

Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1966

Dedicated to finding the causes of difficulties in learning reading and spelling.

"A closed mind gathers no knowledge*, an open mind is the key to wisdom."

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1. Announcements

i/t/a Workshops for Teacher or Specialist-Resource Personell Development at Lehigh University.

June 6, 7, 8, 1966* August 16-19, August 22-25, 1966

Class sessions – mornings only. Practice sessions afternoons and evenings. Tuition of \$100.00 includes registra tion, cost of materials and registrant's room. For participants who prefer to commute daily, registration costs are \$80.00. A credit of \$25.00 against the above costs when sets of materials have already been purchased or are available is possible. Registration for the Workshop should be made at least 3 weeks before the start of each session by addressing a letter to Dr. Albert J. Mazurkiewicz, Director of the Reading and Study Clinic, asking for a reservation of space in the workshop of your choice and enclosing a check made payable to *Lehigh University* for the full amount. Please mail check and letter to the *Bursar's Office*, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Penna.

For more information and details of the sessions, write to Dr. Albert J. Mazurkiewicz, Lehigh Univ. Bethlehem, Penna.

*This workshop will be held for one full day and two half days instead of the usual four half-day sessions.

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Schools for the Future, Inc. announce Workshops in *Words in Color*, by Dr. Caleb Gattegno in New York City, April 11–15, 1966. It will also cover the *Cuisenaire-Gattegno Method of Teaching Mathematics* and motion picture films on both subjects. Cooper Sta. New York, N.Y.

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2. Students in 42 States are Studying i.t.a.*

*reprinted by permission fr Jan. 1966 Phi Delta Kappan.

This year at least 70,000 students in 42 states are being introduced to reading with i.t.a. the Initial Teaching Alphabet, according to Dr. Albert J. Mazurkiewicz, Director of the ITA Studies Center at Lehigh Univ. That is 140 times as many as were studying *ita* in this country in 1963, suggesting that the unorthodox import from Great Britain is beyond the initial experiment stage.

The Initial Teaching Alphabet by representing almost all of the sounds of English, enables children to have an "instant reading" capacity equal to their vocabulary. This provides incentive, says the *ita* experts that is usually lost in the struggle with the traditional alphabet. Spelling in *ita* is kept as close as possible to the appearance of traditional print; a few inconsistencies from the traditional alphabet are retained to make the transition back to traditional easier; and capitalizations are just larger characters.

Starting at Lehigh Univ. and Bethlehem, Pa, the *ita* movement has fanned out over the country. In Lompoc, Calif., it is now used with all first-grade students whose parents approve, in secondary remedial programs, and in an adult illiteracy program. Officials at San Quentin (Calif.) State Prison and at Oregon State Penitentiary found *ita* instruction to be highly successful with adult illiterates when all other methods failed. In New York State more than 100 schools are cooperating in a program that uses *ita* in a variety of ways – teaching first graders to read, introducing kindergarteners to language concepts, helping emotionally disturbed children, and experimenting in teaching communication to deaf, brain damaged, and retarded children.

Materials in *ita* are keeping pace. Pitman's ITA Publications, Inc. has developed materials for teachers, parent education, and readers and storybooks for children. Scholastic Magazines is issuing 40 paperback editions of its Lucky Book Club series in *ita*. A foundation for the study of *ita* has been established at Hofstra University, Hemstead, L.I. New York.

Despite the widespread experimentation, many reading experts have favored a go-slow attitude, citing a lack of research. One speaker at a recent *ita* conference at Lehigh Univ. said *ita's* effectiveness could not be determined until an *ita*-taught child entered college and his sensitivity to sound could be judged.

Then there are observers like A.P. writer G. K. Hodenfield, who has specialized in reports on the teaching of reading in the U.S. He says, "*ita* is the British revenge for our Declaration of Independence. It is patently absurd to teach kids an alphabet and a kind of spelling they will eventually have to unlearn. Unlearning can be harder than learning. But I admit *ita* is a bonanza for Pitman."

It should be noted however, that Sir James Pitman spent \$200,000 in supporting early *ita* experiments with *another* publishers book's. He has not copyrighted his invention of the *ita* system.

(Ed. note: If Hodenfield knows of any difficulties in unlearning *ita*, he should comply with the request of *ita* Publica. for factual data.

3. Time for Change, by Mary Johnson

Twenty years ago in Manitoba the Minister of Education authorized the use of one primary reading program for our public schools. This was a packaged deal which included storybooks for the children to read, workbooks for them to fill in, silent reading tests, guidebooks for the teachers, and even leaflets for them to hand out to parents, if they complained that the system was not working. As a part of the deal, reading consultants from the publishing company toured our schools many times to train teachers to follow the new Guidebooks. They impressed upon our teachers that it was not necessary under the new system to tell children the sounds of letters, or to train them to sound out words. [\[1\]](#)

The new reading program was introduced, with no preliminary research, to all Manitoba Grade 1 classes in 1946, to Grade II in 1947, and Grade III in 1948. No control classes were kept with which to compare the new system. Our educators were assured by the publishers that all necessary research had been conducted in the United States and that we were buying a truly scientific program for teaching primary reading.

For twenty years the 1946 edition of the *Curriculum Foundation Series* has been the only authorized reading text which Manitoba school boards could buy with Government grants, and now is due for retirement. Will the replacement be limited to reading programs which follow the same look-and-say method – or will it include a text which teaches the pronunciation of separate letter sounds and how to sound out words.

A curriculum sub-committee on primary reading has recommended that the Department of Education try out six new reading programs [\[2\]](#) in pilot classes throughout Manitoba. These classes were set up in September, 1965. All of the new texts teach reading by a method similar to that of the look-say *Curriculum Foundation Series* (CFS) – the children learn to discover letter sounds by analysing words which have been previously memorized as wholes. Later, they are taught to mentally combine parts of known words in order to arrive at the pronunciation of new words. Five of the new programs do not teach children to pronounce vowel sounds in isolation, and none of the texts teaches the pronunciation of consonants in isolation. No scientific research has been conducted in Manitoba with any of the new reading programs, and the Minister of Education has publicly stated that none is planned by the Department of Education. There are no control classes with which to compare the experimental classes, and no statistics will be issued at the end of the trial period. [\[3\]](#)

The Department's Dilemma.

Lacking any scientific data, it may be hard for education officials in Manitoba to decide which of the six new reading programs should be chosen for authorization in the new curriculum. There is a seventh series under consideration, however; which, although supported by extensive research, [\[4\]](#) may present officials with an even greater dilemma. This, series – *Phonetic Keys to Readings* [\[5\]](#) – does not conform to the prevailing theories of reading instruction, and is therefore frowned upon by those educators who believe that it is harmful to tell children letter sounds and how to sound out words.

Phonetic Keys to Reading (PKR) was compared with CFS in 15 schools for three years by the Winnipeg School Board. In 1965, at the conclusion of the formal experiment, two conflicting

professional interpretations of the research were submitted by the Winnipeg Board to the Provincial Department of Education. These reports are now under consideration by the Curriculum Branch. Both reports use the same raw data. The average test scores of the *PKR* pupils are clearly higher than of the *CFS* pupils. The two reports disagree on the importance of the superior test scores: one report says the small difference is unimportant, the other report says that the large difference is very significant. The situation is further complicated by the spreading popularity of *PKR* – Winnipeg and three suburban school districts now use the series in 77 primary classrooms.

Under *PKR* the children first learn the long and short vowel sounds, then consonants. Vocal blending of sounds is taught in the initial stages of reading instruction (technical term: "articulated phonics"). As soon as each new letter and sound is presented, it is immediately identified by the pupils *in a whole word*, so right from the beginning of reading instruction the children are exposed to both the phonic and sight approaches to reading. Full use is also made of experience charts. After intensive *PKR* training at the beginning of Grade I, the children spend several weeks reading the pre-primers of any basal reading program. Further periods of *PKR* training are alternated with periods of free-reading in orthodox readers. During the *three-year PKR* program the children practice sounding out 3,930 different words. This training enables *PKR pupils* to read much more than the orthodox limited vocabulary texts commonly in use as one Grade I Winnipeg teacher reported, "I feel that the *PKR* program is excellent for the early independence it gives to the child. He can pick up a book and read it because he has the "phonetic keys" to unlock unfamiliar words. He can write creatively because he no longer has to ask how to spell simple, yet unfamiliar words."

[\[6\]](#)

Prejudice and Protest.

Despite teacher and parent enthusiasm, and overwhelmingly favorable test results, the Superintendent's Department of the Winnipeg School Division No. 1 drew negative conclusions regarding its three-year experiment. In a 29-page statistical research report (No. 8/65) [\[7\]](#) issued in June, 1965, it was stated, in essence, that there was little or no difference in the results obtained by the experimental (*PKR*) and control (*CFS*) classes.

This prompted a scholarly rebuttal from school trustee Andrew Moore, Ph.D. Dr. Moore, who has had a long and distinguished career in education, prepared a 77-page Minority Report [\[6\]](#) which included valuable data omitted from the Superintendent's Report – teacher's comments, line and bar graphs, and distributions of individual children's scores, showing how many more *PKR* children scored high and how few of them scored low, compared with children taught by *CFS*.

Dr. Moore claimed that the Superintendent's Report was "incomplete and inaccurate," and he took issue with its conclusions. He quoted the conclusion on page 10 of Part A, that "in the end the two methods of teaching reading will produce approximately the same results when measured by the testing devices used in this study." Dr. Moore himself declared, "This conclusion is highly inaccurate. It is not supported by the facts."

The facts themselves, as reported in Part A of the Superintendent's Report, show that the two methods of teaching reading produce vastly different results when measured by the testing devices [\[8\]](#) used in the Winnipeg study. In the comparisons made in Part A between experimental and control classes, *PKR* classes made significantly higher scores nine times, *CFS* classes made a significantly higher score once only. (See [Table 1](#))

Dr. Moore also disagreed with the following interpretation on page 11 of Part B of the Superintendent's Report: "On the whole, total results for all schools indicate that the ratio of statistically significant results in favor of the *PKR* program to the number of non-significant results or results in favor of the control method, to a very limited degree, favor the conventional (*CFS*) method of teaching reading."

Dr. Moore pointed out that this procedure is inaccurate. Proper procedure would be to contrast the 151 cases where *PKR* showed "statistically significant" superiority with the 12 cases where *CFS* showed "statistically significant" superiority. Differences which were not "statistically significant," cannot properly be lumped with the 12 cases of *CFS* superiority, since most of them actually favored *PKR*. *PKR* classes scored higher on 240 of the 318 comparisons in Part B.

Table 1.

Research Report 8/65	Total No. of times <i>PKR</i> & <i>CFS</i> classes were compared during 3-year experiment	SIGNIFICANT in favor of <i>PKR</i>	DIFFERENCES in favor of <i>CFS</i>	NON-SIGNIFICANT in favor of <i>PKR</i>	DIFFERENCES in favor of <i>CFS</i>
Part A	54	9	1	24	20
Part B	318	151	12	89	66

Concluded Dr. Moore, "The *PKR* pupils made substantially more high scores than did the *CFS* (Conventional) pupils, especially in Grades I and 11 which are the critically vital levels in learning to read. This means that the *PKR* pupils achieved an earlier and enriched reading capacity and appreciation."

It would seem that most of the *PKR* teachers are in agreement with Dr. Moore's conclusion. Out of the 49 teachers who reported to the Winnipeg School Board in June, 1965, 34 volunteered the statement that *PKR* pupils were more independent readers. Here is a typical comment by a Grade I teacher: [\[6\]](#) "This program gives the children terrific power to discover new words, builds early confidence and a desire to read, as evidenced by the extensive use of the class lending library and the public library, and exposes them to a multitude of new words. Their reading horizon is greatly .tended and the ability to spell increased."

Winnipeg school trustees apparently were impressed by the enthusiasm of their teachers, and by the test results, for on August 24, 1965, they voted in favor of making *PKR* available to all Winnipeg primary teachers on an optional basis, subject to approval by the Department of Education.

This approval was formally sought by the School Board, and a formal reply was received. Confusion arose over the interpretation of the Department's letter, and when local newspapers announced that permission had been refused there was swift public reaction.

A delegation of mothers insisted on seeing the Minister of Education to find out why this training should be denied. Mrs. G. Carsted, leader of the delegation, asked in her brief, "Do parents have to take drastic action before our children get the kind of education to which they are entitled?In some countries mothers must beg for milk so that their children can grow and develop healthy bodies. In Manitoba, it seems, mothers must plead for articulated phonics so that their children can grow and develop healthy minds." Mrs. Carsted pointed out that *PKR* was a co-basal series and

could be used along with *CFS* or any other basic reading program-the authorization of *PKR* need not wait for curriculum changes "that may come into effect between now and the year 2,000."

The Minister of Education told the mothers that the Department had, in fact, given permission for Winnipeg schools to continue using *PKR*. This statement was repeated by Mr. G. Davies, Asst. Deputy Minister, in a telephone interview with the *Winnipeg Tribune* on Sept. 3rd, 1965: "The Winnipeg School Board asked permission to use *PKR* as an option and we sent them a letter granting them permission to do so. If they want to use it they can supply the necessary books to the schools. We simply reminded the school 3 board that the whole problem of reading is under review ... and it would be unwise for any authorization on a large scale."

Pressure and Progress.

The mothers' plea for constructive action on the phonics issue was not the first one to reach the ears of the Department of Education. In Dec. 1959, the Manitoba Royal Commission on Education [9] advised the Department to instruct pupils in the sounds of the letters, "even the consonants," in the initial stages of reading instruction to enable them to attack new words. "Advocates of the sight method have stated to the Commission that in the case of retarded readers it has often proved helpful to teach letter sounds in isolation; the Commission has come to believe that there is benefit for all beginners in reading to have the use of this method of word attack."

No action had been taken by the Department two years later, when Manitoba School Trustees held their annual convention in Nov. 1961. A resolution asking the Department "to give more emphasis to the phonics method" received unanimous support from four hundred delegates. The trustees pointed out that "at present the teaching of reading in the elementary grades leaves much to be desired, as is shown by the necessity for remedial reading procedures in some high schools, and by complaints from many parents that their children are unable to read satisfactorily on completion of the elementary grades,"

Two years later the Department's Advisory Board recommended, in 1963, that "additional instruction in the use of articulated phonics be included in the teacher training program at the Manitoba Teachers' College." [10] This advice was acted upon. A concise and practical handbook on phonics, written by Primary Methods Instructor Mrs. D. H. Turner. [11] is now required reading for all Manitoba elementary teachers-in-training.

The Department gave further support to the teaching of phonics in January, 1964, by making an unsolicited and unprecedented grant of \$3,600 to the Winnipeg School Board for the purchase of *PKR* supplies. A "similar contribution" was made to suburban Fort Garry. [12]

These generous grants and the institution of teacher training in articulated phonics have given official recognition in Manitoba to the educational value of this basic training. However, teachers who wish to use this reading method often have difficulty in obtaining appropriate textbooks. They must either buy them with their own money or-through their administrator-convince the local school board that board funds should be used to purchase the texts.

Manitoba is now at the crossroads of decision with regard to methods of reading instruction. The curriculum is being revised in 1966 and the Department of Education can do one of three things-it can authorize one or more reading series featuring the look-say approach; it can authorize one or

more series featuring an articulated phonic approach; or it can authorize at least one of each so that teachers, at their option, may select the reading method most suitable for their pupils.

Only when teachers are given a true choice of reading method within the provincial curriculum will they be freed from the restrictions which have hampered them for the past twenty years.

Bibliography.

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2. a) *Canadian Reading Development Series*, published by Copp Clark, Toronto, 1962.
b) *The New Basic Readers*, published by Scott, Foresman, Chicago, 1962.
c) *Young Canada Reading Series*, published by Nelson & Sons, Toronto, 1965.
d) *Sheldon Basic Reading Series*, published by Allyn & Bacon, Chicago, 1963.
e) *Reading for Meaning Series*, published by Houghton Mifflin Co, Boston, 1957.
f) *The Macmillan Reading Program*, published by Macmillan, New York, 1965.
3. *Winnipeg Tribune*, Oct. 16, 1965.
4. "Intensive Phonics vs. Gradual Phonics in Beginning Reading, a Review," by Louise Gurren, Ann Hughes, in *The Journal of Educational Research*, vol. 58, no. 8, April, 1965.
5. *Phonetic Keys to Reading*, by T. L. Harris, M. Creekmore, M. Greenman, published by Economy Co, Oklahoma City, Okla.
6. *Minority Report* by Dr. A. Moore. Obtainable from Sec. Treas, Winnipeg School Div. No. 1, 1577 Wall St, East, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, (\$1.50).
7. *Research Report*, 8/65, obtainable as above (\$1.00).
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10. *Annual Report*, Department of Education, June 30, 1963, p. 42.
11. *More Power to Them*, by Mrs. D. H. Turner, obtainable from University Book Store, Univ. of Manitoba, Fort Garry, Man. (50a).
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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1966 p4 in the printed version]

4. The Alliance Study: Phonetic Keys vs. Traditional Method, prepared by Ann Hughes"

* Director of Statistical Research, Reading Reform Foundation

Source: Unpublished doctor's thesis by Walter A. Wollam [\[1\]](#)

The public schools of Alliance, Ohio, installed *Phonetic Keys to Reading* in the fall of 1956, system wide. As the first group of *Phonetic Keys pupils* finished fourth-grade in May of 1960, their reading and spelling ability was tested and compared with that of the fourth-graders from the year before who had learned to read by a traditional method.

The *Phonetic Keys pupils* scored higher on all the achievement tests in spite of being two points lower in I.Q. [\[2\]](#) The differences in Word Recognition and Comprehension were not significant, but there were highly significant differences in Spelling and Rate of Reading, and a significant difference in Vocabulary, all favoring the *Phonetic Keys* children. Mean raw scores were as follows:

Tests	May, 1959 <i>Traditional Group</i> (N=306, IQ, 109)	May, 1960 <i>Phonetic Keys Group</i> (N=301, IQ, 107)	t-values
Word Recognition [3]	17.54	18.51	1.52
Comprehension [3]	20.17	20.68	.69
Vocabulary [3]	22.78	24.50	2.39*
Spelling [4]	45.59	49.30	4.58**
Rate of Readings	157.83	181.00	2.65**

* Significant at the .05 level. ** Significant at the .01 level.

The investigator also stratified his groups by IQ and discovered that the low-IQ pupils were most strongly affected by the difference in method. The 27 *Phonetic Keys* children who had IQ's below 90 were compared with the *Traditional* children who also had IQ's below 90. The low-IQ phonetic group showed a highly significant superiority on every test, including comprehension.

Parent and teacher questionnaires revealed considerable enthusiasm for the new program.

Comments:

It should be noted that in this study the Alliance school system is being compared within itself, so that socio-economic variables and teacher variables were controlled to an unusual degree. Most of the teachers involved taught both groups successively.

One of the most interesting findings of the study was that the good students in the *Phonetic Keys* group read 23 words per minute faster than the good students in the *traditional* group. [\[5\]](#) This

finding contradicts the frequently heard claim that a phonetic start can hold back good students or slow them down.

The other most interesting finding was the fine performance of the low-IQ *Phonetic Keys* children. [6] The achievement of the low-IQ section of any group is of particular concern to most educators, since this section usually tends to supply problem readers.

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[2] From the *California Short Form Test of Mental Maturity*, Primary 1957 S-Form, administered in September of third grade.

[3] From the *Diagnostic Reading Tests*, Survey Section: Lower Level (for grades 4-8), administered in May of fourth grade.

[4] From a 60-word sample from the word list, grades two to six, of *Spelling for Word Mastery*, by D. H. Patton and E. M. Johnson.

[5] From the *Diagnostic Reading Tests* (see above). The means for Rate of Reading apply only to the 40 *traditional* pupils and the 42 *Phonetic Keys pupils* who qualified by getting 10 of 15 comprehension questions right, their mean IQ's being 120 and 117, respectively.

[6] These 27 children averaged 45 on spelling and almost 17 on Word Recognition.

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Spelling is learning all the inconsistencies
you wouldn't have to learn
if English was written phonetically. *N. Tune*

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5. Let's Face the Future Now, by Helen Bowyer.

February of our new 1966 A.D. saw some two million six year-olds enter the first grades of our land February of the year 2000 A.D. is just 34 years ahead.. On that spectacular date most of these beginners will be 40 years old. Along with citizens just a little older and just a few years young they may well constitute the most important category of others at our national and local polls What will their world be like at this beginning of the third millenium A.D.?

Who can say? Perhaps all speculation is useless. Even before then our earth may have become only a lifeless satellite of its sun. But if we can keep our hands from destroying it, it will be a world such as mankind has never known before. In what respects different – and different for better or for worse, may well depend on what we parents teachers and other grown compatriots of these February beginners do with them in the first few years of their schooling.

But it will almost certainly be a world much more densely populated than now. Indeed, if birth and death statistics continue as of this February just past, its human inhabitants will number seven billion plus. There will be two mouths to be fed where there now is one, two bodies to be clothed and housed, two minds to be educated, two total personalities to be helps or hindrances to the common good. Not only so but if the present trend continues the vast majority of these seven billion humans will be living in big cities – with the problems of housing, transportation, water, power and light, street cleaning, rubbish disposal, sewerage; pest control, much more than double the problems they constitute this 1966.

What of juvenile delinquency and youthful crime? In our own land they have been on the rise these last 34 years. If this trend continues through the 34 which will bring us to 2000 A.D., what will the statistics in this field be then? How many of these two million beginning first graders will have been on probation – in reform schools – in prison? And how many of them lawbreakers on the loose on our streets? What we do with them this first school year and the next five will have much to do with these statistics at the beginning of this our third millenium A.D.

What will be the world status of their country then? At the moment it looks as if it will be one of three great powers – the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R., and China In view of that probability what should be the attitude we inculcate in them towards their agemates in these two other lands – lands greater than their own both in area and population Should we have reciprocal agreements with both of them – that all three of us will do our best – through books and pictures, T.V., tape recordings, letter exchange – to put our beginners in happy relationship with theirs and keep them thus the whole of their school life. And in pursuit of this agreement what steps should the three great powers take towards a language their young will all speak and understand in addition to their mother tongue? But more of this later on.

What will be the racial composition of our world in A.D. 2000? 70-80% of these February beginners are white and a majority of these are "fair white" – tracing their blood back to Britain and the Nordic lands of Europe. But the fair whites are but a tiny minority of earth's population – the dark whites, the yellow, brown and black peoples outnumber us many times already and are likely to outnumber us more by the end of this millenium. Then high among the priorities of the education of these first graders should be the opportunities for a realistic knowledge of these alien races – a knowledge free from that superiority complex so prevalent now. Should they learn that China's civilization was great and gracious for centuries while our Nordic fathers were painted savages.

And if the black peoples never got much beyond barbarism, well, that may give them less to junk in preparation for the all-human culture which may be on its way by 2000 A.D. Besides, how much of our Nordic civilization did we fair whites originate ourselves? There was little Greece with her islands and outlying cities in Asia Minor, and we can hardly be too proud of her. But where else shall we look? Egypt; Mesopotamia, Persia, Rome, were all dark whites. What Pharaoh, what great King; what Caesar but would have laughed at the idea that Britainia would someday "rule the waves" while Egypt, Mesopotamia Persia, Rome; lay fragmented into weak little states not much more than clients of hers. Who knows but these next 34 years may usher in a millenium wherein the black peoples may play a prominent role. For their own sake, these children's education should include that possibility.

They entered school with I.Q.'s ranging from 200 down to 70 or below, with most of them clustered not far below or not far above 100. Everyone of them should have the classroom work he can do feels worth doing and gets a sense of self-fulfillment from doing. The world of 2000 A.D. will be clear headed and well motivated in proportion to the insight and skill with which we handle these native differences in endowment in the earliest years of school, All must be kept achieving pretty close to their potential and happy and self-fulfilled in so doing. But there are three categories of them who should be early differentiated from the mainstream of their fellows, They are the very high I.Q.'s, the very creative whatever their I.Q. and the children with very strong drives.

What the first category needs first of all is a teacher who is herself high enough on the I Q scale to delight in children even higher. Along with that they need a few classmates not too far below their own level and at almost any height above it, Thus guided and companioned they are able to take on the whole great world of the average and the slow – and should have considerable experience in doing so: Only part of their school time should be passed among themselves, the rest of it in class work with the mill run of their fellows. Preferably in those subjects and activities where they least surpass them. In any case they should early learn "noblesse oblige" and give these lesser minds stimulation without unduly overshadowing them. Is it too much to hope that the teacher of the average class could work with the teacher of the gifted to establish in their two categories of young minds that understanding, that appreciation which would keep democracy working in that immensely more crowded America of 2000 A D.

The second category which requires special treatment is that of the unusually creative children, whose I.Q. is not especially high. We are going to know more about them now that the National Merit Scholarship is making separate provision for them. As year by year our population becomes denser; everything they can contribute of wonder, beauty, high utility, will become more precious. They should not have to wait till scholarship age for recognition and those opportunities to make the most of their creativity.

As for the third category of exceptional first graders, the children with strong drives let's think back to the probable childhood of Hitler, It is said – I forget by whom – that he had in himself the makings of a good second rate painter. Had his gift with pencil and brush been recognized in early childhood; had it been duly fostered and himself duly appreciated, would there have been a Fuhrer who led Germany to her terrible debacle at the end of World War Two?

Now what of the great majority of those February enrollees, the children of average intelligence and no unusual creativity and no marked drives? What they need most is a chance *to learn to read* – to read easily, understandingly and enjoyingly by February 1967. And clean across their path stand some 120;000 first grade teachers paid to brainwash them into recognizing in *to, do, blue, flew, gnu, shoe, two, who, you, through*, the words they hear and speak as *too, doo, bloc, floc, noo, shoo, too*,

hoc, yoo, throo. Back of these immediate brainwashers stand principals and superintendents, reading specialists., textbook writers, university researchers bent on staving off by this and that reshuffle of method and material, the one thing which would bring common sense into the situation – primers and readers in wun-sien-wun-sound print, They will have to come to it in a few years at the latest – one does them the honor to suppose, when China's first graders (four times the number of ours) get the phonemic spelling now in preparation for them. Together with their grademates in the U.S.S.R. and the Slavic neighbors they will constitute a reproach to our literacy which not even our latest batch of T.O. preservers will be able to withstand. But in those few years what ravage they can work on the time, energy and thought-world of the average first grader – what tension: humiliation and despair on the slower minded ones!

We are reaping a sufficiently tragic harvest from the functional illiteracy with which so many of our young leave school., What will it be in 2000 A.D., if we do no more than switch from "whole word" to "phonics," from phonics to the "linguistic approach", still leaving untouched the basic cause of the trouble – the confusion caused by the irrationality of *home, comb, foam, chrome – make, steak, ache, opaque – own, phone, bone, loan.* A sample which not only burdens the child with a dozen separate acts of memorization but violates his sense of logic; consistency, of analogy, of cause and effect. And those February six-year olds and all the six year olds who follow them, will need all the development of these desirable human faculties which a wun-sien-wun-sound spelling could give them; if they are to mature into the adults; adolescents and children best able to adjust to the population of these United States at beginning of this third millenium A.D.

If by then it is well on its way to the census estimate of 322-438 millions for 2000 A.D., what will be the demands for housing and classrooms?, prime requisites of which we are short even now. And – what of parks and playgrounds camp sites and such like escapes from crowded streets and neighborhoods.

What of the home life of these beginners this 1966? What of that 20 to 30% of them who come from underprivileged homes. Those who have never known anything but overcrowding, dirt; disorder, and such food and clothing as low family income could provide. It may be that Headstart will develop into a Project which will see to it such a start begins at birth – or better yet, before it – and that every child enters first grade in normal development of his physical and mental potential.

Can you think of any expenditure of our tax dollars which will, give a greater immediate return and effect more economy in the future? The Soviet Union comes close to such a project and her juvenile delinquency and crime are much lower than ours and her health and life expectancy higher: To be sure,, this happy state of things is due in part to the fact that she doesn't subject her first graders to anything approaching the strain of our *said, head, red – after, laughter, daughter – eight, date, great, bait, straight.* What few anomalies she didn't iron out of her orthography forty years ago, she is remedying now-while we ... well, if we don't soon begin to sweep the bedlam out of ours, how will our literacy and academic culture compare with hers in 2000 A.D.? Compare that is to say, in less than thirty four years – well within the lifetime of many a young professor *researching* into ways to keep on teaching the bedlam as it is.

Helen Bowyer, Los Angeles; Calif.

6. Phoney Phonetics, by Vivian Buchan*

*Reprinted from *Educational Horizons*

One reason why I cannot spell.
Although I learned the rules quite well.
Is that some words like *coup* and *through*
Sound just like *threw* and *flue* and *Who*;
When *oo* is never spelled the same,
The duice becomes a guessing game;

And then I ponder over *though*,
Is it spelled *so*, or *throw*, or *beau*?
And *bough* is never *bow*, it's *bow*,
I mean the *bow* that sounds like *plow*,
And not the bow that sounds like *row* -
The *row* that is pronounced like *roe*.

I wonder, too why *rough* and *tough*,
That sound the same as *gruff* and *muff*,
Are spelled like *bough* and *though*, for they
Are both pronounced a different way.
And why can't I spell *trough* and *cough*
The same as I do *scoff* or *golf*?

Why isn't *drought* spelled just like *route*?
Or *doubt* or *pout* or *sauerkraut*?
When words all sound so much the same
To change the spelling seems a shame.
There is no sense – see, sounds like *cents*
In making such a difference

Between the sight and sound of words,
Each spelling rule that undergirds
The way a word should look will fail
And often prove to no avail
Because exceptions will negate
The truth of what the rule may state

So though I try, I still despair
And moan and mutter, "It's not fair
That I'm held up to ridicule
And made to look like such a fool,
When it's the spelling that's at fault.
Let's call this nonsense to a halt."

[*Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1966 pp7–8 in the printed version*]

7. Phonetic Spelling – according to the Russians, G. B. S. and spelling reformers, by Abraham Tauber, Ph. D.*

*Acting President of Bronx Community College.

Author of G.B.S. on Language (Philosophical Library 1963).

The Soviet Union recently announced a spelling reform in Russian that indicates that they have been persuaded by the arguments of George Bernard Shaw: They plan to eliminate unnecessary double letters, retaining, but 12 out of 1200 words with such double letter combinations, for semantic reasons and to distinguish homonyms.

In replacing "Kommunist" by "Komunist," for example, this spelling reform will save tons of paper, said the newspaper *Vechernaya Moskva*, editorially, pointing out that an earlier spelling reform, that had been instituted in the written Russian language in 1917 by the Bolshevicks, had been so effective as to save 70 pages of paper in a single copy of War and Peace, The present reform extended further the: principles of the earlier one – arranging to write the language in as phonetic a fashion as possible, that is, using a single symbol for a sound wherever it appears in the spoken tongue, and only then.

The Soviets have not limited their spelling reform efforts to the Russian language. Soviet linguists supplied phonetically written alphabets in the Cyrillic alphabet for spoken dialects which had no previous scripts. They introduced phonetic spelling changes into Yiddish, replacing classical spelling in that language, especially of words derived from the Hebrew, in the days when books and newspapers in that language were still permitted to be published in the Soviet Union:

Of course; George Bernard Shaw did not overlook this matter – in his combined interest in spelling and alphabet reform – and in the Russians and their language, GBS wrote, in *The Times* of London on April 15, 1941:

"My surname has two sounds" but I have to spell it with four letters ... 50 per cent loss of time, labour, ink, and paper. The Russians can spell it with two letters, as they have an alphabet of 35 letters. In the race of civilization, what chance has a Power that cannot spell so simple a sound as Shaw against a rival that can?"

Shaw espoused this credo of a necessary spelling reform in English in one form or another for over fifty years. He even arranged for the cause to be carried on after his death in 1950, by special provisions of his will. Through a kind of poetic justice, the income that redounded to the Shaw estate from *My Fair Lady*, based upon Shaw's *Pygmalion*, made possible the carrying out of the provisions of Shaw's Will even if it made no definitive reply to Henry Higgins' lament, "Oh, why can't the English teach their children how to speak?"

GBS frequently referred to the Russian language as a model of phonetic economy. (He ascribed 35 letters to the Cyrillic alphabet in which Russian is written, although in reality it employs only 33 symbols.) But the general point, he makes is valid – Russian is more phonetically written than English; as are Spanish; Italian, Portuguese, Hebrew, Yiddish and German, as well.

In the 1942 revision of his "Preface to Pygmalion: A Professor of Phonetics., "Shaw said:

A complete and exact phonetic script is neither practical nor necessary for ordinary use, but if we enlarge our alphabet to the Russian size, and make our spelling as phonetic as Spanish; the advance will be prodigious."

The "advance" GBS means is ease of learning, and efficiency. The main burden of Shaw's argument was that economic waste was inherent in present English spelling. In 1948, in the "Preface" to *The Miraculous Birth of Language* (Philosophical Library), he said':

"Take the words *though* and *should* and *enough* – containing 18 letters. Heaven knows how many hundred thousands times I have had to write these constantly recurring words. With a new English alphabet replacing the old Semitic one with its added Latin vowels I should be able to spell t-h-o-u-g-h with two letters. s-h-o-u-l-d with three, and e-n-o-u-g-h with four; nine letters instead of 18 a saving of 50% of my time and my typist's time and the printer's time, to say nothing of the saving in paper and wear and tear of machinery. I have also the personal grievance, shared by all of my namesakes of having to spell my own name with four letters instead of the two a Russian uses to spell it with his alphabet of 35 letters. All round me I hear the corruption of our language produced by the absurd device of spelling the first sound in my name with the two letters sh,"

To illustrate the inconsistency and consequent waste and difficulty in learning to read, write and use the English language; Shaw analyzed a passage in conventional English with this result

"As well as I can count, this sample of English contains 372 sounds, and as spelt above requires 504 letters to print it, the loss in paper, ink, wear and tear of machinery, compositors' time, machinists' time, and authors' time being over 26%, which could be saved by the use of the alphabet I ask for. I repeat that this figure, which means nothing to the mass of people who, when they write at all, seldom exceed one sheet of notepaper, is conclusive for reform in the case of people who are writing or typing or printing all day,"

GBS' famous postcard, titled "A Forty-Letter British Alphabet," stated the matter in his characteristic way;

"A 40-letter alphabet providing one unambiguous symbol for each sound would save manual labor at the rate of 25% per minute (131,400 minutes per annum). Multiply this figure by the millions at every moment busy writing English somewhere in the world, and the total saving is so prodigious that the utmost cost of such a change is negligible, Children, who now have to master the multiplication and pence tables, could learn a 40-letter alphabet easily."

Shaw became concerned with the acceptance of English as a world auxiliary language or lingua franca in the twilight of his life. In the last article GBS wrote, "The Problem of a Common Language", which appeared posthumously in the *Atlantic Monthly* in November, 1950, he said,

"As the English language goes round the earth, the sun never setting on it, it is impossible to ascertain exactly how many people are writing it, not for one minute as an experiment, but all the time incessantly and perpetually. No matter: a big cross section will be just as conclusive. In the British Commonwealth and the United States of North America there are more than 270,000,000 born writers and speakers of English. Of these the proportion of authors, journalists, clerks; accountants, scholars, private correspondents and others writing continually and simultaneously all round the clock may safely be taken as one in every hundred, making 2,700,000. Multiply this figure by the 73 days. The answer is that every year in the cross-section alone we are wasting 540,000 years of time and labor which we could save by spelling English phonetically enough for all practical purposes... I have left out India, Pakistan and Ceylon out of the calculation with their 400,000,000, whose dozen dialects are giving way to English. They would make the figures too enormous to be credible."

This half million years of time figured at an average annual salary of \$6000 means a waste of \$3,240,000;000 a year.

Shaw deplored the obstacles to the adoption of English as a world tongue. So he provided in his Will provisions:

"(1) To institute and finance a series of inquiries to ascertain or estimate as far as possible the following statistics: (a) the number of extant persons who speak the English language and write it by the established and official alphabet of 26 letters (hereinafter called Dr. Johnson's alphabet); (b) how much time could be saved per individual scribe by the substitution for the said letter of an alphabet containing at least 40 letters (herein after called the Proposed British Alphabet) enabling the said language to be written without indicating single sounds by groups of letters or by diacritical marks, instead of by one symbol for each sound; (c) how many of these persons are engaged in writing or printing English at any and every moment in the world; (d) on these factors to estimate the time and labour wasted by our lack of at least 14 unequivocal single symbols;"

Historically, the chief reason for advocating a spelling reform has been practical and economic, but not usually related to a saving in paper, as was recently suggested in the report from the Soviet Union and by Shaw. The basic motive has traditionally been greater or wider promotion of literacy – the ease of teaching reading and writing, which is directly related to the phonetic consistency of writing a language. This has been the experience of such experts as the famous missionary of world literacy, Dr. Frank Laubach, now devoting his efforts to promoting literacy in English by use of phonetic respelling.

The original Russian spelling reform of 1917–18 was part of the literacy campaign indicated by Lenin and the Bolsheviks at that time. The usefulness of a spelling reform in Portuguese gained support in Brazil. Possible reforms in French spelling have been studied by the Academy. Kemal

Ataturk replaced the Arabic script by the Roman alphabet in Turkey in 1928, in his efforts to westernize his people and to open their minds through widespread literacy. The adoption of the Roman Alphabet had been advocated in China long before the present regime. Recently, Chinese scholars developed a program for the use of the Russian Cyrillic alphabet – until changing political tides cut off our information and the direction of Chinese ideology.

Although Shaw stressed the economic significance of a phonetic spelling reform in easing the "alphabetic burden" and in making "life more abundant," he deplored the fact that because of Samuel "Johnson's absurd etymological bad spelling," we are "turning our children out of our elementary schools after nine years' daily instruction unable to speak or write English well enough to qualify them for clerical or professional appointments!"

Nevertheless, GBS' main concern, as he said in a letter to Sir James Pitman on July 20, 1943, was to "stick to phonetics and economics," especially the immense saving of labor that could be effected by the general use of a 40 letter alphabet. GBS sometimes disparaged those who had concern for children in their struggles to learn to read. However, in discussing his proposed Will, in which he sought statistical studies on the waste in the use of the present English alphabet and the advantages of a new one, he wrote:

"The scheme is purely economic. Its object is to save time and labor, whether in producing books and newspapers or teaching children to read, write, and speak."

Sir James Pitman was largely responsible for helping to win a compromise agreement to execute the terms of Shaw's Will. Sir James, like Dr. Godfrey Dewey here in the United States, is keenly interested in the usefulness of the phonetic spelling idea in its application to teaching children to read. His "Initial Teaching Alphabet," now widely known, is in experimental use in Great Britain and the United States. This puts the phonetic spelling idea back in the focus that has been the main emphasis of such proponents as Noah Webster, Benjamin Franklin, Melvil Dewey, Brander Matthews and scores of others, scholars and reformers – namely literacy.

An additional factor puts the phonetic spelling idea into modern emphasis. In 1662, James Howells recommended a simplification in English spelling because it would make English "the more docile and easy to be learnt by Forreners." As we have seen, Shaw too, commended the virtues of English as a Lingua Franca – provided its spelling was made rational and phonetic. The Russians assuredly have in mind, in their spelling reform program, their ideological competition with the West – and their hopes for preferential adoption of the Russian language over English.

Professor Mario A. Pei of Columbia Univ., a spokesman for the Assoc. for a World Language, has specified that a criterion for acceptability of a world auxiliary language would surely be the greater ease of learning of a phonetically spelled language. Advocates of English as a World Language – take note!

[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1966 pp8,9 in the printed version]

8. Simplicity of Orthography Makes for Beauty of Speech and Ease of Writing, by George Howell*

*translator, Lecturer in Russian, Modern Language Department, Bronx Community College of the City University of New York, assisted by Mrs. Rhea S. Tauber.

(from a conversation with Professor A. I. Yefimov of Moscow State Univ.)

Editor's note: This is a free translation from the original Russian article that appeared in *Vechernyaia Moskova* on February 28, 1964.

In the English translation, certain Russian words enclosed in brackets are transliterated with Roman characters, e.g., [nyet]. English words used in a special sense in the translation are placed in quotation marks, e.g., "soft" or "hard" signs. (Abraham Tauber).

The powerful and impressive Russian language is now used (and heard) in all countries of the world. It has become the international language of science, culture, and progress.

People in foreign lands want to comprehend "The Russian Miracle" in the original tongue, and therefore, in foreign lands, in dozens of institutions of higher learning and in thousands of schools and over the radio, the teaching of Russian is carried on. Ten universities in England have such departments. The Sorbonne and Strasbourg University in France prepare highly qualified Russian specialists. In two Australian universities, lectures for graduate students are delivered in the Russian language. A Washington (D.C.) conference of educators came out for the widespread teaching of Russian in the high schools of the U.S.A.

In 1962, in the Faculty of Philology of Moscow State University, a department was established to prepare teachers of the Russian language for work abroad.

Now, as never before, a great need has developed for comprehension of languages for communication, culture and sheer literacy of both adults and children.

The existing Russian orthography (spelling) long ago changed from the servant of language into its master. School experiences which should help children to write effectively frequently deteriorate into a kind of mechanical cramming of rules and exceptions. A teacher thus occupied with the presentation of all spelling rules simply does not have time to spare for style, or to chat with the children about the beauty and exactness of words, and about how better to phrase a sentence.

Orthography must be simplified. Both educators and scholars have arrived at this conclusion

During the summer of this year, a project is being prepared for the reform of Russian orthography. At present; the Government Orthographic Commission [11](#) created by an order of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. is working successfully. To this Commission headed by the Academician V. Vinogradov, every citizen of the country may send his proposals which will be carefully analyzed.

The reform of Russian orthography of 1964 will be a worthy successor to the reform of 1917-18, when certain obsolete letters were eliminated, and certain orthographic rules were simplified. It may be noted that at that time sailors of the Baltic fleet removed these superfluous letters from the

printing plants of Petrograd and hence the newspapers switched to the new orthography in the shortest time.

Such a modern reform will make spelling simple. Rhetoric (stylistics) will come into its own in school, and a true opportunity will be given to raise the speech and literary cultural levels of students. The Russian language will become more accessible to foreigners, and it will be mastered more quickly in the schools of the national republics. The elimination of doubled letters and of the soft sign (translator's note indicating that the previous consonant is unaspirated) at the end of words after "muted" sounds [molodyozh, speshish; vskach] will also result in economies in the use of paper. It is calculated that the elimination of the "hard" sign at the end of words in 1917 saved 70 pages of paper alone in each copy of *War and Peace*, (Translator's note The hard sign always followed a Russian unaspirated final consonant): Now the useless soft sign will disappear after "muted" sounds which have been pronounced "hard" for five centuries, but which have been traditionally written with a soft sign.

Our country has come far from the semi-literate state of pre revolutionary Russia; but our people do not yet correctly understand the definition of a cultivated man. Here is one example Assistant Professor Goldobin of the Technical Institute in Kuibyshev who is disturbed by the fate of the language, requests (as exercises) "about ten orthographically difficult sentences." He presents this trap to his students in his struggle to overcome semi-literacy "On the terrace under the hemp, stepmother Apollinaria treated herself furtively to the ham and vinaigrette of Collegiate Assessor Faddei," (Translator's note: In Russian most words in this sentence illustrate some spelling irregularity.)

But literacy does not consist of the spelling of esoteric words; but in the unified application of all linguistic elements, in the ability to use the resources and potential of speech according to the rules of proper usage; rhetoric and spelling in oral and written speech. This must be acknowledged by all and especially by the workers of the Ministry of Education who are responsible for the kind of textbooks children use. The decisions in the competition for the new 9 textbooks in Russian must be postponed until the promulgation of the new rules of orthography.

It is necessary to publish small dictionaries reference books, attractive grammars; and pamphlets about orators of the revolution.

V. G. Belinskii considered style more important than grammar for a person of higher literary culture

The study of Rhetoric in school will not require additional time. At present, in the fifth grade, of 176 total hours of class time 113 are assigned to spelling problems. The new orthography will require considerably less time. It will be as simple as possible and will approach the pronunciation phonetically and will not harm the language. The orthography will remain of an [okanye] type, we, as before, will write [moloko], altho we pronounce it otherwise; (Translator's note: [Akanye] means the pronunciation of *o* as *a* in syllables before an accent. Thus [moloko] milk; is pronounced approximately [malako]. [Okaoye] is spelling or pronunciation with *o*'s both written and pronounced as *o*.)

The famous exceptions to the rules of spelling as words are pronounced will disappear from school textbooks – [uzh, zamuzh, nevterpyozh] (translation: already, married, unbearably) – which are learned as one phrase, along with the little song, "The gypsy on tiptoes said [shush] to the little chicken." (Translator's note; The above words and sentence illustrate certain spelling rules:) The

Conservatives of language are still not able to ascribe to the unwilling gypsy the absurd exceptions forcing [na smekh] (in defiance) to be written separately; and [naspekh] (in a rush); together.

Doubled letters will be continued in words where they are so pronounced. The evidence shows that in only 12 words [kassa, massa] of 1;200 with doubled consonants are the consonants pronounced long. In the remaining, it is possible to write economically and correctly one letter [apetit, atesiat, komunist]. In proper names [Rossiya] doubled consonants will remain. All adverbs will be written joined [porusski, nadnyakh, bezoglyadki], i.e. as one word. The "hard" sign used for division [ad yurant] will disappear., but 32 letters will remain in the alphabet.

It will not be necessary to wrack your brain over the phrase [sem'ya (ne) bogata]. Now we must think about whether this is a negation of wealth, or an assertion of poverty, and in consequence write [ne] joined or separate. [Ne] will be written separately with verbs and where used to show contrast. (Translator's note [ne priyatel], not a friend, [nepriyatel], enemy:.) Instead of 16 rules of syllabification and two footnotes there will be one single principle of division – syllabic: [kho-ro-sho]. All compound (hyphenated) adjectives will (henceforth) be written as one word.

1964 will become a year of reform for Russian orthography. The project, authorized by the Communist Party, will be completed by competent linguists in the appropriate time.

[1] In USA we don't have an orthographic commission such as they have in Russia, France, Spain: Sweden, Norway.

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9. My Daughter's Being Educated, by Parke Cummings

Some modern educators and a travel agency recently talked me into believing a trip to Europe this summer would contribute to my daughter's knowledge and education, Here are excerpts from her letters,

Took a boat on the Tems River and saw the Tower of London where several queens including Mary Queene of Scotch, were beheaded. Also saw Madam Truso's Waxworks with replicas of such people as Muscleeeny and Richard the Line-Hearted ...

Visited Reems, France which is the shampain district and saw how shampain is made and tasted some. Also saw a statue of Joan Dark.

Got to Venis and road in gandolers on the canals and saw the famous Bridge of Size. Fed the pidgins in the great square in front of St. Marx...

Had a wonderful time in Florence (they spell it Freeze here) and saw pictures by Mikeangelow, Leonard D. Vinchy and some others. Didn't have time to see the runes of Pompay.

In Paris and saw the Loover and the fishermen on the Sane River and Noter Dame Church and the Latin 1/4 : .
(from the Santa Barbara Weekly Magazine section)

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[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1966 pp10–12 in the printed version]

10. Let's Have Effective Phonics, by Mildred Vandenburg, M.S.

The teaching of phonics in public schools has become a moot topic of conversation and debate all over the country. Is phonics being taught today? In what grade should the speech sounds be introduced? Why don't teachers place greater emphasis on them? Can reading and spelling be taught as effectively without phonics?

To these questions so frequently asked should be added another; what kind of phonics – direct phonics? indirect or intrinsic phonics?

I have taught phonics for over twenty years. All teachers with whom I have associated teach phonics. They spend untold hours printing and illustrating charts and flash cards. Manuals and guide books on curriculum for all elementary grade should be examined by anyone who entertains doubts about it. Teachers use these books. Supervisors and principals see that they do.

Unfortunately, the rules of phonics have so many exceptions that teachers must always qualify them by such terms as "may," "usually," "unless," and "except."

Let's consider some of the words used in primers. *Come* and *home* are two you will always find. Are they phonetically consistent? Hardly! Why, then, is the spelling analogous? Because when our alphabet was being formulated, the short *u*-sound tended to confuse people. So *o* was substituted in such words as: *Love*, *come*, and *money*. [1] Centuries later, it is still retained. Try explaining that to five-year-olds!

Go and *goes* can be taught phonetically, except that the *s* sounds like *z*. But when the words *do* and *does* appear in the same primer, can the child recognize the familiar elements? Not when the sounds are at odds. Two-letter words like *no*, *do*, *go*, and *to* must be recognized by sight, not by sound.

Let's take another vowel. If the *e* in *here* has the hooked long *e*-sound [2] why does it sound like *a* in *there* and *where*? The three words are obviously related in both spelling and meaning – but not phonetically!

Children often spell *they*, t-h-a-y. But we can't permit them to spell this common word phonetically because it is incorrect.

After the child is taught the sound of *wh* in such words as *why*, *when*, and *where*, he is confronted with *who* which he must pronounce *hu*.

He sees *ou* in so many words he should know how it sounds. But who does? Consider its sounds in *out*, *soup*, *county*, *cough*, *should*, *though*, *journey*.

Our five vowel letters are abstract signs which must represent some 19 or more different sounds. In addition they may be silent. Or they may be combined to form blends (as *oi*). How young can a child be taught such complexity?

"When two vowels go walking, the first one does the talking." Who says so? Let him pronounce *heart*, *wear*, *great*, *said*, or *shoe* according to that hackneyed jingle.

Rhyming words are recognizable by primary children; such as *all*, *ball*, *fall*, *call*, *bat cat*, *hat*, *rat*.

Yet try this:

Get your sox

Out of the box.

Put your toes

In your shoes.

(Oh, dear! Pity the poor teacher'?)

Perplexing to the very young child are the numerous exceptions which occur even in the most rudimentary vocabulary. Why do *good* and *could* rhyme; while *good* and *food* don't? Can he reconcile the inconsistencies in sight and sound relationships which occur in words like *how* and *low*, *have* and *gave*, *warm* and *harm*, *hear* and *wear*, *worm* and *worn*?

Learning to read by the phonics method is further complicated by the many ways of spelling one sound, such as: *door*, *four*, *roar*, *o'er* and *more*; *bed*, *said*, *head*, *many*, *friend*, *leopard*, *guess*; *where*, *air*, *heir*, and *care*, *carry*, *bury*, *fairy*, *merry*, *wary*, and *prairie*.

The classical illustration of this enigma is the 14 ways of spelling the *sh*-sound, listed by Mario Pei in *The Story of English*: *shoe*, *sugar*, *issue*, *nation*, *mansion*, *mission*, *suspicion*, *ocean*, *nauseous*, *conscious*, *schist*, *chaperone*, *pshaw*, and *fuchsia*.

When a story says, "I r-e-a-d the book," does it mean read (past) or read (present)? Interpretation must be by context clue; *not* by phonics.

Phonetic analysis is the most helpful in recognizing familiar elements in words. To the beginner, of course, there aren't any familiar elements. Teachers must familiarize them by drill. But sometimes it seems morally wrong to teach children rules which are continually broken. It sets a bad example for them, and it certainly is confusing!

There are a few letters in our alphabet which have only one sound – unless they are silent *b*, *k*, *l*, *m*, *r*, and *v*. Consonant blends like *pl* in *play*, *br* in *bring*, and *sn* in *snow* are reasonably stable.

The beginner is taught to recognize initial sounds of words, as *d* in *do*, *dog*, *day*, and *daddy*, But not the sounds of the initial letters in hundreds of words such as *know*, *gnat*, *honor*, *aisle*, *write*, *wrong*.

When teachers endeavor to build up logical associations as *e-a-t* is in *meat* which we *eat*, while *m-e-e-t* is a verb, they are stymied by *beet* which we eat, while the verb is spelled *b-e-a-t*.

Reading being a complex combination of processes which includes recognition, perception, and understanding of words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs, much more than phonics must be employed to teach it to children. The earlier reading begins to function as communication of ideas rather than mechanical sounding out of letters and symbols, the faster progress will be. The printed page must be comprehended and reacted to by the child in order to stimulate interest. Ideally, reading should be a *see-comprehend* process. Spelling should be simplified to a *see-hear-say-write* routine. The gist of the whole matter is that our language needs a thorough overhaul job. Time spent

teaching exceptions to rules and drilling on non-phonetically spelled words could then be used to teach factual knowledge.

If English were as regular as Hawaiian, for example, there would be only 12 letters to teach, each of which has but one sound and is never silent. Simple isn't it! Limited? Granted! Which is probably why Hawaiians speak English. But the contrast must seem formidable to natives who learn both languages.

Esperanto has been proposed as a universal language. But how many speak it? Perhaps it hasn't caught on because it isn't the native tongue of anyone. Didn't we all learn to talk by imitation? We can benefit, though, by noting the logic of its inception. What a ball teachers would have if the rules for English were as regular! Each letter has only one sound unless diacritical marks are added. All nouns end with *o*, all adjectives with *a*, all adverbs with *e*. Present tense verbs end with *a-s*, past verbs with *i-s*, and those in the future tense with *o-s*. Besides the lack of conformity in word endings, many English words function as several parts of speech, making it difficult to explain the parts of speech to children. The word *free*, for example, may be a verb, adverb, or adjective. Francis Scott Key used it as a compound noun in: "land of the free". Possession is shown by the preposition "de" in Esperanto, as in Latin languages, thus eliminating our troublesome apostrophe method. The vocabulary is enriched by the use of ten suffixes and thirty prefixes, which are listed in *A Practical Course in Esperanto* by Dr. Ferenc Szalazi. By comparison, our language has more than a hundred of both.

But when is a prefix a prefix? The prefix *im* means not. Impossible means not possible. But does image mean not age? or impart not part? And how can a child identify a suffix? *Er* has two meanings, depending upon whether it is added to a noun or a modifier. A teacher is one who teaches. Sweeter is more sweet. But how about mother?

Latin languages are much more nearly phonetical than English. And there is visual-aural relationship between such words as *nino* and *nina* for boy and girl, and *perro* and *perrito* for dog and puppy. Our logical offspring tend to call a little dog a "doggy" and a small horse a horsey." They are better keyed to phonetics than is our language!

Why is English so Irregular and complex? Let's take a quick dive into the past and review its evolution. [3] The first known alphabet was found a few years ago at Byblos, the oldest city in the world. The Phoenicians had an alphabet of 22 consonants in the 19th century B.C. The Greeks took it and created five signs representing vowels. It was the Etruscans who burdened posterity with three letters representing the *k*-sound, *k*, *c* and *q*. 28 centuries later, we still cling to this useless heritage! These Etruscans settled in Italy about 800 B.C. and passed the alphabet on to the Romans who modified it to suit their sounds. In their conquests, it spread all over Europe.

On the British Isles, words were adopted from Latin, Danish; and French. King Alfred (871-899 A.D.) wrote in the Anglo-Saxon dialect and is credited with perpetuating it. Modern English became established with the advent of printing. Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language* (1775) stabilized it. But Johnson performed a disservice to students learning to read and spell by placing a *b* in such words as *doubt* and *debt*. Our dictionary now has more than a million words. [4] Over half are of Latin, Greek; and French origin. The rest are from all over the world.

Is it any wonder students have difficulty mastering this hodge-podge? English spelling has been dubbed as an awesome mess and a pergatory by noted scholars. Why must it remain thus?

Our language is not static. Anyone familiar with Chaucer or Shakespeare knows that the English vocabulary has undergone changes both in spelling and definition.

Attempts have been made to simplify spelling from time to time. Noah Webster omitted *u* from *labor* and one *l* from *traveler*. He changed *cheque* to *check*, *plough* to *plow*, *defence* to *defense*. In 1906, Theodore Roosevelt ordered the public printer to adopt new spellings for about 300 words, when used in official publications. They included *thru*, *tho*, *thoroly*, and *dropt*. He intended to add more. Instead, he had to retract his order because of congressional opposition. In 1949, Dr. Mont Follick proposed a bill in Great Britain to simplify spelling, but it was defeated on first reading by 3 votes. Parliament feared, among other things, it might isolate England from other English-speaking countries. It also saw Follick's system and was dismayed by its strange appearance.

Are we Americans buried in tradition? We accept progress and change in practically every other aspect of life as a matter of course. Why can't we convert our language into a phonetic one, and establish a definite relationship between written and spoken words? Teachers could then teach reading and spelling dependably by phonics. We owe this service to our children; Shorthand and Braille would both benefit. And since English is being taught all over the world and is now a required subject in many foreign schools, international understanding would be promoted. Prospects seem bright for English to become the universal language. Even now, half the world's newspapers are published in English. In Egypt, science is taught in English in the universities because Arabic lacks so many scientific terms. It is estimated that three hundred million people speak our tongue. But how foreigners bemoan the irregularities and inconsistencies of it!

It has well been said that man should not become enslaved to his own inventions. Language should be a servant of the people.

But to whom should the task of renovation be delegated? By what authority are changes made?

In his *Handbook of Composition*. [5] Edwin C. Wooley states: "Standards of good English are determined by usage of high-ranking authors and the majority of well-educated people after their judgement has been established." Obviously this pace is incompatible with progress in our space age.

The general public is tolerating without demur industries' attempts to rectify our cumbersome system in such words as donut, snak bar; hi and lo-speed; thruway, sno cone; nite club, Duz; and Kash and Karry, Kodak.

Disturbing is the fact that no group or organization has the power of reform! We need a body of experts with authority to update our language and to continue to do so at regular intervals. The Norwegian language has been periodical, renovated ever since the practice was introduced in the early nineteenth century, according to A. C. Moorehead in his *Triumph of the Alphabet*. Egypt, in her drive against illiteracy, is modernizing Arabic! Turkey switched from Arabic to phonetic Roman letters in 1932. The Russian language was meliorated after the overthrow of the Czarist regime, Why not English?

Our Department of Health, Education, and Welfare might be the logical organization to take action. The Secretary of this Department should be empowered to appoint a committee of expert linguists; etymologists and professors to review and up-date our language, say every ten years. Cooperation of other English-speaking nations should be sought.

For a start, the following revisions are suggested:

Delete the letter *c* from the alphabet. It substitutes for either *k* or *s*, causing confusion. Replace our third letter with *ch* or a single symbol to represent this digraph.

Delete the letter *q* from the alphabet. It has the sound of *k* and isn't needed.

Delete the letter *x* from the alphabet. Its sound is either that of *z* in xylophone or *ks* – pure, or adulterated to *gz*,

Retain the letter *y* only as a consonant; as in *yes*. Replace it with *i* for the long vowel sound, as in *bisikle*.

Use *u* for the short *u* and schwa sounds: Change *wonder* to *wunder*, *come* to *kum*, *silent* to *silunt*, possible to *possubl*.

Use *z* for its sound instead of *s*. Spell *rize* like *size*, *bizzy* like *dizzy*, and plurals with *z*-sound with *z*, *bellz*.

Substitute *j* for soft *g*, leaving only one sound for the letter *g*. Fish have *gills*. There are four *jills* in a pint.

Change all *ph*'s to *f*. Why should we cling to the Greek *ph*, when *f* has replaced it in the Latin languages, as *telefono*, *fotografia*, *filosofia*?

Omit the unnecessary silent letters like *gh* in words like *night*. Spell *nite* like *bite*, *scene* like *sen*, *frend*, *lern*, *bild*.

Strike out the initial silent letters of words as in *gnat*, *wrong*, *know*, and *pneumonia*, so that all words can be located in the dictionary by their initial sounds.

Adopt a uniform symbol to designate long vowel sounds, either a silent terminal *e*, (*mad*, *made*; *set*, *sete*; *lik*, *like*; *tub*, *tube*) or a vowel digraf with *e*, as in *Mae*, *see*, *thie*, *toe*, *Tuesdae*.

Let's lift thu chane frum around the neks uv our children hu ar wasting valuable time strugling with our outmoded languaje. Let's hav fonetik speling!

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11. i.t.a. and the Remedial Child, by Raymond E. Laurita*

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Of all the perplexing problems facing the schools today, the task of improving reading instruction must stand near the head of the list. Yet as attempts are made to upgrade instructional techniques, the unyielding dilemma of the child who cannot learn to read imposes a terribly inhibiting bar to improvement. Better training for teachers, more logical linguistically oriented approaches and increased vocabulary loads in the early texts are ways to speed the flow of language to the child who is ready to learn. But what of those millions who cannot even now learn with existing techniques?

For these children we need a new and enlightened approach such as the Initial Teaching Alphabet offers. Up to now the major emphasis in remedial programs has been on correction rather than on prevention of reading disability. The general attitude of teachers to the child who could not learn was to wait until he had passed the point of no return before initiating treatment. This method has proven to be disastrous, for the numbers of children who have been rehabilitated has to be miniscule in terms of the total number of children who have failed to learn how to read adequately.

Keeping children in remedial classes and providing them with more of the same material they failed to grasp the first time was after all not a very sensible or practical solution. This approach failed to really get at the toot of the difficulty buried deep in the soil of the early educational experience and covered over with successive and continually more confusing layers of new material. The fifth grader who failed because of letter confusions or retarded auditory discrimination at the first grade level didn't respond with improved discrimination for this was no longer the problem. The problem now had become hopelessly complicated by emotional, educational, and psychological factors extremely resistant to treatment.

Another reason for the widespread lack of success of traditional programs of corrective remediation was failure on the part of teachers to sufficiently understand or allow for the debilitating factor of anxiety. The child who fails in the early learning experience becomes literally, a child fearful of the reading situations. His response to treatment cannot even begin to be adequately evaluated until the teacher has effectively overcome the child's' deep feelings of anxiety. His responses will appear those of a confused, immature, even retarded child until the new reading situation becomes a safe, secure environment, where he can begin to perform consistently without fear of the failure that marked his earlier commitment to learning. Thus it may take the more severely disabled as long as three years of unsuccessful treatment before anxiety has been sufficiently relieved to permit an accurate evaluation of ability and progress.

It becomes increasingly evident then that if a successful approach to substantially cutting the number of disabled readers is to be found; emphasis must be in the direction of prevention rather than the traditional response of correction "after the fact." If the child is to be aided, help must come *before* anxiety becomes a significantly inhibiting factor and causes responses to deteriorate into

generalized confusion. The vicious cycle of reading failure, emotional upset and final total school failure has to be broken.

Any approach with prevention as its "raison d'etre" will of necessity be more successful than former methods, for the problems will be attacked in the manageable stage. But, speaking from experience with the remedial child, the Initial Teaching Alphabet offers the most helpful approach toward the end of prevention of reading disability on a number of grounds.

First, the very nature of ITA is conducive to improving the child's ability to both initially perceive accurately and later discriminate. For the child experiencing difficulty, the problem of disturbed perception and resulting confused visual discrimination cannot be underestimated. Children with less than adequate visual skills need every weapon in their perceptual arsenal to develop sufficient skills for consistent viewing of words as whole and unvarying units. The fact that ITA provides this kind of consistent attack is a major factor in its success both with the child learning to read initially and the remedial child.

Second and most significant for the remedial teacher is the consistent auditory nature of the ITA. Being able to provide a set of unchanging auditory clues which correspond consistently with the abstract visual symbol is a tool that has been absent up to the present time. Current linguistic approaches and those earlier of Gillingham [\[1\]](#) and Bloomfield and Barnhart [\[2\]](#) become bogged down when the child is of necessity exposed to words no longer corresponding to the auditory clues used in these restricted approaches.

ITA enables the development of a set of attack skills that provide him with the capacity to read a kind of language within the realm of his experience and not unrealistic conglomerations like "Nan can fan the pan Dan." The student in the ITA class can read any material in his experience vocabulary, thus enabling him to develop confidence, reliable viewing patterns, consistent attack skills, and the ability to profit from context since he isn't being continually misdirected by faulty visual clues.

Third, ITA provides the remedial teacher with a potent weapon in making almost immediate improvement in the child's ability to spell. Up to now, spelling was usually the last area of improvement for the confused child even when reading therapy was highly successful. Now, with an approach that enables a student to spell upwards of 50% of his language by using a reliable and consistent approach, he gains renewed confidence within the framework of the traditional classroom at once. He can begin to compete in an area where he has been utterly lost before.

Adherents of phonetic approaches to spelling may claim that present methods give the child the same ability. Unfortunately this isn't so for the rules governing the use of phonetic elements are so complicated that they are hopelessly confusing to the already confused remedial child. He cannot learn to spell because spelling has been divorced from the reading and writing experience, thus depriving him of the necessary reinforcing practice he needs to develop visual and auditory memory clues. ITA is almost self-motivating for it enables the child to utilize his skills in a coordinated manner using all the senses to strengthen and reinforce prior learning experiences.

The transition argument concerning possible difficulty in learning to spell in the traditional manner is being debunked more thoroughly each day as thousands of children leave ITA classrooms and experience little or no difficulty whatever. In my own experience with dozens of remedial cases ranging from the moderate to the severe over the past two and a half years, there hasn't been a single case of difficulty. In fact, the exact reverse is true with significantly observable progress and improvement being evident in every single case, If one understands the real nature of spelling as a delicate and intuitive blending of combined auditory; visual and memory skills, the reasoning behind the improved capabilities of the ITA children becomes clear.

Last and most significant for the child is a newfound opportunity to use his capacity for comparison and differentiation within the framework of an unvarying set of symbols. Within the structure of the traditional alphabet there is no "built-in" component for enabling the child to see and hear simultaneously the differences between the *a* in cat and the *a* in watch. Or the sound of *o* in hop or the sound of *o* in found. With ITA, the teacher can effectively demonstrate both visually and aurally that these are *different sound symbols*. The child can learn to differentiate and compare for himself. Up to the present, he was forced to work with the same visual symbol designating a variety of sound symbols such as the *a* in *hat, make, bar, caught, care, was*, etc. It becomes clear that the *number of variables* present in these words would make their solution a formidable task for normally developing students. How much more of a barrier must this aspect of the decoding process impose on the confused child?

This single difference in learning emphasis is perhaps the greatest single improvement of ITA over traditional methods for it permits the student to make self-directed discoveries rather than absolute reliance on teacher direction.

Thus it is to be sincerely hoped that remedial teachers everywhere will experiment with ITA as a weapon in the fight against reading retardation. The evidence strongly indicates it will provide education with a significant weapon in improving reading instructional techniques, Surely it has proved itself sufficiently to warrant at least an experimental class in every school Then even the most wary and cautious in our ranks can witness for themselves an experience that should result in great happiness and effective learning for the students in these classes.

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12. One Teacher's Experience with an Initial Teaching Alphabet in First Grade, by Betty Allen Iles, M.A.*

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*from Appendix A of her M.A. thesis, 1965, Lamar State College of Technology, Beaumont, Texas.

After having taught first grade for six years in a school that employed phonics through the third grade; I observed: 1) superior pupils found phonics, even with its many principles, a convenient tool that allowed them to attack effortlessly almost any word, 2) when the average pupil was carefully instructed and given ample opportunity to practice the application of the principles, he could use phonics to unlock almost any word up to two syllables unless it drastically violated these principles, 3) the poor pupils found phonics of little value. There were so many things to remember that he often became confused after several attempts and ended up guessing or lapsing into silence, waiting for the teacher to tell him the word. Too often instead of gradually learning the rules in ensuing years, he fell further behind, never becoming able to apply the rules quickly and skillfully: He had to use memory and context to identify words, guessing at new ones if there was no one to help him.

My concern was shared by others. They too knew that the child could never gain real reading independence depending on only two tools, memory and context, Two others phonetic and structural analysis were most needed in attack on new words. Many systems had been worked out by concerned persons to simplify the task of learning to identify new words phonetically. One system in particular appealed to me.

Since children were grouped according to reading readiness in our school; and the teachers taught every group, rotating from year to year, the time had come for me to reach the "low readiness" group. I talked with my principal and superintendent and received permission to try out Pitman's phonetically regular alphabet on these children who seemed to gain so little from the conventional phonics instruction.

The Class. When school opened, tests were given and groupings made. I found myself with a group of 21 children who ranked from *very* low normal to those who just barely scored. There were 10 boys and 11 girls. For the most part these children were younger, smaller in stature, immature in muscle coordination and speech. Most had difficulty with the articulation of consonants and blends and often substituted one sound for another Several suffered from extreme shyness, it was many weeks before we did not have at least one child crying for his mother part of the day.

Figure 1

Scores on Metropolitan Reading Readiness Test in October

Pupil	Reading readiness	Total readiness
Randy	39	46
Robert R.	37	52
Cindy	36	-
Linda	35	40
Ikeal	34	41
Susie	35	39

Deborah P.	32	42
Karl	29	34
Robby	28	47
Lynn	27	32
Glenda	25	26
Lynette	24	35
Harold	23	27
Deborah B.	21	31
Clayton	21	27
James	21	26
Eunice	21	23
Tommy	18	23
Eilene	16	22
Lester	15	22
Patrice	6	7

Beginning the alphabet. On September 22, reading readiness workbook; *Book 1*, of the *Early to Read* series was begun. Most of the children had settled down, the main problem being the short attention of those involved. The exercises in the book were designed to overcome this. They had high interest and variety. Soon the children were able to "read^s" sentences to the teacher and each other. Also, they began to listen for certain sounds at the beginning, choosing between words with a specific sound and those without.

On Oct. 9, the first formal evaluation was made. On the first half of the test, all of the children fell into the normal range, on the second half of the test, the scores were so low that it was decided to give the children additional readiness material before proceeding to new materials.

By October 22, the children were able to sound out many one syllable words. They had learned the symbols *p, t, b, r, s, a, e, i*. They could substitute one symbol for another and sound out the new word. They were very elated over being able to "really read."

About this time, a group of the more eager pupils began to read in John Downing's little readers. Though these books were designed to be used with the *look-and-say* approach, the children used their knowledge of sounding to attack the words. By this time, the room had been divided into three groups for work in the reading circle. The top group read out of the enlarged version of the pre-primer, the others working on symbol recognition, word sounding, and reading sentences.

By November 10, almost all of the children were able to go to the board and write words I dictated to them with little or no difficulty. On the 12th, they finished the readiness book and began the workbook that accompanied the first text in the *Early to Read* series. In this book they were introduced to the remaining symbols. The top 2/3 of the class were able to read in the Downing readers and were reading short stories from the board or from mimeographed sheets. These they took home to read to their families.

Early in December, the children had learned enough symbols that they were ready to begin in the text book that is, the top 2/3 had. The lower group continued to work in readiness. They did not begin the book until after Christmas. By the first of February, Group 1 had reached the fifth story of *Book 3*, while Group 2 was in the last, and Group 3 in the next to last stories in *Book 2*. The first

group read fluently with good expression, seldom pausing to sound words. The second group was competent at independent word attack but more halting in oral reading. Their comprehension was good. The last two groups (seven children altogether) were very slow and required reading, questioning, and re-reading to get the real thought in the sentence or paragraph. Though very slow, they were sounding out the new words themselves with help from me in some cases.

I.Q. Tests (Otis) in February resulted' in a mean score of 95 for the class, the highest being 111, the lowest 79 (fg2).

Figure 2.

Scores on Otis Test of Mental Maturity and their correspondence to the performance of the children in reading at the time of the test.

Pupil	Age	I.Q.	Reading Group
Deborah P.	6.10	111	1
Glenda	6.6	109	2
Robby	7.2	105	1
Robert R.	7.2	104	1
Ikeal	6.8	103	2
Lynn	6.6	99	3
Lynette	6.9	98	1
Tommy	7.3	98	1
Susie	6.8	96	3
Cindy	7.4	95	2
James	6.7	95	2
Randy	6.5	94	2
Clayton	7.4	94	2
Harold	6.6	94	4
Eunice	7.3	91	2
Linda	6.5	90	4
Elray	6.7	89	3
Patrice	6.9	88	4
Karl	6.9	87	4
Eilene	7.3	86	3
Jearl	6.5	79	4

The most advanced group had reached the approximate middle of *Book 5* by Washington's birthday. They were very excited over the stories in this book – stories that were far advanced from the conventional first grade bill-of-fare, in either vocabulary or subject matter. The children in these stories lived with the circus, operated (unsuccessfully) a lemonade stand, visited with a talking crow. The adults were astronauts, skin divers, or brave old men who explored haunted houses They were already making the transition to regular reading material. They often came up, asserting "This word says - - -Mrs. Iles?" When they began to read their friends' t.o. books on the school bus, the regular first grade library books were made available to them. Comparing notes with the t.o. teacher next door, we found that these children read the t.o. primer with approximately the same ease as her children who were the "B" group.

In the meantime, Group 2 was gaining in fluency, working hard on quick sounding of words, trying not to audibly sound out words while reading orally. They were also working on reading with the proper expression.

During the second week in March, a transliterated version of a standard vocabulary test was given. The results were gratifying: 2 scored at grade 4, 4 at grade 3-2, 2 at 2-2, 1 at 2-1, 2 at first reader, 3 at pre-primer, the rest at below 70% of pre-primer. Though this seems low, even those who scored low could have scored more if they had not been timed. Only five seconds per word was permitted. Six weeks later they were tested again and this time the gains made were surprising. Several of the children had progressed a whole year. Particularly pleasing was the progress of the lower group. Only one had failed to gain at least one level. On this test, the results were: 5 at grade 4, 3 at gr. 3-2, 1 at 3-1, 2 at 2-2, 2 at 2-1, 3 at primer, 4 at preprimer. We had lost one child who went into special education. See fig. 3

Figure 3.

Results of Botel's Survey administered in March and May, 1965.

Pupil	First Test	Second Test	Gain
Deborah P.	4 ^{0*}	4 ⁰	*
Robert R.	4 ^{0*}	4 ⁰	*
Lynette	3 ²	4 ⁰	1 level
Robby	3 ²	4 ⁰	1 level
Lester	3 ²	4 ⁰	1 level
Tommy	3 ²	3 ²	none
Cindy	2 ²	3 ²	2 levels
Eunice	2 ¹	3 ¹	2 levels
Glenda	1 ³	3 ¹	3 levels
Randy	1 ³	2 ²	2 levels
James	1	2 ²	4 levels
Eilene	1	2 ¹	3 levels
Clayton	1	2 ¹	3 levels
Karl	-1	1	1 level
Lynn	-1	1 ²	2 levels
Patrice	-1	1 ³	3 levels
Ikeal	-1	1	1 level
Elray	-1	1	1 level
Susan	-1	1	1 level
Harold	-1	-1	1 level
Linda	-1	-1	none

*top score on the test.

About this time the Gray-Votaw-Rogers Achievement test for the primary grades was administered, the reading portion being given twice. Two forms were used, one the regular t.o. version, the other (different material) had been transliterated. (See figure 4) While these do not seem to be particularly good scores, it must be kept in mind that this is the lowest section (D section) of the first grade.

Figure 4.

Reading scores on transliterated version of Gray-Votaw-Rogers General Achievement Test, May, 1965.

Pupil	Vocab.	Compr.	Ave. Reading	Educ. Grade
Robby	18	20	19	2.4
Deborah P.	18	20	19	2.4
Robert R.	13	17	15	2.1
Lynette	15	15	15	2.1
Tommy	13	10	11.5	1.8
Cindy	11	12	11.5	1.8
Lester	12	10	11	1.7
Glenda	7	8	7.5	1.5
Eunice	4	10	7	1.5
James	9	5	7	1.5
Clayton	5	9	7	1.5
Eilene	2	7	4.5	1.3
Ikeal	4	4	4	1.3
Randy	4	3	3.5	1.3
Karl	3	4	3.5	1.3
Elray	4	2	3	1.3
Harold	4	2	3	1.3
Susie	4	1	2.5	1.2
Lynn	4	1	2.5	1.2
Patrice	2	0	1	1.0
Linda	1	0	.5	1.0

Normally, many of these children would not be reading at all. As far as the standard t.o. version was concerned, only the scores of the children who had made the transition were considered. Most of these children read the material confidently, indicating that they had made the transition effectively enough that reading in the new medium, t.o. was not too difficult.

A comparison of scores shows:

Pupil	i/t/a	grade level	t.o.	grade level
Deborah	38	2.4	39	2.5
Robby	38	2.4	30	2.0
Lynette	30	2.0	26	1.9
Robert	30	2.0	41	2.6
Tommy	23	1.8	18	1.7

On the whole, the experience with i/t/a was enlightening and satisfying. From the beginning, we had not expected to accomplish miracles. I had been looking for a way to teach children with limited powers of attention and memory to be able to attack new words effectively, unburdened by the irregularities and inconsistencies encountered in even the most systematic phonics system. With Pitman's alphabet and its regular spelling, the burden imposed on the child was far less. He was required only to recognize the symbol and associate it with its sound; remembering names was unnecessary. Even the slowest child in the room, once he recalled the sounds the symbols stood for and had sufficient practice; could identify most words in his reader. He was seldom told a word; but when unable to recall a certain sound represented, was helped to recall the sound and to blend it

with the known sounds to produce the unfamiliar word. Wild guessing, common in the poor reader, seldom occurred.

The regularity of the spelling made independent writing a much more enjoyable occupation than is usual in a low section of first grade. The children were not afraid to attempt to spell any word they needed; their misspellings generally reflected their own pronunciation difficulties. In previous years, getting these children to write captions and sentences had been a difficult task. They worked slowly, were not good at remembering even the most commonly used words. The usual aids such as picture dictionaries and words on lists were of little use. The i/t/a children did not seem to suffer from these difficulties. Where last year's children had struggled over simple captions, this year's group were writing sentences. By Christmas many sentences had lengthened into stories. They wrote about many things – birthday and Christmas gifts, their likes and dislikes, their ambitions, everyday happenings, or imaginative stories. Some, like Robby, became intoxicated with his new power and wrote long stories, trying to make each one longer than the previous. The workbooks that accompanied the text were designed to encourage independent writing. They contained thought-provoking pictures with spaces provided for the child's original story. The subjects varied from a boy with his kite hung in a tree, to a captive princess in a tall tower guarded by a fire spitting dragon.

The close of school found the children at all stages of the reading program. The top group had read all but the last five stories in *Book 7*, the last book of the series. The next group had finished *Book 5* and was making the formal transition (many were already reading conventional primers). The third group had finished *Book 4* and would continue through the series in the fall until they too had made the transition. For the most part, this group was not attempting to do much reading in conventional readers, tho they were beginning to associate the capitals with the lower case letters and to pick out words that were the same in both orthographies. Two children were to be retained, not having made sufficient progress to convince us that they were ready to work with even a slow section of the 2nd grade.

All persons concerned felt that the year's work with i/t/a in the first grade was worthwhile but that one-year's trial was not sufficient to draw any real conclusions from it. It was decided that the new medium should be tried in all sections of the first grade over a three year period before any opinions were formed as to its effectiveness and its official adoption.

As far as I was concerned, I found several advantages to the system over conventional phonics programs, particularly where immature children were concerned: 1) Not having to learn letter names simplified learning the *sounds*, 2) consistent spelling made for more consistent sounding and gave the children confidence in their ability to attack words, 3) the simultaneous reading-writing of the symbols and sounds was more effective than the conventional way of making two separate activities, 4) the consistency made independent writing easier and more interesting, 5) the wide variety of materials read did much to enrich the children's vocabularies and vicarious experiences, particularly important to this group of children.

13. Criteria for Designing a Phonetic Alphabet, by Newell W. Tune.

Most persons do not realize how very complex a problem is involved in designing an alphabet. There are so many facets of its potential uses that most people overlook many of these potential uses and limitations. Let us see if we can decide first of all the things that an alphabet is required to do or be.

Firstly, it must be successful as a teaching tool. Secondly, it must be a permanent, useful tool that will not need to be changed soon. Thirdly, in order to meet the first, it must not have any confusion between the various letters. Fourthly, it should be easily written by hand. Fifthly, there must be no difficulty of discrimination between the different letters – since this creates stumbling blocks and hence is harmful to acquiring speed in reading. Sixthly, in order to accomplish our objective easily, the new alphabet must not be too strange in appearance with our present letters. The new types should be designed to conform and integrate with the present Roman letters. Seventhly, and since we are accustomed to use most consonant letters in a regular manner these should all be retained nearly unchanged in shape for their most frequently used sounds. This principle can also be applied to a certain extent to the vowel letters and sounds, but here we will have to invent some new letters to accommodate all the sounds necessary to prevent making homophones out of words requiring discrimination such as: aud, odd, auto, Otto, naughty, knotty, and many others with these and other similar sounds.

Most alphabet designers do little or no research in the field of alphabet design – yet they could profit by examining many of the hundreds of alphabets designed in the past and printed in books and pamphlets on alphabet reform or spelling reform. Additionally, research into such subjects as what kind of type makes for easier reading – what parts of the type convey the most discrimination – what causes confusion in young learners, etc.

Two excellent books that have been used so frequently for this purpose that they are almost like a bible to phoneticians are Dr. Edmund B Huey *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading* and Miles A. Tinker *Legibility of Print*, (Iowa State Univ., Press, Ames Iowa, 1963). This latter is still available.

Huey says on page 93: "It might seem therefore that letter width is a very important factor in characterizing word form." (He means that there needs to be a variety in the width of letters to aid in quick discrimination). Tinker, in his tests on speed of reading with 11 different type faces, (page 48) showed that American Typewriter Pica, was 5.1% slower than Garamond type and was exceeded in difficulty only by Cloister Black (Old English) type, But he also noted that Pica was first in perceptibility at a distance, (ease of perception), hence the loss of speed was entirely due to the same width of all characters. Along this same line, Huey points out that variety in height, shape, ascenders, descenders, etc; are useful points of discrimination between words so as to contribute to speed of reading. Then Huey also says on page 98, "the upper half of a word or a letter is obviously more important for perception than is the lower half. This may be tested by comparing the difficulty of reading the two mutilated passages," one with the bottom half missing and the other with the top half missing.

It seems: to me that the greater importance of the upper half is due rather to the words being better differentiated there than below, as shown by Messmer's count of 238 letters projecting above the line to 32 below, Besides; we habitually find most meanings in the upper parts of objects, we ourselves are so placed and so oriented as to bring this about. This, then, is why all capital print is much harder to read than lower case printing. This lack of variation in the top and bottom coast lines eliminates points of quick fixation and discernment. Tinker found that this tends to retard speed of reading. By experimentation and speed tests, Tinker has found that all capital print is 13% to 20% slower to read than all lower case letters. Consequently, an alphabet based upon all letters being capitals or all the same height would be more difficult to read and would retard speed of reading. Tinker (page 57) tells of "an investigation in which 60 college students read material in all capitals and then in all lower case for 4 successive 5-minute periods. The speed of reading was measured. Scores were obtained for 5, 10, 20 minute periods, the % differences ranged from 9.53 to 19.01. For the 20-minute periods; the % retarding effect of the all capitals was 13.89%. It is apparent from the above data that an all-capital printing retards speed of reading to a striking degree. More could be said on this part of legibility, but we must spend some time on the other factors to consider in designing an alphabet. Let us go back to considering in detail the 7 necessary features.

Primarily an alphabet should be a teaching tool. Everyone has to learn how to use it. If it has faults that handicap it in this feature, it will not be very successful. Witness Izaak Pitman's alphabets of 1843–59. They were not made with considerations for the ease of transition to our present alphabet and spelling and consequently greatly retarded the transition. Seeing the faults of his grandfather's alphabet Sir James Pitman gave a lot of time and study to the ease of transition in designing the i.t.a., consequently it is the most successful of any alphabet designed for that purpose. And probably will be for a longtime to come.

Generally speaking an object can be designed most successfully to do only one job properly or to its peak of efficiency. No man can serve several masters at the same time. An alphabet that is designed primarily as an initial teaching alphabet has as its dominating feature the transition to Traditional Orthography. (Of course phoneticness and lack of confusion are also important considerations). Thus Pitman's i.t.a. while admirable for its purpose, is not as good as some others designed for a permanent reform alphabet. An alphabet such as Malone's Unifon, which is designed so that all characters are easily and unmistakably scanned by an electronic device, is not suitable for an initial teaching alphabet because of the great differences with T.O. And is not as easily readable as one designed for that particular purpose. Also, the needs of electronic scanning do not run similar to handwriting needs hence interfere with ease of handwriting.

The second consideration, permanence and avoidance of future changes depends upon how well and with what foresight the alphabet is designed. All factors affecting its usefulness must be carefully considered and their importance weighed and good judgement used to decide their relative importance. This factor of good judgement is something that very few persons have yet is often recognized by others lacking it when the results of good judgement are shown in an example – particularly if contrasting points are shown. The converse should be true; yet most alfabetees are blinded by their enthusiasm for their own incomplete considerations that they cannot see its faults. Remember to the mother duck there is no ugly duckling. Its good features blind us to its faults.

The third consideration, lack of confusion between the different letters is an important consideration. There are points to consider in this aspect mirror-image reversals size of points of discrimination similarity of shapes, and width of letters.

The Roman alphabet was not designed with this first point in mind or it would not have had the several mirror-image pairs, such as b and d, p and q, and to a lesser extent, the vertical mirror-image pairs b and p, d and q. This latter is of considerable less importance as a human's lateral balance is more delicately equalized, and consequently easily flipped over or thrown out of balance than is the vertical balance. We dislike standing on our heads, yet we use both hands – many persons are ambidextrous and alternately use either hand that is convenient. Mistakes due to the mirror-image pairs b and d were found in young children to be an important cause of confusion. That is why Sir James Pitman in his i.t.a. made the bottom of the *b* rounded and on the bottom of the *d* extended the foot. This point was emphasized by Tinker (page 37), "However, it might well be possible to improve some of the poorly legible characters by increasing simplicity of outline, modifying serifs, omitting the use of hairlines, and emphasizing distinguishing characteristic parts." A good example of this is the capital letter Q. For years the California license plates used a Q with a very small tail making it undistinguishable from O at a distance of more than 25 feet. This last year they doubled the size of the tail (both inside and out) and they increased the visibility distance to 60 feet.

Other types of confusion, such as the lack of differentiation in sans-serif type, also retard rate of reading. Tinker; (page 52), found that of 10 different type fonts, which included one sans-serif type and one Old English type, the sans-serif type was next to slowest to read and also next to most difficult of perception, being exceeded only by the Old English (with which most of us have had little or no practice). Part of the causes of this difference is that in the sans-serif type there is no distinction between *l*, capital *l*, and the figure *l* – between *i* and *j* only the fact that *j* extends below the line of letters without descenders. Tinker also found out that Pica Typewriter type was 26.45% easier to read (perceptibility) than Kabel light sans-serif type. And that this sans-serif type was only 1.52% easier to read than Old English. Similarity of shape will be taken up later. Width of letters is another point affecting ease of reading. Just notice how much serif Roman type is easier to read than Pica typewriter, in which all characters are the same width. In addition, typewriter type wastes space to the extent of 16 to 20% in running text. I have made comparisons of typewriter Pica with the I.B.M. Executive type and find it to be in this range.

The fourth consideration, ease of writing by hand is a point worthy of consideration. While typewriters are fairly extensively in use in the U.S.A., even here most personal correspondence is in handwriting. Certainly all children must learn handwriting for many years to come. And when the written letter is different from the printed letter, it becomes a new letter to be learned – time wasted unnecessarily when the script could just as well be the same as the print if it were designed with this thought in mind. Confusion between the various letters in carelessly written script is an important feature. Recently, I had the rather difficult job of typing an article from the handwriting in which no t's were crossed, no i's were dotted, and few if many sentences had periods. Additionally, *u*'s and *n*'s were indistinguishable from each other and *ie* occurrences. Can you imagine how difficult it was to read? It was worse than Arabic with its vowels indicated by tiny dots. It took me more than twice as long to read and some words could only be vaguely guessed by context. If I were confronted by such a manuscript again, I'd return it marked unreadable.

The fifth point, discrimination between certain letters, has been covered to a certain extent in the above. But Tinker (page 5) has this to say, "Speed of Perception. By employing a short-exposure technique, the quickness and accuracy with which letters, digits, words, and phrases can be perceived are measured. The 'recognizability' of printed symbols is ascertained by this procedure. This method has been found useful for determining the relative legibility of the letters of the alphabet, digits, mathematical signs, particular letters in different type faces, and the role of word form in the perception of materials printed in lower case versus upper case type. It has also been used advantageously in studying various factors which increase or decrease the legibility of a printed character, such as the use of serifs, hairlines, boldness in letters, and optimal width of strokes and optimal height-width ratio in digits." Then he goes on to say that these techniques were used to measure the ease of perception of the various lower case letters (page 35), "From 1885 to 1928, 7 research reports on the relative legibility of lower case letters appeared. Intercorrelations between the rankings for legibility found in the 7 studies ranged from .48 to .88, with a median coefficient of .62. This represents a rather close correspondence considering that 3 methods of experimentation were used. Consideration of data from all 7 studies reveals the following consistent trends. Letters of high legibility, in this order *k, d, q, h, p, m, w, f*, letters of medium legibility, *h, j, y, r, t, g, v, z*, letters of low legibility (or more easily confused) *c, o, a, u, e, i, n, s, l*." Note that the letters with ascenders and descenders head the list while the letters without them tail the list. "An analysis of these reports revealed a marked tendency for the letters of poor legibility to be confused with other letters, *c* with *e*, *i* with *j*, *l* with *j*" (and capital I). Tinker also says that while some capital letters had high legibility, others were very low. "Many of the capital letters were fairly low or very low in relative legibility because of confusion with other letters, such as B with R, G with C and O, Q with O, M with W." The use of all-capitals is condemned. (page 34), "Most of the printing material for ordinary reading is in lower case letters, except for the capitalization of a few words. This is fortunate for the lower case printing is much more legible than all-capital printing. Lower case letters have more 'character' in terms of variations of shapes and the contrasting of ascenders and descenders with short letters. This leads to characteristic word forms that are much easier to recognize than words in all capitals. This is true even though the sheer visibility of capital letters is much greater than that of lower case letters."

The sixth point, that the new letters should not be too strange in comparison with our present Roman letters needs a great deal of explaining. The ease of transition is greatly affected by this point. For this reason the new letters should by their configuration tell us something. A mere glance at a new letter should tell us that it was made to serve a certain definite purpose and what that purpose is. Pitman, in designing the i.t.a., carefully considered all these factors, read considerable of the research on the subject, and made his new letters to look like the digraphic characters whose sounds they were to represent. His research paid off with substantially the best alphabet that could be devised for that purpose. But for our new alphabet, we need single letters to stand for each of the sounds now being represented by digraphs, such as: *ch, ng, sh, th*, (both sounds), *wh, zh*, to consider for the moment only the consonants. Yet these letters must serve both as transitions to or from the digraphs and convey the thought as to their meaning – their T. O. equivalent – with as little chance of confusion or mistakenness as possible. Combining into one character parts of the two letters of the digraph representing that sound is a good way of preserving the ancient heritage and the idea of the predecessor digraphs. Pitman's symbol for *ng* is a good example of this idea. The International Phonetic Alphabet equivalent η is also a fairly good example but not as easy for an uninformed

person to visualize. The same is true of other symbols the IPA has selected. Wherever they made a wise choice in selecting a symbol embodying parts of the letters of the digraph, I accepted it. Where their choice did not, I looked for or invented a symbol that did. Their choice of the long s, f for the sh-sound is a good one, and their symbol for the zh sound a z with a tail, ʒ, is a natural addition along the style of the ŋ symbol. However, their symbols for ch th, and wh, do not call to mind these sounds and their conventional digraphs, so I have selected IPA symbols that do (even tho they are used for other purposes). The symbol ʃ could hardly be interpreted for any other sound than that of ch since the top half is that of C. and the bottom half, that of an h. The crossed h, ʰ is unmistakably identified with th but which one of these two sounds? This of course, would have to be fixed arbitrarily. The other th symbol could be either the thorne or theta, but both are difficult to write, hence the SSA symbol is to be preferred. It is a crossed h with a descender, which makes it easy to write. For the wh sound, or more properly the hw-sound, I selected a symbol that starts like an h and continues with a half of a w or a v, hv. This is another natural step in the visualization of the digraph.

Going to the vowel letters, we find our task more difficult. But since our script alphabet has some vowel letters in it that differ from their print form, these could easily be used to serve as the following vowel sounds: script or italic a, a for the broad a in father, either joined a, æ, or a small capital a for the long-a, script e, ε, for long-e, inverted c, ɔ for awe (which the IPA uses for this purpose). Unfortunately IPA represents long-i and long-u by digraphic characters because they are diphthongs, but which violates our usual concepts of these as single unit sounds. The IPA symbol for long-oo as in boot, is our letter u, which successfully represents much fewer words than if it were used for the short-u sound in *up*. Additionally, its use will create confusion in many words such as fool (ful) school (skul) tool (tul), mule (mul), soon (sun), boom (bum), noon (nun), whereas the use of a joined double-o, oo, will not cause confusion and will aid in the transition.

To make a consistent pattern of use of the Roman letters so that it will be easier to learn and to teach,; the regular vowel letters should all be used to represent the short vowel sounds, as in "that pet is not much" and the long vowel sounds now often represented by digraphs, as in "Mae see thie toe Tuesday noon;" will be represented by the new or altered letters. The reason for this can be seen in Dewey's *Relativ Frequency of English Speech Sounds*. It shows that all of the short vowel sounds occur with much greater frequency in running text than the corresponding long-vowel sounds. Hence, if the regular Roman letters for vowels are used for the short vowel sounds, it will result in a considerably less strange appearance on the printed page. Then we can teach the system much easier because the long vowels will all be identified with the new or altered symbols.

Such an alphabet, based upon the above multiplicity of considerations, is the amerikan fonetik alfabet, as shown on page 19. While it is a carefully considered symbolization, perhaps improvements can be made in it, depending on what consideration needs more emphasis.

Book Reviews.

14. Writing Systems, by Gerd Fraenkel, Ph.D.*

*Linguistics Dept, Univ. of Pittsburgh, Pa.

Published by Ginn & Co. New York, 1965 134 pp. \$2.20.

This book, number 2 in a series, "*New Aspects of Language*," is both a text book for tenth and eleventh grades, and a self-education book with popular appeal for adults. It was written with the viewpoint of a linguistics professor who is also interested in archaeology. Certainly it has a great deal more of historical interest on ancient alphabets than any other book we have ever seen, including Charlton Laird's *The Miracle of Language* and the possible exception of the famous book by Frederick Bodmer, *The Loom of Language*. The main theme of the book is the growth and structures of languages, yet this dry subject is made interesting by the personality of the writer.

One thing that makes this a stimulating book is the 38 applications of its principles, each following the subject discussed. A reader following these applications will test himself on how carefully the text has been absorbed and thus reinforce his learning.

Writing systems are not necessarily alphabets. There are several different kinds of these, from pictographs, ideographs, logographs, syllabic systems and finally alphabets, both partially and completely phonetic. The book covers a great deal of factual information condensed in such a small book; and is right up to date with the Pitman i.t.a. and the Shaw alphabet. The objections, limitations and difficulties of reforming English spelling and the spelling of Hebrew are also discussed.

Many technical terms are used and a 5 page glossary at the end helps the reader learn the terms connected with these specialized subjects.

A Teachers' Manual is also available as a guide and aid in stimulating discussions.

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15. The Davis Speller, by Leo G. Davis

The Davis Speller, by Leo G. Davis. Pub. by Carleton Press, 1966. 74 pp. \$1.95.

This book is a sequel to *K-a-t Spelz Cat*, by Leo G. Davis. It is an attempt to circumvent the irregularities of English spelling by means of either of two systems, one a 5 vowel "Stable" system and the other a 10 vowel "Fonetik" system. The 5 vowel so called "stable" system is only slightly more stable (?) than our present system and in many instances causes much confusion by having 2 or 3 vowel pronunciations represented by the same letter. While it might be considered an improvement in some particular instances over our erratic spelling, we doubt if it is worth the effort.

On the other hand, his 10 vowel system is more complete and reliable. Its chief fault is that it represents the two different vowel sounds in *odd* and *aud* by the same symbol. Otherwise it is easy to learn and to use in deciphering the pronunciation of any new word a pupil encounters in the Davis Speller. A good part of the book is devoted to listing the re-spellings of common words needed to be taught to beginners.

Davis admits in his book that the 10 vowel system "is only the initial step in an orthographic reform and that it was not intended to achieve fonetik perfection but only basikly fonetik speling."

Teachers will wonder why Davis wrote the book as it does not tell how it is to be used, nor how the book will help a pupil learn our erratic spelling. Then he ends with ""Thus, there is no excuse for further delay in orthographic reform. Let this text be the guide thereto."

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16. THE ÆMERICAN FONETIK ALFABET with changes proposed by Newell W. Tune

25 Consonants				14 Vowels					
Print	Script	Name	As in	Print	Script	Name	As in		
p	<i>p</i>	<i>pə</i>	pin, cup	ə	<i>ə</i>	<i>ər</i>	about, murmur, data		
b	<i>b</i>	<i>bə</i>	bin, cub	a	<i>ɑ</i>	<i>at</i>	am, pat		
t	<i>t</i>	<i>tə</i>	ten, bet	ɑ	<i>ɑ</i>	<i>ah</i>	alms, part, ma		
d	<i>d</i>	<i>də</i>	den, bed	e	<i>e</i>	<i>et</i>	edge, let		
k	<i>k</i>	<i>kə</i>	come, back	eʀ	<i>eʀ</i>	<i>eʀ</i>	air, pair, mare		
g	<i>g</i>	<i>gə</i>	gum, bag	ʌ	<i>ʌ</i>	<i>ʌ</i>	age, late, may		
f	<i>f</i>	<i>fə</i>	fan, safe	i	<i>i</i>	<i>it</i>	is, sit, army		
v	<i>v</i>	<i>və</i>	van, save	ɛ	<i>ɛ</i>	<i>ɛ</i>	ease, seat, me		
θ	<i>θ</i>	<i>θə</i>	thigh, bath	ɒ	<i>ɒ</i>	<i>ɒt</i>	odd, not, shot		
h	<i>h</i>	<i>hə</i>	thy, bathe	ɔ	<i>ɔ</i>	<i>ɔ</i>	awed, naught, pshaw		
s	<i>s</i>	<i>sə</i>	seal, race	ʌ	<i>ʌ</i>	<i>ʌt</i>	up, ton, does		
z	<i>z</i>	<i>zə</i>	zeal, raise	o	<i>o</i>	<i>o</i>	open, tone, show		
ʃ	<i>ʃ</i>	<i>ʃə</i>	assure, rush	u	<i>u</i>	<i>ut</i>	full, should		
ʒ	<i>ʒ</i>	<i>ʒə</i>	azure, rouge	ʊ	<i>ʊ</i>	<i>ʊ</i>	fool, shoed, shoe		
ʧ	<i>ʧ</i>	<i>ʧə</i>	choke, rich	ʀ	<i>ʀ</i>	<i>ʀ</i>	urge, her, sir, cur		
ʤ	<i>ʤ</i>	<i>ʤə</i>	joke, ridge	4 Diphthongs					
m	<i>m</i>	<i>mə</i>	met, him	ɪ	<i>ɪ</i>	<i>ɪ</i>	aisle, pint, by		
n	<i>n</i>	<i>nə</i>	net, thin	ɔ	<i>ɔ</i>	<i>ɔ</i>	owl, pound, bough		
ŋ	<i>ŋ</i>	<i>ɛŋ</i>	ink, thing	φ	<i>φ</i>	<i>φ</i>	oil, point, boy		
r	<i>r</i>	<i>rə</i>	raid, dear	ɻ	<i>ɻ</i>	<i>ɻ</i>	pure, due		
l	<i>l</i>	<i>lə</i>	laid, deal	Supplementary signs					
w	<i>w</i>	<i>wə</i>	wet, witch	&	<i>ə</i>	ɸ	ɛ	\$	@
hw	<i>hw</i>	<i>hwi</i>	whet, which	and, the, for, cents, dollars, at.					
y	<i>y</i>	<i>yə</i>	yet, you	To capitalize a fonetic tipewritten					
h	<i>h</i>	<i>hə</i>	head, who	or longhand word, underline the					
				first letter.					

Fonetic print capitals are heavy or boldface letters, otherwise similar to the small or lower case letters.

The linear order and fonetic names of this alphabet are derived from established shorthand practices, and will be found both logical and convenient.

17. AN ENGLISH TEACHING ALPHABET BY SIR JAMES PITMAN, K.B.E.

English spelling, which is so difficult for foreign students, is in no way easier for English children. Sir James Pitman whose ancestor became a household name on account of his pioneering work in the field of modern shorthand has now himself become a pioneer in the field of reading reform. His is the Initial Teaching Alphabet, generally referred to as i.t.a. It consists of ordinary character slightly modified, and claims to be more easily acquired by the child. It claims, moreover, that, at a given moment, the child can switch over to the ordinary or traditional spelling, and at that moment has got farther than those children who began with the orthodox spelling and never knew any other.

THERE are four aspects of learning a foreign language. First of all, everyone wants to be able to listen to it with understanding and then be able to speak it and be understood. Then, of course, they want to be able to read it and also to write it. Now, in an alphabetically written language that is valuable only if the printed form of the language is a guide and not a misdirection to the pronunciation of a language. Unfortunately, English is very un-alphabetic. If you were to pronounce more than two-thirds of the words in the English language as they are printed, nobody would be able to understand you at all. As many of you will know, our spelling is the reverse of helpful. You learn to pronounce a-n-d as 'and' [ænd] and to pronounce s-h-a-l-l and h-a-v-e as 'shall' [ʃæll] and 'have' [hæv] and you then come across a-l-l and s-a-v-e and find they are not 'al' [æl] and 'sav' [sæv] but 'aul' [ɔ:l] and 'saev' [seiv]. The character a has yet different values again in 'father', 'was' and 'any'. Now, with an initial teaching alphabet, as we have called a slight re-arrangement of the characters, it is possible to convey the sounds of English alphabetically in a form which is yet sufficiently like the final form for the reader to be able to read either, without any difficulty whatever. There are several thousand schools now in the English-speaking world where this alphabet is being employed to teach English-speaking children to learn to read. When they have learnt to read in that simple alphabetic alphabet, they then transfer without any difficulty whatever to reading and writing in the full alphabet of our traditional orthography.

Now, it is one thing teaching already English-speaking children to learn to read their own language; it is another thing altogether teaching those who know no English at all to be able to listen and to speak, to read and to write in what to them is a foreign language. For this purpose I have made some very minor alterations to the Initial Teaching Alphabet which suits it to the teaching of English speech. The sounds of English are there in the characters of i.t.a., but there is absent from ordinary i.t.a. the sense of rhythm, and the rhythm of English is a very important part in making yourself understood, above all, and also of course in understanding what you hear. Rhythm is at present not indicated by the printed page. In a page, however, printed in ordinary i.t.a. you get a sense of the sound. In a page printed in the adapted i.t.a. you get a sense not only of the sound but also of the rhythm as well. In other words, the characters will be conveying alphabetically both sound and rhythm. How then can it be done? Well, there are two kinds of non-stressing of syllables. The first is where you use what is known by phoneticians as the 'schwa', the weak vowel in the words 'about', 'upon', 'pencil', and so on. You do not say [ʌpɒn], you say [əpɒn] and the syllable is not only unstressed but its vowel sound is changed from u in 'up' to the 'schwa'. In the other quite different words, the lack of stress takes a different form altogether. We stress the word 'day' and 'noon-day', but in the words 'Sunday' and 'birthday' we do not say 'Sunday' [ˈsʌndeɪ] and 'birthday' [ˈbɜːθdeɪ], we say 'Sunday' [ˈsʌndɪ] and 'birthday' [ˈbɜːθdɪ]. In this case, then, the sound is changed not to the 'schwa' but to the sound of 'i' as in 'it'. This sound when unstressed I call the 'schwi', Well, this lack of stress and these two changes of the sound to one of two other kinds of vowel can be done in two ways, both of them keeping the ordinary i.t.a. form, because I am anxious that the extra information

about rhythm and sound shall not spoil one of the beauties of i.t.a., namely that the resemblance between the learning alphabet and the final alphabet is very close, so close indeed that those who learn in the one are able to read immediately in the other, once they have become really familiar with reading in the learning alphabet. This can be done in two ways. One of these ways is by printing the syllable, first in smaller type to show that there is less stress, and secondly by printing it in a particular position – to show the sound of the vowel to which the stressed form needs to be changed. That is to say the syllable 'up' in 'upon' is printed smaller and in the lower position, to show first that the vowel is unstressed and then that it needs to be spoken with the 'schwa' sound [ə'pʊn]. Similarly the 'day' in 'Sunday' is to be printed smaller than the rest of the type and in the higher position, to show first that the vowel is unstressed and secondly that the sound needs to be the 'schwi'. In that way you can pick up a page of print in the adapted i.t.a. and gain a clear indication of how to pronounce the words of English both in terms of pronunciation and in terms of rhythm. Another way of doing this is to overline a dotted line for the 'schwa' and of dashes for the 'schwi'.

Of course, you will still need a teacher or, if you have not a teacher, you will still need a tape recorder or some kind of actual sound-giving instrument, because, of course, the black ink upon the page is utterly silent. It is a conventional way of representing sound and thus quite useless, unless there is someone to teach you that convention, and tell you precisely what sound to use when you say a particular printed form. Without such help, you cannot have any idea of how to speak. We must remember that the whole purpose of the alphabet, which was probably man's greatest invention, was to relate that which was spoken with writing, so that anyone reading from an alphabetic system would be able to tell from the marks on the paper what spoken words they represented. In that sense, English and other alphabetic languages differ entirely from the Chinese language where a character stands for the word without any relationship whatever to the sound of that word. Now, if as in English, we have that simple phrase 'once upon a time' and we write it with characters which represent 'onky upon a timmee' we confuse the learner. I believe that with the new i.t.a. it will be much easier for learners to be taught and to teach themselves the English language thanks to the alphabetic relationship and to the more self-evident indication of rhythm. Those learning will thus find themselves speaking English and able to learn the language simultaneously in both of its forms – spoken and written, so that each form may reinforce the other throughout the learning period.

thær ar for aspects ov lerniŋ
 a foren læŋgwæj. first ov aull,
 everywun wonts tɔ bɛ æbl tɔ lisen
 tɔ it wið understandiŋ and then bɛ
 æbl tɔ spɛk it and bɛ understood.
 then, ov cors, thæ wont tɔ bɛ æbl
 tɔ rɛd it and aulsɛ tɔ ri:t it.

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18. Blue Print For Progress

Blue Print For Progress

There is some indication that the U. S. Office of Education may soon call an International Educational Conference to reform our alphabet and spelling. Many people have looked forward to the time when we would consciously rid ourselves of the handicaps which a poor alphabet places on us all--the beginner, the foreign born, the oldest and all the rest of us. This conference will have representatives from all of the English-speaking countries according to their population which use English as their chief tongue. There will probably be both invited members and accredited visitors. Each country will select its own representatives. Hopefully, no one will select its own representative. Hopefully, no one will be on this world-wide committee, but they should be allowed to come before it, in limited numbers, to tell the merits and demerits of various alphabets, after an orientation address by some well respected persons, who would explain and distinguish the short- and long-term goals of the conference. These would, I suppose, be somewhat as follows: First, we wish to

replace our old alphabet with a better one and to do this with as little uproar and friction as possible, but our long-term goal is to get accepted the very best alphabet to serve all coming generations easily and efficiently, and this goal must not be obscured. Just to make the transition a little easier. This then is our chief problem--to separate the short-term goal of transition, with its many temporary problems, from our final goal of obtaining the very best alphabet for all practical purposes. Our coming generations must not be shortchanged, even at the risk of offending someone now.

Once selected, the alphabet should be rediscussed and, if possible, improved. Some days should be spent in the practice of converting some present spelling to the new system. The conference may be divided into small groups, say couples and perhaps four lists, of say 500 words each, be given to each couple for conversion. Separate lists of problem words should be ready to be considered by the whole conference. Whatever

pronunciations can be settled amicably by discussion on the basis of simplicity or brevity should be, but no attempt to pre-decide pronunciations should be made. Sound-related words such as pass, past, master, pasture, fast, etc., should be grouped according to the common disputed sound and then represented by a single key word. For those problem key words which no amount of discussion can settle, they should list both pronunciations alternately, so that the result will be fair, then the even or odd pronunciation be chosen by lot. In general, pronunciation of words will be as now, but the spelling will be simpler, yet define the sounds better than now.

After the dictionary is made, we should pass the Spelling Commission Bill, which should have a three-years cushion period before implementation, so that most of the worried-about areas of friction will tend toward self-adjustment, as new type is put into use and practice given, in the newspapers, magazines, TV channels and in the schools, so that when this period is over, we shall have our alphabet complete--unscarred by a rough transition. Present system 2688 letters. Saves 407 letters or 15.7%.
 Troyden, My 11 2181

Perhaps 40% of our people are only semi literate, because our alphabet is bad. My alphabet has 36 letters to represent its 36 sounds. One sound=one letter. It has 3 new letters; O as in at, as in got, and T-sing plus ten partly new letters: E-set, I-sit, A-all, O-soon, C-chin, H-pull, S-shy, Th-this, H-thin and X-agure. It is some trouble to learn these letters, but such is only temporary, whereas any alphabet with duplications, digraphs or 2 letters assembled has faults which are permanent. It is as simple as that!

With a good alphabet, our average primary pupil will learn 1000 to 2000 words, just as they do in Russia, Armenia, Turkey, Germany, Italy and Spain, instead of our present 300 words. People with education are better off job-wise and for enjoyment.

- Here's a good program: First one or more acceptable alphabets.
 2) the International Educational Conference 3) adoption and perfection of a good alphabet 4) creation of the new dictionary 5) passage of Spelling Commission Bill with 3 years cushion period. For a copy of my alphabet send a stamped envelope to: Mrs. Mary Aubrey, 76227

(Paid Advertisement)

P.O. Box 192. Texaco

19. A Minimal Change System of Spelling Reform, by Frank Du Feu, M.A.

In a minimal change system of spelling reform the objective is to make as few changes as possible on the printed page and these should be as inconspicuous as possible. Since the sounds in *tool*, *school*, and *fool*, cannot be adequately represented by other than *oo*, the sound of the vowel in *good* must be represented otherwise.

The two principal spellings of the short vowel in *good* and *bush* are *oo* and *u* as used in these two words.

Now among the letters and digraphs to be considered, there are two digraphs *ou* and *uo* and the single letter *o* which are each more compatible – with *oo* and *u* regarded as being of equal importance – than is the World English spelling *uu*.

Clearly *ou* and *o* are not available because, for many reasons they must, as in World English, represent the sound in *shout* and *shot* respectively. But *uo*, which has no important assignment in traditional orthography is indeed available.

Guod wine needs no *buosh*, is a better minimal change than *Guud* wine needs no *buush*, because whereas *buosh* is no better than *buush*, *guod*, in which only one letter is changed, is better than *guud* in which two are changed. Furthermore, *buosom*, *wuolf*, *wuoman*, in which the *o* is retained, are better minimal change spellings of *bosom*, *wolf*, *woman*, than are *buusom*, *wuulf*, *wuuman*, in which it is not.

Lastly, there is little to choose between *cuod* and *cuud*, *shoud* and *shuud*, *wuod* and *wuud* as respellings of *could*, *should* and *would* respectively.

My conclusion is that in a minimal change system of spelling reform, *uo* is the most suitable spelling available for the short vowel sound under consideration.

Frank T. Du Feu, Jersey. Ch., Eng.

-o0o-

20. The Picture, by Frank Du Feu

I'm twenty miles away from home,
Too late for trains or coaches,
I thhink I'll stay at yonder inn.
For darkness fast approaches.

The landlord of "The Jolly Tar,"
Gave Paul a harty greeting,
And seemd delited with the sketch
The artist wos completing.

"In payment for yoor bed and board
As yoo'r in no greit hurry,
Just paint a sien too hang up here,
Yoo'll doo it well, doen't wurry."

The landlord ththankd him for the job,
And pledjed his helthh in brandy,
While Paul expressd the modest hope
The sien wood cum in handy.

At home that nite his wife began
"Whiu waste yoor time on pictures?
Supposing that yoo persevere
In commerce, nou yoor hoel career
Will be secure. These strictures
Will be endored bie Uncle Ralf,
I thhink it moest essential
That yoo shuod trie to satisfie
A man so influential."

Paul tuok the hint, shaved off his beard,
Puolld up his socks and braces;
A firm in Sheffefeld siend him on
When filling vaecant places.

His work and family soon became
His constant occupaetion.
And with his brushes laid aside,
Whie painting cuod not nou provide
A thheme for conversaetion.

As bisness prosperd, Paul, in time
Became a welthhy cutler
Havving on his domestic staff
Three maids, a cook and butler.

Behoeld the sien in sleet and snow,
In damp and foggy wether,
Too scorching sun and drying wether
Exposed for years together.

Wun birthhday he received a gift
From charming dauter Olga,
A landscape in a rich gilt frame
Of sunrise on the Volga

Thenceforward, bie degrees, did Paul
Becum a keen collector
Hoo boasted of his jems of art
Too colleags and the rector.

Bie chance a dealer of repute
Establishd in the city
Abuv a portrait wrote the words,
"Too miss it wer a pity."

A frend perswaded him too buy
Thiss picture oeld and mellow,
"Two hundred pounds," sed he, "is cheap,
Yoo'll never fiend its fellow.

A Reubens or perchance Van Dyeck
Our heero wos uncertain.
An expert hung the prize which wos
Protected bie a curtain.

Nou aull his frends with wun accord
Acclaimd it as a winner,
When, troo too custom he displayd
The gallery after dinner.

Wun day a thaut occurd too Paul
Hoo fainted from emoetion,
And Olga had too bring him round
With smelling saults and loetion.

"O faather, darling, arn't yoo well.
Whotever is the matter?"
"The puodding disagreed with me.
Yoor muther made the batter."

I wunder if yoo'v gessd the cause
Of Paul's prevaricaetion.
He recognized "The Jolly Tars,"
And that's the explanaetion.

So when a stout American
Hoo wore nineteens in collars
Sed, "Buddy, for this little daub,
I'd giv a thhousand dollars."

Paul anserd promptly, "It's a deal.
I'v never cared for Flemish."
But frends wer cross and moarnd the loss.
Sed they, "It had no blemish."

Meny paintings, tooday it is known
Hav a property clearly their own,
They'r not shorn of renoun
If they'r hung upside down,
And a nite in the rain givs them tone.

[Spelling Progress Bulletin Spring 1966 p24 in the printed version]

21. Carlton Press, Inc. NEW YORK N.Y.

Dear Reader:

Johnny can't read because he can't SPELL. When he learns to spell given words in his vocabulary, he has no trouble recognizing them in context.

But he does have trouble learning to spell them. (After a lifetime of struggle, adults still have trouble with many common words). Thus -

1. Simplified spelling *must* be the solution to our reading problem.
2. Classroom tests show that use of stable orthography in primary grades would shorten the duration of school attendance and lower the cost of education.
3. It would also lower the percentage of "drop-outs".
4. Eliminating useless silent letters offers substantial savings in typing and printing.
5. Stabilizing our orthography would expedite acquisition of English as the de facto international language – to the inestimable advantage of the U.S. forever.

Although most people favor basic reform they resist radical change. Thus, the new orthography must be a compromise between the erratic and the ideal. Revised spelling need not create the "chaos" that some conservatives fear. It could be introduced at the kindergarten level and arbitrarily extended through the primary grades only. Third graders could be given a special course in "old reading", so they could make normal use of the obsolescent texts. Its simplicity enables adults to read the new orthography thru mere "exposure". Thus we would have an orderly transition period of "optional" spelling.

Leo G. Davis now offers two revolutionary texts that should be in the hands of all interested in progress and promoting English as the common world tongue.

k-a-t spelz cat is a fonetik reader for clinical research. Using the distinctive symbols "A-E-I-O-U" as long vowels and "a-e-i-a-u" as the short, it is a complete text for teaching the beginner to read and write a fourth-grade vocabulary with minimum effort, after which he should have no difficulty learning to read traditional literature.

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Words that need no "fixing" are not listed. For the most part only common root words are treated. The "fonetik" section offers over 3200 modified spellings, while the "stable" section offers over 2100.

But every category of words and/or phonemes is treated comprehensively, offering a basic pattern for orthografik reform, and its orderly implementation.

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