

THE ROLE OF THE READING TEACHER IN HALIFAX SCHOOLS

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## The Role of the Reading Teacher in Halifax Schools

Although teachers have been employed to concentrate attention on corrective and remedial reading, no clear guidelines have been established concerning the duties, rights and responsibilities of special reading personnel. The purpose of this study is to examine reading programs in the schools of Nova Scotia and to look for clarification of the duties and responsibilities of reading personnel in Halifax schools.

Schools which offered special services in reading were identified through letters sent to fourteen inspectors. Two questionnaires were formulated, one for the principals and one for the reading or learning disabilities teachers in these schools. Questionnaires were sent to seventy-nine principals and to seventy-eight reading teachers in order to probe such areas as responsibilities, training, experience, time allotment, selection of students, and the role of the reading teacher in the developmental program. In addition, questionnaires were sent to fourteen teachers of children with learning disabilities. Returns were received from ninety per cent of the principals, eighty-five percent of the reading teachers and ninety-three per cent of the teachers of children with learning disabilities.

An analysis of the data received showed that there is a wide divergency in the positions held by the persons responsible for special

reading services. It indicated that since there are many aspects of the role of the reading teacher that demand clarification, a curriculum guide to the teaching of reading is required. The demand for additional reading personnel is obvious and there is a need for better trained classroom teachers of reading. The reading teacher's area of responsibility comprises the total reading program of the school, with special reading personnel acting as teacher-consultant on the staff.

Greater emphasis must be placed on the prevention rather than the remediation of reading difficulties. Proper training and careful selection and evaluation of reading personnel should result in reading improvement programs which decrease the number of reading casualties in the classrooms of Nova Scotia.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE ROLE OF THE READING TEACHER IN HALIFAX SCHOOLS

#### The Problem

The past several decades have witnessed a healthy concern in the schools for children with reading difficulties. Successful reading has come to be widely recognized as one of the most important factors in school achievement. Since reading pervades all aspects of the child's progress, educators are becoming extremely conscious of the need for improved instruction in that area. Steps have been taken to reduce the number of children whose progress is impeded by reading difficulties.

The amount of attention given both locally and nationally, as well as world-wide, to this area of the school curriculum is encouraging. Recently corrective or remedial reading has come to receive as much or more attention than many other areas of specialization.

To alleviate the problems of ineffectual readers, an increasingly large number of schools throughout Nova Scotia, in the past decade, have established special services in reading. Although teachers have been employed in many Nova Scotia schools to concentrate attention on corrective or remedial reading, no clear guidelines have been established

concerning the duties, rights and responsibilities of special reading personnel. There is some bewilderment and a need for definition of the responsibilities of reading teachers. Austin (1961) points out that "The variety of titles assigned to the reading specialist may be indicative of present day confusion". Many authors use the terms, 'specialist, consultant, coordinator, remedial reading teacher,' interchangeably. This exchange of nomenclature is confusing and vague.

Administrators are uncertain as to the types of tasks reading personnel should be asked to perform. They wonder how much responsibility for reading improvement programs reading personnel are able to assume. Often teachers are unsure of the precise nature of the job of the reading teacher on the staff. The reading person herself wonders if her responsibility will be to remedial groups alone or if she should have available a plan to help with the prevention of reading difficulties in the school.

#### Purpose of the Study

This study will examine the role of reading teachers in the public schools of Nova Scotia. It will look into the training and experience of teachers selected for the position and will comment briefly on the type of program used in the various schools. Careful examination of what was done in the past and what presently is being done in this field should result in suggestions regarding the most effective use of special reading personnel.

It is anticipated that this study will benefit reading teachers already employed in the public schools by helping them to understand their daily responsibilities. It will help classroom teachers to know what services they may expect from the reading teacher in their school. It may help principals and other administrators who co-ordinate the program of reading personnel assigned to their schools. It may help to make them aware of the type of person and of the qualifications required by the one who will fill the reading teacher's position. Primarily, it is hoped that through clearer understanding of this area of teaching, educators will be better prepared to help children solve their reading problems.

It is desirable that training institutions will become concerned about present courses and techniques offered to prospective teachers and that they will be moved to provide training which produces teachers who can meet successfully the various demands that will be placed upon them. Perhaps the courses will be tailored to train teachers so that they will be competent to provide instruction in the area of basic reading skills, diagnosis and treatment.

An examination of roles and responsibilities of reading teachers in schools throughout the province, will permit comparison of these with duties performed by reading teachers in Halifax schools. From this investigation, it is anticipated that there will emerge suggestions for



reading improvement programs which will up-grade the teaching of reading and benefit children attending city schools.

#### Description of Procedure

In order to identify schools employing special reading personnel, letters were sent to fourteen inspectors throughout the province seeking a list of schools hiring special reading persons and asking permission to correspond with these.

Two questionnaires were formulated, one for the principal and one for the reading or learning disabilities teacher in each school listed. Questionnaires were sent to seventy-nine principals and to seventy-eight reading teachers throughout Nova Scotia in order to probe such areas as responsibilities, training, experience, time allotment, selection of students, number of schools served, size of classes, in-service training, and the role of the reading teacher in the developmental program. In addition, questionnaires were sent to fourteen persons who are teaching children with learning disabilities. Replies were received from seventy-one principals, sixty-six reading teachers, and thirteen learning disabilities teachers.

This study is based on an analysis of data received in these questionnaires. An analysis of this data should reveal steps presently being taken to upgrade the teaching of reading in public schools and should offer suggestions for reading improvement programs.

## Definition of Terms

It has been stated that there is confusion of roles of reading personnel partly because of the tendency of some writers in this field to use the terms 'specialist, consultant, coordinator, clinician, remedial reading teacher' interchangeably. Another cause of the misunderstanding is the fact that in many districts there is little distinction between these positions. In practice, duties vary and the training may range from one course in the teaching of reading to doctoral degrees.

The size of the reading staff influences duties of each person involved. In some districts only area-consultants are hired; in others, a special reading person is placed in every school; in yet others, both of these educators are available. It is logical to conclude that where both reading teachers and area-consultants are available, the role of either will differ from that of those employed in a district which hires only one. Roles and responsibilities, then, are determined partly by availability of personnel. In practice, definitions and duties vary so much that no one pattern is discernible for any of the titles. Obviously, reading teachers must be prepared to assume different roles in a variety of educational settings.

Minimum standards for the professional training of reading specialists were developed by the Professional Standards and Ethics Committee, were approved by the Board of Directors of the International

Reading Association in 1961, and were revised in 1965. These standards are useful to teachers preparing themselves as reading specialists and to administrators who use them to assess the qualifications of applicants for reading positions.

Several definitions given in the standards brochure are useful in this study:

#### The Reading Specialist

The Reading Specialist is that person who works directly or indirectly with those pupils who have failed to benefit from regular classroom instruction in reading, and/or who works with teachers and administrators to improve and coordinate the total reading program of the school.

#### Special Teacher of Reading

A Special Teacher of Reading has major responsibility for remedial and corrective and/or developmental reading instruction.

#### Reading Clinician

A Reading Clinician provides diagnosis, remediation, or the planning of remediation for the more complex and severe reading disability cases.

#### Reading Consultant

A Reading Consultant works directly with teachers, administrators, and other professionals within a school to develop and implement the reading program under the direction of a supervisor with special training in reading.

### Reading Supervisor (Coordinator or Director)

A Reading Supervisor provides leadership in all phases of the reading program in a school system.

It is within the framework of these broad definitions that most titles are used in this study; yet divisions will not be finely drawn, as it will be seen from an analysis of data that many teachers with the same titles are filling different roles, and in many cases, teachers performing similar tasks do not always have the same title. I do not want to become involved in a controversy over nomenclature. The majority of schools surveyed had one teacher employed as a special reading person. It is the purpose of this study to identify the role of that person, whether she is called reading teacher, consultant, specialist, or supervisor. However, I do have a strong preference for the term "reading teacher" and think that its use is important in establishing rapport with other staff members. It serves, also, to emphasize a very important aspect of the role of reading personnel - TEACHING. I am apposed to the specialist becoming so specialized that she no longer teaches. I tend, wherever possible, to avoid such terms as 'supervisor' and 'specialist'. Nor do I favour the term 'remedial reading teacher', primarily because of the connotation that somebody - the teacher or the child - has committed a wrong which must be corrected. In addition, this term puts undue emphasis on remediation which is only

one phase of her job. It ignores the developmental aspect and the entire area of prevention of reading difficulties. Comstock (1967) feels that a program is branded from the onset when the term 'remedial' is used.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### The Need for Special Reading Personnel

Ability to read is a prerequisite for successful learning. Strang (1961) calls reading proficiency "The royal road to knowledge". It is essential to success in all academic subjects. Reading is an entrance into almost all vocations. "Surveys show that non- or poor readers become the delinquent, the unemployed, or the misfit in a society which progresses to the extent that its mental resources do" (p.58). The introduction of the report of the Carnegie Conference of Reading Experts included this statement: "Reading is the most important subject to be learned by children; a child will learn little else in today's world if he does not first learn to read properly".

Reading disability severely restricts development of adolescents. According to Krugman (1956), mental hygiene and reading underlie all teaching in the schools and have the most pervasive influence on the student's success in school and adjustment in living. "A reading disability or severe retardation in reading has the same profound influence on educational growth as a severe emotional involvement. Both limit successful functioning, cause feelings of inadequacy and

frustration, bring about disturbed relationships, influence outlook on life, and result in a variety of undesirable behavioral manifestations" (p.10).

To most teachers the child who can not read is a familiar figure in the classroom. Let us examine the feelings of this child. What are his hopes, his fears, his daily experiences? Too often the ineffectual reader must endure times of humiliation, frustration, fear and boredom. Wilson (1967) says that "Inability to read coupled with the lack of desire to read, leads directly to school failure" (p.4).

The relation of reading disability to premature school leaving definitely has been established. Penty (1956) obtained evidence from data in Battle Creek, Michigan school system that more than three times as many poor readers as good readers were early school leavers. Some of the disadvantages accompanying reading disability - inability to do assignments, inability to take part in discussions, difficulty with content subjects - are too much for the child to endure. He must withdraw from the frustrating challenge. As Wilson notes, "The problem reader is not only a problem to himself, but eventually causes problems in school, with his peers and at home" (p.4).

There has been a growing realization that not all is well with the reading program in the schools. The National Council of Teachers of English (Slobodian, 1965) has estimated that there are four million elementary school pupils in the United States who have reading disabilities.

Additional reports show twenty-five to thirty-five percent of high school students have reading disabilities, and approximately eight million adults are considered functional illiterates. Surveys by Harris have indicated that in a typical elementary school, ten to fifteen percent of all the children are cases of mild or severe reading disabilities.

Witty (1962) emphasizes the concern of administrators over the reading problems in grades beyond elementary school: "Reading is the most important problem in junior high schools today" (p.62). Dr. Roy Kress, Director of the Reading Clinic at Temple University, speaking before the Sixteenth Annual Reading Conference in 1960 said, "The continuing struggle with reading on the part of many children, in spite of repeated periods of tutoring help, has alerted educators to the need for a more scientific approach to the evaluation and treatment of reading problems".

Strang (1961) notes that "Teachers in elementary schools, frequently too busy to cope adequately with all the demands, neglect many children with serious reading problems. Year after year they note the reading difficulties in the youngsters' cumulative records and leave them uncorrected" (p.58). Difficulties pile up in the succeeding grades. Usually hard working classroom teachers attempt to give extra help after class hours only to find that the child is too tired to gain



much benefit. Many new teachers lacking in both training and experience are slow to diagnose difficulties and uncertain as to how to treat them.

In most secondary schools, the present state of reading instruction presents a dilemma: there are many pupils with deficiencies in basic skills, but few teachers available to work with them. Strang offers a possible solution: employ in every school a reading teacher - consultant who will work with severely retarded readers and also help the teachers to give all the students more effective instruction in reading. Although secondary school principals are willing enough to introduce reading programs, they have difficulty in finding persons to carry them out. In a survey of more than seven thousand high school English teachers, published in 1959 by the National Council of Teachers of English, ninety percent said that they felt inadequately prepared to teach reading. In the Harvard study, Mary Austin (1961) recommended "That a course in basic reading instruction be required of all prospective teachers" (p.144). According to that study, in the schools that offered reading programs one-third to one-half of the persons supervising, directing, or teaching reading had had no specialized education in it.

Recently there has been a healthy concern about the fact that too many of today's children fail to achieve in reading. This growing

concern has caused administrators to look for possible solutions. In more and more schools, administrators are attempting to fill this need by hiring special reading personnel who are charged with the responsibility of directing reading improvement programs.

#### History of Special Reading Personnel

The reading specialist is an innovation, historically speaking. Smith (1967) states that it was not until the three decades of 1920 to 1950 that reading clinics began to evolve, that special supervisors of reading were first appointed, and that remedial reading teachers began teaching retarded readers.

For years there have been special departments and supervisors for music, art, physical education, manual training and domestic science. It was not until 1930 when Detroit, Michigan, replaced general supervisors by supervisors in arithmetic, language, spelling and reading, that the supervisor of reading appeared. According to Smith (1965), twenty years later special supervisors of reading were visible at state, county, district, and city levels, but in very small numbers. Robinson tells us that "This new specialist evolved from the administrators' concern and the need for someone to help evaluate and interpret research in reading, assist in preventing reading problems, and provide the public with a better understanding of the school's reading program".

In the late forties and early fifties, reading specialists were in demand in American schools - private and public. No longer were primary teachers the only people interested in teaching reading. Reading programs for secondary schools received more attention. Most administrators recognized the need for improving the reading of junior and senior high school students.

Smith calls the growth in reading specialization from 1950 to the present phenomenal. During this period interest in reading instruction became practically universal. Governments, by supplying funds, began to encourage improvement in this area of education. Efforts were made to help parents become aware of the importance of reading in the life of the child. Yarrington (1967) records that in 1962, Betts reported that the improvement of reading and reading teachers was being accelerated at all levels.

In some localities, notably Dallas, Philadelphia, and St. Louis, city or countrywide reading clinics serving both elementary and secondary schools appeared. For many years Chicago schools employed 'adjustment teachers' to work with backward and maladjusted children. The most modern systems now employ a reading teacher - consultant whose job, in part, is to work with severely retarded readers. Strang notes that in time the reading teacher probably will work less with a few special problems and more widely with the teachers for more effective instruction for all the pupils.

In many elementary and secondary schools, this new demand for reading personnel was caused by the growing number of children in the schools and the desire to educate them to an approved level of literacy. It was hoped that reading personnel would reduce the number of failures and thus prove to be economically advantageous.

The new demand for reading teachers found educators hopelessly unprepared to meet the need. The unfortunate result was that with demand high and supply relatively short, positions were filled by people with little or no specialized training or experience in the teaching of reading.

#### Changing Role of Reading Personnel

With the increased demand for reading personnel, a need arises to examine the role of the reading specialist in the school. As Rawson (1966) puts it, "The specialist in reading frequently begins her work as a specialist in non-reading. Her responsibility is for the casualties, for the children who do not learn and for the teachers inexperienced in the teaching of reading" (p.221). Robinson (1967) surveyed the role of reading consultants in the past, present, and possible future and found that in the past they worked more closely with disabled readers directly than they did with teachers and the total reading program. In quite a few circumstances, the consultant worked with retarded readers in

scheduled sessions and worked with teachers in the periods that were left over. Those who functioned in high schools were primarily teachers of developmental or remedial reading and were often termed directors of reading laboratories.

With the maturation of the reading field throughout the sixties, reading personnel became better trained. The role of the consultant was determined to some extent by the nature, size, and wealth of the school district. In districts employing a multiplicity of reading personnel, roles naturally differed from those in districts employing one or two. Generally, the consultant of the sixties put aside the responsibility of teaching developmental or remedial reading and assumed as her major purpose the responsibility for working with the staff of a school to develop, implement, coordinate, and evaluate the reading program. Teaching was done only to evaluate new methods and materials, to demonstrate specific techniques, or to learn more about specific students.

Although the duties of today's reading consultant vary from situation to situation, Robinson finds that they appear to encompass the following areas: in-service education, evaluation, methods and materials, research, public relations, curriculum development, and administration of reading projects.

Robinson suggests that the reading consultant of the future must be better trained and must have a minimum of three years successful classroom teaching experience. The future consultant must be as concerned about the individual strengths and weaknesses of each teacher on the staff as the teacher is concerned with those of the students. The reading consultant must have knowledge of instructional materials, textbooks, reference sources, and all aspects of reading. She must make an effort to integrate the reading skills into the curriculum of content areas.

Team teaching activities ought to consume a good deal of the reading consultant's time. From this experience both consultant and classroom teachers learn and students gain the benefit of different approaches. Part of the consultant's job is to assist in the development of lifetime readers in the school. Robinson believes that these suggestions for reading consultants of the future are not outside the realm of realism. "In essence the suggestions describe a well-trained specialist who conceives of the school reading program as permeating the total curriculum . . . and (one who) is not only concerned with reading skills but is deeply concerned with the development of lifetime readers."

One means by which the role of the reading teacher can be determined is to survey teachers presently in the field and ascertain

what duties, rights and responsibilities they have as reading personnel. Several surveys have been conducted in order to facilitate role definition. Dever's (1956) study on Positions in the Field of Reading showed that reading specialists and consultants devoted the greater amount of their time to teaching reading, supervision, testing and diagnosis, and counseling; their lesser functions were administrative and clerical work, research, public relations and community activities. Robinson's "Occupational Survey on Reading Specialists in Junior and Senior High Schools" found that their responsibility included serving as consultant to English teachers, conducting in-service reading courses, selection of materials, conducting demonstration lessons, taking part in supervision, undertaking research projects, and holding parent conferences.

Austin and Morrison (1963) find their data rather discouraging in regard to limitations on responsibilities given to reading specialists in public school systems. They say of reading consultants that ". . . only one-fourth or less of the systems assign the reading consultant responsibility for evaluating the reading program, for selecting reading materials, or for interpreting the reading program to parents and interested persons." In summarizing the role of the remedial teacher, they state, "Aside from her role as special instructor to unsuccessful students, the remedial reading teacher is somewhat of a nonentity. This specialist's function ranks last in all other areas, including the area of diagnostic testing, where her talents could well be utilized."

Robinson and Rauch (1965) wrote a reading consultant's guidebook to help those persons assigned primarily to work with teachers in the improvement of reading instruction. The focus of the book is on the reading consultant as an organizer and coordinator of programs. They note four phases of the consultant's work: (1) Investigator, (2) Diagnostician, (3) Instructor, (4) Evaluator. Townsend (1964) tells us that by definition, the chief purpose of the reading teacher should always be the improvement of instruction.

Gradually, a change is being effected in the role of the reading specialist. It is with joy that Stauffer (1967) reports that finally "Reading specialists are being sought - not to serve as remedial reading teachers and work in the bottomless pit, but as reading consultants. The role of the consultant is to prevent reading failure by working with teachers, school psychologists, guidance and counseling specialists, administrators, and parents. At last we are on the 'ounce of prevention' phase" (p.474). It is a source of comfort that the role of the reading specialist is changing and more emphasis gradually is being placed on the preventive aspect. Stauffer states that instead of meeting the children after they are in the third grade and have fully displayed their failure potential, reading specialists are being asked to help prevent disabilities rather than correct them. He is grieved that most graduate programs are geared toward remedial instruction rather than toward developmental prevention. It is encouraging to note that whereas in the



past reading personnel were employed to attempt to remedy a failure situation, more recently they are being asked to help prevent reading failures before problems become acute.

#### Standards and Qualifications for Reading Specialists

As a result of expanded knowledge and renewed interest in reading, the demand for trained specialists at all levels has increased tremendously. With a large demand and a short supply, the danger of unqualified persons attempting teaching tasks which require trained personnel is very real. The last three decades saw an increase in reading staff.

Since trained specialists were scarce, many school districts hired partially trained people or elevated successful classroom teachers to reading positions. In response to this, the Professional Standards and Ethics Committee, with the approval of the Board of Directors of the International Reading Association, formulated a statement of roles, responsibilities and qualifications of reading specialists. It is intended that these minimum standards will serve as guides to:

1. Teachers and administrators in identifying the reading specialist.
2. State and provincial departments of education in certifying specialists in reading.
3. Colleges and universities offering professional programs in reading.
4. Individuals planning to train as reading specialists.

As has been noted, the reading specialist is designated as that person (1) who works directly or indirectly with those pupils who have either failed to benefit from regular classroom instruction in reading or those pupils who could benefit from advanced training in reading skills and/or (2) who works with teachers, administrators, and other professionals to improve and coordinate the total reading program of the school (International Reading Association, 1968). Four categories of reading specialists - the special teacher of reading, the reading clinician, the reading consultant, and the reading supervisor - are identified by the Committee, and titles are defined as stated in chapter one of this study. The Committee lists the responsibilities of people in each position as follows:

#### The Special Teacher of Reading

should identify students needing diagnosis and/or remediation,  
should plan a program of remediation from data gathered  
through diagnosis,  
should implement such a program of remediation,  
should evaluate student progress in remediation,  
should interpret student needs and progress in remediation  
to the classroom teacher and the parents,  
should plan and implement a developmental or advanced  
program as necessary,

Complete a minimum of three years of successful classroom teaching in which the teaching of reading is an important responsibility of the position,

Complete a planned program for the Master's Degree for an accredited institution, to include

1. A minimum of twelve semester hours in graduate level reading courses with at least one course in each of the following:
  - (a) Foundations or survey of reading
  - (b) Diagnosis and correction of reading disabilities
  - (c) Clinical or laboratory practicum in reading
  
2. Complete, at undergraduate level, study in each of the following areas:
  - (a) Measurement and/or evaluation
  - (b) Child and/or adolescent psychology
  - (c) Psychology, including such aspects as personality, cognition, and learning behaviors.
  - (d) Literature for children and/or adolescents
  
3. Fulfill remaining portions of the program from related areas of study.

Reading Clinician

Should demonstrate all the skills expected of the Special Teacher of Reading and, by virtue of additional training and experience, diagnose and treat the more complex and severe reading disability cases.

Should demonstrate proficiency in providing internship training for prospective clinicians and/or Special Teachers of Reading.

Reading Consultant

Should survey and evaluate the ongoing program and make suggestions for needed changes.

Should translate the district philosophy of reading with the help of the principal of each school into a working program consistent with the needs of the students, the teachers, and the community.

Should work with classroom teachers and others in improving the developmental and corrective aspects of the reading program.

Reading Supervisor

Should develop a system-wide reading philosophy and curriculum and interpret this to the school administration, staff, and public.

Should exercise leadership with all personnel in carrying out good reading practices.

Should evaluate reading personnel and personnel needs in all phases of a school-wide reading program.

Should make recommendations to the administration regarding the reading budget.

#### The Need for Better Trained Teachers of Reading

If the reading teacher is to cope with the new demands placed upon her as a result of the changing concept of her role, it is imperative that her training be extensive enough to prepare her for this comprehensive task.

Kinder's (1968) study found that half the states in the United States still made it possible at that time for someone to work as a school reading specialist with little or no specialized training or experience in the teaching of reading. In most states, even where specialized training is needed, requirements do not meet criteria set forth in the International Reading Association Minimum Standards.

The studies conducted by Simmons, Braam and Roehm, Robinson, Dever, and Austin and Morrison all reveal a need for better preparation. All of these investigators found that while there are many well qualified reading specialists, there are many more untrained people serving as

specialists. Studies have shown that classroom teachers frequently do not receive adequate preparation in their preservice training. It is not surprising that critics have found fault with reading practices in the public schools. In 1963, Cook reported a state of utter confusion in the certification of reading teachers. Yarrington (1967) found that "In the past seven years there has been close to one hundred percent improvement in the certification of special reading teachers in the various states" (p.126).

Conant was asked in 1961 to undertake a study of the education of teachers for the elementary and secondary schools. His findings, published in 1963, carried twenty-seven recommendations for changes in teacher preparation. He found that too little time was spent in actually learning to teach reading, so he suggested a minimum of three semester hours for teachers of kindergarten and lower grades. The Harvard Carnegie Reading Study (Austin and Morrison, 1961) came up with similar suggestions.

For each of the positions in reading, the Professional Standards and Ethics Committee suggests the following qualifications:

General (Applicable to All Reading Specialists)

Demonstrate proficiency in evaluating and implementing research.

Demonstrate a willingness to make a meaningful contribution to professional organizations related to reading.

Demonstrate a willingness to assume leadership in improving  
the reading program.

Reading Clinician

Meet the qualifications as stipulated for the Special Teacher  
of Reading.

Complete, in addition to the above, a sixth year of graduate  
work, including

1. An advanced course or courses in the diagnosis and  
remediation of reading and learning problems.
2. A course or courses in individual testing.
3. An advanced clinical or laboratory practicum in the  
diagnosis and remediation of reading difficulties.
4. Field experiences under the direction of a qualified  
Reading Clinician.

Reading Consultant

Meet the qualifications as stipulated for the Special Teacher  
of reading.

Complete, in addition to the above, a sixth year of graduate  
work, including

1. An advanced course in the remediation and diagnosis  
of reading and learning problems.

2. An advanced course in the developmental aspects of a reading program.
3. A course or courses in curriculum development and supervision.
4. A course and/or experience in public relations.
5. Field experiences under a qualified Reading Consultant or Supervisor in a school setting.

#### Reading Supervisor

Meet the qualifications as stipulated for the Special Teacher of Reading.

Complete, in addition to the above, a sixth year of graduate work including

1. Courses listed as 1, 2, 3, and 4 under Reading Consultant.
2. A course or courses in administrative procedures.
3. Field experiences under a qualified Reading Supervisor.

The above statement of the Committee emphasizes the need for greater training as positions become more demanding. Dietrich (1967) says that roles and responsibilities of the above specialists will vary depending upon number and positions of other reading personnel on the staff.

Dietrich believes that people employed as reading specialists in all categories must possess certain abilities that are difficult to assess in



terms of courses taken or years of experience. These personal qualifications include the ability to work with children of all intellectual levels, to establish rapport with students, teachers, administrators, and parents; to think through carefully various aspects of a problem and offer a workable solution.

Klausner (1967) lists the following personality traits as mandatory for reading personnel:

1. Sympathetic and understanding attitude
2. Warm, approachable and friendly manner
3. Spirit of cooperation and helpfulness
4. Genuine love and interest in people
5. Faith in the dignity and worth of a person regardless of social position or handicap
6. Enthusiasm
7. Optimistic, idealistic, yet practical attitude
8. Keen-thinking, intellectually alert mind
9. Emotional maturity
10. Tolerance, kindness, patience and tact

Generally these personality traits would be helpful to any teacher, but they are especially needed by teachers of reading because of the nature of their task. Spache (1963) describes "five patterns among

elementary retarded readers - the hostile, adjustive, defensive, solution-seeking, and autistic or withdrawn" (p. 120). Harris (1961) believes that the reading teacher needs a personality "strong in such traits as optimism, enthusiasm, good cheer, creation of a calm, relaxed atmosphere, kindness . . . building up of self confidence and self respect" (p. 249). Smith stresses the need for a high degree of leadership.

Now that minimum standards have been recommended by the committee, it remains for those who are not qualified to take steps to become better prepared. Smith (1967) suggests that:

1. Preservice students should have better preparation courses in reading dealing with practical methods in meaningful situations.
2. All preservice secondary students must have at least one reading course regardless of their chosen subject area.
3. All in-service secondary teachers who have not taken recent courses in reading should take either a college course or an in-service course in this subject.
4. Reading specialists who are not fully prepared to assume their duties should plan immediately to take special courses in reading and related areas in order to become prepared at once.

5. Many more people should enter upon graduate programs of reading specialization in order to meet the demands for qualified personnel in this field.

## CHAPTER 3

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

It is obvious that all classroom teachers, regardless of subject matter, are teachers of reading. In defining the role of reading teachers, this study concentrates not upon classroom teachers who teach reading, but upon teachers who are employed specifically as reading personnel.

With the help of the inspectors, it was possible to identify 66 reading teachers in the schools of Nova Scotia. A questionnaire was designed to provide information about the various aspects of their roles and responsibilities. In order to gain information that might not be available to the reading teachers, separate questionnaires were sent to the principals of these schools hiring reading personnel and to teachers of children with learning disabilities. It is the information received from the principals that I shall analyze first.

## Questionnaire for Principals

### The School

#### Location and Enrolment

Replies were received from 90 per cent of the principals surveyed. Of these 38 per cent were located in rural areas, 25 per cent in town schools and 37 per cent in urban areas. The respondents administered schools which served a total of nearly 40,000 children in grades primary to 12. Enrolment in these schools ranged from 130 to 2100 pupils, with an average enrolment of 573. Almost 2000 teachers were employed, with staff ranging from 6 to 109 teachers.

In 43 per cent of these schools the majority of children came from what the principals estimated to be low income families, 50 per cent from middle income families and 1 per cent from high income families. From 6 per cent of the respondents there was no reply to this item.

#### Special Services Available in the Schools

The principals were asked to list other specialists employed in their schools:

TABLE 1  
SPECIAL SERVICES AVAILABLE

---

SPECIALIST	SCHOOLS EMPLOYING SPECIALIST (PER CENT)
Guidance counsellor	66
Speech therapist	28
School nurse	72
Reading teacher	88

---

Many of the schools surveyed enjoyed the services of other specialists on the staff. The reading teacher had not been the first additional member to be hired. Of the schools reporting, 66 per cent employed a guidance counsellor; 28 per cent employed a speech therapist; 72 per cent had available the services of a school nurse; 88 per cent had reading teachers. Many of the specialists were available on a part time basis. Other specialists serving these schools were teachers of art, physical education, music, French, home economics, industrial arts and learning disabilities.

## The Reading Program

## Title Given Reading Program

The item asked principals to state the name by which the reading program was known in the school:

TABLE 2  
TITLE OF READING PROGRAM

TITLE	SCHOOLS USING TITLE (PER CENT)
Special Reading Class	22
Remedial Reading Program	46
Corrective Reading Program	7
Reading Clinic	7

There appeared to be some uncertainty as to what the reading program should be called. Some stated that it was called by one title to the teachers (usually remedial reading) and by some other title to the students. Some checked more than one answer to this question, possibly indicating that there is no definite title for the program.

Of the respondents 22 per cent called their program the special reading class; 46 per cent named it the remedial reading program; the

terms corrective reading program and reading clinic were each used in 7 per cent of the schools. Other titles reported included reading laboratory, improved reading program, reading room and reading instruction centre. There was no response to this item from 3 per cent of the respondents.

#### Innovators in the Schools

An attempt was made to determine who originates new programs in education by asking principals to tell who had initiated the special reading programs in their schools:

TABLE 3  
PERSONS INITIATING THE PROGRAMS

INNOVATORS	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (PER CENT)
Superintendent	17
Supervisor	14
Principal	34

The innovations were attributed to a variety of sources and usually they were due not to the efforts of any one person. It was reported that superintendents were responsible for starting 17 per cent



of the programs and supervisors for 14 per cent. Principals had initiated the largest number - 34 per cent. It is interesting to note that parents are reported to have played an important part in the setting up of one program. In 34 per cent of the cases origin was attributed to the combined efforts of numerous educators, notably, supervisor, principal and teachers.

#### Duties of Reading Teachers

Having set up this new service in the schools, principals were asked to name the administrator who determined the duties of the reading teacher:

TABLE 4  
DEFINITION OF DUTIES

ADMINISTRATOR	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (PER CENT)
Superintendent	4
Supervisor	16
Principal	16
Reading teacher	8

Once again a variety of administrators shared this task. In 4 per cent of the schools definition of duties of the reading teacher was the responsibility of the superintendent. The supervisor and principal each took this responsibility in 16 per cent of the schools involved. In 8 per cent the reading teacher herself determined what her duties should be. In about half of the schools the principal and reading teacher came to some agreement and shared this responsibility. In one school the duties of the reading teacher were defined by the head of the English department.

#### Line and Staff Relationship

Since some of the literature indicated a certain vagueness concerning line-and-staff relationship of reading personnel on the staff, an item was included in the questionnaire to probe this area. The principals supplied the information given in Table 5 when asked to name the administrator to whom the reading teacher was responsible:

TABLE 5  
LINE OF RESPONSIBILITY

ADMINISTRATOR	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (PER CENT)
Superintendent	6
Supervisor	13
Principal	50
Others	31

Local situations lend some variety to positions held by reading personnel. In 6 per cent of the schools the reading teacher was responsible to the superintendent, in 13 per cent to the supervisor and in 50 per cent to the principal. In many schools she was responsible to more than one of the administrators listed above, usually the principal and supervisor. Others mentioned as having responsibility were English department head, curriculum director and the reading teacher herself.

#### Evaluation of the Reading Program

When asked to name the person by whom the special program was evaluated, respondents supplied the following information:

TABLE 6  
EVALUATION OF READING PROGRAM

EVALUATOR	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (PER CENT)
Superintendent	3
Supervisor	12
Principal	12
Reading teacher	3

It was found that evaluation rested with the superintendent in 3 per cent of the schools, with the supervisor in 12 percent, with the principal in 12 per cent and with the reading teacher herself in 3 per cent of the schools. In 58 per cent of the schools the supervisor, principal and reading teacher shared in evaluation. Others mentioned as taking part in this were the English department head, curriculum director, teachers, and to some extent children and parents.

#### Additional Duties Assumed by Reading Teachers

Opinions of the principals varied as to whether special subject teachers should devote some of their time to additional duties in the school.

TABLE 7  
ADDITIONAL DUTIES

---

DUTIES	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (PER CENT)
Playground	38
Lunch	15
Bus	4
Part-time classroom teaching	8
Library	8
Substitute Teaching	14
No additional duties	28

---

In about three quarters of the schools surveyed reading teachers were assigned duties other than the teaching of reading. The duty most often assigned was playground duty - in 38 per cent of the schools. Teachers were assigned lunchroom duty in 15 per cent, bus duty in 4 per cent, classroom teaching in 8 per cent, library duty in 8 per cent and substitute teaching in 14 per cent of the schools. Some respondents commented that as part of the staff the reading teacher should share in these additional duties required of classroom teachers. Some stated that the reading teacher was unable to do this because she served several schools or she began her teaching before nine o'clock. In several schools she was asked to help with clerical work in the office. Reading

personnel were assigned no extra duties in 28 per cent of the schools surveyed.

#### Area of Responsibility

Principals were asked to state whether reading teachers had responsibility for remedial groups only or for the entire reading program. The question appeared to cause some difficulty. Whereas the responsibility of most reading teachers was not limited to remedial groups only, few principals were willing to assign them responsibility for the entire reading program. It is possible that the questionnaire should have included an item somewhere between the two extremes. Some respondents (7 per cent) added this item, stating that the reading teacher shared responsibility for the entire program.

The reading teacher was assigned responsibility for the entire reading program in 24 per cent of the schools, and for remedial groups only in 62 per cent. Most respondents felt a need to put additional comments to this answer. This item was not answered by 7 per cent of the principals.

The comments in most cases explained an additional aspect of the role of the reading teacher - that of teacher-consultant in the school. Testing, suggesting methods and materials, and planning programs for children experiencing difficulties were mentioned as responsibilities of the reading teacher.

### Duration of the Program

Principals were asked to tell how long there had been a reading teacher in their schools. Period of existence of special reading programs ranged from five months to seven years, with an average of about two and one-half years. Some schools which had had reading teachers lost them to classroom teaching from time to time as enrolments fluctuated.

### Additional Comments

Space was provided for respondents to make additional comments relative to the study. Many explained some further aspect of their program stating grades served, materials used, and grouping procedures. They pointed out that there is some misunderstanding among classroom teachers as to the proper role of reading personnel. "Even many of our teachers feel that it is her (the reading teacher's) job to work with the slow learners." Some emphasized the need for the work done in the special reading class to be carried over into the regular classroom. "Only when we have highly trained teachers of reading in the classroom and well equipped reading rooms will we get the most from small group instruction done by the specialist."

I shall quote, without comment, several other responses made in this section of the questionnaire:

"We were obliged to make classes larger in number in order to free one teacher to undertake the reading program."

"Our reading program works out very well. We could use two or three more teachers like the one we have. She does not have enough time to teach all the children who need help."

"We get comments from parents such as, 'my child never picked up a book to read until he began going to reading class.'"

"The goal of our reading program is the prevention of reading cases rather than curing difficulties. The reading teacher's services and materials are available to the entire staff. She offers advice and assistance to classroom teachers in the prevention of difficulties."

The work of our two reading teachers is tremendous and of great value to our entire reading program. Without these teachers many of our pupils would have been deprived of the help they needed. Reading teachers have been a blessing to these pupils. There should be provision made for more of these on the staff."

"Once you have tasted the services of a good reading specialist, it is hard to believe that we have done without this service so long."

"Reading specialists would not be necessary if each teacher can group within her class and have available many books on many levels and allow children to progress at their own level. What we need are perceptual handicap teachers."

"One of the best things that ever happened to our school!"



"A large percentage of students have been affected both academically and emotionally since many have a great deal of frustration removed from their day. Positive conduct actions have been noted. The teachers receive guidance from the reading consultant."

"The program is valuable and children show improvement."

### Questionnaire for Reading Teachers

#### The School

#### Schools Served

Questionnaires were returned by 85 per cent of the reading teachers surveyed. Others who did not complete the questionnaire sent letters to explain why this survey no longer applied to their situation. Several teachers stated that they were not serving as reading teachers. Those employed as reading personnel were working in one school in 61 per cent of the localities and 39 per cent were serving in more than one school. Some of these served as consultants to an area and one worked in a reading center. The majority of these people (67 per cent) taught reading full time. Those not devoting the entire day to the reading program taught other subjects such as English, Biology and French.

## The Reading Program

## Title of Teacher

The teachers were asked to state the title by which they were known in their schools:

TABLE 8  
TITLE OF TEACHERS

TITLE	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (PER CENT)
Reading teacher	25
Remedial teacher	17
Reading consultant	14
Reading specialist	33
Reading supervisor	7

In 25 per cent of the schools they were known as reading teacher, as remedial teacher in 17 per cent, as reading consultant in 14 per cent, as reading specialist in 33 per cent and as reading supervisor in 7 per cent of the schools. Other titles mentioned were Language Arts Coordinator, English Department Head, and Developmental English Teacher. By checking more than one of these items, some respondents expressed uncertainty as to what their title really was.

## Line and Staff Relationship

It is interesting to note that replies from the reading teachers did not always agree with those from the principals:

TABLE 9  
LINE AND STAFF RELATIONSHIP

ADMINISTRATOR	PERSONS TO WHOM READING TEACHER IS RESPONSIBLE (STATED BY PRINCIPALS)	PERSONS TO WHOM READING TEACHER IS RESPONSIBLE (STATED BY READING TEACHERS)
Superintendent	6	13
Supervisor	13	14
Principal	50	59
Others	31	14

In stating persons to whom the reading teacher was responsible, whereas principals said that they were responsible to superintendents in 6 per cent of the schools, reading teachers listed superintendents in 13 per cent. Reading teachers considered themselves responsible to supervisors in 14 per cent of the schools, which compared favourably with the principals' report of 13 per cent. The reading teacher fancied herself responsible to the principal in 59 per cent of the schools,

compared with the principals' figure of 50 per cent. Others listed by respondents as having responsibility were curriculum director, English department head, or some combination of those listed above - usually principal and supervisor. Some disagreement between responses of principals and reading teachers can be noted in several items on the questionnaire, a fact which further indicates a need for role definition.

#### Duties of Reading Teachers

The reading teachers were asked to tell who determined just what duties they should perform:

TABLE 10  
ASSIGNED DUTIES

---

ADMINISTRATOR	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (PER CENT)
Superintendent	8
Supervisor	14
Principal	30
Teachers	3
Reading teacher	15

---

Of the respondents, 8 per cent stated that duties were determined by superintendents, 14 per cent by supervisors, 30 per cent by principals, 3 per cent by teachers, and 15 per cent said that duties were determined by the reading teacher herself. In many schools (30 per cent) the principal and reading teacher together shared this responsibility. Others listed were guidance counsellor, director of reading and English department head.

#### Evaluation of the Reading Program

Both principals and teachers expressed some doubts as to the exact number of people they should check in response to the item inquiring who evaluated the program:

TABLE 11  
EVALUATION OF READING PROGRAM

EVALUATOR	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (PER CENT)
Superintendent	3
Supervisor	11
Principal	20
Reading teacher	13

Some pointed out that in a sense everybody connected with the program shares in the evaluation. Respondents checked superintendent in 3 per cent of the schools, supervisor in 11 per cent, principal in 20 per cent, reading teacher in 13 per cent and joint evaluation by some of those listed above in 36 per cent of the schools. Usually this task fell to supervisor, principal and reading teacher. Others listed were curriculum director, guidance counsellor and teachers.

#### Title Given Reading Program

In response to the item asking reading teachers to give the name by which the reading program was known in the school, the information listed in table 12 was returned:

TABLE 12

#### TITLE OF READING PROGRAM

TITLE	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (PER CENT)
Special Reading Class	23
Remedial Reading Program	45
Corrective Reading Program	11
Reading Clinic	3

Respondents stated that in 23 per cent of the schools it was the special reading class, in 45 per cent the remedial reading program, in 11 per cent it was the corrective reading program and in 3 per cent it was the reading clinic. Other names given for the program were Language Arts Program, Reading Center and Reading Laboratory.

#### Additional Duties Assumed by Reading Teachers

Reading teachers were asked to tell what additional duties they assumed and to state whether or not they felt that they should assume these duties:

TABLE 13  
ADDITIONAL DUTIES

DUTIES	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (PER CENT)
Playground	36
Lunch room	19
Bus	6
Hall	28
Canteen	6
Library	8
Substitute teaching	19

Playground duty was the most often assumed duty - in 36 per cent of the schools. In 19 per cent of the schools surveyed the reading teacher was asked to do lunchroom duty, bus duty in 6 per cent, hallway supervision in 28 per cent, canteen duty in 6 per cent, library duty in 8 per cent and substitute teaching in 19 per cent of these schools. Other tasks listed included helping out with office chores, regular subject teaching, testing, supervision of drama club, year book advisor, coaching and administrative tasks.

In 13 per cent of the schools the reading teacher was asked to do no additional tasks. It is interesting to note that principals reported that 28 per cent had no additional duties. Either principals are not aware of some additional duties performed by reading personnel or principals and reading teachers do not always agree on what constitutes "additional" duties. The respondents felt that they should assume these additional duties in 33 per cent of the cases, whereas 48 per cent felt that these hours should be devoted to the teaching of reading. Many reading teachers approved of some but not all of the additional duties, commenting that time could be used more profitably.

#### Allotment of Time

Teachers were given a very difficult task when they were asked to state the approximate percentage of their time that they spent on each of the following items over the period of a year:



TABLE 14  
ALLOTMENT OF TIME

TASK	TEACHERS ALLOTING TIME TO THIS TASK (PER CENT)	RANGE OF TIME (PER CENT)	AVERAGE AMOUNT (PER CENT)
Development of reading goals and objectives	58	1 - 25	7
Implementation of the reading program	50	1 - 20	6
Appraisal of success or failure of the program	52	1 - 10	5
Selection of reading materials	60	1 - 10	5
Supervision of classroom teaching	14	1 - 20	6
Providing diagnostic testing in reading	75	2 - 25	13
Providing remedial reading instruction	92	2 - 90	53
Providing developmental reading instruction	42	2 - 35	12
Interpretation of the reading program	44	1 - 10	4
Inservice training	44	1 - 15	4
Working with classroom teachers in consultant capacity	69	1 - 40	8
Prevention of reading difficulties	30	2 - 25	7
Library duties	8	2	2
Parent interviews	52	1 - 10	2
Clerical	52	1 - 20	5

Many respondents experienced difficulty in separating some of these tasks which tend to overlap. Some 8 per cent stated that they were unable to give a breakdown of their time. Others, 17 per cent, did not attempt a division of time but added an explanatory note to specify further their role.

Of those who replied to this item 58 per cent allotted time to the development of reading goals and objectives. The amount of time allotted to this ranged from 1 to 25 per cent of the teacher's total working hours, with an average of 7 per cent of her hours devoted to it.

Implementation of the reading program was checked by 50 per cent of the respondents. These teachers devoted from 1 to 20 per cent of their time to this, with an average of 6 per cent.

Of the respondents, 52 per cent assigned time to the appraisal of success or failure of the program. They assigned it from 1 to 10 per cent of their time, with an average of 5 per cent.

Selection of reading materials was checked by 60 per cent of the teachers replying. They assigned this task from 1 to 10 per cent of their time, with an average of 5 per cent.

Supervision of classroom teaching was part of the role of 14 per cent of the reading teachers. They spent from 1 to 20 per cent of their time, and averaged 6 per cent of the school year.

Three quarters of the respondents said that they provided diagnostic testing in reading from 2 to 25 per cent of the term, and averaged 13 per cent of their working hours.

Providing remedial reading instruction was part of the role of 92 per cent of the teachers surveyed. This task was allotted from 2 to 90 per cent of the term for those engaging in it, with an average of 53 per cent of their school hours devoted to it.

Providing developmental reading instruction was checked by 42 per cent of the respondents. They allotted from 2 to 35 per cent of their time, with an average time allotment of 12 per cent.

Interpretation of the reading program was checked by 44 per cent of the reading teachers. It was given from 1 to 10 per cent of their time, with an average of 4 per cent.

Conducting inservice training sessions was an aspect of the role of 44 per cent of the reading teachers. This took from 1 to 15 per cent of their working hours, with an average of 4 per cent.

Working with classroom teachers in consultant capacity was checked by 69 per cent of the teachers. They assigned it 1 to 40 per cent of their time, with an average of 8 per cent. Many stated that this is a continuing process and very difficult to specify time allotments.

Prevention of reading difficulties was checked by only 30 per cent of the reading teachers. It was given from 2 to 25 per cent of their time, with an average of 7 per cent.

Library duties were assigned to 8 per cent of the respondents. They devoted 2 per cent of the term to this.

Parent interviews were included in the schedule of 52 per cent of the teachers. They assigned this task from 1 to 10 per cent of their time, with an average time allotment of 2 per cent.

Clerical duties were checked by 52 per cent of the respondents. They gave it from 1 to 20 per cent of the school year with an average of 5 per cent. Other tasks listed as making demands upon the teachers' time were student interviews, studying research results, and administrative duties.

### The Children

#### Method of Grouping

The teachers were asked to tell whether they worked with children individually, in groups or in classes:

TABLE 15  
METHOD OF GROUPING

GROUPING ARRANGEMENT	TEACHERS USING METHOD (PER CENT)	AVERAGE CLASS SIZE
Individual	65	1
Groups	69	5
Classes	25	25

It was found that 65 per cent of the respondents instructed between 2 and 50 children individually, and averaged about 12 individuals per year.

Children were taught in small groups by 69 per cent of the reading teachers. Size of groups varied from 2 to 16 children, with an average of 5 people in the group. Teachers met with from 2 to 8 groups per day, with an average of 5 groups on most days.

Reading teachers instructed children in classes of from 13 to 35 members in 25 per cent of the schools.

Some 21 per cent of the teachers combined all three of the above methods of grouping; others used only one or two methods. Many teachers mentioned that they met regular classes for group testing or for enrichment. Teaching children in groups of 4 or 5 appeared to be the arrangement most often used.

#### Method of Selection

The information given in table 16 was supplied in response to the item which asked reading teachers to tell who selected students for the special program:

TABLE 16  
SELECTION OF STUDENTS

PERSON SELECTING	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (PER CENT)
Classroom teacher	12
Reading teacher	5
Principal	3

It was found that the classroom teacher made the selection in 12 per cent of the schools, the reading teacher in 5 per cent and the principal in 3 per cent. In the majority of schools - 72 per cent - the classroom teacher and reading teacher together decided which children should be enrolled in the program. Others mentioned as taking part in selection were supervisor of curriculum and guidance counsellor.

#### Frequency of Instruction Periods

Teachers reported that children were instructed daily in 63 per cent of the schools, three times each week in 30 per cent, and weekly in 6 per cent. Other arrangements included twice and four times each week.

### Organization of Reading Period

Children visited the reading room during the regular classroom reading period in 39 per cent of the schools. Some period other than the reading period was used by 30 per cent of the reading teachers. Some 22 per cent of the respondents assigned reading periods without regard to subject being taught in the regular classroom. The period before nine o'clock was used by 6 per cent of the reading teachers and some used part of the lunch hour.

### Evaluation of Student Progress

The teachers were asked to name the person responsible for evaluation of the child's progress for report card purposes. This person was the classroom teacher in 28 per cent of the schools, the reading teacher in 14 per cent and there was joint responsibility in 58 per cent of the schools. Some reading teachers expressed disapproval of this practice, stating that report cards oppose some of the philosophy underlying remedial reading instruction.

### Grades Receiving Instruction

An effort was made to determine which grades are receiving the greatest amount of attention from reading teachers:

TABLE 17  
GRADES SERVED

GRADES	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS (PER CENT)
Primary - grade 2	34
Grade 3 - grade 4	60
Grade 5 - grade 6	36
Junior high school	17
Senior high school	0

It was found that 34 per cent of the teachers gave the greatest portion of their time to children from grades primary through two, 60 per cent to grades 3 and 4, 36 per cent to grades 5 and 6 and 17 per cent to junior high grades. No teacher gave the greatest attention to high school students. This question was not answered by 5 per cent of the respondents. Some found it difficult to reply since their areas did not always correspond with grade divisions listed in the item, hence they checked more than one.



## The Teacher

### Training of Teachers

Training of teachers employed in special reading programs ranged from high school plus a one-year teacher training course to the completion of a master's degree with additional special courses. Approximately 64 per cent of the respondents were Teachers College graduates, some 59 per cent with a one year course and the others with a two year course.

A bachelor's degree was held by 50 per cent and a master's by 12 per cent of the respondents. Course work beyond the master's level had been done by 4 per cent of the teachers. Others had completed one or more Block Programs at the Nova Scotia summer school. The Reading Block had been either started or completed by 67 per cent of the people employed as reading teachers.

Teachers were surveyed with respect to qualifications formulated by the Professional Standards and Ethics Committee and approved by the International Reading Association regarding course content. Table 18 shows the courses checked and the percentage of teachers having completed them:

TABLE 18  
TRAINING OF TEACHERS

COURSES	UNDERGRADUATE (PER CENT)	GRADUATE (PER CENT)
Foundations or survey of reading	39	39
Diagnosis and correction of reading difficulties	43	42
Clinical or laboratory practicum in reading	31	36
Measurement and/or evaluation	50	43
Child and/or adolescent psychology	50	43
Literature for children and/or adolescents	37	36

Other courses which reading teachers had taken included reading supervision, methods and materials, improvement of secondary school reading, learning disabilities, supervised tutoring, creative writing, perceptual development, administration in reading and teaching the superior child.

#### Teaching Experience

Teachers were asked to state the number of years they had taught both as a regular classroom teacher and as a reading teacher. Although

teaching experience ranged from 0 to 34 years, it was found that reading teachers were usually teachers who had taught for a large number of years in the regular classroom. More than 90 per cent had spent three years or more as a regular classroom teacher. Strangely enough, one reading teacher listed Sunday School teaching and the teaching of private music students as her only teaching experience. One other reading teacher had no experience as a regular classroom teacher.

Experience as a reading teacher ranged from less than 1 year to 6 years, with an average period of 2 years. Reading teachers who had been regular classroom teachers appeared to have had experience in a wide range of grade levels. For the majority, the appointment to the school to which they presently were assigned was their first appointment as special reading personnel. Only 15 per cent had ever served as reading personnel in another school.

## Materials

### Availability of Materials

An opinion was asked for on the part of the teachers in assessing the availability of materials for the special reading program:

TABLE 19  
 AVAILABILITY OF MATERIALS

MATERIALS	ADEQUATE (PER CENT)	INADEQUATE (PER CENT)
Children's library	39	61
Professional library	44	56
Supplementary readers	59	41
Skills books	55	45
Reading laboratories	53	47
Machines	35	65
Standardized tests	61	39

It can be seen from table 19 that reading teachers felt that most materials were inadequately supplied. In reply to the question 'Do you feel, generally, that your supply of materials is adequate?' 33 per cent answered 'yes' and 59 per cent gave a negative reply. The others either neglected to answer this question or gave an answer such as 'getting more gradually'.

When asked to list several items that they would like to add to their materials, they returned the information listed in table 20:

TABLE 20  
MATERIALS DESIRED

MATERIALS	PER CENT
Controlled reader	31
Skills books	25
Listening center	16
High interest books	17
Tapes	14

Table 20 shows the five most desired materials with the percentage of teachers asking for them. Other materials desired included records, phonics cards, supplementary readers, audio visual materials, primary typewriter, tests, reading laboratories, flash-x, library, filing cabinet, perceptomatic, telebinocular, audiometer, reading games, programmed reading materials, dictionaries, overhead projector, reading eye camera, and classroom space.

#### Additional Comments

Many respondents used the space provided for additional comments to explain further their program, their problems or their organization. There were numerous comments about the value of such a program to pupils

experiencing reading difficulties. In order to convey some of the opinions of the reading teachers, I shall quote some of the comments they made.

"The reading program on the whole is inadequate. The classrooms are full of problems and because of lack of time and personnel we do not adequately meet the needs of many students."

"Past experience with children, reading and inservice training have been my helpers. Helping children with reading problems is challenging."

"Since this is the first year for the program, it is experimental at this stage. Already I can think of several changes I would make another year."

"I am happy in my work. I would like to see formed an Association for Reading Teachers of Nova Scotia."

"Often I am asked to give materials to teachers who are teaching pupils who are not retarded in reading, but just need extra help in order to master skills. There is not sufficient money allotted to remedial reading programs."

"I find that the reading specialist is considered by most teachers in the category of an auxiliary or special education teacher. If a child is slow mentally, his place is in the reading room. I think that this is a great disadvantage to children who are average or above average intellectually and who are experiencing difficulties in reading."

"The very slow children are the students who usually come to the center."

"If a student is receiving help in reading, he usually is missing out in some other area while away from the class. It is difficult for the reading teacher to cope with this."

"In the four years that we have had the reading center many children had been helped to reach their proper reading level and to catch up on skills on which they were deficient."

"I am convinced that many of the reading problems could be avoided if the Initial Teaching Alphabet were used in primary and grade one. It is not difficult to train teachers to use the alphabet."

"The need is great for the information provided in this questionnaire. The administration and the teachers do not understand the specific nature of the role of the reading specialist."

"The work is very rewarding to both students and teacher because both can see the progress being made. Pupils and parents are very enthusiastic about the program."

"Students who are discipline problems in the regular classroom usually are not so in the reading room, and usually there is a marked change in their classroom performance and attitude."

"Where the scheduling allows periods are spent instructing good readers (as a class) how they may read even better."

"Teachers are always consulted and kept informed along the way."

"I feel that there should be some contact among remedial reading teachers, learning disabilities teachers and reading consultants."

"There should be some kind of central resource or supply center for this type of teaching."

#### Teachers of Children with Learning Disabilities

Since a number of schools have employed special teachers for children with learning disabilities and since their work is closely related to the work being done in other schools by reading teachers, it would be remiss to neglect to report on this aspect of training for children who experience reading difficulties.

At the time of this survey, fourteen teachers of children with learning disabilities were employed in Halifax schools. These teachers instructed approximately 220 perceptually handicapped children in 16 city schools.

Most of their attention was devoted to children in grades primary through three, although several mentioned grades as high as 6. The average number of children served by each teacher was 18 and instruction was mostly on a one-to-one basis, although some reported small group work. Instruction periods ranged from 15 to 30 minutes. Some of the teachers were serving more than one school.



Although some of the specialists emphasized the similarities between their role and that of the reading teacher: "Most of my teaching time is spent on reading and language skills", others pointed out the differences: "I teach not so much reading as I do the cause of reading difficulties." "Inability to read is merely a symptom of another difficulty."

One teacher of children with learning disabilities expressed concern that the specialist has neither enough freedom in selection of pupils and materials nor enough influence on the total reading program of the school. Another emphasized the need for greater cooperation among specialists, classroom teachers and all people concerned with the development of the child.

#### Reading Teachers Wanting Results of Study

All but one of the reading teachers surveyed asked for a summary of the results of this study.

## CHAPTER 4

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the study is to examine special reading programs in the schools of Nova Scotia and to look for clarification of the duties and responsibilities of reading personnel in Halifax schools.

The summary of related literature indicated that little information was available in this specific area and that little more than qualifications for the special teacher of reading could be found.

The prompt response, the high percentage of questionnaires returned and comments made by respondents are indicative of a desire on the part of principals and teachers for a more specific role definition of reading personnel assigned to the schools. The questionnaires returned supplied valuable information to be used in the formulation of that specification of role.

To summarize, it was found that the size of school population does not seem to be a very significant factor in the hiring of reading personnel.

Most of the schools employing a reading teacher have available the services of other specialist teachers.

The special reading program is called by a variety of titles, the Remedial Reading Program being the name most often used. In some schools there is uncertainty as to exactly what name is assigned to it.

In the majority of schools the reading program was initiated through the combined efforts of the supervisor, principal and teachers.

The duties are determined by the principal and reading teacher herself.

She usually is directly responsible to the principal. The supervisor, principal and reading teacher share in the evaluation of the special program.

In about three quarters of the schools surveyed reading teachers are asked to assume playground patrol and duties other than the teaching of reading.

In many schools the reading teacher in addition to having responsibility for remedial groups shares with the principal responsibility for the entire reading program. An additional aspect of her role is that of acting as consultant to classroom teachers on matters concerning the teaching of reading.

The position of reading teacher is relatively new, but apparently is being well accepted, and the worth of these specialists in the educational structure is being found to be beneficial.

The majority of reading teachers in Nova Scotia schools are serving one school and teaching full time.

Reading personnel are called by a variety of titles, the two most often used are reading specialist and reading teacher.

Although she performs a variety of duties, as would be expected the largest portion of her day is devoted to providing remedial reading instruction.

Although much of the teaching is on a one-to-one basis, the method of grouping most often used for remedial instruction is groups of 4 or 5 children. Most teachers meet at least 5 groups during the day.

The selection of students for the program is the joint responsibility of the reading teacher and the classroom teacher.

The duration of instruction periods usually is 45 minutes and teachers make numerous arrangements in order to excuse children from the classroom at a time most convenient to children and teachers concerned.

Usually the reading teacher and the classroom teacher combine to evaluate the child's reading progress for report card purposes.

Reading teachers devote their greatest attention to children in grades 3 and 4.

Throughout the province there is wide variety in the amount of training required of reading personnel. Some 13 per cent of the teachers of reading have no specialized training and some have no classroom experience, whereas others have done work beyond the master's level and have taught many years.

The majority of teachers stated that materials are inadequately supplied.

The need for additional reading personnel in the schools was clearly indicated.

#### Conclusions and Recommendations

At the outset it was stated that a comparison of programs throughout the province with those in Halifax schools may result in suggestions which could be implemented into city reading programs. From the analysis of data from questionnaires returned by principals and teachers, it was found that a great similarity exists. This fact perhaps is attributable to the influence of Nova Scotia summer school where so many have received their training. Because most programs are in stages of infancy, teachers are following quite closely the suggestions they received at the summer school sessions. Experimentation and improvements, hopefully will come with experience.

Several variations, however, were noticed. It was found that Halifax teachers wisely are responsible to and evaluated by the principals with greater frequency than were the other teachers who checked curriculum director, guidance counsellor and other supervisors slightly more often.

Reading teachers from both areas were called upon to perform duties in addition to the teaching of reading. The percentage of Halifax teachers doing substitute teaching exceeded by far the provincial average. Reading teachers checking substitute teaching were in all but 3 instances teachers in Halifax City. I would not hasten to suggest that this is a disadvantage. It can be a worthwhile opportunity for reading teachers to go into the classrooms and evaluate classroom reading programs. It can be an opportunity for them to detect reading difficulties that may not otherwise be brought to their attention.

Substitute teaching can be, and is in some situations used to the detriment of the special reading program. Teachers report incidents of serious interruptions which nullify any advantage gained from special classes. It must be pointed out that the remedial reading program is a full time program. The children require daily instruction. Frequent cancellations destroy the continuity which so desperately is required by children who already have reading difficulties. The requirement by Halifax school administrators of up to 3 days per month devoted to substitute teaching is a reasonable one if carefully put into practice

by the principal. It is reported that the principal in at least one city school has worked out a very satisfactory arrangement. The reading teacher does a great deal of the substitute teaching early in the term before remedial groups are formed and when testing normally fills her day. The remedial program is more conveniently interrupted at this stage. Later in the term substitute teaching is done on a 45-minute period basis, allowing the reading teacher to go to the classroom of the children whose teacher is absent during the regular period that she would meet children from that class. This provides an excellent opportunity to observe the daily adjustment of remedial students in their regular classroom.

From the data supplied, it appeared that on the average reading teachers in Halifax schools had taken a slightly larger number of special courses than had teachers in other Nova Scotia schools. This possibly would be accounted for by their proximity to training centers. Halifax teachers were found to serve only one school with greater frequency than the provincial average.

With regard to materials available, Halifax teachers felt that the supply was inadequate more often than did those employed throughout the province. This was, however, a subjective response so may or may not mean that schools throughout the province hiring reading teachers are more adequately supplied with materials. In most cases city teachers felt that the supply of two items - supplementary readers and reading laboratories was adequate.

There appears to be a tendency for Nova Scotia reading teachers to engage in a larger number of teacher-consultant activities than did those employed in Halifax schools. Teachers throughout the province allotted almost 3 times as many hours to these activities.

It appears from data supplied that the grade level to which the teacher devotes the greatest portion of her time is slightly higher in Halifax City than in other schools in Nova Scotia, although this is difficult to substantiate with facts because the questionnaire asked for ranges instead of single grades.

#### Recommendations

From a survey of the literature and from an analysis of the role of reading teachers in the schools of Nova Scotia, the following conclusions and recommendations emerge:

There is a need for a curriculum guide to the teaching of reading. This is required not only for reading teachers, but in order that every member of the staff may know his role in executing a successful reading program. Principals must have a guide to assist in the administration of the total plan. The school nurse, the speech therapist, the librarian and teachers of content subjects need guidance in understanding their responsibilities in relation to reading difficulties. It is important that each educator understand fully the role of his coworkers.



I strongly recommend that administrators and specialists get together and produce a curriculum guide to assist educators at all grade levels.

There is a need for greater emphasis to be placed on making parents aware of the role of the home in assisting the child's reading progress. This valuable aid to successful teaching is one that has been sadly neglected in our schools. A limited amount of attention on the part of educators devoted to informing parents opens up a whole realm of exciting possibilities for reading improvement. Hand-in-hand with this, of course, goes the recommendation to give immediate attention to the glaring need for well stocked shelves in the library of every school in Nova Scotia.

The demand for additional reading personnel, a demand so obvious throughout this study, must receive serious attention. Reading teachers report that it is impossible to schedule sessions for all children requiring help in reading. When principals point out the value of the program to reading-handicapped children, dare educators permit any needy child to pass through the classrooms without the benefit of this additional instruction? However, I am strongly convinced that the solution to reading difficulties lies not in the establishment of numerous remedial classes nor in the provision of remedial instruction for an increasingly larger number of children each year, but in the provision of better trained teachers of reading. It is imperative that classroom teachers

be well trained reading teachers so that there will be fewer children in need of remedial instruction.

I do, however, see the need for at least one reading teacher in every school in the province of Nova Scotia. I would recommend that her task be not so much that of trying to remediate failures as that of working in cooperation with principal and classroom teachers in an effort to prevent reading difficulties. The reading program and a child's success in reading are sufficiently important to demand the services of a person engaged to devote full time to the total reading program of the school. Classroom teachers need continuing instruction in dealing with reading difficulties. New staff members must be made aware of the philosophy underlying the school reading program. Most teachers and busy principals, devoting attention to so many aspects of school operation, would welcome the opportunity to share this heavy responsibility with a person specialized in the teaching of reading. The presence of an on-the-scene person to evaluate the child's progress over a period of years would be an asset to any staff.

The renewed emphasis on the developmental aspect of the school reading program should decrease the number of reading failures, and thus provide the reading teacher with the hours required for consultant duties. I would not be so naive as to suggest that this approach would eliminate reading casualties; however, I am convinced that the vast majority of children presently receiving remedial instruction would not

be in need of this type of program had more effective classroom instruction been available at an early level. There are far too many children who, although they are suited to progress under a regular classroom developmental program, are being assigned to remedial classes simply because the appropriate developmental program is not available in their classroom. In the suggested program, the specially trained teacher would find it necessary to work only with the extreme cases in the school. She would become the reading improvement teacher suggested by Strang. She would act as teacher-consultant and ascertain that the reading program in that school was meeting the needs of all the children.

If reading teachers are to add this heavy responsibility to their role, it follows that careful selection of reading personnel is required. Only well trained and experienced teachers will qualify. Results from questionnaires show a flagrant violation of this requirement. In addition to their initial training, their education must be continued through refresher courses and summer courses in order that the teacher keep informed of research findings, new methods and materials. Consideration must be given to personal attributes suggested by Dietrich, Klausner and Harris and listed in chapter one of this study.

It is imperative that some system of evaluation of both reading program and reading teachers be devised. Information supplied by principals and teachers suggested that the entire area of evaluation is not clearly defined and that in many cases administrators are uncertain as to whose responsibility this is.

Certainly reading teachers must be prepared to prove to administrators and to the public that there is a suitable return for additional investment in special reading classes. Responsible educators will not request additional personnel without proof that attendance in these classes produces better results than attendance in regular classroom reading programs. Attempts to measure knowledge gained have taken many forms. Educators are well aware of the difficulties encountered when they try to determine how much more knowledge a child gains in one situation than he would have gained in another. This, essentially, is what must be decided for the child involved in special reading classes. He must not only improve his reading, but must improve more than he would have if he had been left in the regular classroom. It is not enough to say that he is making progress as he likely would have made progress in class. If the reading service is to be a worthwhile investment reading gains must exceed gains which the child would have made as a result of maturation and classroom instruction.

Reading teachers have been attempting to measure reading gains by a pre test - post test procedure. Whereas they are well aware that

test results are influenced by numerous factors unrelated to reading ability, standardized tests are great allies of the reading teacher. I caution about too great a reliance upon test results, yet recognize the value of these in program evaluation. Gains made during the period of special reading instruction can then be compared with average progress the child made in previous years.

The reading teacher should keep careful records that will prove to teachers and administrators that the reading program is a worthwhile service. It is not enough to be of the opinion that progress has been made. Scientific evidence must be furnished. Record keeping, although time consuming, is a necessity. This is not meant to imply that every child who shows little progress should be dropped from the program. Rate of progress and periods of growth spurts vary from child to child. Some begin to show gains shortly after entering the program; whereas for others this period appears much later.

This does not imply, either, that there is no place for subjective evaluation. One of the very rewarding aspects of teaching reading is the realization that a child who had no desire to read a book suddenly finds books interesting and exciting. A child's desire to read and his love of books certainly are qualities that are difficult to measure, but they are factors that must be considered in the evaluation of the reading program. Comments from classroom teachers, principals and parents should be included. Often these people are not sure which techniques the child

has improved or which skills he has gained, but they know that he is a better reader than he was. A comment frequently repeated by classroom teachers is "Now he fits in with his group".

There must be some method of evaluation of the reading teacher herself. Given the training and experience recommended above, it does not follow that all persons who apply for the reading teacher's position will be suited to this heavy and responsible task. As the reading teacher's role becomes more diversified, evaluation of her capabilities becomes more complex. The school principal, the person always on the scene, is the obvious educator who can rate the reading teacher on such objectives as the development of reading goals, interpretation of the reading program, rapport with teachers and children, teaching ability and the possession of the personal attributes mentioned above. The current trend of having the principal's evaluation augmented by that of a supervisor of reading is desirable and provides another resource person to supplement the principal's knowledge of research in the field of reading. Evaluation by these two educators must combine with continuing self-evaluation by dedicated reading teachers to ensure successful reading improvement programs in the public schools of Nova Scotia.

The need for improved training of both reading personnel and classroom teachers is one that had received some attention during the past decade. Steps have been taken to offer better training in the teaching of reading. Unfortunately efforts have been too meagre and too narrow.

Each year teachers continue to enter the classroom possessing little knowledge of reading instruction or the importance of reading. It is surprising that some training centers put so little emphasis on this important aspect of the child's education. It is sad that many university faculties of education include no persons who specialize in or even appear concerned about the teaching of reading. Reading must become a large part of the initial training of every person planning to teach children, regardless of the subject they expect to teach.

It has been stated that the role of reading personnel is vague and that only recently has there been an interest in identifying their responsibilities. Whereas I concur with the need for role definition and guidelines for the execution of duties, I interject a note of caution. At times if guidelines are too firmly drawn, there is danger that the creativity of the teachers may be stifled. The need is for flexibility in interpretation of guidelines.

Role definition is required in order to clarify for the benefit of other staff members the place of reading personnel in the educational structure and to help them know what services they may expect. It would clarify some misunderstandings mentioned in the data concerning pupil selection for special reading programs. The reading teachers should be made aware of the administrators to whom they are responsible. Some guidelines should be given to help newcomers to this program from making

such obvious errors as forming remedial groups which are too large and thus destroying their effectiveness. This is an error that has been made by many beginning reading teachers. The information given in Table 15 of this study shows that there are some reading teachers in Nova Scotia who, in their eagerness to solve all the reading problems, are falling into this pit and may be in danger of destroying their effectiveness.

One aspect that happily is missing from Nova Scotia programs is that of too great a dependence upon statistical reports in the selection of students for the reading class. Educators are all too familiar with the practice of the setting of firm limits of intelligence quotients, years below grade level, exact gains made and other such factors as determinants for moving students in and out of special programs. At the present time it seems that reading teachers rightfully are given a good deal of independence in making these decisions, and that each case may be judged according to the needs of that particular child. I plead with administrators to continue to permit this freedom, as I tend to question whether a child's need for remedial instruction can always be shown on paper and with test results.

In emphasizing the role of special reading personnel in the developmental program, it must be noted that there is a responsibility to good readers which very often is neglected. Too often if a child is reading at or above grade level, regardless of his intelligence quotient



or reading expectancy, he is denied the opportunity to advance at a rate compatible with his ability. I suggest that the reading teacher has a responsibility to good readers to see that they become even better by helping in the organization of programs of enrichment and advanced instruction.

This study has enunciated some of the aspects of the role of reading personnel demanding clarification. It remains for each locality to print a handbook which will define, with reference to the local situation, the roles, rights and responsibilities of reading teachers employed in that community. Such a handbook will clarify such matters as line of responsibility, selection of students, evaluation of program, and will help other educators in the school to take advantage of this new and worthwhile service.

The role of the reading teacher, then, is one that constantly must be the subject of revision. Whenever there is continuing evaluation, there must be continuing revision. The duties must of necessity be determined by such factors as student population, area served, training and experience of classroom teachers on the staff, and - most important of all - training, experience and personal qualifications of reading teachers involved. These are only some of the factors which demand flexibility in establishing guidelines for reading personnel, guidelines which, in the final analysis, will be interpreted according to the degree of dedication of the educators involved.

APPENDIX A

LETTERS TO INSPECTORS, PRINCIPALS AND READING TEACHERS

27 Central Avenue,  
Fairview, Nova Scotia.  
February 5, 1971.

Dear Sir,

In numerous schools of Nova Scotia there is presently a trend toward the employment of special reading personnel. This creates a need to define the nature of their work.

I am interested in studying the role of the reading teacher in Nova Scotia schools. To do so, I must first identify those schools offering special services in reading. Would you be willing to co-operate by giving me the names of the reading teachers employed in your district so that I may send them a questionnaire inquiring about their duties, rights and responsibilities?

This study, which is being done at Saint Mary's University, is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for my degree of Master of Arts. It is being supervised by Mr. Arthur Conrad who is Supervisor of Curriculum for Halifax City Schools.

Would you kindly supply the information on the enclosed sheet and return it to me at your earliest convenience?

Thank you for your co-operation.

Sincerely,

Dorothy M. James

27 Central Avenue,  
Fairview, Nova Scotia.  
February 20, 1971.

Dear

The trend in Nova Scotia toward the employment of special reading personnel creates a need to define the nature of their work. I am interested in studying the role of the reading teacher in Nova Scotia schools. In order to obtain the data for my study, I have drawn up this questionnaire. Your inspector has given me your name and address so that I may send one to you.

Would you kindly cooperate by completing the enclosed sheets? Please reply to all items which apply in your situation and return the questionnaire to me at your earliest convenience. Additional comments will be welcome.

This study, which is being done at Saint Mary's University, is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for my degree of Master of Arts. It is being supervised by Mr. Arthur Conrad who is Supervisor of Curriculum for Halifax City Schools.

Should you be further interested in this study, kindly indicate in the appropriate section of the questionnaire your desire to have sent to you a summary of the results.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Dorothy M. James

27 Central Avenue  
Fairview, Nova Scotia.  
April 15, 1971.

Dear

In February I sent you a questionnaire concerning the Role of the Reading Teacher in the Public Schools of Nova Scotia. I am doing this survey as part of the requirements for a Master's Degree at Saint Mary's University.

As of this date I find that I have received no reply from you. I should like very much to include your school in this research. If you have any questions about the questionnaire please forward them to me.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Sincerely,

Dorothy M. James

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR PRINCIPALS AND READING TEACHERS

THE ROLE OF THE READING TEACHER IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NOVA SCOTIA

Questionnaire for Principals

I. THE SCHOOL

A. Type of school

1. Rural \_\_\_\_\_

2. Town \_\_\_\_\_

3. City \_\_\_\_\_

B. Number of children enrolled \_\_\_\_\_

C. The majority of the children in this school come from \_\_\_\_\_

1. High income families \_\_\_\_\_

2. Middle income families \_\_\_\_\_

3. Low income families \_\_\_\_\_

D. Number of full time teachers on staff \_\_\_\_\_

E. Special services available to your school

1. Guidance counsellor \_\_\_\_\_

2. Speech therapist \_\_\_\_\_

3. School nurse \_\_\_\_\_

4. Remedial reading teacher \_\_\_\_\_

a. Full time (Give number if more than one) \_\_\_\_\_

b. Part time \_\_\_\_\_

5. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

F. Grades taught in this school \_\_\_\_\_

II. THE READING PROGRAM

A. The special reading program in this school is known as

- 1. Special reading class \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Remedial reading program \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Corrective reading program \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Reading clinic \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

B. The special reading program was initiated by the

- 1. Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Principal \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Teachers \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Parents \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. Children \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

C. The duties of the reading teacher are determined mainly by the

- 1. Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Principal \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Teachers \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Reading teacher \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_



D. The reading teacher is directly responsible to the

- 1. Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Curriculum director \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Special services director \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Principal \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

E. The special reading program is evaluated by the

- 1. Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Curriculum director \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Special services director \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Principal \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. Reading teacher \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

F. Additional duties assumed by the reading teacher include

- 1. Playground duty \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Lunchroom duty \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Bus duty \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Hall duty \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Canteen duty \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. Library duty \_\_\_\_\_

7. Substitute teaching \_\_\_\_\_

8. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

G. The reading teacher in this school has responsibility for

I. Remedial groups only \_\_\_\_\_

2. Entire reading program \_\_\_\_\_

H. How long have you had a reading teacher in your school? \_\_\_\_\_

I. In the space provided, please make any other comments relative to this study.

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Name of School \_\_\_\_\_

Person Reporting \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like a summary of the conclusions from this study sent to you, please check the appropriate blank:

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

THE ROLE OF THE READING TEACHER IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NOVA SCOTIA

Questionnaire for Reading Teachers

I. THE SCHOOL

A. You serve

I. One school \_\_\_\_\_

2. More than one school (Give number) \_\_\_\_\_

B. Type of school

I. Rural \_\_\_\_\_

2. Town \_\_\_\_\_

3. City \_\_\_\_\_

C. Grades served \_\_\_\_\_

D. Total number of children served \_\_\_\_\_

E. You teach reading

I. Full time \_\_\_\_\_

2. Part time (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

II. THE PROGRAM

A. On the staff of your school, your title is

I. Reading Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

2. Remedial Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

3. Reading consultant \_\_\_\_\_

4. Reading specialist \_\_\_\_\_

5. Reading supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

6. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

B. You are directly responsible to the

1. Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_
2. Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_
3. Curriculum director \_\_\_\_\_
4. Special services director \_\_\_\_\_
5. Principal \_\_\_\_\_
6. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

C. Your duties are determined mainly by the

1. Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_
2. Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_
3. Principal \_\_\_\_\_
4. Teachers \_\_\_\_\_
5. Reading teacher \_\_\_\_\_
6. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

D. The special reading program is evaluated by the

1. Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_
2. Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_
3. Curriculum director \_\_\_\_\_
4. Special services director \_\_\_\_\_
5. Principal \_\_\_\_\_
6. Reading teacher \_\_\_\_\_
7. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

E. You call the special reading program in this school

1. Special reading class \_\_\_\_\_
2. Remedial reading program \_\_\_\_\_
3. Corrective reading program \_\_\_\_\_
4. Reading clinic \_\_\_\_\_
5. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

F. Additional duties assumed by you are

1. Playground duty \_\_\_\_\_
2. Lunchroom duty \_\_\_\_\_
3. Bus duty \_\_\_\_\_
4. Hall duty \_\_\_\_\_
5. Canteen duty \_\_\_\_\_
6. Library duty \_\_\_\_\_
7. Substitute teaching \_\_\_\_\_
8. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

G. Do you feel that you should assume these additional duties? \_\_\_\_\_

H. Please give the approximate percentage of your time that you spend on each of the following over the period of a year:

1. Development of reading goals and objectives \_\_\_\_\_
2. Implementation of the reading program \_\_\_\_\_
3. Appraisal of success or failure of program \_\_\_\_\_
4. Selection of reading materials \_\_\_\_\_

5. Supervision of classroom teaching \_\_\_\_\_
6. Providing diagnostic testing in reading \_\_\_\_\_
7. Providing remedial reading instruction \_\_\_\_\_
8. Providing developmental reading instruction \_\_\_\_\_
9. Interpretation of reading program \_\_\_\_\_
10. Inservice training \_\_\_\_\_
11. Working with classroom teachers in consultant  
capacity \_\_\_\_\_
12. Prevention of reading difficulties \_\_\_\_\_
13. Library duties \_\_\_\_\_
14. Parent interviews \_\_\_\_\_
15. Clerical \_\_\_\_\_
16. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

- I. For how many years has your school had a special  
reading program? \_\_\_\_\_

### III. THE CHILDREN

#### A. You work with children

- I. Individually \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Number in one year \_\_\_\_\_
2. In groups \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Size of group \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Number of groups each day \_\_\_\_\_

3. In classes \_\_\_\_\_
- a. Size of classes \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Number of classes \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Your students are selected by the
1. Classroom teacher \_\_\_\_\_
2. Reading teacher \_\_\_\_\_
3. Principal \_\_\_\_\_
4. Some combination of above \_\_\_\_\_
5. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Remedial students are instructed by you
1. Daily \_\_\_\_\_
2. Three times each week \_\_\_\_\_
3. Weekly \_\_\_\_\_
4. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- D. Duration of the reading period usually is
1. Thirty minutes \_\_\_\_\_
2. Forty-five minutes \_\_\_\_\_
3. One hour \_\_\_\_\_
4. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- E. As a rule, your students are taken from the regular classroom
1. During the regular classroom reading period \_\_\_\_\_
2. During some subject other than reading \_\_\_\_\_
3. Without regard to what subject is being taught in  
        the classroom \_\_\_\_\_

4. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

F. The person responsible for evaluation of child's reading for report card purposes is

I. Classroom teacher \_\_\_\_\_

2. Reading teacher \_\_\_\_\_

3. Combination of above \_\_\_\_\_

G. The grades to which you feel you give greatest attention are

I. Primary - two \_\_\_\_\_

2. Three - four \_\_\_\_\_

3. Five - six \_\_\_\_\_

4. Junior high \_\_\_\_\_

5. Senior high \_\_\_\_\_

#### IV. THE TEACHER

A. Professional qualifications

I. Teachers college graduate \_\_\_\_\_

a. One year course \_\_\_\_\_

B. Two year course \_\_\_\_\_

2. Degrees

a. Bachelor's degree \_\_\_\_\_

b. Bachelor of education \_\_\_\_\_

c. Master's degree (Specify field) \_\_\_\_\_

d. Work beyond a master's degree \_\_\_\_\_

e. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_



3. Reading block at Nova Scotia Summer School

(Give year completed) \_\_\_\_\_

B. Your training included at least one course in each of the following

	Undergraduate	Graduate
I. Foundations or survey of reading	_____	_____
2. Diagnosis and correction of reading disabilities	_____	_____
3. Clinical or laboratory practicum in reading	_____	_____
4. Measurement and/or evaluation	_____	_____
5. Child and/or adolescent psychology	_____	_____
6. Literature for children and/or adolescents	_____	_____

C. Other special training in reading not covered above (Specify)

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D. Experience

I. Number of years regular classroom teaching experience at each level

a. Primary - three \_\_\_\_\_

b. Four - six \_\_\_\_\_

c. Junior high \_\_\_\_\_

d. Senior high \_\_\_\_\_

2. Number of years as reading teacher at each level

a. Primary - three \_\_\_\_\_

b. Four - six \_\_\_\_\_

c. Junior high \_\_\_\_\_

d. Senior high \_\_\_\_\_

3. Have you been a reading teacher at a school other than  
the school(s) to which you presently are assigned? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

V. THE MATERIALS AVAILABLE TO YOU

A. Books

Adequate

Inadequate

1. Children's library \_\_\_\_\_

2. Professional library \_\_\_\_\_

3. Supplementary readers \_\_\_\_\_

4. Skills books \_\_\_\_\_

B. Machines

1. Controlled readers \_\_\_\_\_

2. Flash-x \_\_\_\_\_

3. Other reading papers (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

C. Other

1. Reading laboratories \_\_\_\_\_

2. Standardized tests \_\_\_\_\_

D. Do you feel, generally, that your supply of  
materials is adequate? \_\_\_\_\_

E. List several items that you would like to add to your materials \_\_\_\_\_

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F. In the space provided, please make any other comments relative to this study \_\_\_\_\_

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Name of School \_\_\_\_\_

Person Reporting \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like a ~~summary~~ summary of the conclusions from this study sent to you, please check the appropriate blank:

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

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