Effectiveness Training</td>
<td>Psychologist</td>
<td>E.H.</td>
<td>58.08</td>
<td>Some H.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginott, Haim</td>
<td>Between Parent and Child</td>
<td>Psychologist</td>
<td>E.H.</td>
<td>54.85</td>
<td>Some H.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hymes, James L.</td>
<td>The Child Under 6</td>
<td>Educator</td>
<td>E.H.</td>
<td>64.00</td>
<td>7 or 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilg, F. &amp; Ames, L.</td>
<td>Child Behavior</td>
<td>M.D.</td>
<td>Comp.</td>
<td>61.37</td>
<td>7 or 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilg, F. &amp; Ames, L.</td>
<td>Parents Ask</td>
<td>M.D.</td>
<td>Comp.</td>
<td>72.71</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jersild, Arthur T.</td>
<td>Child Psychology</td>
<td>Psychologist/Educator</td>
<td>Comp.</td>
<td>40.89</td>
<td>H.S. or College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krumbloltz and Krumbloltz</td>
<td>Changing Children's Behavior</td>
<td>Psychologist</td>
<td>Comp.*</td>
<td>48.86</td>
<td>H.S. or College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author(s)' Background/Experience</td>
<td>Topic Area of Book</td>
<td>Readability</td>
<td>Approximate Grade Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LeShan, Eda J.</td>
<td>How to Survive Parenthood</td>
<td>Psychologist/Educator</td>
<td>E.H.</td>
<td>60.01</td>
<td>7 or 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LeShan, Eda J.</td>
<td>On &quot;How Do Your Children Grow?&quot;</td>
<td>Psychologist/Educator</td>
<td>Comp.</td>
<td>61.92</td>
<td>7 or 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moore, R. &amp;</td>
<td>Better Late Than Early</td>
<td>Psychologist/Educator</td>
<td>Comp.</td>
<td>57.34</td>
<td>Some H.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moore, D.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Educator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peairs, L. &amp;</td>
<td>What Every Child Needs</td>
<td>Educator</td>
<td>E.H.</td>
<td>64.19</td>
<td>7 or 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peairs, R.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Psychologist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salk, Lee</td>
<td>What Every Child Would Like His Parents to Know</td>
<td>M.D.</td>
<td>E.H.</td>
<td>54.08</td>
<td>Some H.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satir, Virginia</td>
<td>Peoplemaking</td>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>E.H.</td>
<td>63.46</td>
<td>7 or 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharp, Evelyn</td>
<td>Thinking is Child's</td>
<td>Educator</td>
<td>I.D.</td>
<td>56.93</td>
<td>Some H.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spock, Benjamin</td>
<td>Baby and Child Care</td>
<td>M.D.</td>
<td>Comp.</td>
<td>68.93</td>
<td>7 or 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spock, Benjamin</td>
<td>Problems of Parents</td>
<td>M.D.</td>
<td>Comp.</td>
<td>58.74</td>
<td>Some H.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young, Leontine</td>
<td>Life Among the Giants</td>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>E.H.</td>
<td>62.04</td>
<td>7 or 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I.D. = Intellectual development  
E.H. = Emotional health  
Comp. = Comprehensive  
*Listed as comprehensive - This book is more accurately classified as behavior modification.
written by each of the following: psychologist/educator, parent, and nurse.

Of the 32 books on the survey instrument four were identified as being primarily involved with intellectual development, 16 were identified as being primarily concerned with emotional health, none were identified as being primarily concerned with physical health, and 12 were identified as "comprehensive".

The mean readability for the entire 32 books was 59.10 or approximately the reading level of an average high school student.

The number of books in five readability categories were represented can be seen in Table 9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flesch Reading Ease Categories</th>
<th>Number of Books</th>
<th>Approximate Grade Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 - 39</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Completed High School or Some College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 49</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Completed High School or Some College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 59</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Completed Some High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 69</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Seventh or Eighth Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 - 79</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sixth Grade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rank ordering of books according to the number of times they were reported partially and totally read

Books were rank ordered according to the number of times women reported having read them. Table 10 is the rank ordering for books reported partially read. Table 11 is the rank ordering for books reported totally read. Dotted lines were used to divide the listings into four sections of approximately equal size.

An inspection of Table 10 will show that Parent Effectiveness Training by Thomas Gordon was the book reported as partially read most frequently (eleven times). The book reported as having been partially read second most often was Baby and Child Care by Benjamin Spock (ten times).

An inspection of Table 11 will show that Your Child's Self-Esteem by Dorothy Briggs and Baby and Child Care by Benjamin Spock were the books most frequently reported as totally read (fourteen times each).

Four books were common to the highest grouping of both lists (books reported as having been read seven or more times). These books are: (1) Your Child's Self-Esteem by Dorothy Briggs, (2) Baby and Child Care by Benjamin Spock, (3) Parent Effectiveness Training by Thomas Gordon, and (4) Between Parent and Child by Haim Ginott. The readability of each of these four books was above 50 using the Flesch Reading Ease formula or at the reading level of the average high school student.

Three of the four most frequently read books were written by psychologists and one by a medical doctor. Three of the four books were in the area of emotional health and one was classified as comprehensive.
Table 10

Rank Ordering of Books Reported as Having Been Partially Read by the Entire Group of Subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Times Read</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Readability*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Parent Effectiveness Training</td>
<td>Gordon, T.</td>
<td>54.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Baby and Child Care</td>
<td>Spock, B.</td>
<td>68.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Dare to Discipline</td>
<td>Dobson, J.</td>
<td>62.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The Magic Years</td>
<td>Fraiberg, S.</td>
<td>47.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Your Child's Self-Esteem</td>
<td>Briggs, D.</td>
<td>59.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Between Parent and Child</td>
<td>Ginott, H.</td>
<td>58.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Child Behavior</td>
<td>Ilg &amp; Ames</td>
<td>61.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Infant &amp; Child in the Culture of Today</td>
<td>Gesell, Ilg &amp; Ames</td>
<td>55.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>How to Survive Parenthood</td>
<td>LeShan, E.</td>
<td>60.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Peoplemaking</td>
<td>Satir</td>
<td>63.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>How to Raise a Brighter Child</td>
<td>Beck, J.</td>
<td>36.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Your Preschool Child</td>
<td>Burnett, D.</td>
<td>65.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Challenge of Parenthood</td>
<td>Dreikurs, R.</td>
<td>59.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>On &quot;How do Your Children Grow&quot;</td>
<td>LeShan, E.</td>
<td>61.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Is Your Child in the Wrong Grade</td>
<td>Ames, L.</td>
<td>54.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>New Ways of Discipline</td>
<td>Baruch, D.</td>
<td>67.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dialogues with Mothers</td>
<td>Bettelheim, B.</td>
<td>79.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>How to Parent</td>
<td>Dodson, F.</td>
<td>59.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Children the Challenge</td>
<td>Dreikurs &amp; Stoltz</td>
<td>59.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Child Psychology</td>
<td>Jersild, A.</td>
<td>40.89</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>What Every Child Would Like His Parents to Know</td>
<td>Salk, L.</td>
<td>54.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Problems of Parents</td>
<td>Spock, B.</td>
<td>58.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Times Read</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Readability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A Child's Mind</td>
<td>Beadle, M.</td>
<td>39.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Liberated Parents - Liberated Children</td>
<td>Faber &amp; Mazlish</td>
<td>76.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Child Under Six</td>
<td>Hymes, J.</td>
<td>64.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Parents Ask</td>
<td>Ilg &amp; Ames</td>
<td>72.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Changing Children's Behavior</td>
<td>Krumboltz &amp; Krumboltz</td>
<td>48.46</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>What Every Child Needs</td>
<td>Peairs &amp; Peairs</td>
<td>62.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Life Among the Giants</td>
<td>Young, L.</td>
<td>62.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Better Late Than Early</td>
<td>Moore &amp; Moore</td>
<td>57.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Understanding Children</td>
<td>Gardner, R.</td>
<td>42.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Thinking is Child's Play</td>
<td>Sharp, E.</td>
<td>56.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Conversion of Flesch Reading Ease scoring to approximate grade level can be obtained from Table 8.*
Table 11

Rank Ordering of Books Reported as Having Been Totally Read by the Entire Group of Subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Times Read</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Readability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Your Child's Self-Esteem</td>
<td>Briggs, D.</td>
<td>59.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Baby and Child Care</td>
<td>Spock, B.</td>
<td>68.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Between Parent and Child</td>
<td>Ginott, H.</td>
<td>58.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>How to Parent</td>
<td>Dodson, F.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Challenge of Parenthood</td>
<td>Dreikurs, R.</td>
<td>71.55</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Understanding Children</td>
<td>Gardner, R.</td>
<td>42.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Problems of Parents</td>
<td>Spock, B.</td>
<td>58.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Child Under Six</td>
<td>Hymes, J.</td>
<td>64.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>On &quot;How do Your Children Grow&quot;</td>
<td>LeShan, E.</td>
<td>61.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Your Preschool Child</td>
<td>Burnett, D.</td>
<td>65.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 11 (Continued)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Number of Times Read</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Readability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>A Child's Mind</td>
<td>Beadle, M.</td>
<td>39.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Child Psychology</td>
<td>Jersild, A.</td>
<td>40.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Changing Children's Behavior</td>
<td>Krumboltz &amp; Krumboltz</td>
<td>48.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Sharp, E.</td>
<td>56.43</td>
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<td>57.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>59.86</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Life Among the Giants</td>
<td>Young, L.</td>
<td>62.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>What Every Child Needs</td>
<td>Peairs &amp; Peairs</td>
<td>64.19</td>
</tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>Parents Ask</td>
<td>Ilg &amp; Ames</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>New Ways of Discipline</td>
<td>Baruch, D.</td>
<td>67.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Conversion of Flesch Reading Ease scoring to approximate grade level can be obtained from Table 8.*
Discussion of the Findings

The Experimental Portion of the Study

The experimental portion of the study was designed to explore whether: (1) readability of material, (2) reading competency of the reader, and (3) the interaction of readability of material and reading competency of the reader would show significant differences when a 2 x 2 analysis of variance was used as the statistical technique. The model developed by Klare appeared to indicate that the women who received the ninth grade materials would have a significantly lower error rate on the measure of comprehension than women who received the fifteenth grade materials (i.e., significant main effect). It also appeared to indicate that women with higher reading competency scores would have a significantly lower error rate on the measure of comprehension than women with lower reading competency scores (i.e., significant main effect). Moreover, a significant ordinal interaction was expected such that women with lower reading competency and fifteenth grade reading materials would make significantly more errors on the measure of comprehension than women in the other three cells of the 2 x 2 analysis of variance matrix.

Significance was not obtained for either main effect or for the interaction on either analysis. The F ratios for the main effects and interaction when the cloze procedure was used as the measure of reading competency were 0.089 and 2.098; all not significant at the .05 level of significance. The F ratios for the main effects and interaction when educational attainment was used as the measure of reading competency were 0.077, 0.693, and 1.136; all not significant at the .05 level of
significance.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that three of the four cells in the matrix that used the cloze procedure as the measure of reading competency were in the direction expected by the researcher prior to the data collection and that all four cells were in the expected direction when educational attainment was used. The hypotheses were constructed based on the rationale that the "matched" cells would show the lowest number of errors on the test of comprehension. ("Matched" refers to lower readers receiving ninth grade materials and higher readers receiving fifteenth grade materials.) Cell means of 4.80, 5.14, 5.50, and 5.33 were recorded in the "matched" positions. These means were the lowest cell means of the study. In addition, it was expected that the highest number of errors would be found in the cell where women with lower reading competency were given the most difficult reading materials. Cell means of 7.29 and 7.80 were recorded in these positions. These means were the highest cell means of the study.

The cell mean in which women with higher reading competency were given ninth grade reading materials was expected to show an error rate approximately equal to the "matched" cell means. This was the finding when educational attainment was used as the measure of reading competency. However, the cell mean when the cloze procedure was used as the measure of reading competency was 6.33 somewhat higher than the means for the "matched" cells. An inspection of the individual scores that composed this cell mean indicates that most of the women scored within the range of errors of the "matched" cells but that a few of the women made a considerable number of errors which inflated the overall mean
for the cell. The small amount of data within this cell makes it difficult to interpret but they appeared to indicate that a few of the women did not take the test and/or the reading seriously.

The Survey Portion of the Study

The survey portion of the study was designed to explore the relationship of readability of books reported as having been read with reading competency of the women. Separate analyses were made for books reported partially and totally read. The four correlations calculated were not significant at the .05 level of significance. These correlations were seen to represent the "real-life" test of the Klare model in that the books would have been self-selected by the women.

It would appear that the women's choice of parenting books was not significantly related to their reading competency. The non significant findings may indicate that no relationship in fact existed between the readability level of books chosen by the women and the women's reading competency. These findings might also be the result of: (1) the high educational level of the women in relation to the readability of the books and/or (2) uncontrolled factors such as content of material and motivation of the women as posited in the Klare model.

The Descriptive Analyses of the Books

It would found that more books were reported partially read than totally read; 158 as compared to 106. Moreover, it was found that women with higher reading competency read more books partially than totally and that they read more books partially than women with lower reading competency read partially or read totally. Table 6 and Table 7
show the average number of books reported having been read by women with lower and higher reading competency.

Increased partial reading by women with higher reading competency might be explained as a boredom factor. This conjecture would reinforce the contention made in the discussion of the experimental findings that the higher error rate of women with higher competency given lower reading materials might be based upon boredom. Increased partial reading might also be explained as a function of the reader's skill. Knowles (1975) discussed the idea of reading a book "proactively". According to Knowles, proactive reading is taking the time to become acquainted with the author's background and the organization of the book, deciding the question(s) one wants to get answers for through reading the book, and then proceeding to read only those sections that lend themselves to answering the predetermined questions, i.e., partial reading of the book. Either, or both, of these explanations might account for the increase in partially read books by readers with higher competency.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Summary

The study was designed to test Klare's model of reading competency which stated that five factors and their interactions were related to reading comprehension. One of the five factors, readability level of written material, was manipulated in the experimental portion of the study. Another factor, reading competency of the reader, was measured and used to divide the subjects into contrast groups. The remaining three factors, motivation, content of material, and the test situation, were controlled in various ways. A 2 x 2 analysis of variance showed no significant main effects or interaction for the two levels of readability of written material (ninth and fifteenth grade reading material) and two levels of reading competency (lower and higher).

In the survey portion of the study the women were asked to check the books they had: (1) partially read (reading less than half) or (2) totally read (reading half or more) from a list of 32 books. The survey was designed to complement the experimental design in that the same two variables were analyzed. The survey allowed the women to respond to written materials that they had chosen to read themselves. Correlations showed no significant relationships between mean readability of books reported as read and reading competency of the women.
Although no significant differences were found in the experimental portion of the study it was noted that "matched" cells showed the lowest number of errors, i.e., increased comprehension. "Matched" cells were defined as those cells formed by women with lower reading competency receiving ninth grade reading materials and women with higher reading competency receiving fifteenth grade reading materials. This was an expected finding. Also expected, was the finding that the highest number of errors were recorded by women with lower reading competency and fifteenth grade reading materials. An unexpected finding was the cell mean for women with higher reading competency receiving ninth grade reading materials. It was suggested that boredom might have contributed to the high error rate.

The survey portion showed non-significant correlations between mean readability of books (both partially and totally read books) and reading competency of the reader. This would appear to suggest that selection of books was not determined by the readability of the book. It might also suggest that other uncontrolled factors in the Klare model (content of material or motivation) might have masked any readability differences or that the subjects might not be restricted in the reading of these 32 books due to their high reading competency.

The descriptive analysis of the book list showed that women with higher reading competency reported having read more books partially than women with lower reading competency. It was suggested that either boredom, proactive reading, or both might be responsible for this finding. Proactive reading was described as the process in which the reader purposefully sets out to answer a specific question which (s)he feels
the book contains without any intention of reading the entire book.

The descriptive survey of the 32 books on the survey instrument by author's background, topic area, and readability can be found in Table 8. The rank ordering of the books according to the number of times the women reported partially and totally reading them can be found in Tables 10 and 11. Parent Effectiveness Training by Thomas Gordon, Baby and Child Care by Benjamin Spock, and How to Parent by Fitzhugh Dodson were the books most frequently reported as having been partially read. Your Child's Self-Esteem by Dorothy Briggs, Baby and Child Care by Benjamin Spock, and Between Parent and Child by Haim Ginott were the books most frequently reported as having been totally read.

Conclusions and Implications

None of the findings of the experimental study reached significance. Therefore, no strong conclusions are possible. However, an interpretation of the trends appears meaningful insofar as three of the four cells of the analysis of variance were in the expected direction using a relatively small number of subjects. Statistical significance might possibly have been reached using a larger sample.

An examination of the cell means suggested that "matching" the readability of written material to reading competency of the reader decreased error, or conversely, increased learning. Consequently, it would appear advantageous for parent educators to match the reading competency of their readers with the readability of written material whenever possible.

Reading competency was measured in two ways--the cloze procedure and educational attainment. Both measures appeared to sort out some of
the variance of the study. Both appeared to be useful indicators of reading competency that a parent educator might use to match readability of written material to the reader.

The study would appear to indicate that overly difficult materials increased errors (i.e., decreased learning). This conclusion supports the general literature on readability.

An unexpected trend was noted in that there was an increased error rate for women with higher reading competency under lower readability conditions. This might suggest that boredom or skimming of the material was associated with overly simplified reading. Further research was suggested to determine whether this trend was an artifact of this particular study or whether it would be found in a replication of the study.

None of the survey findings were significantly correlated indicating that for this group of women self-choice of books was not significantly related to the books they reported partially and totally read. It may be that books are chosen more by author's reputation, topical area, or other such factors rather than by readability. It might also be that so many factors of the Klare model are uncontrolled that it is impossible to statistically sort out the variance due to readability alone. It should also be noted that the women of this study all had at least a high school education and were therefore not truly limited in the books they could read. Further research on self-selection of parent books might more profitably be pursued with persons with lower reading competency.
The descriptive study indicated that more books were partially read than totally read. This trend was especially noted for women with higher reading ability. Two possible conclusions might be drawn from this finding. First, this might indicate that better readers become bored more easily. This conclusion would have some merit in light of the unexpected trend of the experimental study where women with high reading competency made more errors with lower reading materials than with higher reading materials, possibly indicating boredom. Second, it may be that better readers purposefully chose to partially read books. The concept of proactive reading was suggested as a possible explanation for this increased partial reading. Perhaps a combination of boredom, proactive reading, and other unknown factors account for the higher partial reading of better readers. More research appears to be indicated to identify and sort out variables associated with partial readings of parenting books.

Parent educators should be aware of the large number of times books were reported as having been partially read. Parent educators should remain alert in their discussions with parents that a book mentioned as read may only have been partially read.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

Seven research areas are suggested as a result of this study:

1. The experimental portion of the study might be replicated using a larger number of subjects. It would be helpful to randomly assign reading material within levels of reading competency in the replication. This assignment could be most easily accomplished by identifying the subjects' educational attainment before distributing the
reading materials. The replication should focus on the matching of material to reader and on better readers being given lower reading materials.

2. A study similar to the proposed replication described above might also be conducted in which the subjects were informed that they would be tested on their reading comprehension and asked to do their best. Under these conditions would matched cells still show the lowest error rate? Would better readers still show a high error rate with low readability materials?

3. The possible boredom of higher competency readers given lower reading materials would appear to be in need of more study. What factors within the reading appear to lower the interest of good readers? Do all good readers "turn off" to lower readability? Is there an optimal readability level in relation to one's reading competency where interest in maintained, time reduced, and material enjoyed?

4. Research might be designed to begin to operationalize the "matching" of reading materials to the level of reading competency of the reader. It is suggested that the cloze procedure might be a vehicle by which the matching might be operationalized.

5. The concept of proactive reading might be explored more fully through the study of better readers. What do they look for when they are engaged in proactive reading? How do they set about accomplishing this task? Are they satisfied with the knowledge they get in this manner? Do they return to reread the book at a later time? How well can they apply knowledge gleaned piecemeal from a
variety of sources? Answers to these questions might help the parent educator formulate teaching strategies to teach proactive reading skills to parents not presently using them.

6. More research is also suggested on the self-selection of parenting books. If readability does not play a major role in the choice of reading material, what factors do? It is also suggested that readability might be a more important variable in choice of parenting book for less well educated parents.

In Closing

This study used a parent education sample but nevertheless it is seen to have application to adult education in general. Much of adult education is conducted under conditions similar to those that existed for the sample studied insofar as participants came voluntarily for the purpose of learning more about a specific interest area. Effective use of reading materials would appear to be more difficult under these conditions as compared with the standard classroom situation because the instructor cannot assign readings autocratically nor lower grades as a penalty for noncompliance. With voluntary participation it becomes increasingly more important for an instructor to fill the felt needs of each participant. Well chosen readings written at a level that does not stress the reader would appear to be one way of meeting felt needs.

In the experimental portion of the study the "matching" of reading competency and readability of material was an attempt to maximize interest and minimize stress. As the study showed, the lowest number of errors occurred under matched conditions. The findings of the study did not reach significance and it is suggested that research with a larger
group under more rigorous conditions might show significance and confirm the trends of this study.

The finding of interest to adult education in the survey portion of the study was that better readers read considerably more books partially than fully. It is possible to speculate that these better readers had taught themselves to search a book for answers to specific questions that filled their need without feeling the need to read all the author had to offer. Knowles' concept of proactive reading appears to be a possible explanation for this finding. It is suggested that further research might be undertaken to operationalize the use of proactive reading in adult education programs.
LIST OF REFERENCES


Evans, Mary White. Reactions to a Parent Education Program In a Church Sponsored Preschool as a Basis for Improvement. Thesis at The Ohio State University, 1967.


APPENDIX A

Ninth Grade Reading Materials  Pg. 85-90
Fifteenth Grade Reading Materials  Pg. 91-96
VALUE CLARIFICATION

The material in this reading is abstracted from a book by
Raths and Associates
called
Values and Teaching
Value Clarification and Today's World

The child of today is faced with many choices. Many more choices than a child used to have. This means that the child of today has more alternatives among which to choose. Consequently, the child of today is more worldly-wise than a child used to be. In addition, the many choices make the act of choosing more difficult for the child. How can a child learn to size up all of the available alternatives? How can a child examine the ground on which each alternative rests? How can a child foresee the results of each alternative? In short, how does a child know what to value? This paper will be aimed at showing parents how they can help their child develop values which will let the child sort through the many choices with which he is faced.

Previous Methods of Teaching Values

Parents in earlier times used many different methods to teach their child a set of values. Usually these earlier methods of teaching values fell into seven categories: (1) setting an example, (2) persuading, (3) limiting choices, (4) inspiring by emotional pleas, (5) rules, (6) cultural or religious dogma, and (7) appeals to the child's conscience. Although these traditional methods have had some positive results they have not always brought about the results parents had hoped for.

Exactly What Are Values?

Raths tells us that values are those guidelines that show how a person has decided to use his life. Persons have experiences; they grow and learn. Out of these experiences come certain general guidelines for
behavior. These guidelines tend to give direction to life. These guidelines can be called values. Our values show what we tend to do with our limited amounts of time, energy, and money.

Since values grow from a person's experiences, we expect that different experiences will give rise to a different set of values. We also expect a person's values to be changed as his experiences accumulate and change. Also, because values are a part of living, they work in a very complex way. Values involve more than simple extremes of right or wrong, good or bad, true or false. The conditions under which behavior is guided usually involves conflicting demands. So, guidelines are usually established through a process of weighing and balancing. Only in the final analysis do we see an action that reflects the many forces that entered into the formation of the value.

Valuing as a Process

We will be less concerned with teaching a particular value outcome for a child than we will be with teaching the process a child uses to obtain his values. Because life is different through time and space, we cannot be sure what values or style of life would be best for any person. But we do have some ideas about what process is best for obtaining values.

A look at this process will make it clear how we define a value. Only when something fills the following seven criteria do we call it a value. The seven criteria are: (1) choosing freely, (2) choosing from among alternatives, (3) choosing after thoughtful consideration of the consequences of each alternative, (4) prizing, (5) affirming one's choice, (6) acting upon one's choice, and (7) repeating one's choice.
When a child expresses a value he expresses something in his life that meets all seven of these criteria.

It should be very clear that within this value theory the parent does not push his own pet values upon the child. Rather the parent helps to bring about the conditions which aid the child in building his own values IF the child chooses to do so. Within this value theory it is possible that children will choose not to develop values. It is also possible within this value theory that the child will develop values opposite of the values of his parents.

The next paragraphs will give a brief description of how the parent can help his child learn this process of valuing.

Teaching the Process of Valuing

The basic design for teaching values to be explained in this paper rests on a single way of responding to things a child says or does. This method of responding is called a clarifying response. A clarifying response asks the child to think about what he has chosen, what he prizes, or what he is doing. A clarifying response asks the child to clarify his thinking and behavior and in the process to clarify his values. For instance, a child might say: "I don't want to play with Sally; she hit me yesterday." A parent's clarifying response might be: "How did you feel when she hit you?" or "What did you do--and what else might you have done?"

The reader may already guess some of the rules for a good clarifying response. A clarifying response does not moralize. It does not criticize. It does not evaluate. Also, a good clarifying response does not attempt to give the child a specific value. Rather, a good clarifying
response puts the responsibility on the child to look at his behavior and ideas. It asks the child to think and decide for himself what it is he wants. A clarifying response also lets the child have the chance to NOT look; to NOT decide; to NOT think. It should be noted that a clarifying response should not be used when a parent wants to get information from a child or when the parent is trying to promote an extended discussion.

Also, a clarifying response does not try to create a value right away. Rather it is aimed at setting a mood that will allow a series of clarifying responses to have a cumulative effect. A clarifying response attempts to create a situation in which the child will think, without feeling he must justify his thoughts to an adult. This thinking is usually done by the child in private. So, a parent is urged to carry on only 2 or 3 rounds of talk with the child and then stop the conversation with some cautious but true statement such as, "I see what you mean better now" or "Let's talk about this another time, shall we?"

**When to Use a Clarifying Response**

Not everything a child says or does is a value; nor need it be. Not everything a child says or does needs a clarifying response from the parent. A good time to use a clarifying response is when the child makes a "value like" statement which meets several but not all seven of the criteria for valuing. These "value like" statements which meet only some of the criteria for valuing are called value indicators. Value indicators can be the child's: (1) goals, (2) aspirations, (3) attitudes, (4) interests, (5) feelings, (6) beliefs, (7) activities, and (8) problems.
By using a clarifying response to a child's value indicator a parent sets up conditions under which the child can reflect on what he said or did in terms of one or more of the seven criteria for valuing. In this manner the parent helps the child move closer toward building his own value system.
VALUE CLARIFICATION

The material in this reading is abstracted from a book by Raths and Associates called Values and Teaching
Value Clarification and Today's World

Children in the present cultural milieu are confronted by significantly more choices than children of previous generations which has resulted in today's child becoming less provincial and more sophisticated. Because today's child is increasingly being bombarded by a large number of alternatives among which he must continually choose, the very task of deciding has become difficult. How can children size up all the available alternatives, scrutinize the assumptions on which each alternative is based, and anticipate the consequences toward which each alternative points when so many choices are readily available? Stated differently, how do today's children know what to value? This article will be directed toward unfolding a relatively new method parents can use to assist their children to develop values and thereby allow their children to sort through this bewildering array of choices with which they are presently confronted.

Previous Methods of Teaching Values

Previous generations of parents have used a variety of approaches in their attempt to teach children a set of values which generally fall within the following seven categories: (1) setting an example, (2) persuading, (3) limiting choices, (4) inspiring by emotional pleas, (5) rules, (6) cultural or religious dogma, and (7) appeals to the child's conscience. Although these traditional approaches have not been without some significant results they have not always brought about the results parents had anticipated.
Exactly What Are Values?

Raths has defined values as those elements that demonstrate the decisions an individual has made concerning the use of his life. It is out of an individual's experiences with life that the individual comes to establish guidelines for his behavior. These guidelines, once established, then in turn give a direction to an individual's life and become what we are referring to as values. Stated more simply, an individual's values indicate how he intends to use his limited time and energy and money.

Because we perceive values as emanating from an individual's experiences, we would anticipate that different experiences would produce different values and that any one individual's values would be modified as his experiences accumulate and vary. Moreover, because values are a part of living they operate in very complex circumstances and usually involve more than simple extremes of right or wrong, good or bad, true or false. The conditions under which behavior is guided, in which values operate, typically involves conflicting demands or a weighing and a balancing of forces before, eventually, an action is forthcoming that reflects the multitude of forces.

Valuing as a Process

The teaching of a particular value outcome is of considerable less importance in this article than is the teaching of the process of value formation, called value clarification. This process of value clarification is firmly grounded on the assumption that an individual's life may be different through time and space as well as the assumption that we cannot know in advance exactly what experiences each individual will
have. We, therefore, cannot with certainty predict what values, what style of life, would be most appropriate for any individual. Value clarification talks to the need to build a process model which will allow each individual an effective means whereby he can build his own individual set of values. This process model defines a value as something that satisfies all of the following seven criteria: (1) choosing freely, (2) choosing from among alternatives, (3) choosing after thoughtful consideration of the consequences of each alternative, (4) prizing, (5) affirming one's choices, (6) acting upon one's choices, and (7) repeating one's choices. In defining a value as meeting all of the above seven criteria we are in fact saying that children are only expressing a value when their behavior reflects all of the above criteria.

It should be increasingly clear that parents do not manipulate children into accepting their own cherished values. Rather, the parent facilitates the conditions which will aid children in finding their own values IF they choose to do so. When operating within this value theory, it is entirely possible that children will choose not to develop values or to develop values that are diametrically opposed to those of their parents.

The next subdivision of this article provides an overview of how the parent can facilitate children's learning of this process of valuing.

Teaching the Process of Valuing

The fundamental strategy of instructing children about values advocated in this article rests on a specific procedure of responding to children's behavior and expressions called the clarifying response. Fundamentally, a clarifying response is a method of responding to
children that results in the children deliberating on what they have chosen, what they prize, and/or what they are doing. For example, a child might remark, "I don't want to play with Sally, she hit me yesterday." A parent's clarifying response might be, "How did you feel when she hit you?" or "What did you do--and what else might you have done?"

The reader may already be intuitively aware of some of the criteria of an effective clarifying response. A clarifying response avoids moralizing, criticizing, giving values, or evaluating. Rather, a good clarifying response places the responsibility on the child to examine his own behavior and his own ideas, and to think and decide for himself what it is he desires. A clarifying response also entertains the possibility that the child will NOT look, NOT decide, NOT think about his behavior or his ideas. Moreover, a clarifying response should not be used when a parent wishes to obtain information from a child or when the parent is attempting to promote an extended discussion.

In addition, a clarifying response does not undertake to create a value immediately but rather aims at setting a mood whereby a succession of clarifying responses can have a cumulative effect. Consequently, a clarifying response attempts to create a situation in which the child will contemplate his behavior, usually alone, without the temptation to justify his thoughts to an adult. Therefore, a parent is advised to conduct only 2 or 3 rounds of conversation with the child and then volunteer to break off the conversation with some noncommittal but honest phrase such as, "I see what you mean better now" or "Let's talk about this another time, shall we?"
When to Use a Clarifying Response

Obviously not all of children's statements or behaviors reflect their values, nor should they. Equally obvious, not everything children say or do should elicit a clarifying response from his parent. An ideal time to use a clarifying response is when the child makes a "value like" expression which meets several but not all seven of the criteria for valuing. These "value like" expressions which meet only some of the criteria for valuing are called value indicators. Value indicators can be children's' (1) goals, (2) aspirations, (3) attitudes, (4) interests, (5) feelings, (6) beliefs, (7) activities, and (8) problems.

By employing a clarifying response to children's value indicators parents set up conditions under which children are able to later reflect upon their behavior and/or statements in terms of one or more of the seven criteria for valuing. In this manner, the parents encourage children to move increasingly toward building their own system of valuing.
APPENDIX B

The Cloze Procedure
The two paragraphs below have had every fifth word deleted. Please try to fill in all of the missing words as best you can. It is perfectly all right to guess where you may not be sure of an answer.

There was much _______ life to enjoy. Kino _______ a good time every _______. In the winter he _______ to a school in _______ fishing village, and he _______ Jiya shared a seat. _______ studied reading and arithmetic _______ all the things that _______ children learn in school. _______ in the summer Kino _______ to work hard on _______ farm, for his father _______ help. Even Setsu and _______ mother helped when the _______ seedlings had to be _______ in the flooded fields _______ the terraces, and they _______, too, when the grain _______ ripe and had to _______ cut into sheave and _______. On those days Kino _______ not run down the _______ to find Jiya. When _______ day was over the _______ was so tired he _______ asleep over his supper.

But _______ were days when Jiya _______ was too busy to _______. Word came in from _______ fishermen up the coast _______ a school of fish _______ passing through the channels _______ then every fishing boat _______ haste to sail out _______ the bays and inlets _______ the main currents of _______ sea. Early in the _______, sometimes so early that _______ light was still that _______ the setting moon, Jiya _______ his father sailed their _______ out across the silvery _______, to let down their _______ at dawn. If they _______ lucky the nets came _______ so heavy with fish _______ it took all their _______ to haul them up, _______ soon the bottom of _______ boat was flashing and _______ with the wriggling fish.
APPENDIX C

The Comprehension Test
Please choose the **BEST** answer to each of the following questions.

1. Choose the one statement that is **NOT** one of the seven criteria for valuing
   
   ____ affirming the values of one's parents
   ____ choosing freely
   ____ acting upon one's choice
   ____ repeating one's choice

2. A statement a parent might make to help a child clarify his values is called a
   
   ____ clarifying dictum
   ____ clarifying response
   ____ valued response
   ____ valued dictum

3. A person's values
   
   ____ may change over his lifetime
   ____ once formed will never change
   ____ express his difficulty in coping with life
   ____ none of the above

4. The title of this paper is
   
   ____ Value Related Literature
   ____ Value Clarification
   ____ Clarification of Valuing
   ____ Valuing Through Time and Space
5. A value
   _____ must meet at least one of the 7 criteria for valuing
   _____ must meet most of the 7 criteria for valuing
   _____ must meet all of the 7 criteria for valuing
   _____ the 7 criteria for valuing do not apply to valuing

6. Value indicators CANNOT be one of the following
   _____ a child's expression of his aspirations
   _____ a child's expression of his feelings
   _____ a child's expression of his beliefs
   _____ a child's expression of his tiredness

7. When a parent correctly uses the information in the reading
   _____ his child may choose values different from his own
   _____ his child will probably accept his parents' values
   _____ his child will definitely accept his parents' values
   _____ none of the above

8. When a child does not listen to a particular clarifying response
   the parent is advised to
   _____ try moralizing
   _____ insist that the child listen by threatening him
   _____ allow the child to ignore the parent's remarks
   _____ none of the above

9. The reading seems to imply that
   _____ this method is the only method of teaching values that will
     work in today's world
   _____ this method of teaching values was specially devised for
     treating "difficult" children
   _____ all children need to learn values
   _____ all of the above
10. A child's values grow out of his

_____ experiences

_____ observation of parents

_____ all of the above

_____ none of the above

11. A clarifying response would NOT be used under which of the following conditions

_____ the parent is seeking information

_____ the parent is trying to help the child with a problem

_____ a child expresses an attitude

_____ a child expresses his goals

12. According to the reading a value indicator might be

_____ a child's school work

_____ a child's activities

_____ a child's problem solving ability

_____ a child's intelligence

13. After a successful clarifying response

_____ a child will think through his behavior in private

_____ a child will consult his friends for the "peer point of view"

_____ a child will agree with his parent

_____ none of the above

14. The reading implies that the responsibility for developing values rests on

_____ society as a whole

_____ the child (with the help of his parent)

_____ the parent (with the child being slightly involved)

_____ parent education groups
15. A good clarifying response would

____ set a mood that would allow a series of clarifying responses to have a cumulative effect
____ help the child to immediately see his value more clearly
____ have to be used daily to have the desired effect
____ none of the above

16. Values can be defined as general guidelines that show how a person uses his

____ money
____ energy
____ life
____ time

17. Values

____ are basically an individual's simple judgment of right and wrong
____ evolve during the early teens
____ are the result of much weighing and balancing of forces
____ all of the above

18. According to the reading, parents should NEVER

____ allow their child to choose their own value
____ ask their children about their personal belief system
____ provide a good model for the child
____ none of the above apply to the statement

19. A good clarifying response would NOT

____ moralize
____ evaluate
____ criticize
____ all of the above
20. A clarifying response

___ clarifies the parent's value for the child
___ clarifies the present cultural point of view for the child
___ stimulates the parent to respond more clearly to the child
___ stimulates the child to clarify his own thinking

21. The material presented in this paper was taken from a book written by

___ Raths
___ Roberts
___ Williams
___ Webster

22. The reading limited the teaching of values to children of the following ages

___ nursery school age
___ elementary school age
___ teenagers
___ the reading did not limit the ages of children

23. The philosophy of the reading emphasizes

___ using positive reinforcement to stabilize behavior
___ using laissez faire or permissive treatment of children
___ parent authority to control the child
___ the establishment of learning conditions and trusting the child to make good use of them
24. According to the reading a parent should allow his child
   _____ to think through his value system without feeling he must justify his thought to adults
   _____ to choose to ignore his parent's values
   _____ to consider by himself exactly what he prizes and wishes
   _____ all of the above

25. The purpose behind the use of a clarifying response is to
   _____ let the parent express his own value
   _____ help the child learn new ways of expressing himself
   _____ both of the above
   _____ none of the above

26. When a child expresses his feelings about something in his life that does not yet meet all of the 7 criteria for valuing, we call his expression a
   _____ "value free" expression
   _____ value indicator
   _____ goal
   _____ none of the above

27. Choose the one statement that is NOT one of the 7 criteria for valuing
   _____ prizing
   _____ helping others develop their own value system
   _____ choosing after thoughtful consideration of the consequences
   _____ repeating one's choices
28. This reading is concerned with the present need children have to
    ___ choose among many alternatives
    ___ ignore their parent's rules
    ___ talk back to their parents
    ___ hit their friends without provocation

29. According to this reading a parent helps a child learn to value by
    ___ allowing his child to form his own values
    ___ leaving his child free to ignore the parent's questions
    ___ establishing conditions which ask the child to reflect on
        his actions and statements
    ___ all of the above

30. Generally a clarifying response
    ___ needs to be followed up for about one full month
    ___ is an extended discussion
    ___ takes at least 3 minutes of time
    ___ is about 2 or 3 rounds of conversation long

31. The reading suggests a method of teaching
    ___ how to separate one value from another
    ___ the content of a value
    ___ the process of valuing
    ___ all of the above

32. Which of the following is NOT an earlier or traditional method of
    teaching values?
    ___ limiting choices
    ___ inspiring by emotional pleas
    ___ appeals to the child's conscience
    ___ all of the above are earlier or traditional methods
33. I liked the use of this reading as a way of introducing a new topic
   ___ yes
   ___ no

34. I found the reading
   ___ too difficult
   ___ too easy
   ___ about right
APPENDIX D

Survey Instrument
Please read over the titles of the parenting books listed below. Check (✓) in the first column if you have read LESS THAN HALF of the book. Check (√) in the second column if you have read HALF OR MORE THAN HALF of the book.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LESS THAN HALF</th>
<th>HALFWAY</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ames, Louise B.</td>
<td>Is Your Child in the Wrong Grade?</td>
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<td>Baruch, Dorothy W.</td>
<td>New Ways of Discipline</td>
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<td>Beadle, Muriel</td>
<td>A Child's Mind</td>
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<td>Beck, Joan</td>
<td>How to Raise a Brighter Child</td>
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<td>Bettelheim, Bruno</td>
<td>Dialogues with Mothers</td>
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<td>Briggs, Dorothy C.</td>
<td>Your Child's Self-Esteem</td>
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<td>Burnett, Dorothy K.</td>
<td>Your Preschool Child, Making the Most of the Years from 2 to 7</td>
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<td>Dobson, James</td>
<td>Dare to Discipline</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dodson, Fitzhugh</td>
<td>How to Parent</td>
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<td>Dreikurs, Rudolf</td>
<td>The Challenge of Parenthood</td>
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<td>Children the Challenge</td>
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<td>Faber, A. &amp; Mazlish, E.</td>
<td>Liberated Parents - Liberated Children</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fraiberg, Selma H.</td>
<td>The Magic Years</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gardner, Richard A.</td>
<td>Understanding Children</td>
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<td>Gesell, A. Ilg, F. &amp; Ames, L.</td>
<td>Infant and Child in the Culture of Today</td>
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<td>Ginott, Haim</td>
<td>Between Parent and Child</td>
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<td>Gordon, Thomas</td>
<td>Parent Effectiveness Training</td>
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<td>Hymes, James L.</td>
<td>The Child Under 6</td>
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APPENDIX E

Form for Demographic Data
Please answer the following questions so that the information on the other forms can be tabulated by the information on this form. PLEASE DO NOT GIVE YOUR NAME. The next, and last page, is a consent form that indicates that no information you give on this or any other form will be reported by individuals. Rather the information will be grouped and reported in the aggregate. Thank you.

1. Age and sex of children in the family:
   (a) Circle the number that corresponds to the age of each boy in the family. For example, if you have 2 boys ages 3 and 7, please circle the 3 and the 7. If you have two children the same age please indicate with a double circle around the age.

   less than
   1  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11  12  13  14  15  16 and over

   (b) Circle the number that corresponds to the age of each girl in the family.

   less than
   1  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11  12  13  14  15  16 and over

2. Your age: ________

3. Circle the highest number of years you spent in academic education:
   College          Graduate School
   10  11  12  13  14  15  16  17  18  19  20  21  22

   List other non-academic educational accomplishments:
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

4. Check the category that applies:
   ___ married and living with husband
   ___ separated or divorced
   ___ spouse deceased
   ___ other
5. Our total family income falls within the following category:

- under $10,000
- between $10,000 and $14,999
- between $15,000 and $19,999
- between $20,000 and $24,999
- between $25,000 and $29,999
- over $30,000