READING WORKBOOKS: TEACHER
BELIEFS AND USAGE

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The Faculty of Graduate Studies
and Research of
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree
Master of Education

by
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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to identify Division One teacher beliefs about and usage of reading workbooks. In order to do so, a questionnaire consisting of three components was devised. The components were demographic information, two open-ended items, and 22 forced-choice statements. A four-point scale for the 22 items was developed using the following categories and numerical values: strongly agree, 4; agree, 3; disagree, 2; strongly disagree, 1. The intent was to force teachers to take definite, rather than neutral, positions in their responses. No formal statistical analysis of the data was undertaken. Instead, simple percentages were used to determine whether or not each hypothesis was accepted or rejected. Categories were identified to determine the magnitude of acceptance or rejection.

The study identified the following:

1. The use of workbooks is widespread.

2. Teachers believe that workbooks are an important instructional aid in the teaching of reading.

3. Teachers believe that workbooks are the products of scientific investigations of the reading process and instructional practice.

4. Teachers believe that workbooks ensure the covering of essential reading skills.

5. Other supplementary materials are used but they play a subsidiary role to workbooks.

6. Teachers do not believe that workbooks facilitate class management in dealing with grouping procedures, or that they facilitate individualization of instruction.

Suggestions for future research included an examination of the workbooks teachers in the study use, an examination of teacher approaches
and practices, and an investigation of the existence of external pressures on teachers to use workbooks.
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CHAPTER I.

Introduction

Recent studies have produced a number of findings related to teacher beliefs about and usage of workbooks, and the quality of the design of workbooks.

Shannon (1983) found that teachers believe that commercial reading materials are valuable aids to reading instruction, and that they are the products of scientific investigations of the reading process. Durkin (1978-79) stated that most teachers use workbooks, and that such usage occupies more than 50% of the instructional time. Osborn (1981) observed that students spend as much or more time with their workbooks as they do with their teachers. Osborn's study of workbooks prompted her to develop a set of guidelines for the improvement of workbook design.

The present study investigated teacher beliefs about and usage of workbooks, to determine if Shannon's and Durkin's findings held true for teachers in this study. It also attempted to discover if teachers are aware of the limitations of workbooks revealed by Osborn's investigation.

Background of the Problem

Research indicates that both the quality and the quantity of time spent in instruction are critical variables in student achievement. The quality of time spent is determined by the concept defined by Rosenshine and Berliner (1978) as "direct instruction," which is similar to the three essential phases of teacher/student behaviour identified by Durkin (1978-79) as instruction, application and practice. Sufficient time must be spent on each of the three phases in order to ensure student mastery of a skill or understanding of the material.
One of the elements included in the process of direct instruction as described by Rosenshine and Berliner (1978) is the use of workbooks. But reading workbook usage is a controversial topic among reading researchers. Shannon (1982), in an historical overview of attitudes to reading workbooks since their introduction in the 1920's, revealed the polarization that has existed. Some authorities in the field of reading have supported their use, others have opposed the practice. Docter (1962) decried the antagonist/protagonist approach to workbooks. Instead, he called for an investigation of how teachers use workbooks, and stated his belief that used properly they are useful instructional tools which can enhance the instructional program.

This suggestion found general support from such critics of how teachers use workbooks as Durkin (1974) and critics of workbook design such as Osborn (1981). Research into how reading is taught, Durkin (1974, 1978-79) and Duffy and McIntyre (1982), and into teacher use of workbooks, Osborn (1981), revealed that instructional objectives in lessons, rather than being set by teachers, were determined by the content of the workbooks used. Teachers, they found, acted as assistants to the materials, as mentioners or monitors, rather than acting as the instructional leaders in the classroom. Thus, the teaching responsibility had been handed over to the workbook. The study by Patching et al. (1983) supported the view that this practice is misguided. They found that when the principles of direct instruction were applied, that is the three phases of instruction, application and practice which are teacher led and directed, students achieved beyond the required level for mastery as identified by the mastery learning concept. On the other hand, if the instructions were provided in a workbook, with teachers supplying corrective feedback, students achieved well below the mastery level.
A further concern related to workbook use are the findings of research into the design of workbooks. The literature consistently revealed serious weaknesses. Veatch (1966) found them "ineffective, inadequate, and non-educational" (p. 143). Greene and Petty (1975) listed eight limitations of workbooks. Durkin (1974, 1978-79) while not specifically examining workbooks, found in her investigations of how comprehension is taught that workbooks perpetuate erroneous information, causing her to describe them as questionable instructional materials. Osborn (1981) in her investigation of workbooks found so many weaknesses that she responded by outlining twenty specific suggestions for improvement.

Nevertheless, despite the identified weaknesses and the repeated calls for discretionary and selective use of workbooks, Durkin (1978-79) suggested that the control of instructional decisions by workbooks rather than by teachers is typical of teaching behaviours in most classrooms.

Commenting on what she had found during her investigations, Durkin (1981) stated:

If the research findings reported here come close to providing an accurate picture, grades three through six do not provide environments that foster real reading. Instead, workbooks and ditto sheets run the program, and children are encouraged to conclude that reading is doing exercises. (p. 454)

Such practices are a far cry from the desired approach of instruction, application and practice recommended by Durkin (1978-79) and supported by the proponents of direct instruction.

In responding to the concern of Durkin and others, the present study attempted to gain preliminary insights into:

1. The prevalence of workbook usage.
2. Teacher beliefs about the usefulness of workbooks.
3. Teacher beliefs about the design of workbooks.
5. Why teachers use workbooks.

Statement of the Problem

The general hypothesis was that teachers do use workbooks, and that they do so because they believe that workbooks are educationally valid and valuable for enhancing student achievement.

Specific Hypotheses

The present study attempted to confirm the findings of research in relation to the following seven hypotheses:

1. The use of workbooks is widespread.
2. The majority of teachers believe that workbooks are an important instructional aid in the teaching of reading.
3. The majority of teachers believe that workbooks are the products of a scientific investigation of the reading process and instructional practice and as such are scientifically valid materials.
4. The majority of teachers believe that workbooks facilitate class management in dealing with grouping procedures.
5. The majority of teachers believe that workbooks facilitate individualization of instruction.
6. The majority of teachers believe that workbooks ensure the covering of essential reading skills.
7. Other supplementary materials are used but they play a subsidiary role to workbooks.

Delimitation

The study addressed itself only to teacher use of the workbook component of the reading program, and the sample comprised only
Division One classroom teachers who teach reading in the English, not the French Immersion, classrooms.

Definition of Terms

A reading workbook is a commercially printed, consumable material for student activity.
CHAPTER II.

Review of Related Research

Introduction

Educational practice has been a source of controversy for generations. The teaching of reading has not been exempt. This review of literature will examine one aspect of controversy within the teaching of reading: the workbook. Considered in this chapter will be:

1. Basic philosophies of instruction.
2. Research into the concept of instructional time with accompanying recommendations for teaching behaviours.
3. Historical attitudes toward the use of workbooks.
4. The design of workbooks.
5. Teacher practices involving the use of workbooks as revealed by research.
6. Desirable approaches to reading instruction.

By way of conclusion, a summary will illustrate how these topics are interrelated.

Basic Philosophies of Instruction

Essentially two contrasting schools of thought have existed as to the most effective method of teaching and the difference of opinion has revolved around whether the curriculum should be subject-centered or child-centered, and whether it should emphasize affective response or cognitive discipline. The proponents of each position have tended to create a polarization by suggesting that the contrasting views are mutually exclusive. For example, the impression is conveyed that if a subject-centered approach is adopted, such an approach will stress cognitive
discipline to the exclusion of affective response and concern for the child.

In reading instruction, the contrasting views have been represented by those who favour a decoding approach to beginning reading on the one hand and those who favour a meaning-based approach on the other. A similar polarization has existed with regard to the question of reading instruction.

These contrasting views will be discussed under the following headings: heuristic/didactic; organic/inorganic; top-down/bottom-up; and meaning-based/teaching-the-code.

**Heuristic/Didactic**

The heuristic approach to instruction is an open, informal, inquiry-centered, and discovery-oriented model. It includes inquiry, student choice, individualized work, and time for exploration and discovery. The interests of the child determine the content of the curriculum. Proponents of this approach have included Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Dewey, along with the adherents of the Progressive school of thought, such as Kilpatrick.

A contrast is the didactic approach. The emphasis here is more formal. It is behaviour-analytic and detail-specific. Here, the teacher determines the content of the curriculum and the teacher directs and paces the lesson. Large group instruction is the norm, and questioning procedures are narrow and detail-specific. Such an approach is a continuation of the classical or traditional school of thought which emphasized intellectual discipline, close textual study, and the training of memory.

**Organic/Inorganic**

The organic approach to teaching draws out of the child what is already in the child's experience. Thus, in reading instruction, the
approach becomes a bridge from the known to the unknown, from the inner self out. Instruction derives from the child's own imagination and vocabulary, which "unlock the mind and release the tongue" (Ashton-Warner, 1963, p. 36), opening the door on the love of reading and laying the foundation of a lifetime of books.

In contrast, the inorganic approach, is a "plastering on of foreign stuff" (Ashton-Warner, 1963, p. 14), the imposition of a dead reading, and a dead vocabulary, of a "frame over a young tree making it grow in an unnatural shape" (p. 95), destroying the possibility of developing an integrated personality. Such an approach is the opposite of reaching a hand into the mind of a child, bringing out a handful of the stuff that is found there and using that as the working material of instruction.

In short, the difference between the organic and inorganic models of instruction is similar to the difference between an organic and inorganic vocabulary of reading. The one comes from the creative vent, as Ashton-Warner described it, the creations of the children themselves, and the other comes from the outside, the creations of the compiler of the commercial reader.

Heuristic/didactic and organic/inorganic are really different labels for similar concepts.

Top-down/Bottom-up

Cognitive psychology provides yet another representation of the contrasting models. Frederiksen (1978) discussed the issue at length in the context of discourse comprehension and early reading. One conception of how different components of the discourse comprehension system interact is the top-down model. This model views discourse comprehension as a product of syntactic and interpretive components under the control of
high-level inferential processes. Or as Goodman (1979) described it:

Language is learned from whole to part in full communicative contexts . . . . reading is meaning-seeking, so that language parts have no real existence outside the whole. (p. 659)

The opposite conception, the bottom-up model, provides a contrasting view of how different components of the discourse comprehension system interact. Here, decoding, syntactic processing, and semantic interpretation are conceived of as occurring in sequence. In other words, lower-level processes occur prior to, and are independent of higher level processes. Frederiksen (1978) stated:

In the bottom-up conception, the processes by which a person understands a discourse are controlled by the textual input, that is, there is a more or less automatic parsing of each sentence in an input text followed by a semantic interpretation based on sentence syntax. (p. 512)

Goodman (1979) described this conception as a view of reading whereby each small part is processed successively and accurately to get to each larger unit.

**Meaning-based/Teaching-the-code**

Advocates of the meaning-based approach to reading state that the initial emphasis in learning to read should be placed on the child learning to grasp the meaning of the message (Chall, 1967). The child must start with meaningful reading of whole words, sentences, and stories which are as closely geared to the child's own experiences and interests as possible. Also, silent reading must be stressed early. This approach can be characterized as the look-say or sight method.

On the other hand are the advocates of the teaching-the-code approach to reading, which Calfee and Drum (1978) characterized as learning to pronounce the message with accuracy and fluency. This approach is the phonics method of early teaching of correspondences between letters and
sounds, or the mastering of the alphabetic code through analysis and/or synthesis. Common phonic elements or spelling patterns are used to control difficulty, and oral reading is stressed.

Again, top-down/bottom-up and meaning-based/teaching-the-code are really different labels for similar concepts.

A Balanced View

The view that reading instruction must be an either/or situation—a choice between the dichotomies presented heretofore—can be challenged. An alternate and perhaps more realistic view is that successful reading instruction forms a continuum between the two poles, involving aspects of each of the different suggested approaches or models.

Rosenshine (1979) suggested that, in didactic teaching, while instruction is structured it need not be authoritarian but can occur in a convivial atmosphere. He found that decent, humane, genuine interactions occurred in many classrooms that were highly structured and teacher directed. The proponents of the heuristic model would dispute this suggestion and claim that such a classroom atmosphere could only occur using their instructional approach. Rosenshine also claimed that the didactic instructional model is more effective for obtaining gains in reading and mathematics, while the heuristic model seems more suitable for achieving intuitive and creative goals. Rosenshine believed that the heuristic model is not effective in achieving analytic ends. Nevertheless, both models are important in instructional programs when applied appropriately.

Ashton-Warner (1963) did not view her organic reading approach as the only approach to reading. In fact, she saw it as a bridge to what she called inorganic reading. She stated:
This organic reading, however, is not meant to stand alone: it is essentially a lead up and out to all the other reading, and as a child rises through the infant room, reaching further and further out to the inorganic and standard reading, there is a comfortable movement from the inner man outward, from the known to the unknown, from the organic to the inorganic. (p. 62)

In other words, the organic approach moves from a known to myriad unknowns, curiosity, incorporating the latter as interests and taste develop.

Frederiksen (1978), a proponent of the top-down model, made the claim that designing reading instruction to achieve the sub-goal of decoding is likely to lead to subsequent difficulty in achieving the primary goal of comprehension. When challenged he modified his position.

When asked if one does not always go from bottom to top and then from top to bottom, Frederiksen (1978) replied:

I was starting with the assumption that you have a language code first of all. But one always starts at the bottom. The question is how far do you go, so that Shank just goes a little way, and then he starts doing things at a higher level. That's the reason I said it is an oversimplification to talk about a bottom-up model versus a top-down model. I think this is just a way of characterizing differences that can occur in the way component processes interact. (p. 574)

Discussing what they called the top-down/bottom-up argument, Calfee and Drum (1978) arrived at the same conclusion as Frederiksen. They felt that the argument serves largely as a context for jousting with ideas, and that the truth undoubtedly falls between the two positions. A truly useful instructional model, they believed, must provide a clear indication - for student, program, or situation - about where on this continuum the instruction is occurring.

The argument, or controversy, between two supposedly mutually exclusive models or approaches is really created by imprecise use of
language and insufficient defining of terms, which cloud issues. This view was supported by Chall (1967). In the context of meaning-getting versus teaching-the-code, she stated that the dichotomy is only one of emphasis. She claimed that all code-emphasis programs give some practice in reading for meaning and that this cannot be avoided. Similarly, meaning-emphasis programs give some practice in code learning, because reading could not take place without some attention to the code. Chall's review of the experimental research led her to conclude that no evidence suggested that either a code or a meaning-emphasis fosters greater love of reading or is more interesting to children.

McCullough (1968) stated that many components of the reading process exist and that to neglect one or more of them is to create an imbalance which, because of their interrelatedness, affects the whole. Herein lies the danger of an either-or approach to reading instruction. Calfee and Drum (1978) identified these components of reading as a set of six independent processes, each of which has a distinctive and measurable relation to the reading task. These processes are prereading perceptual skills, decoding, vocabulary, grammar, literal comprehension, and inferential comprehension. Describing these processes, they stated:

Decoding entails the translation from print to some equivalent of spoken language. Vocabulary provides one or more meanings for a word from a person's language and experience. Grammar interprets a string of words as a pattern that is permissible in the language. Literal comprehension is the understanding of an event through the use of the explicit information in a passage. Inference adds to this explicit information other facts and knowledge available to the reader; thought and imagination expand the reader's understanding of the text. (p. 209)

While these skills can be viewed as independent, they are nonetheless interrelated skills on the continuum which forms the reading process.

Carroll (1970) in making the point that the essential skill in reading is getting meaning from a printed or written message also pointed out
that when one gets the meaning one has not only recognized the words themselves, but has interpreted the words in their particular grammatical functions. Somehow, one has apprehended the general grammatical patterning of each sentence. In the process, one has given a semantic interpretation of the sentence, assigning meanings to the key words in the sentence. In other words, the different elements in the reading process occur together, or as Carroll (1963) stated: "Somehow you put all these things together in order to understand the 'plain sense' of what the message says" (p. 8).

Calfee and Drum (1978) stated that the practitioners of teaching, and we might add the recipients, suffer when many voices call from different directions. Consequently, a balanced view must prevail particularly since, as Carroll (1970) pointed out, methods may differ in effectiveness from child to child, and the needs of the child must control instructional decisions.

Research into the Concept of Instructional Time

The body of research into the concept of time with its recommendations for instructional practices is of interest in the context of the foregoing discussion related to the need for balance in instructional decision making.

Carroll (1963) recognized the impact of the concept of time as a critical variable in increased student academic achievement. His work gave rise to a discrete body of research. Carroll's model of school learning suggested that time is composed of two essential elements, one being the time spent learning a task, and the other the time required to master a task. Of the five elements of the model, three reside in the individual, and two stem from external conditions. Factors in the individual are:
1. Aptitude - the amount of time needed to learn the task under optimal instructional conditions.
2. Ability to understand instruction.
3. Perseverance - the amount of time the learner is willing to engage actively in learning.

The external factors are identified as:
2. The quality of instruction - a measure of the degree to which instruction is presented so that it will not require additional time for mastery beyond that required in view of aptitude. (p. 729)

According to Carroll (1963), "The learner's task of going from ignorance of some specified fact or concept to knowledge or understanding of it, or of proceeding from incapability of performing some specified act to capability of performing it, is a learning task" (p. 723). He recognized that while most of the goals of the school can be expressed in the form of learning tasks, or a series of such tasks, not all of them can be. Examples of the latter would be goals related to attitudes and dispositions, and his model is not intended to apply to these. For his model to apply, the task must be capable of being unequivocally described, and means must exist for making a valid judgment as to when the learner has accomplished the learning goal which has been set for him.

Bloom (1974) acknowledged the importance of Carroll's model in developing the concept of mastery learning. He noted that mastery learning is affected not only by the quality of instruction and student aptitude, but also by the quantity of instruction. In discussing the importance of the research of both Carroll and Bloom, Anderson (1983) stated:

The basic principle underlying both Carroll’s model and Bloom's mastery learning strategy is simple, straightforward and can be written completely in terms of time. If all students are provided with the time they need in order to learn well and if students can be encouraged or coerced to spend that needed time actively engaged in learning, then all students will learn well. (p. 25)
Thus, the two key instructional issues which must be addressed if this principle is to become a reality are (a) the need to provide students with sufficient amounts of time to learn, and (b) the need to ensure that students use their time productively. These two concepts deserve elaboration.

Elements of Time

The different aspects of time move from the most inclusive, school time, through classroom time and instructional time, to the least inclusive, engaged time and academic learning time. Engaged time is that portion of instructional time during which students are observed to be paying attention, trying to learn, or are engaged in the process of learning. Academic learning time, the least inclusive element, is that portion of engaged time during which students are experiencing relatively high degrees of learning success, exhibited by their answering questions correctly in class and completing assignments with high degrees of accuracy. Academic learning time excludes the time that students make many mistakes or appear to be confused.

Not surprisingly, research suggests that as the concept of time moves from the most inclusive to the least inclusive, the correlations between time and learning become stronger (Anderson, 1983; Caldwell, Huit, and Graeber, 1982; Wyne and Stuck, 1982).

Student Use of Time

The need to ensure that students use their time productively along with the implications for the classroom teacher is recognized and discussed by a number of researchers. A primary characteristic of effective instruction is teacher behavior that leads to high levels of student time on task, as Wyne and Stuck (1982) observed. In other words, teacher/
student behavior during instructional time significantly affects engaged
time and academic learning time which, in turn, influence student achieve-
ment. The importance of the teacher's role is highlighted by Rosenshine
(1983) who quoted Larkin and Reif:

Students do not automatically acquire a learning skill
merely through experience in a subject matter. To enhance
independent learning, learning skills should be taught
directly. (p. 337)

The recommended teaching behavior which this body of research
identified and described will be discussed in the next two sections.

Direct Instruction

A teaching behavior recommended by Rosenshine and Berliner (1978)
and Rosenshine (1979, 1983) is direct instruction. The term as they
used it refers to the activities and settings which the teacher establishes
in order to move students through a sequenced set of reading or mathematics
materials or tasks. They stated:

Direct instruction pertains to a set of teaching behaviors
focused on academic matters where goals are clear to students;
time allocated for instruction is sufficient and continuous;
content coverage is extensive; student performance is monitored;
questions are at a low cognitive level and produce many correct
responses; and feedback to students is immediate and academically
oriented. In direct instruction, the teacher controls
instructional goals, chooses materials appropriate for the
student's ability level and paces the instructional episode.
(p. ?)

Rosenshine's concept of teacher behavior and its significant,
positive influence on student achievement was supported by the findings

These teacher behaviors are important in effective classroom manage-
ment. Brophy (1983) stated that while we can discuss classroom manage-
ment separately from instruction, in practice they are interdependent,
because, when classroom managers maximize the time their students spend engaged in academic tasks, they also maximize their students' opportunities to learn academic content. As a result, students exhibit superior performance on achievement tests.

Concerns Related to Direct Instruction

The concept of direct instruction was not without its critics. The recommendations of the proponents of direct instruction include the use of workbooks in order to ensure the mastery of skills, as well as direct teacher involvement in and control of the instructional program, and process. Concerns expressed by Roehler and Duffy (1982) in response to these recommendations are reminiscent of the earlier discussion of the debate surrounding the questions related to the best method of teaching reading. Roehler and Duffy (1982) did not disagree with the claim that instruction which is direct is more effective than instruction which is indirect, incidental or oblique. Their concern was that direct instruction tends to result in an emphasis on only skill outcomes and on instruction which emphasizes the leading of students through exercises in basal text materials. They stated:

Reading is a complex phenomenon. It involves much more than "knowing your letters," or "sounding out words," or "getting the main idea," or scoring well on a skills-based assessment test. We also want children to love and appreciate literature, to understand reading's function in the language process, and to use reading as a source of information. It is intuitively sensible, therefore, that teachers should build balanced reading programs which employ not one but various kinds of direct instruction and which result in not one but various kinds of outcomes. (p. 476)

For some, the recommendation of Rosenshine and Berliner (1978) that workbooks play an important role in direct instruction would cause concern. Veatch (1967) expressed her concern related to the use of such material.
She stated:

The central issue of structure, as I see it, is what Arthur Heileman (sic) calls the ego involvement of the learner. Do children learn to read earlier, easier, faster, and better when their own lives, emotion, feelings and experiences are used in the teaching? Or do children learn to read best from materials unrelated to their own personal individual existence, however simplified, systematized, and presented? (p. 254)

While she recognized a loose progression of skills in learning to read, she stated that the progression is within each child and is not found in a set of "inanimate" materials.

This concern regarding the encouragement of the use of commercial materials in direct instruction will be dealt with in the remainder of this chapter. The specific component of these materials which will be examined is workbooks, the use of which is recommended by Rosenshine and Berliner (1978).

**Historical Attitudes to Workbooks**

Historically, attitudes to workbooks have been polarized since their introduction in the 1920's. Interestingly, this period marks the beginning of what is called the progressive movement in education. On the one hand are those who support and advocate the use of workbooks and on the other are those who totally oppose their use. The controversy over the use of workbooks has centered on three major themes related to (a) the content of workbooks, (b) appropriate reading methodology, and (c) descriptions of teachers' use of these materials, as Shannon (1982) observed. The positions held are reminiscent and reflective of the earlier discussion related to the question of reading methodology. The opposing positions will be considered separately.
Proponents of Workbooks

Those who support and advocate the use of workbooks tend to do so because they believe in the presentation and acquisition of sequential subject matter. The origins of commercially prepared workbooks date back to the early days of the progressive education era when the scientific approach predominated. In conducting a survey to determine how much impact scientific research with respect to the teaching of reading was having in the field, Donovan (1928) recorded his dismay at finding:

Teachers instructing children as they themselves were taught, absolutely ignorant and oblivious that science had discovered for us truths, and that little children are entitled to the benefits of these discoveries. (p. 106)

He took comfort in the fact, however, that authors and publishers of commercially prepared materials were making use of recent scientific investigations into the teaching of reading, for he saw these materials as potent agencies for the spreading of the results of research.

An early, influential voice in support of the use of workbooks was Gates (1935), pioneer in developing diagnostic and remedial techniques in reading, with W. S. Gray, and co-author of The Macmillan Company's The Work-Play Books. He suggested that students, before the advent of workbooks, either guessed at what they should learn, or waited for the teacher to tell them and then learned in uncertain ways. In contrast, he suggested that workbooks provide practice materials and suggestions designed to make what would otherwise be trial and error learning definite, foolproof, economical and interesting. He believed that workbooks provide for diagnosis, testing of student ability, review, a decrease in oral instruction, individualization of instruction, a developing of student initiative, and the opportunity to remediate student difficulties.
Gray (1937), co-author of the Scott-Foresman "Dick and Jane" series, made this claim in the Thirty-Sixth Yearbook:

Prepared materials are, as a rule, more skillfully organized and are technically superior to those developed daily in the classroom. Because they follow a sequential plan, the chance for so-called "gaps in learning" is greatly reduced. (p. 90)

After reviewing the results of twelve studies, Goodykoontz (1935), suggested that the findings support use of workbooks as beneficial, resulting in not only higher scores on standardized tests, but also in an: "... increase in power of self-direction, helps in retention, skill in fundamental processes, reasoning ability, and solving problems" (p. 35).

Despite recognizing that the workbooks of his day needed continued development to overcome certain weaknesses, Brueckner (1935) stated:

Admittedly, the workbook is new and imperfect. The fact that it has achieved success in spite of its limitations guarantees that systematic, scientific study and planning will greatly increase the effectiveness of workbooks and stimulate their continuous improvement. (p. 44)

Betts (1941), recognizing that in the preceding two decades workbooks had become one of the major vehicles of instruction, attributed to them the responsibility of individualizing and integrating instruction in the language arts. Later, (1943), in discussing the place of such materials in systematic reading instruction, he claimed that such notions as individualization of instruction can be translated into practice only through the use of these commercially prepared materials.

A myriad of benefits accruing to students from the use of workbooks was identified by Stone (1950). Such benefits range from remediating reading difficulties of poor readers with language handicaps, alexia, cerebral dominance, poor visual and auditory discrimination, through overcoming problems created by overcrowded classrooms, mass instruction,
and lack of student motivation, to ensuring individualized instruction, independent reading, intrinsic learning and the development of spiritual values.

Research in the 70's still recognized the value of workbooks. Callaway et al. (1972) claimed that most teachers reject non-workbook approaches to the teaching of reading. Consequently, they recommended further development of commercial materials to enable teachers to correlate oral and written language activities in their language arts instruction.

Finally, Smith (1972), stated that most children profit from instruction with basic reading materials designed to teach reading skills, because such materials are carefully prepared and sequenced.

Opponents of Workbooks

Those who have opposed the use of workbooks have done so for a variety of reasons. Their use caused teachers to lose sight of the main purpose of reading instruction which is to give the student a useful and enjoyable educational and recreational tool to be used throughout life, (Burris, 1927) and this argument ran throughout the writings of those who are opposed to workbooks.

Another predominant concern was that the use of workbooks negated an individualized approach to reading. Boney (1938) stated that the most significant argument against their use is that similar books cannot be used in dissimilar reading cases. That argument was echoed by Abraham (1954) who claimed: "Whatever level the book is aimed at will constitute only a minority of the classroom, and the rest will either be bored or puzzled, but certainly not satisfied" (p. 142).
That charge was supported by Yoakam (1954) who stated that commercially produced materials cannot meet the varying needs of individual children, and thus cannot lead to improved reading habits and interests.

The bluntest criticism of workbooks in regard to individualization of instruction was offered by Veatch (1966) who, having described them as "ineffective, inadequate and noneducational," went on to say:

No workbook, assigned day in and day out, one page following another, can be clairvoyant enough to meet the needs of one, or any child, day in and day out. (p. 143)

The content of workbooks is yet another area that drew criticism. Three basic weaknesses were addressed by Burton (1956): (a) They contain many time-wasting materials such as puzzles and stunts, and coloring, cutting and pasting exercises that, while amusing for students, have little or no bearing on learning to read. (b) They overemphasize the mechanical aspects of reading to the neglect of meaningful aspects. (c) Their comprehension exercises are few and far between, and are limited almost exclusively to sentence and paragraph comprehension, with little or no regard for story comprehension.

A final concern had to do with teaching methodology. Opponents saw commercial materials creating a narrow, lock-step approach to teaching reading, where the ability to recognize, sound-out, and pronounce words was stressed almost to the exclusion of all else. Gutknecht (1973) blamed teachers, charging that they abrogated their responsibilities so that publishers, by default, dictated the method and materials to be used in teaching reading. Others, such as Artley (1980) believed workbooks play such an important part in the teaching of reading largely because they supply the practice and drill teachers believe necessary for students to master "essential subskills which teachers assume to be synonymous with reading competence."
Such a belief was decried by Dickhart (1958) who stated:

To enjoy the printed page one must be able to feel and to understand what the author has attempted to express. Reading should enhance the lives of children, and lead them to become gleaners of facts, seekers of truth, and searchers for things unknown. (p. 56)

Ashton-Warner (1963) echoed Dickhart's concern. Not only did she view workbooks as the middle man between conception and execution of an idea, intercepting some of the energy and glamour of the instructional process, but also she saw them imposing a predetermined program of study on students, stifling creativity.

Wherever there's creativity on a large scale there's life, and I, anyway, can't plot life. I just join in. How are we to know what is going to come from the children on this day or that? How can I tell what the reading and spelling is going to be since each morning they write their own books for the day's use? Does a teacher want to anticipate the purposes of each new day? In an infant room cultivating the organic expansion, a teacher learns to put the factors of mood and change before the prognostications of a workbook. (p. 90)

Finally, in considering the levels of activity in reading theory and research over the past number of years and the potential the knowledge produced had for application to better teaching and learning of reading, Goodman (1979) felt that the teaching profession ought to be excited. Instead, he found:

An overwhelming system-oriented, know-nothing movement which is based on tightly structured, arbitrarily chosen skill sequences; it is an empty technology so inflexible it cannot tolerate new knowledge. (p. 661)

He then went on to state:

Literacy in this competency-based, highly structured, empty technology is reduced to a tight sequence of arbitrary skills. (p. 663)

The impact, as he saw it, is that teachers have become mere technicians, part of a delivery system, and children are treated as passive, interchangeable recipients of technological treatments.
Summary of Strengths and Weaknesses

The opposing attitudes towards workbooks have been summarized by a number of people in the past fifty years. The following table presents a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of workbooks, their uses and misuses, and their values and limitations. The same points of view are expressed from decade to decade, and are listed under the headings "merits" and "limitations."

Table 1.
Merits and Limitations of Workbooks

| MERITS
|
|--------------------------------|
| **Content**                     |
| 1. Provide good amount and quality of drill materials. |
| 2. Provide sufficient supplementary material. |
| 3. Build up specific vocabularies. |
| 4. Provide suitable material for home study. |
| 5. Provide diagnostic testing program. |
| 6. There is a sequence and they encourage developmental reading skills. |
| 7. They test achievement. |
| 8. They provide meaningful practice. |
| 9. They provide material for individual instruction. |
| 10. They are useful in remedial work. |
| 11. They add variety and supplement instruction. |

Table 1 continued . . .
Table 1 (continued)

Usage

1. They stimulate interest in reading.
2. Provide for self-competition.
3. Provide for developing good study habits and skills.
4. Create favorable pupil reactions.
5. Pupils progress at own rate.
6. Saves teacher's time for supervision.
7. Allows for more scientific grading.
8. They are a help to children who have been absent.
9. They result in time-saving in securing pupil responses.
10. They aid in class control.
11. They provide meaningful practice.
12. They provide a practical means of supplementing group instruction with individual instruction.

LIMITATIONS

Content

1. Faulty analysis of processes or subject matter.
2. Too many trivial, unrelated facts.
3. Exercises not cumulative in difficulty.
4. Ill-adapted to courses or textbooks.
5. Lack of extra units for bright pupils.
6. Reduce learning to a matter of doses.
7. It is usually boringly factual and limited.
8. The mechanics of reading are emphasized.
9. They fail to produce superior ability to write complete sentences.
10. They fail to provide adequately for individual differences.

Table 1 continued...
Table 1 (continued)

**Usage**

1. They make children mechanical memorizers.

2. Reduce teacher's initiative, originality, creativeness for specific problems.

3. Teachers tend to use exercises in consecutive order, or to follow too closely.

4. Materials are assigned arbitrarily to all pupils without reference to individual differences and needs.

5. The materials are used needlessly by many pupils who would profit more by spending comparable time on free reading.

6. A child's pleasure in reading is often sacrificed to objective approaches that are unimportant.

7. They may easily monopolize the day and leave no time for a variety of creative activities.

8. Too often the workbook becomes a controlling force rather than a supplemental aid.

9. They fail to produce expected improvements in language.

**Sources**


Workbook Design

Implicit in these summaries is the concern related to the design of workbooks. Osborn (1981) examined the workbooks of six prominent and current reading publications. She found many weaknesses and errors, which led her to develop twenty specific suggestions for the improvement of workbook design. Her suggestions are presented, following her order of presentation.

1. A sufficient proportion of workbook tasks should be relevant to the instruction that is going on in the rest of the unit or lesson.

2. Another portion of workbook tasks should provide for a systematic and cumulative review of what has already been taught.

3. Workbooks should reflect the most important (and workbook appropriate) aspects of what is being taught in the reading program. Less important aspects should remain in the teacher's guide as voluntary activities.

4. Workbooks should contain, in a form that is readily accessible to students and teachers, extra tasks for students who need extra practice.

5. The vocabulary and concept level of workbook tasks should relate to that of the rest of the program and to the students using the program.

6. The language used in workbook tasks must be consistent with that used in the rest of the lesson and in the rest of the workbook.

7. Instructions to students should be clear, unambiguous, and easy to follow; brevity is a virtue.

8. The layout of pages should combine attractiveness with utility.

9. Workbook tasks should contain enough content so that there is a chance a student doing the task will learn something and not simply be exposed to something.

10. Tasks that require students to make discriminations must be preceded by a sufficient number of tasks that provide practice on the components of the discrimination.

11. The content of workbook tasks must be accurate and precise; workbook tasks must not present wrong information nor perpetuate misrules.

12. At least some workbook tasks should be fun and have an obvious payoff to them.
13. Most student response modes should be consistent from task to task.
14. Student response modes should be the closest possible to reading and writing.
15. The instructional design of individual tasks and of task sequences should be carefully planned.
16. Workbooks should contain a finite number of task types and forms.
17. The art that appears on workbook pages must be consistent with the prose of the task.
18. Cute, nonfunctional, space and time-consuming tasks should be avoided.
19. When appropriate, workbook tasks should be accompanied by brief explanation of purpose for both teachers and students.
20. English-major humor should be avoided. (pp. 18-93)

The preceding discussion of the arguments for and against workbooks prompt one to agree with Docter (1962) who said that considerably more heat than light has existed in the debate. He called for an end to the antagonist/protagonist approach and suggested that what needs to be examined is not so much the use of workbooks per se, but rather how teachers use workbooks. This point of view will be considered in the next section.

A Moderate View

Many educators feel that wise use is the central issue concerning workbooks. For example, Docter's (1962) research led him to conclude that, when used appropriately, workbooks have their place in a total reading program. He found that workbook usage has a peak of efficiency in grades two, three and four, that non-workbook materials are superior for the purpose of initiating the reading program during the first grade, and that neither the workbook nor non-workbook materials demonstrate a clear superiority at grades five and six. All of this led him to conclude that workbooks need not be simply busywork, but can be a boon to the instructional staff and students as well.
These findings are supported by Felton (1957) based on the results of a two year study at the grade one level. Reading was taught using workbooks in one class, while another class used independent reading rather than workbooks. The results revealed no advantage for either group on test scores, but Felton advocated that if teachers use seatwork they should:

Use material that is properly organized by experts in primary education, instead of resorting to unscientific, unsystematic teacher-made material. (p. 382)

But she does add this caution:

So that the workbook may not dominate the school day it might prove more effective if it is used optionally. Instead of a regular daily follow-up of the reading lesson the teacher, without guilt feelings, should feel free to select workbook material suitable for the needs of the particular group and ignore certain other pages . . . The teacher could then use the workbook as an additional tool, rather than a required "cure-all." (p. 382)

In such a situation, workbooks are kept in proper perspective, an approach which Stewart (1966) supported. He believed that in the hands of thoughtful teachers workbooks are valuable. Their value is identified by others such as Hardin and Corbin (1973) who found workbooks effective as a reinforcing and motivating device rather than an original teaching device. They claimed that used properly workbooks "provide nothing less than immediate application and the nurture of the glow of success" (p. 564).

Workbooks are included in the list of necessary tools for the diagnostic reading teacher by Harris (1974) while Shelton (1978) included them as a part of systematic reading instruction, and Goldman (1977) stated that they provide practice in systematic and sequential steps to learning.

Durkin (1974a), a critic of how teachers use workbooks, asked:
Would I be classified with those who proudly characterize themselves as "antibasal"? (p. 13)

She answered:

I hope not. I say this because when manuals, readers, and workbooks are used wisely and along with other materials, including some made by the teacher herself, they can make a contribution to a reading program. (p. 14)

Finally, Osborn (1981), a critic of workbook design, responded to the questions "Are workbooks important to reading?" and "Are workbooks necessary?" by stating "For some students, maybe, for others, a very definite yes" (p. 1).

All of this research suggests that the conclusions of Austin and Morrison (1963) continue to be valid. Identifying acceptable and unacceptable workbook usage, they stated:

If workbooks are used to check comprehension on an individual basis, to reinforce skills previously introduced, and are corrected immediately so that a child sees his errors (and corrects them) while the subject is still fresh in his mind, workbooks have a definite place in the classroom. If, on the other hand, all children work from the same page of the same workbook, regardless of their individual strengths and weaknesses, and furthermore if the workbooks are corrected only as a final gesture when school closes in June, then their use can hardly be justified. (p. 56)

If used in a discretionary manner, research seems to indicate that workbooks have their place in the reading program. What research has to say about how teachers do use workbooks will be discussed in the following section.

Teacher Use of Workbooks

A study of the literature suggested that recommendations for discretionary and appropriate use of workbooks have gone unheeded. Durkin (1974 a, b, c) spent six years visiting classrooms from kindergarten to grade six. Her objective was not specifically to assess instructional
Durkin found that workbook pages were assigned even when their content was irrelevant to the reading lesson, or incorrect, or unrelated to what the children needed to learn. Even in classrooms which were said to have highly individualized instruction she found children almost inevitably filling out pages in programmed workbooks. Little evidence of small-group instruction existed. Instead, the teachers acted like monitors, rather than instructors.

In a later study of reading comprehension instruction in grades three through six, Durkin (1978-79) discovered that little had changed. She found teachers "mentioning" rather than instructing. That meant, she explained, that just enough was said about a topic to allow for an assignment related to it. These assignments were in the "omnipresent" workbooks. As a result, teachers paid far more attention to comprehension assessment than they did to comprehension instruction. In fact, she found that over the course of the school year only 1% of the teachers' time was devoted to comprehension instruction. The teachers' purposes during the lessons seemed to be to get the students into their workbook tasks as quickly as possible. Workbooks and worksheets constituted almost the whole of instructional programs. What she observed led her to conclude that teachers are assistants to materials and not instructional leaders.
Other research supported Durkin's findings. Duffy and McIntyre (1982) found that, instead of selecting and using explicative strategies which help students learn, teachers seldom communicate to students careful explanations of the skills and abilities needed in reading. Rather, the teachers monitored student responses. The situation, they believed, was caused by the fact that ongoing instructional decisions were controlled by the commercial publishers, and not by the teachers. The teachers, at best, merely mediated the materials.

Further support was added to Durkin's findings by the Shannon (1983) study of the use of commercial reading materials in American elementary schools. He found that teachers believe that commercial materials can teach reading, and that they treated reading instruction simply as the application of these materials. As a result, teachers became alienated from their reading instruction.

However, recent research has suggested solutions to deal with these instructional problems. These suggestions are dealt with in the following section.

Desirable Approaches to Reading Instruction

The principles and practices of direct instruction described by Rosenshine and Berliner (1978) were discussed earlier in this chapter. A similar approach to reading instruction requiring direct teacher guidance and involvement is described by Durkin (1978-79). Each lesson requires three phases: instruction, application and practice. During the instructional phase, the teacher does or says something to help the children understand a passage, or work out the meaning of more than a single, isolated word, for example. The purpose of the instruction during this phase is to facilitate transfer of learning. To discover if this transfer has occurred,
during the application stage the teacher does or says something in order to learn whether previous instruction has enabled the children to understand the meaning of connected text not previously used. Here, the child's understanding of instruction and ability to cope with the skill taught is checked. Only when the teacher is certain that the skill is understood is the third phase engaged. This phase is the practice stage, and here the children are provided with workbook or teacher prepared exercises, which allow the children to practice what they have been taught and what they have understood.

In such an approach, the materials assist the instruction, rather than provide the instruction. The teacher chooses and assembles all the pieces that comprise the instructional program. Durkin (1974 c) stated:

From visits to a wide variety of schools, I have concluded that programs which are effective are the evolutionary products of teachers who have a very broad (not vague) knowledge of reading; in particular of the kinds of learning that advance children in their ability to do all kinds of reading. (p. 266)

Patching et al (1983) supported Durkin's conclusion. They cited several studies which suggest that children can improve their critical reading skills if they receive systematic instruction in these skills. In their own study, they found that students who received systematic instruction in critical reading skills scored significantly higher at the end of their experiment, which lasted seven weeks, than those who used a workbook containing all the instructions which teachers taught directly to the other group. They also found that the first group of students scored at a level above the 80% accepted as the lowest score to satisfy the mastery learning concept, whereas the workbook group, who also received daily feedback, scored significantly lower, at 58.2%.
Yet, according to Durkin (1978-79) this practice of workbook use with corrective feedback rather than systematic instruction by the teacher in critical reading skills is typical of what happens in most classrooms.

Suggestions for changing and improving the instructional environment have been made. Anderson (1983) called for a decrease in the assignment of worksheets and workbooks and an increase in contextual reading. This suggestion, as he acknowledged, is similar to that of Leinhardt, Zigmond and Cooley (1981) who stated that one strategy for improving reading instruction would be to increase the amount of time students spend reading, preferably self-selected silent reading.

Summary

A need for balance emerges from this review of the literature. If one accepts Durkin's description of the three desired phases of a reading lesson, then workbooks have a place in the reading program. Used with discretion and with the needs of individual children in mind, workbooks can provide some of the needed practice to follow the instruction and application phases of a lesson. The teacher is the key determiner of whether or not materials control the instructional decision-making and whether or not the emphasis is merely one of skills instruction and development. The issue thus is not "Should workbooks be used?" but rather "How should workbooks be used, if the teacher chooses to use them?" The teacher, not the workbook, is the important element in determining the educational practices and the environment in the classroom.

Thus, the recommendations arising out of the research into the concept of time would be met, and the children would be guaranteed more purposeful guidance in and through reading.
CHAPTER III.

Procedures Used in the Study

Once the literature was surveyed and hypotheses formulated, the writer developed procedures for the study. These procedures are outlined in this chapter.

The Instrument

To gather preliminary data about teacher beliefs and practices related to the use of workbooks, the writer developed a questionnaire. Questionnaire Components

The questionnaire underwent several refinements and consisted in its final form of three major components. The first component consisted of demographic information relevant to the hypotheses of the study, as identified in Chapter I. It also provided a working definition of reading workbooks for teachers’ reference while completing the questionnaire. The second component consisted of two open-ended items which provided teachers the opportunity to describe how and why they use workbooks in their reading instruction. The final component consisted of 22 forced-choice statements. These were developed from the work of Durkin (1974a, b, c), Rosecky (1978), Osborn (1981), and Shannon (1983). These statements fell into two broad categories. One focused upon teacher beliefs about the usefulness of workbooks as teaching/learning aids. The other focused upon teacher beliefs that workbooks are the products of a scientific investigation of the reading process and instructional practices, and as such are scientifically valid materials. Together, these two categories of questions provided further insight into why teachers use workbooks.

35.
Coding of Questions

Appendix A provides a listing of the questions which related to each of the two major categories. Appendix A also identifies pairs or series of questions that acted as a check of the consistency of teacher beliefs and also provided a check as to whether teachers were second-guessing the writer when responding to individual items. For example, item 6 asked teachers to respond to the statement:

Unknown words should provide the practice for phonics generalizations in workbooks.

Durkin (1974b) claimed that this feature must be present, otherwise such practice of skills becomes an end in itself, rather than a means to an end. Item 20 thus became a check on the response to item 6, because it asked teachers to respond to the statement:

Workbook tasks are a means to an end, not ends in themselves.

Because teachers were to be assured of anonymity in the study, the questionnaires themselves were not coded. Teachers were, however, provided with the opportunity to identify themselves for follow-up interviews, if they so desired, to provide additional information.

Four-point Scale

A four-point scale for the 22 items was developed using the following categories and numerical values: strongly agree, 4; agree, 3; disagree, 2; strongly disagree, 1. The intent was to force teachers to take definite, rather than neutral, positions in their responses.

The Population and Sample

The population for the study consisted of all Division One teachers in the Saskatoon Public School System. The system consists in part of 45 elementary schools, with approximately 4600 students and 200 teachers in Division One. With the assistance of the Superintendent of the Department
of Professional Development and Research of the Saskatoon Public Board of Education, the sample was prepared. Some teachers were excluded from the population including those teaching in the writer's own school, teachers in the one "special" school in the system, and those in the French Immersion program. A sample size of 40 was established, representing approximately 20% of the population. A random sample of 40 teachers' names was drawn, and they represented 33 of the possible 43 schools. One teacher declined to participate due to health reasons, so a further name was drawn.

Field Testing

Before questionnaires were sent to the sample members, field testing was conducted for two reasons: to determine items which might need to be added or deleted, and to identify items whose wording might need to be clarified to remove any ambiguity.

The field testing was conducted in person with six individuals. Two were Division One classroom teachers from the Saskatoon Catholic System, two were Language Arts consultants from the Saskatoon Public Board of Education, and two were Sessional Lecturers in reading (with Master's degrees) from the University of Saskatchewan. They were requested to peruse the questionnaires and make recommendations about additions, deletions, and ambiguity. Their suggestions were considered and the instrument was further refined resulting in the deletion of two of the forced-choice items which were considered to be superfluous. Appendix B contains the questionnaire in its final form.

Data Collection

The instrument was hand delivered to each of the teachers in the sample, together with a covering letter which is found in Appendix C. A stamped envelope bearing a University address was provided for return
of the completed instrument. A total of 33 returns were received within the 10 days provided teachers for completion of the instrument. Although this return represented over 75% of the sample, a letter of appeal for additional responses was sent to everyone. This letter appears as Appendix D. Five more responses were received, making a total of 38 to be analyzed.

Follow-up Interviews

The purpose of the follow-up interviews was to respond to the teachers willingness to discuss the topic further, and thereby to gain additional insights into teacher views about the design and usefulness of workbooks.

Of the teachers who voluntarily identified themselves on their interview schedules only five agreed to be interviewed. One was forced to cancel due to family illness. Thus, four face-to-face interviews were conducted.

For these interviews, the writer developed a questionnaire consisting of three parts. The first part identified additional information of a general nature. The second part related specifically to a teacher's specific responses on the original questionnaire. This section was therefore different for each teacher, to provide an opportunity for the teacher to clarify her responses to items which appeared to be in conflict with some of her previous written responses. The final part was an open-ended section designed to allow teachers to express themselves further about the topic. Probe questions were developed to assist in this part of the interview. A sample follow-up interview schedule is included as Appendix E.

The interviews were conducted in as relaxed a manner as possible. The purpose of the interview was explained, teachers were assured of continued anonymity, permission to tape the interview was requested, and a time limit of 30 minutes was agreed upon. Notes were taken during
the interview, which were expanded later from the recording. Only one teacher refused to have the interview taped.

Each teacher was thanked and the interview ended.

**Treatment of the Data**

The writer decided that no formal statistical analysis of the data would be undertaken. Instead, considering each of the hypotheses separately and based on teacher responses, the writer used simple percentages to determine whether or not a majority of responses accepted or rejected each hypothesis. In other words, a percentage of 51 or more would confirm an hypothesis and 50 or less would reject it. Moreover, to indicate magnitude of acceptance and rejection and to ensure consistent descriptions of differences in magnitude, the writer established the categories identified in the following table.

**Table 2.**

Describing Magnitude of Acceptance and Rejection of Hypotheses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>50's/40's</th>
<th>Weak acceptance/weak rejection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60's/30's</td>
<td>Fair acceptance/rejection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70's/20's</td>
<td>Moderate acceptance/rejection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80's/10's</td>
<td>Strong acceptance/rejection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90's/units</td>
<td>Powerful acceptance/rejection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data treatment for each hypothesis was as follows:

**Hypothesis 1.** The use of workbooks is widespread.

The demographic information page provided the data for this hypothesis. Teachers indicated whether or not they use workbooks. Raw scores and percentages were calculated to determine the acceptance or rejection of this hypothesis.
Hypothesis 2. The majority of teachers believe that workbooks are an important instructional aid in the teaching of reading.

Questionnaire items 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 20 and 22 directly focused upon this hypothesis. Here, for the purpose of analysis, the four categories were collapsed into two: agree and disagree. A percentage of agreement determined whether or not the hypothesis would be accepted or rejected. The total sample response was determined by counting the number of teachers who agreed with the hypothesis and creating a percentage.

The strength of acceptance of the hypothesis among the total sample was determined by multiplying the total number of items for this hypothesis (13) by the total number of valid respondents (37)* giving a total of 481 possible positive responses. This number was then divided into the actual total of positive responses for these items and multiplied by 100 to give a percentage for accepting or rejecting the hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3. The majority of teachers believe that workbooks are the products of a scientific investigation of the reading process and instructional practice and as such are scientifically valid materials.

The relevant questionnaire items for this hypothesis were 2, 4, 7, 9, 12, 15, 17, 19 and 21. The method of determining the acceptance or rejection of this hypothesis was identical to that for hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 4. The majority of teachers believe that workbooks facilitate class management in dealing with grouping procedures.

The information for this hypothesis was provided by teacher responses to the two open-ended questions, "How do you use workbooks in your reading program?" and "Why do you use workbooks in your reading program?"

*The total number of respondents was actually 38, but one questionnaire was rejected because the teacher was no longer teaching in Division One, a fact contrary to the sampling data provided by the school system.
number of teachers suggesting that grouping procedures are a reason for or method of using workbooks was counted. This number was then converted to a percentage to be used for accepting or rejecting the hypothesis.

**Hypothesis 5.** The majority of teachers believe that workbooks facilitate individualization of instruction.

The responses to item 22 on the questionnaire were tabulated and converted to a percentage to determine the acceptability of this hypothesis.

**Hypothesis 6.** The majority of teachers believe that workbooks ensure the covering of essential reading skills.

The acceptability of this hypothesis was determined by the responses to items 2 and 16, that is the percentage of those agreeing with the items.

**Hypothesis 7.** Other supplementary materials are used but they play a subsidiary role to workbooks.

The responses to the two open-ended questions, plus responses to item 13, provided the data to accept or reject this hypothesis. Unless the teacher specifically mentioned extensive usage of other materials in addition to the workbook in her reading lesson, it was assumed that the workbook predominated. The number obtained was converted to a percentage to determine acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis.

Finally, the data from the follow-up interviews was incorporated into the consideration of the appropriate individual hypothesis.
CHAPTER IV.

Analysis of Data

Teachers' beliefs about and their usage of workbooks are described in the following sections.

Hypothesis 1. The use of workbooks is widespread.

An examination of the 37 useful responses revealed that 33 teachers, or 89% of the sample, indicated that they use workbooks. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is strongly accepted.

Of the 37 respondents, 13 indicated in their responses to the open-ended questions that they rely totally on the workbook that accompanies their basal reader for follow-up practice. This number represents 35% of the sample. However, a further 12 indicated that any supplemental material used in addition to the accompanying workbook is really of a workbook type. That is, they duplicate pages from other workbooks to provide further practice in a skill or concept. This number (12) represents 32% of the sample.

Thus, 67% of the sample use workbooks or workbooks plus workbook type material almost exclusively.

Eight (8) of the respondents indicated that the workbook is only one of a number of materials they use for follow-up practice of skills and extension of the lessons taught. Thus, 22% of the sample appear to use workbooks with discretion.

Only 4 teachers, or 11% of the sample, indicated that they do not use workbooks at all. However, examination of their written responses, and the comments of three of them in the follow-up interviews revealed that they do use workbook pages from time to time.
An interesting finding is that 13 respondents, or 35% of the sample, indicated that workbooks take up more than half of the time they spend in their reading lessons. While this number is considerably less than Durkin's (1978-79) conclusion that most teachers use workbooks in this way, it does reveal that a fair number of teachers in this study devote a large amount of time to workbooks relative to other aspects of a reading lesson such as personal choice reading, composing, or sharing books.

Hypothesis 2. The majority of teachers believe that workbooks are an important instructional aid in the teaching of reading.

An examination of the responses to the 13 questionnaire items related to Hypothesis 2 indicated that this hypothesis gained fair acceptance. Of the respondents, 25, or 68% of the sample, each supported more than half of the 13 items. To determine the strength of the overall support for the hypothesis, a calculation was made. There were 481 (13 x 37) possible positive responses - strongly agree or agree - for this hypothesis. The number of responses in support totalled 286. This number represented an overall agreement of 60% on the part of the respondents for the items related to the hypothesis. Table 3 presents the data.
### Table 3.
Responses to the 13 Items Related to Hypothesis 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th># in Support</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>My workbooks provide for systematic reviews of what has been taught already.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>My workbooks contain appropriate extra tasks for students who need extra practice.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>My workbooks contain enough content that my students have an opportunity to master a concept, and are not simply exposed to it.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Unknown words should provide the practice for phonics generalizations in workbooks.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Student response modes in my workbooks emphasize reading and writing skills.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Complex tasks are preceded by a sufficient number of quality tasks leading to those complexities.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>My students understand the purpose behind each workbook task.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Workbook tasks take up at least half the time I spend in my reading lesson.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>In my program, workbooks are a necessary part of reading instruction.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Workbook tasks cover the concepts identified and stressed in my lessons.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I have observed that workbook materials develop in my students an appreciation for literature.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Workbook tasks are a means to an end not ends in themselves.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>My workbooks ensure individualization of instruction.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Three of the 13 items, 13, 18 and 22, were not accepted, indicating that the majority of teachers in the study were aware of some of the limitations of workbooks, and do not completely misuse them. The majority of respondents, 65%, appeared to be somewhat selective in their use of workbooks, using them less than 50% of the time in their lessons. Only 8% of teachers in the study believed that workbook materials develop in students an appreciation for literature, and less than half, 41%, believed that the use of workbooks ensures individualization of instruction.

The majority of teachers, 97% believe that workbook tasks are a means to an end, not ends in themselves, as revealed by their responses to item 20. Item 6 provides a check on the above statement, for if workbook tasks are a means to an end, rather than ends in themselves, then unknown words must provide the practice for phonics generalizations, according to Durkin (1974b). While the support for this item was not as powerful, nevertheless a majority of teachers, 68%, supported the statement. Taken together, responses to these two items seem to indicate that a majority of teachers in the study genuinely believe that workbook tasks are not ends in themselves, but a means to an end.

The hypothesis was accepted, but teacher responses to individual items, and comments in the open-ended sections indicated that teachers in the sample recognize the limitations of workbooks and the majority of teachers do not rely on only one workbook for their follow-up practice.

Hypothesis 3. The majority of teachers believe that workbooks are the products of a scientific investigation of the reading process and instructional practice and as such are scientifically valid materials.

An examination of the responses to the nine questionnaire items related to Hypothesis 3 indicated that this hypothesis was accepted. Of the
respondents, 33, or 89% of the sample, each supported more than half of the nine items. This percentage represented strong support for the belief that workbooks are the products of a scientific investigation of the reading process and instructional practice and as such are scientifically valid materials. To determine the degree of the overall support for the hypothesis, a calculation was made. There were 333 (9 x 37) possible positive responses - strongly agree or agree - for this hypothesis. The number of responses in support totalled 239. This number represented an overall agreement of 72% on the part of the respondents for the items related to the hypothesis.

The responses to item 15 were particularly significant, since this item addressed the hypothesis directly. Of the respondents, 60% agreed with the statement that workbooks are the products of scientific investigations of the reading process. This percentage represented fair acceptance of the statement.

Table 4 reveals that support for the individual items ranged from weak to powerful acceptance, and none of the items were rejected.
Table 4.
Responses to the 9 Items Related to Hypothesis 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item #</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th># in Support</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Workbook tasks reflect the most important aspects of what I teach in the reading lesson.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The vocabulary level of workbook tasks are such as to allow my students to work independently on them.</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Students find my workbook instructions clear, unambiguous, and easy to follow.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The content of my workbook tasks is characterized by accuracy and precision, rather than wrong information and misrules.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Workbook design provides sequences of tasks that are carefully planned.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I support the view that workbooks are the products of scientific investigations of the reading process.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>The art on workbook pages helps my students complete the task correctly.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>The sequence of goals for teaching reading is scientifically valid within a workbook program.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>The readability of workbook tasks is systematically controlled.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis 4. The majority of teachers believe that workbooks facilitate class management in dealing with grouping procedures.

An examination of teacher responses to the open-ended items of the questionnaire revealed that only 9, or 24% of the sample, made specific reference to grouping procedures as a reason for using workbooks. This percentage required a rejection of the hypothesis.

Although research shows that most teachers employ at least three groups in their reading classes, and while all but four of the respondents mentioned using workbooks as a follow-up to the lessons they teach, only 24% made specific reference to grouping procedures as a reason for using workbooks.

Hypothesis 5. The majority of teachers believe that workbooks facilitate individualization of instruction.

An examination of the responses to item 22, revealed that only 15, or 41% of the teachers in the sample, supported the statement that workbooks ensure individualization of instruction. The hypothesis, therefore, was rejected.

Eight (8) other respondents made reference to using workbooks in a fashion that suggested individualization of instruction. Comments were as follows:

1. I believe this (independent seat work) helps the children learn good independent work habits.

2. Students need some independent seat work to reinforce skills being taught.

3. If a page does not suit the needs of a student I simply omit it.

4. Lessons are re-taught on the basis of the performance in these skills. (Based on workbook answers.)
5. It is used to determine whether the child understands what he has been taught.

6. It provides an opportunity to the individual student to use the new vocabulary in context form.

7. Except for individual cases I do not use workbooks in my reading program.

8. The workbook is also a first step to gaining responsibility since I treat it as assignments that they know need "to be finished and corrected" by the end of the day.

If these respondents were added to the 15 who indicated their belief that workbooks ensure individualization of instruction then 62% of the sample would be in agreement, and the hypothesis would gain fair acceptance.

Hypothesis 6. The majority of teachers believe that workbooks ensure the covering of essential reading skills.

An examination of the relevant questionnaire items for this hypothesis, 2 and 16, revealed that 23 respondents, or 62% of the sample, agreed with both statements. The hypothesis is thus accepted with a fair degree of emphasis.

Further examination revealed that 9 others supported one of the two items. When all of the positive responses were counted 55 of 74 possible positive responses for the items were accepted. This figure represented 74% agreement. This percentage represented moderate acceptance of the hypothesis.

A further breakdown of responses revealed that 12 respondents disagreed with item 2:

Workbook tasks reflect the most important aspects of what I teach in the reading lesson.

Seven disagreed with item 16:
Workbook tasks cover the concepts identified and stressed in my lessons.

Only 5, or 14% of the teachers, disagreed with both items.

**Hypothesis 7. Other supplementary materials are used but they play a subsidiary role to workbooks.**

Examination of the responses to the open-ended questionnaire items revealed that 13, or 35% of the respondents, used the workbook exclusively for follow-up to their lessons. This percentage suggests that the hypothesis is rejected. However, a further 12, or 32% of the sample, indicated that any other supplementary materials used were pages from other workbooks. Thus, 67% of the sample used workbook or workbook type materials exclusively. The hypothesis is therefore accepted.

**Summary**

This chapter indicates that the use of workbooks is widespread and that in follow-up activities workbooks supercede the use of other types of supplementary materials among teachers in this study. The chapter also reveals that teachers believe that workbooks are an important instructional aid and that they are the products of scientific investigation of the reading process and instructional practice.

Teachers in the sample reject the view that workbooks facilitate grouping procedures, or that they ensure individualization of instruction. They do, however, believe that the use of workbooks ensures the covering of essential reading skills.
CHAPTER V

Summary and Conclusions

Summary

The purpose of the study was to identify teacher usage of and beliefs about reading workbooks. The subjects were 37 Division One classroom teachers who had responsibility for their classroom reading program.

The writer developed a questionnaire consisting of three major components: the first dealt with relevant demographic information; the second consisted of two open-ended questions; the third consisted of 22 forced-choice items, using a four-point scale. Teachers were assured of anonymity; however, the opportunity to identify themselves for further discussion of the topic in face-to-face interviews was provided. Only four availed themselves of this opportunity. There was a return of 38 questionnaires of 40 sent out. One teacher was disqualified, however, as she no longer taught in Division One. Thus, there were 37, or 93%, useful responses.

The writer analyzed teacher responses to determine the validity of the seven hypotheses posed in Chapter I.

Conclusions

Conclusions Derived from the Analysis of Results

1. Teacher use of workbooks is widespread.

2. The majority of teachers believe that workbooks are an important instructional aid in the teaching of reading.

3. The majority of teachers believe that workbooks are the products of a scientific investigation of the reading process and instructional practice and as such are scientifically valid materials.
4. Teachers do not believe that workbooks facilitate class management in dealing with grouping procedures.

5. The majority of teachers do not believe that workbooks facilitate individualization of instruction.

6. The majority of teachers believe that workbooks ensure the covering of essential reading skills.

7. Teachers use other supplementary materials, but these materials play a subsidiary role to workbooks.

Discussion

The following discussion considers the conclusions of the study with reference to previous studies of workbook usage and design, especially those major ones reported by Durkin, Osborn and Shannon.

Prevalence of Workbooks

This study reveals that the use of workbooks continues to be a widespread practice. In their response to the question "Do you use workbooks?" 33, or 89% of the teachers, answered affirmatively. However, examination of written responses to the open-ended questions, together with follow-up, face-to-face interviews, revealed that three other teachers do resort to workbook material from time to time. Thus, 97% of the sample admitted to at least some use of workbooks. Such a finding supports Durkin (1978-79) who claims that workbooks are "omnipresent" (p. 499). Durkin (1978-79) claims that the influence of workbooks is "overwhelming" and that they "constitute almost the whole of instructional programs" (p. 524). She accepts the E.P.I.E. (1977) report findings that 95% of what is done in classrooms can be attributed to commercially prepared materials. The present study lends some support to these findings.
Thirteen (13) respondents, or 35% of the sample, indicated that they use the workbook more than 50% of the time in their lessons. However, not all of those who indicated that they use the workbook exclusively as follow-up admitted to spending more than 50% of their lesson time in workbooks. Nor did all 12 who indicated that they use the workbook plus additional workbook-type materials, exclusively. Yet two who claimed to use workbooks as only one of a variety of follow-up materials admitted to using the workbooks more than 50% of the time. Thus, a valid assumption might be that in fact 27 teachers, or 73% of the sample, use the workbook more than 50% of the time. Such a figure would lend support to Durkin's statement.

This finding is a discouraging indicator of a possible too heavy reliance on workbooks, if it means that teachers move directly from the reading and discussion of a story into workbook practice. Rosecky (1978) found that teachers felt so much pressure to cover skill development in workbooks first that they ran out of time for other follow-up enrichment activities. Balance is needed in a reading lesson, and activities such as personal choice reading, composing, dramatization of stories and sharing books, must supplement work on skill-development if the reading lesson is to be well-rounded. The question arises as to whether or not teachers in the study define reading as the covering of the basal program, or if they develop their own program, based on the needs of individual children, in which the basal program plays an appropriate part.

However, although it was clear that other supplementary materials played a subsidiary role to the workbook during the lesson, there were some encouraging indicators. Twelve (12) respondents, or 32%, indicated
that they use supplementary materials, albeit of a workbook-type, to reinforce what they found to be lacking in their basic workbook. In other words, they did not rely solely on the accompanying workbook to provide the follow-up practice. Eight (8), or 22%, indicated that the workbook was only one of several different types of materials or approaches to instruction that they use as follow-up in their lessons. And four (4), or 11%, indicated that workbook-type material, if used at all, is very much subsidiary in their instructional approaches. Thus, 65% of the sample might be said to use the workbook as follow-up, with at least some discretion.

Usefulness of Workbooks

The analysis of the results further indicated that teachers in this study believe that workbooks are an important aid to instruction. Indeed, 34, or 92% of respondents, recognized the value of workbooks in providing practice for students in skills or concepts taught. Such use of workbooks is supported by Durkin (1974a) and Osborn (1981). However, some of the specific reasons given by teachers in this study for holding such a view are challenged by the research of Osborn (1981). The views of teachers in the study were as follows:

1. 86% supported the view that workbooks provide for systematic reviews.

2. 54% believed that workbooks contain appropriate extra tasks for students who need extra practice.

3. 54% agreed that workbooks contain enough content that students have an opportunity to master a concept, and are not merely exposed to it.

4. 68% believed that student response modes in workbooks emphasize reading and writing tasks.
5. 68% stated that complex tasks are preceded by a sufficient number of quality tasks leading to these complexities.

While the majority of these findings represent only weak to fair acceptance of the statements, nevertheless, Osborn (1981) rejects such beliefs about workbooks. Indeed, she lists the opposite view among her 20 identified weaknesses of workbooks. While Osborn examined only six series, and the series used by teachers in this study may not have been a part of her study, nonetheless the series she examined represent probably the best in scholarship, if being a major publisher means anything. Thus, her findings may well be pertinent to this study.

A majority of respondents, 54%, indicated that they believe that students understand the purpose behind each workbook task, while 81% stated that workbook tasks cover the concepts identified and stressed in their lessons. Osborn's analysis of workbooks led her to refute both claims. She found little correlation between the teachers' manual, to which teachers presumably pay at least some attention when preparing their lessons, and the workbook assignments that accompany the lessons, for most reading programs that she examined. She also found that the purpose of workbook tasks, particularly for hard-to-teach students, would be impossible for these students to ascertain on their own. Osborn's examination of workbooks led her to conclude that workbooks are "the forgotten children of basal programs" (p. 18).

One can be encouraged that 92% of respondents recognized that workbooks do not develop in students an appreciation for literature, that 59% rejected the notion that workbooks ensure individualization of instruction, and that 97% see workbooks as means to an end, not ends in themselves. Nevertheless, the fact that 65% believed that they are
a necessary part of reading instruction is cause for possible concern. Rosecky (1978) found that 75% of teachers omitted follow-up, enrichment activities such as dramatization of stories, oral or written composing, and reading to children. The reason was that teachers felt so much pressure to cover skill development in workbooks first that they ran out of time.

The issue really is not whether skills should be taught or the meaning-based approach emphasized for, as Chall (1967) pointed out, the dichotomy is only one of emphasis. Each approach is necessary, and neither is superior in fostering a greater love of reading. Nor is the issue whether workbooks should be used for, as Durkin (1974a) pointed out, used wisely they can make a contribution to a reading program. The concern rather that arises from teacher responses in this study is whether or not teachers teach to the workbook, or if they use the workbook selectively and with appropriate discretion.

The issue is one of teacher instructional practice. Do teachers use the principles of systematic instruction, incorporating the three phases of a lesson identified by Durkin (1978-79) as instruction, application and practice? In such an approach, the teacher controls the instructional decision-making and the materials assist the process, rather than vice-versa. The workbook is assigned, appropriately, to the practice phase, and only those pages that provide the practice for skills or concepts taught in the lesson are assigned.

The issue of teacher instructional practices and the use of workbooks is also of concern, for example, in the matter of reading comprehension instruction. Durkin (1978-79) found that teacher emphasis on workbooks resulted in only 1% of instructional time being devoted to actual reading comprehension instruction. Instead, the prevalent
practice was comprehension assessment based largely on student workbook responses. Teaching did not occur. Most frequently, when assignments were checked, teachers placed little or no importance on why student response was correct or incorrect or how the student arrived at the answer. While only seven respondents, or 19% of this sample, made reference to using the workbook to check students' understanding of work covered, future research would be needed to determine how comprehension instruction is carried out amongst the sample population.

Professional Training

The impact of professional training in terms of degrees held and number of university reading classes taken on teacher use of workbooks appeared to be negligible. In the first group of teachers consisting of those who do not use workbooks, and those who use them as only one of a number of different materials or approaches, the following was found: 92% hold one University degree, none have more than one, and 67% have taken two or more reading classes, with the maximum taken being four. On the other hand, among the other group of teachers who use workbooks, or workbooks plus supplementary workbook-type materials, exclusively as follow-up, the following was found: 64% hold one degree, 28% hold more than one degree, and 60% have taken two or more reading classes, with the maximum taken by any individual being eight.

Years of teaching experience appeared to reveal some differences between the two groups. While only 25% of the first group had more than 10 years of experience, with the maximum being 11-15 years, 60% of the second group had more than 10 years experience. The maximum years of service in this group was 20+ years. Of those teachers with more than 16 years of experience, seven of the eight hold at least one
degree, and six have taken two or more reading classes, with the maximum taken being five. Professional training plus years of experience do not of themselves appear to necessarily lead to discretionary teacher use of instructional materials.

Scientific Validity of Workbooks

The data revealed that teachers believe that workbooks are the products of a scientific investigation of the reading process and instructional practice. While only $60\%$ of the sample indicated by their response to the specific questionnaire item, 15, that stated this belief, the overall support for the related, collective items was much higher. In fact, $89\%$ of respondents agreed with a majority of the statements, although this moderated to $72\%$, as indicated in Chapter IV, when the items were treated separately for all respondents.

These findings appear to support the conclusions of other researchers. Shannon (1983) cited Barton and Wilder (1964) who claimed that over $80\%$ of teachers and administrators considered commercial materials to be the technology of the scientific study of reading instruction. He also cited Habermas (1970) who observed that people see science as technology. The danger of that is that, so perceived, technology transcends human activity, becoming a powerful creature without need of human action or judgment. Technology then becomes the solution to the problem of teaching students to read. Shannon's (1983) study led him to conclude that teachers believe that commercial reading materials embody scientific truth, and, as a result, teachers treat reading instruction as the systematic application of these materials. In other words, they believe that the materials themselves can teach reading. In so believing and acting, teachers become alienated from actual teaching and become assigners and monitors.
Such a situation may or may not be true in the sample population, but the strength of teacher support for the questionnaire items creates concern particularly in light of Osborn's (1981) findings. The present study revealed the following:

1. 86% of teachers believed that the vocabulary level of workbook tasks is such as to allow students to work independently on them.

2. 65% indicated that students find workbook instructions clear, unambiguous and easy to follow.

3. 78% supported the view that workbook design provides sequences of tasks that are carefully planned.

4. 57% believed that the art on workbook pages helps students complete the task correctly.

5. 86% supported the statement that the readability of workbook tasks is systematically controlled.

Osborn found the following, particularly for the hard-to-teach child:

1. The vocabulary and readability level of many workbook tasks were confusing and in order to do the task students needed specific instruction.

2. Many workbook instructions were confusing, ambiguous or unclear. The reason was that critical elements of the instructions were not emphasized, and instructions were either too ambitious or contained insufficient information.

3. Performance requirements of tasks were not clear to students, and so students were not able to move without hazard through the task from beginning to end.
4. Much of the quality of art work was confusing, inappropriate and no help at all to children.

The present study also revealed that 92% of respondents believed that the content of workbooks is characterized by accuracy and precision, rather than wrong information and misrules. Yet Durkin (1974a, b) found that workbooks accounted for some, at least, of the incorrect instruction she observed. She provided examples of erroneous workbook instructions, particularly phonics tasks. Osborn (1981) provided further examples of inaccurate phonics information in workbook tasks, as well as highly questionable comprehension tasks. For example, the message to students from some comprehension exercises would be that the main idea is always the first sentence in a paragraph.

Finally, 54% of the sample stated their belief that the sequence of goals for teaching reading is scientifically valid within a workbook program.

Since 65% of the sample believe that workbook tasks reflect the most important aspects of what they teach in their reading lessons, the concern again arises that teachers teach to the workbook. Assigning of materials and the provision of paper/pencil activities may be supplanting actual teaching, and eliminating the teacher-led "application" stage of the lesson. While materials and paper/pencil activities probably have a place in the practice phase of a lesson, the teacher must ensure that such materials and activities do not control the instructional decision-making. The teacher must decide and control the instructional objectives of the lesson. Further, the teacher must not allow the workbook to control the educational experiences to which the child will be exposed in the course of the lesson. Children must be
exposed to a variety of follow-up, enrichment activities, in addition to or, where appropriate, instead of skill practices in workbooks. The workbook should be subsidiary to and complementary of teacher instruction and used only to provide appropriate practice of skills or concepts already taught.

Coverage of Skills

Durkin's (1974a) observations of classroom practices and her follow-up discussions led her to the conclusion that teachers lacked confidence in their ability to ensure that they could provide all the necessary reading instruction if they did not use workbooks. This belief also existed among the teachers in this study. Based on their responses to questionnaire items 2 and 16, 62% of them believed that the use of workbooks ensures the covering of essential reading skills. Indeed, in responding to the item "Why do you use workbooks?" one teacher stated:

Most workbooks for highly approved programs adequately and interestingly cover skills required.

Perhaps it is not surprising that teachers hold this view. Gray (1937) contended that the use of prepared materials greatly reduces the chance for "gaps in learning," (p. 90). Betts (1941, 1943) attributed to workbooks the responsibility of individualizing and integrating instruction in the language arts. Indeed, he believed that the notion of individualization could only be translated into practice through the use of commercially-prepared materials. And Stone (1950) listed a myriad of benefits accruing to students from the use of workbooks, including, among others, diagnosis and remediation of reading difficulties, intrinsic learning and the development of
spiritual values. If respected voices such as these in the field of reading actively advocated the use of workbooks rather than teacher-prepared materials, it is perhaps not surprising that teachers hold workbooks in high esteem, especially since research in the 70's continued to call for the further development of commercial materials to enable teachers to correlate oral and written language activities in their language arts instruction. Teachers, perhaps, have been convinced that they are incapable of teaching and of developing their own instructional objectives, and must therefore rely on the workbook to do so. If so, ways must be found to improve teacher education in order to develop teacher growth and create teacher confidence in their ability to determine instructional objectives for their students, if the situation is to improve.

Recent research rejects these extravagant claims for workbooks of Gray, Betts and Stone, and the identified beliefs of teachers in this study. Osborn (1981) stated that a major weakness of workbooks is that there is little correlation between lesson concepts stressed in teachers' manuals, and the workbook exercises that accompany the lesson. Further, she observed that whatever practice workbooks provide amounts to no more than exposure of the students to skills and concepts because no adequate cumulative review of skills is included. Yet, 35% of the teachers in this study indicated that they use only one workbook as follow-up to their lessons.

**Grouping Practices and Individualization**

Analysis of teacher responses to the open-ended questionnaire items, and item 22, indicated that teachers rejected the belief that workbooks facilitate class management in dealing with grouping procedures,
and the belief that workbooks ensure individualization of instruction. Yet, 35% of respondents indicated that they use only one workbook as follow-up to their lessons, and a further 32% indicated that they use the workbook and additional workbook-type material. Also, 73% of respondents suggested that the workbook occupies more than 50% of the time in their reading lessons. The questions therefore arise as to whether or not grouping procedures are used, how the groups are determined, and whether or not there is individualization of instruction occurring, and, if so, how it is achieved.

Influences on Teachers

Other reasons teachers gave for using workbooks are of interest. They included the following:

1. Students. Twenty-two percent stated that workbooks develop independent work habits in students. Thirty percent commented on student attitudes to workbooks, and all comments were favorable. Among the comments were the following:
   1. The children take pride in their workbook. They seem to have a sense of accomplishment when they have completed all pages and every page is correct.
   2. I know my children are very enthusiastic about having workbooks.
   3. Primary children love having their own workbooks.

2. Parents. Three teachers, or 8% of the sample, felt that parents expected them to use workbooks. One of these teachers did not use workbooks, but she stated that parents seem to feel that something has been accomplished when the child comes home with a completed workbook. In follow-up interviews with two other teachers who did not use workbooks no suggestion of such pressure from parents was given.

3. Colleagues. Only three teachers, or 8% of the sample, including one who did not use workbooks, expressed the view that they
felt pressure from colleagues to use workbooks. One teacher attributed her rejection of workbooks to teachers with whom she had either interned or taught. Another teacher, who used workbooks, expressed the possibility that her attitude might change if she had the opportunity to observe teachers who do not use workbooks.

Eleven percent expressed the view that workbooks are valuable for providing structure for beginning teachers or others who are lacking confidence in their ability to provide a "total" reading program, or are unfamiliar with a particular reading program.

4. Principals. Principals appeared to have an impact on whether or not teachers use workbooks. Two of the teachers who do not use workbooks attributed the major influence to their principal who opposed the use of workbooks. Another teacher, however, made the following statement:

I use workbooks because I am expected to. There is a certain pressure from school administrators . . . to use workbooks. On one occasion when my intention to dispense with workbooks came to the attention of my principal he expressed doubts as to whether I would know that I had covered the course without their use.

Another teacher said:

They are ordered automatically by schools and I often do not have a say in the matter, particularly if it is my first year at the school.

Yet another made the comment:

We were told that we could not not use workbooks.

Thus, there appears to be some support in this study for Shannon's (1983) finding that teachers believe that administrators expect them to use workbooks.

5. University personnel. The impact that professors involved in the conducting of university classes in reading might have on teacher
attitudes to the use of workbooks was revealed by the responses of two
teachers in follow-up interviews. One indicated that a major influence
in shaping her attitude was a professor who had supported the use of
workbooks. The other teacher indicated the influence of a professor
who did not support the use of workbooks. She expressed it as follows:

   He set forth the ideal program, and I have worked
towards that.

6. Convenience. Twenty-two percent of the teachers made specific
reference to the convenience of workbooks in saving teacher's time.
Typical of such comments were the following:

   1. The workbooks are convenient and eliminate duplicating
copies for the children.
   2. Workbooks also provide a certain amount of material
      that is readily available to me - which means I do
      not have to spend a lot of time looking for material
      to follow a lesson and the running it off on the
      machine - which is very time consuming.

Summary of Discussion

Shannon (1981), in reviewing the literature since the 1920's
related to teacher use of workbooks, stated that three major themes
predominated in the discussions. One was the content of workbooks,
the second was discussions related to appropriate reading methodology,
and the third was descriptions of teacher use of the materials. This
discussion of the results of this preliminary study indicates that the
content of workbooks and teacher use of them still remain a matter for
concern and lay out an area of future research. The discussion also
reveals that teacher beliefs about workbooks are questionable in the
light of recent research such as Durkin's and Osborn's.
Limitations of the Study

1. Osborn (1981) stated that well-developed workbooks containing well-constructed tasks can serve students in many ways which she identified as follows:

- (a) Workbooks can provide students with a means of practicing details of what has been taught in the reading lesson.
- (b) They can provide extra practice on aspects of learning to read that are different.
- (c) They can provide intermittent review of what has been taught.
- (d) They can provide activities in which students must synthesize what they have learned or make applications to new examples or situations.
- (e) Workbooks can provide students with a sense of accomplishment, when the work is "do-able," worthy, challenging, and has some "pay-off."
- (f) They can provide practice in following directions.
- (g) They can provide students with practice in working independently.
- (h) They can provide students with practice in writing.

The workbooks which teachers in this study used were not examined to see if they meet the criteria for well-developed workbooks. The quality of workbooks could have an impact on what teachers said about them, and how they answered individual items on the questionnaire.

2. Follow-up, face-to-face interviews were possible with only four teachers, three of whom did not use workbooks. Thus, it was impossible to pursue the question of how workbooks are used by those who do use them, or to enquire into matters such as grouping procedures and practices, individualization of instruction, and if explicative strategies are employed during instruction. Such practices are recommended by Rosenshine and Berliner (1978) who described them as direct instruction, Durkin (1978-79) who suggested a lesson has three...
phases - instruction, application and practice - and Duffy and McIntyre (1982) who found such practices to result in student achievement above the mastery learning level (80%).

3. The coding of questionnaire items into their respective categories was not subjected to any rigorous scientific examination. Thus, there may be a certain arbitrariness in their placement.

4. The lack of a statistical design for the study limits the degree of generalizing one can do.

5. Actual practice may differ from what respondents indicated in writing and in the interview.

6. Terminology (the word "individualization", for example) may mean quite different concepts to respondents whose answers in summary appear congruent and harmonious.

**Implications**

A number of issues and implications arise out of this study and the review of the literature. They will be discussed in this section under a number of headings. Moreover, they will be discussed with reference to studies of workbook usage and design as reported by Durkin, Osborn and Shannon.

**Teachers**

1. Teachers need to take control of the instructional decisions in their reading lessons, and not allow the contents of the workbook to dictate the content of their lessons. Teachers should employ the principles of systematic instruction described by Durkin (1978-79). Within her three phases of a lesson - instruction, application and practice - workbooks have an appropriate place, in providing the practice for skills and concepts already taught. Teachers will then be the
instructional leaders they should be, and not mere distributors of and assistants to materials.

2. Teachers need to be aware of the skills package supplements to workbooks. They provide other sources of additional practice of skills and concepts for students, and used properly they can help to avoid the lock-step approach to workbooks.

3. Teachers must maintain a balance in their lessons, and not allow workbooks to monopolize student time, to the exclusion of other desired aspects of a reading program, such as personal choice reading, oral and written composing, dramatization, and sharing books.

Teacher Education

1. Preservice. Primary teachers especially should be required to take University classes in reading theory and methodology. Such classes should include the issue of workbooks, and provide prospective teachers with training in additional and alternative approaches in reading instruction, such as dramatization, puppetry, etc.

   Such training would encourage teacher growth and increase their confidence in their ability to control the instructional decisions in their reading lessons and help to reduce teacher abrogation of these decisions to the workbook.

   University personnel need to supplement what is lacking in their reading methods textbooks. Osborn (1981) surveyed a number of University reading textbooks and found that they gave the issue of workbooks little or no discussion at all.

2. Inservice. There should be a continued emphasis on inservice, providing teachers with the most up-to-date research findings in the field of reading. For example, teachers should be aware of Osborn's (1981) research on workbooks and Durkin's (1978-79) discussion and
description of the elements or phases of an effective reading lesson.

Such inservice could be held at the System or local school level, and be led by consultants or teachers who exhibit exemplary instructional practices, and who use approaches other than the workbook in follow-up. Such teachers would appear to be in the best position to exert an influence for change on their colleagues.

**Principals**

1. This study confirms Shannon's (1983) findings that principals' knowledge of and attitude to workbooks appear to be critical factors affecting teacher practices. Inservice for principals would be beneficial if they are to adequately fulfill their role as instructional leaders.

2. Principals and Central Office personnel should be wary of hiring teachers, particularly in Division One, who have too few University classes in reading. Such teachers can not legitimately be expected to know how to teach reading.

**Publishers**

The writers and publishers of reading programs have an enormous responsibility to discharge. Research such as Durkin (1974a), Osborn (1981), and the present study indicates that teachers place a great deal of confidence in the validity of published programs. Both Durkin and Osborn called for an improvement of materials to eliminate erroneous information and instruction, and a better correlation between the different parts of the published programs - manual, reader, and workbook. Publishers have introduced skills packages as a supplement to workbooks. If teachers use them properly, they can help to avoid the lock-step approach to workbooks. However, publishers owe it to children to make specific reference to appropriate instructional methodologies,
and the use of materials, based on the most up-to-date research.

Department of Education

The back-to-the-basics movement in the United States has led to the use of standardized test scores to determine both student achievement and teaching competence. It has also led to the use of one basal series for all students in every classroom in some states. In some Canadian provinces, a similar trend of external examinations and single text adoptions has developed.

Durkin (1981) discovered that one of the reasons for the overuse, if not abuse, of workbooks was that teachers were teaching to the test, ensuring that the skills to be tested were covered. Teachers explained to her that the workbook pages used following the lesson, although they bore no relation to what had been taught, needed to be completed because they provided practice on items that would appear on the standardized test.

While the aim of teacher accountability may be laudable, unbalanced instruction will likely result. One should remember the cautions of Roehler and Duffy (1982):

Reading is a complex phenomenon. It involves much more than "knowing your letters," or "sounding out words," or "getting the main idea," or scoring well on a skills-based assessment test. We also want children to love and appreciate literature, to understand reading's function in the language process, and to use reading as a source of information. It is intuitively sensible, therefore, that teachers should build balanced reading programs which employ not one but various kinds of direct instruction and which result in not one but various kinds of outcomes. (p. 476)

Reading instruction should not just be a training in the ability to identify facts. It should, as well, develop the mind, the personality, and the interests of children and provide them with a window on the world. Or, as Dickhart (1958) expressed the goal: "Reading should
enhance the lives of children, and lead them to become gleaners of facts, seekers of truth, and searchers for things unknown" (p. 56).

The child is facilitated or impeded in his attempt to reach this goal by a press (Murray, 1938). A press that favours workbooks has the power to affect the well-being of the child. This workbook press seems to emanate from adults, most of whom are familiar with workbooks directly from their own school experience when children. This experience seems to translate into an expectation in adulthood. The adult as parent seems to expect that the child will be taught with workbooks. The adult as prospective teacher learns about workbooks in university. The adult as teacher seems to expect to use workbooks because of expectations - either real or perceived - that pupils, parents and administrators expect them to be used. Consequently, all the adults seemingly collectively contribute to the press and create thereby a demand that publishers seek to meet. Implicit in such a demand is probably the belief that workbooks are of scientific validity. Hence, a tradition of workbook usage seemingly develops.

Adults, too, need to be "gleaners of facts, seekers of truth, and searchers for things unknown." All the adults cited in the foregoing implications are responsible - singly and collectively - to seek and search for ways to break with tradition such that the child's growth may not be impeded but instead be enhanced.

Future Research

Issues requiring future research which arise out of this study include the following:

1. Do the workbooks used by teachers in this study meet Osborn's (1981) nine requirements of a well-planned workbook, accounting for
teacher stated beliefs about their workbooks?

2. Do teachers in the sample population teach to the workbook, or do they set their own goals for reading instruction, employing explicative strategies to reach those goals? How do teachers define "reading program"? Is the term synonymous with a basal reading series or is it more broad and include a basal program? In other words, are teachers assistants to the materials, as Durkin (1974a) found, or do materials assist teachers?

3. Arising out of this concern, is the further consideration: Does teacher use of workbooks constitute the whole of follow-up instruction? Rosecky (1978) found that 75% of teachers in her study omitted follow-up, enrichment activities such as dramatization of stories, oral or written composing, and reading to children. Teachers felt so much pressure to cover skill development in workbooks that they simply ran out of time. Is the same true for teachers in this study?

4. Durkin (1978-79) found that only 1% of instructional time was devoted to comprehension instruction. Instead, comprehension assessment, based on workbook answers, was the order of the day. Does teacher use of workbooks in this study result in a similar situation?

5. Do teachers use workbooks to facilitate grouping procedures? If not, how do they determine their groups?

6. Do teachers individualize their instruction? Teachers in the study rejected the notion that the use of workbooks ensures individualization of instruction, yet 67% use a workbook, or workbook plus supplementary workbook-type materials, exclusively, as their follow-up. How then do they individualize their instruction?
7. Are external pressures on teachers from colleagues, students, parents and principals to use workbooks real or imaginary?
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Appendix A
Appendix A

Coding

The questions are broken into two major categories. One (I) relates to specific teacher beliefs in the usefulness of workbooks as teaching aids. The other (II) relates to general teacher beliefs in the scientific validity of workbooks.

The questions for each category are as follows:

I. 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 20, and 22.

II. 2, 4, 7, 9, 12, 15, 17, 19, and 21.

Questions that act as a check on each other, or check for consistency of teacher belief are the following:

1. 2, 16
2. 6, 20
3. 9, 12, 15, 17, 19, 21
4. 4, 7, 21
5. 1, 12
Appendix B

Questionnaire

A. Grade now taught: K/1 ____, 1 ____, 1/2 ____, 2 ____, 2/3 ____,
   1/2/3 ____, 3 ____, 3/4 ____.

B. Degrees held:

C. Number of University reading classes taken:

D. Years of experience, including this year: 1 ____, 2 ____, 3-5 ____,
   6-10 ____, 11-15 ____, 16-20 ____, 20 plus ____.

E. "A reading workbook is a commercially printed consumable material
for student activity."

Given the above definition, do you use workbooks?
Yes ____  No ____

F. Directions:
1. The first two questions are open-ended. Please respond to them
   in as brief, or as lengthy, a manner as you desire.

2. The remaining items should be answered by placing a tick ____,
   under your preferred response. If you wish to respond further
   to an individual item please read page 8.

3. The categories are:
   strongly agree  agree  disagree  strongly disagree
   4  3  2  1

   ____  ____  ____  ____
A. HOW do you use workbooks in your reading program?
B. WHY do you use workbooks in your reading program?
1. My workbooks provide for systematic review of what has been taught already.

- strongly agree
- agree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

2. Workbook tasks reflect the most important aspects of what I teach in the reading lesson.

- strongly agree
- agree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

3. My workbooks contain appropriate extra tasks for students who need extra practice.

- strongly agree
- agree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

4. The vocabulary level of workbook tasks are such as to allow my students to work independently on them.

- strongly agree
- agree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

5. My workbooks contain enough content that my students have an opportunity to master a concept, and are not simply exposed to it.

- strongly agree
- agree
- disagree
- strongly disagree
6. Unknown words should provide the practice for phonics generalizations in workbooks.

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7. Students find my workbook instructions clear, unambiguous and easy to follow.

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8. Student response modes in my workbooks emphasize reading and writing tasks.

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9. The content of my workbook tasks is characterized by accuracy and precision, rather than wrong information and misrules.

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10. Complex tasks are preceded by a sufficient number of quality tasks leading to those complexities.

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11. My students understand the purpose behind each workbook task.

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12. Workbook design provides sequences of tasks that are carefully planned.

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13. Workbook tasks take up at least half the time I spend in my reading lesson.

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14. In my program, workbooks are a necessary part of reading instruction.

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15. I support the view that workbooks are the products of scientific investigations of the reading process.

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16. Workbook tasks cover the concepts identified and stressed in my lessons.

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17. The art on workbook pages helps my students complete the task correctly.

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18. I have observed that workbook materials develop in my students an appreciation for literature.

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19. The sequence of goals for teaching reading is scientifically valid within a workbook program.

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20. Workbook tasks are a means to an end, not ends in themselves.

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21. The readability of workbook tasks is systematically controlled.

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22. My workbooks ensure individualization of instruction.

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OPTIONAL

IF YOU WOULD BE WILLING TO DISCUSS FURTHER THE TOPIC OF WORKBOOKS WITH
THE RESEARCHER, PLEASE FILL IN YOUR NAME AND SCHOOL. SUCH CONVERSATIONS
WILL BE, OF COURSE, CONFIDENTIAL AND REPORTED ANONYMOUSLY.

NAME:

SCHOOL:

Thank you very much for your help!
April 5, 1984

Dear Colleague:

The enclosed questionnaire deals with reading workbooks and their use. Because of your familiarity with reading workbooks, your assistance in completing the questionnaire is especially requested.

A stamped, addressed envelope is enclosed. You will note that the questionnaire is not coded. In other words, you are assured complete and absolute anonymity. However, should you be willing to pursue the topic further in an interview, the opportunity for you to so indicate is provided.

Your returning of the questionnaire by Wednesday, April 18 would be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Murdoch Macfarlane

MM/bm

Encls.
APPENDIX D
May 9, 1984

Dear Colleague:

I would like to thank all of you for participating in my study. Many of you have returned your questionnaires, and I thank you for that. There are still some that have not come in, and the purpose of this letter is to encourage you to complete the questionnaire and return it. Having ensured your anonymity, I do not know who has returned it, so if yours is already in, please ignore this reminder, and accept my thanks.

Sincerely,

Murdoch Macfarlane
APPENDIX E
PERSONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Additional Data
   a) How long have you taught in the primary division?

   b) Which University reading classes have you taken?

   c) Which reading workbooks do you use?

   d) In your experience, how do the following groups of people feel about workbooks:

      Parents:

      Principals:

      Colleagues:

      Students:
e) 1. What people in your career have influenced your views about workbooks?

2. What events (University classes, school visits, inservice, professional reading) have influenced your views?

f) You indicate that workbooks do not help students to develop a taste for literature. How do you compensate for this?

g) Our curricula stress creative writing skills. What part do you see workbooks playing in that process?
2. Individualized according to responses of teachers.
3. OPEN-ENDED

There may have been questions that came to your mind as you completed the questionnaire. Could you share some of them with me. Have you noticed anything that you wished I had asked in the questionnaire but didn't?

What do you think the status of workbooks will be in the future?

If you had the freedom to develop your own reading program, what part would workbooks play in it?