Two methods of teaching sixth grade spelling

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TWO METHODS OF TEACHING SIXTH GRADE SPELLING

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

BY
NAOMI CORNELIA KNOWLES MOORE

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
MAY, 1968
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Attorney Eugene Ernest Moore, Jr., who through consistent encouragement and patient understanding made the task of completing this study possible; and to my daughter, Little Miss Pamela Denise Moore; and to my nieces, Miss Minnie Laura Knowles and Mrs. Willie Maude Smith.

N. C. K. M.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to express her appreciation and thanks to all who contributed to the successful completion of this study. She especially wishes to express gratitude and sincere appreciation to the following persons:

1. Mrs. Miriam H. Jellins, advisor, for her scholarly assistance rendered to me in this study and the preparation of this thesis.
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4. Mrs. Emma W. Chunn, for proofreading the original thesis.
5. Mrs. Mary Ellen James, who worked diligently in typing the thesis.
6. This thesis would not have been possible without the understanding and encouragement given to me from the very beginning by my devoted husband, Eugene Ernest Moore, Jr.; my daughter, Pamela Denise Moore; and my niece, Minnie Laura Knowles.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Rationale

Spelling may be defined as the usual method of writing words by means of letters, as distinguished from code writing and phonetic transcriptions. Since letters are in origin phonetic symbols, it follows that at some time every spelling must have been more or less phonetic, the reservation more or less deriving from the fact that generally the letters are inferior in number to the phonemes they have to represent, with the result that one letter may frequently have more than one phonetic value.¹

Development in spelling and being able to write words and printed symbols had their origin many years ago in the past when man began to use pictures and other forms of objects to communicate and record events. As man continued communication in this form, he began to find new ways of communicating which developed into some form of spelling and writing these symbols.

Spelling, like handwriting is one of the most important tools used in written communication with others as

a mean of self-expression. The ease and freedom with which the child engages in various forms of written expression of ideas depends upon his ability to spell. Spelling is a conventional tool useful to students so that they may communicate with persons not at hand.

Spelling is complex, but it is not chaotic. Modern approaches to spelling instruction indicate that it should be taught as a language related skill which serves the child's purpose in written expression both in and out of school. It is learned and practiced as a functional tool for written work in content studies and school activities.¹ Such a point of view is basically a shift in emphasis. While the traditional spelling program was based primarily on abstract drill, memorization, and no generalization, modern approaches utilize all senses and provide numerous opportunities for using spelling in meaningful situations.²

If the individual is able to pronounce words correctly, know how to write or spell, and understand the meaning and use of the words, the individual can communicate more wisely and efficiently.

Various studies have investigated learning procedures for more effective spelling. Unfortunately, words


learned for spelling periods do not always carry over to other situations. The child may spell all the words on a spelling test and misspell one of the words a few days later. A method of learning to spell which relies upon the use of a standard list of words, abstract drill, memorization and no opportunity for generalization may be an ineffective procedure for learning to spell. It appears that the oral repetition of isolated word is not sufficient. Learning to spell is largely an individual matter. The pupils must be stimulated to continue their interest in words and to increase their abilities in oral and written spelling. Gertrude Hildreth said:

"Learning to spell is correlated with growth in the pupil's linguistic powers. The child who tends to be less competent in oral language and slow in learning to read tends to be slow in learning to spell in general, and the contrary holds for the gifted child. Our speech and the writing are interrelated. We write as we talk using the same vocabulary orally and in writing, and organizing the content similarly in both speaking and writing."\(^1\)

Spelling should be taught as it relates to the activities of the learners in school. As children listen and read, words take on new meanings and new words are added to the speaking and listening vocabularies. Many of the same words should become a part of the children's writing vocabularies.\(^2\)

\(^1\)Hildreth, loc. cit., p. 27.

Words that come directly from children's writing give one good basis for planning instruction in spelling. Some type of inventory test will help determine which words the children do not know, but may need in performing written tasks. Most spelling texts contain such inventory tests at the back of the book. The most justifiable criterion for selection is a selection of words that children use in their writing. Such words do not always appear in spelling textbooks lists, nor at the exact time they are needed by the children.¹

It may be conjectured that there are modes of presenting spelling words characteristic of either a traditional approach or a modern approach to spelling instruction. Different modes of presentation may yield noticeable differences in task performance. On the other hand, certain learner-types may respond better to one kind of presentation than to another. If there are basic differences in ways of presenting words, each task required may present a special kind of problem to the learner. Measurement of such tasks may be devised so that some notion of pupil proficiency with these tasks is obtained, thereby providing some bases for structuring a spelling program which will be effective in teaching children to solve the spelling

problems which may confront them.

**Evolution of the Problem**

The writer's interest in this study stemmed from a consideration of spelling as one of the most important tool subjects. Of special concern is that young learners gain a somewhat more rational approach to spelling than is provided by rote memory. Further, it is felt that conscious efforts can be made to consider the usefulness of varied techniques in presenting words which the child must learn to spell. It is to this end the present study has been directed.

**Contribution to Educational Knowledge**

It is hoped that this study will be important to other interested persons in improving the teaching of spelling, to make it more interesting and meaningful to boys and girls. It is further hoped that the teaching procedures and the instruments utilized for teaching and testing specific skills in spelling should be of value in the instructional program.

**Statement of the Problem**

The problem of the study was to determine which of two different instructional methods would result in the greater gain in performance of selected spelling skills by sixth grade pupils.
Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study was to determine the relative effectiveness of modern and traditional spelling instruction upon the performance of sixth grade pupils on a variety of spelling test items.

The specific purposes of this study were:

1. To determine the relative effectiveness of both modern and traditional methods through a comparison of the pupils' performances on spelling tests requiring the spelling of words on multiple-choice type items.

2. To determine the relative effectiveness of the two methods through a comparison of the pupils' performances on tests requiring the spelling of the words in isolation.

3. To determine the relative effectiveness of the two methods through a comparison of the pupils' performances on a test requiring the placement of the words in meaningful sentences.

4. To determine the relative effectiveness of the two methods through a comparison of pupil responses with appropriate words to given definitions.

Definition of Terms

The modern method of spelling instruction involves
a new variation in the studying of word development. Activities grow out of the immediate needs of the pupils in terms of spelling skills and content area demands as well as from circumstances of a more personal nature. A part of the work activities is done on a group basis while other aspects of the work activities are individualized especially with children who are seen to lack a spelling sense. Thus, the practical value of correct spelling is held constantly before the children as they concentrate on learning the spelling they need to use in their writing.\(^1\)

The traditional method involves learning to spell by exposing children to a list of words each week from a basic speller. The authors of the speller have selected words from standard word lists such as Fitzgerald's, Horn's, and Dolch's word lists. Usually the children are assigned the words for the week on Monday, they are required to write them in sentences on Tuesday, have a trial test on Wednesday, study errors on Thursday, and are given a final test on Friday.\(^2\)

**Limitations of the Study**

The limitations of this study exist in the fact that it involved only twenty-eight sixth grade pupils. These


pupils who had similar backgrounds, chronological ages, and intelligence quotients, were randomly selected from fifty sixth grade pupils enrolled at the Haugabrooks Academy. This study was limited to the comparison of the progress and achievement of sixth grade pupils taught by the modern and traditional methods of instruction.

Subjects and Locale

The subjects participating in this study were twenty-eight sixth grade pupils of Haugabrooks Academy who were randomly selected from fifty sixth grade enrollees. They were thirteen boys and fifteen girls, ranging in age from ten to eleven years. The pupils had been attending this school for four years.

The pupils lived in different sections of the city. One third of the pupils live in apartments, in which the families receive average and below average incomes. However, two thirds of the families are home owners with average and a little above average incomes. The parents are interested in their children.

The Haugabrooks Academy is located in Atlanta, Georgia on Hightower Road between Simpson Road and Bankhead Highway. The school is located in a community which is comprised of middle income family groups.

The school is very attractive in architecture, comparatively new with average size classrooms and is generally
conducive to successful use of such techniques as this study utilized.

**Instruments**

The following instruments were used in this study:

1. The Kuhlmann-Anderson Intelligence Test, Form J.
2. Lincoln Intermediate Spelling Test, Forms A and B.
3. Morrison-McCall Spelling Scale, Lists II and III.
4. The Stanford Achievement Test, Forms J, K, and M.
5. A specially constructed teacher-made test for measuring the ability of pupils to recognize the use and meaning of words in accordance to their context in statements or sentences.

Buros states that the Kuhlmann-Anderson tests are among the best all-round group intelligence tests.

The Kuhlmann-Anderson Test, Form F, has as its purpose the measurement of the mental development of pupils. The test has been in part unique in: (a) the use of median mental age scores on separate tests to arrive at the mental age of the pupil, thus obtaining IQ's less affected by extreme scores on any subtest caused by some particular extraneous influence, (b) the use of a greater number of separate booklets for varying levels of competence which make tests better adapted to the different groups of pupils. It also has somewhat less verbal material than most intelligence tests.

A battery of ten sub-tests are included in this form. Each test in the battery is individually standardized, and mental age equivalent scores are provided.
for evaluating performances on it.

Validity is defined in terms of discriminative capacity, that is, of the ability of tests to detect differences in mental development over the age range covered. Split-halves reliability coefficients range from .88 to .97.¹

Buros reports that the Stanford Achievement Test is the designation of a series of achievement tests designed to measure the important knowledge, skills, and understandings commonly accepted as desirable outcomes of the major branches of the elementary curriculum. The tests are intended to provide teachers, supervisors, administrators, and others concerned with the growth and development of elementary school pupils dependable measures of these outcomes, comparable from subject to subject and grade to grade, as an evaluation of the program.²

The manual contains very little information concerning the validity of the test. It merely states that the major goal in the preparation of the test was to make certain that the test content would be valid in the sense of its intended goal, and to measure what was actually being taught in the schools.³

The Lincoln Intermediate Spelling Test is designed for grades 5 through 8, and it is available in four forms.


³Ibid., p. 18.
The words have been arranged in approximate order of difficulty, as determined by grade placement set by Gates, Betts, and the New York State Spelling List. Each form of the test consists of one hundred words and each correct answer counts one point.

The words to be spelled are omitted from the context of illustrated sentences. The sentences are given in order to help the pupil understand the words to be spelled. As each word is pronounced by the test administrator, the pupils must read the corresponding sentence after which he writes the words on a line opposite the sentence.

The reliability of the entire test, on the other hand, is apparently satisfactory for discrimination of the general spelling levels of individuals.¹

The Morrison-McCall Spelling Scale, contain eight forms of fifty words each which are arranged progressively from words considered easy to difficult and suitable for testing spelling achievement of primary grade pupils to junior high school pupils. The words in the spelling scale were selected from Ayrres' Spelling Scale and in addition, the words were required to appear among the 5,000 most

commonly used words as listed in Thorndike's Word Book.\(^1\)

The manual provides no statistical data concerning the reliability to the test. Another major fault is the lack of discussion of the possible use of the test results. This test has undoubtedly been a valuable measuring instrument. In certain "then and now" comparisons it may still have value although the reviewer did not recommend its use in the lower grades.\(^2\)

The instrument especially designed by the writer was used to determine the extent to which the pupils progressed in acquiring the use of words in meaningful units of work. The test consists of fifty words. In each item the word to be defined is presented in a very brief sentence; the pupils write the words in each blank space that matches the meaning.

**Method of Research**

The method of research employed in this study was the experimental method utilizing the parallel group method and employing tests as the main investigative tool.

**Research Procedure**

The following procedures were taken:


1. Permission to conduct the study was requested from proper school officials.

2. The twenty-eight, sixth grade pupils were matched on the basis of age, sex, I.Q. and achievement levels.

3. The following pre-tests were administered to test pupils' spelling achievement prior to the experiment.
   a. The Stanford Achievement Test, Form K
   b. Lincoln Intermediate Spelling Test, Form A
   c. Morrison-McCall Spelling Scale, List II
   d. Specially Constructed Teacher Made Test

4. Group M was instructed by the method previously defined as the modern method and group T was instructed by the traditional method for a period of eight weeks.

5. The following post-tests were administered to test the pupils' spelling achievement subsequent to the experiment:
   a. The Stanford Achievement Test, Form M
   b. Lincoln Intermediate Spelling Test, Form B
   c. Morrison-McCall Spelling Scale, List III
   d. Specially Constructed Teacher Made Test

6. Tests of significance, the Fishers' "t" were employed in determining significant differences at the .05 level of confidence.
7. Implications and recommendations were formulated based upon the statistical analysis in the final thesis copy.

**Survey of Related Literature**

The survey of literature was made in order to facilitate the development of a proposed plan for formulation of this research study.

The related literature for this study is presented under the following sub-headings:

1. Spelling instruction: its nature and purpose.
2. The modern approach to spelling instruction.
3. The traditional approach to spelling instruction.

**Spelling Instruction: Its Nature and Purpose**

Spelling in the middle grades as well as in the primary grades should be functional, linking what is spelled to a stream of meaningful experiences. Older children may be motivated to spell because they have something they wish to communicate in written form. While spelling is improved by a functional approach, research does not support the view that spelling should be "incidental" or left to chance. A good spelling program especially for the eight to twelve-year olds in elementary school should involve methodical
techniques of instruction in addition to functioning in meaningful ways in the lives of the pupils.¹

Words should be selected on the basis of need for present and future use. No single list of words presented to an entire class regardless of interests and need can meet the spelling needs of all members of the class. Children need help in setting up their own goals in spelling and in evaluating progress toward the goals. A proper regard for the needs of individual children will lead to individual instruction in spelling which allows individuals and small groups within classes to progress as slowly or as rapidly as their abilities and efforts will permit.²

In the modern school, the spelling program takes into account the level of maturity of the child. It is a waste of time and effort to teach children to spell words before they will need them in writing. If children are required to learn such words purely through drill, they will have forgotten how to spell most of them and will have to learn them over again when they are needed.³

A growing trend is the use of various aids to


spelling instruction. If a spelling workbook is used, it is considered the basic minimum, and in some cases its use is confined to slower learners. Teachers tend to add variety and interest to spelling instruction with such devices as spelling games, flannel boards, appropriate reference materials, puzzles, films, and filmstrips.¹

The Modern Approach to Spelling Instruction

Without doubt, the most functional spelling program of today's schools is the standardized list of words and supplementary words which arise from the writing activities. To facilitate writing, pupils must learn to spell the words that they need in everyday writing activities; therefore, learning the meanings and usage of words must be closely related to the spelling process.

Some schools use spelling series workbooks. In the lists, for these books simple words are presented first, and then more complex words with various kinds of spelling problems appear in logical order. Though some experts today think the use of a list is important, many believe that the list should be supplemented by words growing out of the special activities of children in the school.²

This type of program offers three distinct advantages:

¹Ragan, loc. cit., p. 387.
²Sowards and Scobey, loc. cit., p. 265.
1. All children are taught the words which they probably will use most frequently in their writing.

2. Spelling is integrated with other curricular areas by using words derived from immediate classroom needs.

3. The use of the supplemental list provides opportunity for the individualization of the spelling program according to specific needs and abilities.¹

The Traditional Approach to Spelling Instruction

Children are exposed to a list of words each week from a basic speller. The authors have selected the words from standard word lists. Usually the children get the week's words on Monday, write them in sentences on Tuesday, have a trial test on Wednesday, study errors on Thursday, have a final test on Friday. Unfortunately, words learned for a spelling test do not always carry over to other situations. The child may receive a 100 per cent score on a spelling test and misspell one of the words a few minutes later in a written presentation of a subject-area assignment. He may even learn the list of words in a certain order and make errors if the teacher changes the order when calling the list.²

It is a fairly common practice in some school


²Sowards and Scobey, loc. cit., p. 207.
systems that employ the traditional method of spelling instructions to utilize motivating devices, as the "spelling bees" and "spell down." In the ordinary "bee" the children are eliminated when they misspell a word.

Evidence as to the Effectiveness of Traditional and Modern Instructional Approaches to Spelling

Spelling continues to be a thorn in the side of many teachers, parents, principals and administrators, not because it is so important itself, it is so often used as a means of measuring the outcomes of public instruction. If instruction in spelling was planned in a more definite fashion, utilizing pertinent research findings, it could be made more meaningful.

Cook made an evaluation of two methods of teaching spelling, one of which concentrated on the study of each word as a whole, as an individual problem, while the other method utilized workbooks which provided for early phonetic and structural analysis of words along with frequent study of words in context. According to this study, superior intelligence was a factor in learning to spell. Because workbooks involve much reading, a controlled vocabulary identical with that found in the basic reading program may not exist. Thus, children may become confused and less able to concentrate on spelling. Findings of the study suggest that the method used in teaching spelling should insure an
adequate amount of drill on actual words to be learned. It should avoid any confusion which might result from too early and too extensive an analysis of a word which might better be taught as a whole.¹

Sister Marie found in her study Teaching Rules in Spelling, the value of spelling by rules or no rules was investigated by means of three methods: (1) the Inductive method presented relevant words and developed the rule from them, (2) the Deductive method stated the principle and illustrated it by specific words, (3) the Thought method associated the words with their meaning and figured out the letters. No rule was used. Findings of the study shows least progress in spelling was made by the Inductive group, it may be implied that pupils lack sufficient training in formulating generalizations. The fact that the Deductive group ranked second in spelling improvement seems to indicate that children do reason deductively and with success. Since the Thought method produced significantly greater progress in spelling than did either of the other two methods, it may be inferred that the development of meaning is the single most important factor in spelling mastery, and it should receive emphasis in any spelling

Schoephoerster in his study of Test-Study Plans of Teaching Spelling found that the above average pupils retained the knowledge of the spelling list by having followed any one of three plans. Plan I, the first four weeks consisted of pronunciation and meaning exercise with initial corrected tests on Monday and a mastery test on Friday of each week. Plan II followed the same procedures as Plan I except that a midweek corrected test was given on Wednesday. Plan III followed a plan similar to that of Plan I except that a midweek period of word study on Wednesday was permitted followed by the mastery test on Friday. The average spelling ability group retained the knowledge of the spelling of a significantly greater number of words contained in the weekly spelling lists by having followed either Plan II or III. The below average ability group retained the knowledge of spelling of a significantly greater number of words contained in the weekly spelling lists by having followed Plan III.  

Hollingworth's study compared words used in present-day writing to the list Ernest Horn made in 1926.


Present-day words were those used in letters to the editor in four geographically-separated newspapers that generally cover the United States. A total of 4,960 running words were printed in the letters to the editor on the specific date of the study. These words were compared to Horn's list in *A Basic Writing Vocabulary: The 10,000 Words Most Commonly Used in Writing*. Of the 1,245 separate words, 1,023 were found to be in Horn's list. Of the 222 words found in Horn's list 69 were word forms relate to a word on Horn's list. Of the remaining 153 words, only 16 had been written two or more times in the letters to the editor.¹

Scott compared the SRA Spelling Laboratory with a seventh-grade class to conventional spelling instruction. The Laboratory was found to be approximately equivalent to conventional instruction with respect to average group achievement, but with a significant increase in the number of individual pupils making achievement gains. Neither Conventional instruction nor use of the Laboratory however, affected significantly the achievement of two-thirds or more of the pupils.²

Determining the effectiveness of the Letter-Mark-Out method when added to the corrected test to produce

¹Paul M. Hollingworth, "Spelling List-Outdated?" Elementary English, XXXII (February, 1965), 151-188.

²Owen Scott, "An Assessment of the Use of the SRA Spelling Laboratory in a Seventh Grade," The Journal of Educational Research, LIX (September, 1965), 35-36.
spelling achievement, as compared with the corrected test without the letter-mark-out, was the subject of a study by Hall. Results showed no reliable evidence that either of the two methods was more efficient than the other. The findings did suggest a possibility that the letter-mark-out method made a slight contribution to recalling the spelling of a word.¹

Developing spelling power was the focus of a study by Groff in connection with a textbook spelling program to determine if use of the lessons on the visual and auditory perception of words was a significant factor in the development of spelling ability by intermediate pupils. The differences in gains in spelling favored the modified program, the differences were not statistically significant at either the .01 or .05 levels of confidence.²

An unpublished thesis by Ida M. Ross, "A Comparison of Two Methods of Teaching Spelling to Fifth Grade Pupils," reported that there was no difference in the relative effectiveness of the textbook method and the functional method of teaching spelling on the population used in the study. The textbook method, words were selected from the textbook, 


and the pupils studied the words with the five steps of learning to spell a word as outlined in the textbook. The functional method, the words were selected from the pupils' creative writing and used the five steps of learning to spell a word as outlined as in the textbook. As a result of overall test, comparison indicated that neither the textbook method nor the functional method showed any superiority of effectiveness over the other. Both the textbook and functional groups showed some progress as result of the experimental study.¹

An unpublished thesis by Hunter, "The Relative Effectiveness of Two Methods of Teaching Spelling," yielded results which indicated that there was no difference in the relative effectiveness of the "Study Test Method" and the "Test Study Method." The "Study Test Method" involved a procedure for the selection of words from a textbook, and the study of words by the pupils, which was followed by the administration of a test to the pupils on the words studied. Under the "Test Study Method," a test was given to the pupils first, and the pupils studied the misspelled words. Since it was revealed by the data that the pupils were retarded in spelling achievement, there appeared to be the need for implementing some sort of program in spelling to

meet effectively the needs of the pupils. The experimental periods of this study were probably too short to permit the variables to operate freely enough to measure the true effects of the two methods. It is highly probable that a meaningful approach should be utilized in spelling instructions.¹

Rick conducted an investigation of "Relationships Between Vocabulary Development and Spelling Achievement of Fifth Grade Pupils." The findings indicated that in distribution of auditory aptitude, for orientation, and discrimination the group approximated normality. The findings were accepted as being indicative that the pupils involved in this study held similar levels of achievement in vocabulary development and spelling. There was a significant relationship between vocabulary development and spelling achievement as found in this study; but no relationship between visual aptitude and spelling achievement and between auditory aptitude and spelling achievement of the pupils.²

O'Reilly found an apparent inconsistency between the purpose avowed in the teacher's manuals and the suggested pupil study procedures. These procedures were very


similar in the five examined textbooks. All of the books used phonics in teaching of spelling, but with considerable variation in degree.¹

Wayne Otto found a relationship between reactive inhibition and attainment in spelling and handwriting as well as in reading. Given a fairly low motivation level, good achievers in spelling and handwriting dissipate less reactive inhibition. There is some evidence that both the performance and the inhibitory potential of good achievers is increased when motivation is increased. Yet no such relationship was demonstrated with poor achievers.²

Sister Josephina found in her study, "Spelling Achievement of Above Average Pupils," the pupils with ability above the average achieved in spelling according to grade level. Yet, their placement was not significantly above the grade level to warrant a pedagogical complacency that all is well with their spelling accomplishment.³

Kooi, Schutz, and Baker in their study of "Spelling Errors and Serial-Position Effect" found that difficult vowels and double-letter combinations are not randomly


³ Sister Josephina C.S.J., "Spelling Achievement of Above-Average Pupils," The Elementary English, XXXX (October, 1963), 608-610.
distributed throughout a word and that every letter not in serial position should be counted as an error.¹

Plessas and Dison in their study of "Spelling Performances of Good Readers" found no significant differences in word identification, but there were significant differences in visual discrimination in spelling terminal consonants; and spelling homonyms, variant words, and compound words.²

Dorthy Frash found that the rate of errors on first draft remained fairly constant, but on the second drafts there was a progressive decrease in the rate of errors. The investigator concluded that the five weeks of practice in the detection and the correction of spelling errors had a positive influence on the proofreading ability of most of the pupils.³

Personke and Knight in their study "Proofreading and Spelling: A Report and A Program," found that boys who were taught techniques for check-guessing and proofreading in spelling made significantly fewer errors than those who


did not receive such instruction. The evidence regarding girls in similar situations gave some indication that they too profited from the instruction.¹

Eisman found that the children in the "Individualized Spelling" program worked on the average 1.5 grades higher in spelling than the children in the "Group Spelling" program.²

Personke and Yee in their study of "The Situational Choice and the Spelling Program" found that any spelling program which does not include learning in the use of all five channels of spelling behavior is going to leave the child ill-equipped for all of his spelling needs. The five channels of spelling behavior are: (1) memory channel, (2) kinesthetic detour, (3) check channel, (4) proofread channel, and (5) proofread-rewrite detour are absolutely necessary. Since it is almost inconceivable that anyone will ever learn by memory the spellings of all words he may need to write, these channels should always remain as a part of his total spelling behavior.³

Theman says that recent research indicates that


those teaching methods which are most effective are those that:

1. Help the child succeed in spelling the words he needs when he needs them.

2. Help the child to help himself.

3. Recognize the wide span in spelling abilities with any class or grade.

4. Provide for individual differences.

5. Foster in the child a desire to spell words correctly and a pride in his growth in spelling ability.

6. Build a background of experience, a desire and opportunity to communicate honestly as well as creatively or imaginatively in school.¹

In a study by Osborn using the Rinsland word list, an inventory was made of the initial, medial, and final syllables of all polysyllabic words in that list. A summary of the frequencies of occurrence of all syllables that occur ten or more times was made. The conclusion was that syllabication is important in spelling. It is difficult to expect students to recognize or to spell words of more than one syllable until they are conscious of the syllables involved.²

Chasnoff found that there was no significant difference between the means of the experimental and the


control groups for spelling. The mean grade score for the total experimental group was 31.76, for the total control group it was 30.93. This finding was similar to the finding at the end of the first grade when no significant differences were found in spelling. The misspelling of the experimental pupils were typical of the initial-teaching-alphabet way of spelling more frequently than the misspelling of the control pupils were, but the difference between the groups was not significant when the "t" test statistic was used.¹

Summary of Related Literature

The related literature for this study is presented under the following sub-headings: (1) Spelling instruction: its nature and purpose, (2) The modern approach to teaching spelling, (3) The traditional approach to teaching spelling, and (4) Research on the effectiveness of modern and traditional spelling instructional methods.

Instructional methods of teaching spelling in the primary and middle grades should involve a functional approach, relating what is spelled to the needs and meaningful experiences of the children.

The use of standardized list of words and supplementary words which arise from the needs of the pupils in

their writing activities seems to be most functional spelling program of today's schools.

This type of program offers three distinct advantages:

1. All the children are taught the words which they probably will use most frequently in their writing.

2. Spelling is integrated with other curricular areas by using words derived from immediate classroom needs.

3. The use of the supplemental list provides opportunity for the individualization of the spelling program according to specific needs and abilities.

The traditional approach to teaching spelling may be an ineffective method, in so far as it fails to meet the needs of the pupils in their experiences and in so far as it fails to carry over to other situations.

Research on the effectiveness of modern and traditional spelling instructional methods indicate that there is substantial agreement among authorities for the view, that no one method of teaching spelling is best for all pupils. Variations in particular methods and combinations of methods, which are best for individual pupils should be determined and utilized.

The findings of research in which there appears to be general agreement among authorities indicate that those instructional methods in teaching spelling which are most effective are those that: (1) Help the child succeed in
spelling the words he needs when he needs them. (2) Help the child to help himself. (3) Recognize the wide span in spelling abilities with any class or grade. (4) Provide for individual differences. (5) Foster in the child a desire to spell words correctly and pride in his growth in spelling ability.

Other isolated findings of research suggests that:
(1) That the development of word meaning is one of the most important factors in spelling achievement. (2) That the use of textbooks in combination with visual and auditory perception of words was a significant factor in the development of spelling ability of intermediate pupils. (3) That the letter-mark-out method as compared with the non letter-mark-out method in the corrected test procedure evidences no significant superiority in spelling achievement for either method.
CHAPTER II

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings, analysis and interpretations of the relevant data obtained in this study. The problem involved in this study was to determine which of two different instructional methods would result in the greater gain in achievement in selected spelling skills by sixth grade pupils.

The purpose of this study was to determine the relative effectiveness of modern and traditional spelling instructional procedures upon the performances of sixth grade pupils on a variety of spelling test items. The findings are presented and interpreted as they relate to the following specific purposes of the study:

1. To determine the relative effectiveness of both modern and traditional methods through a comparison of the pupil's performances on spelling tests requiring the spelling of words on multiple-choice type items.

2. To determine the relative effectiveness of the two methods through a comparison of the pupil's performances on a test requiring the spelling of
words in isolation.

3. To determine the relative effectiveness of the two methods through a comparison of the pupil's performances on a test requiring the placement of the words in meaning sentences.

4. To determine the relative effectiveness of the two methods in responding with appropriate words to given definitions.

The subjects for this study were twenty-eight pupils, consisting of fifteen girls and thirteen boys who were selected from fifty pupils enrolled in the sixth grade class of the summer school session of the Haugabrooks Academy. The twenty-eight pupils were selected on the bases of their intelligence quotients as measured by The Kuhlmann-Anderson Intelligence Test, Form F and reading achievement scores attained on the Stanford Achievement Test, Form J. These tests had been previously administered to the pupils at the Haugabrooks Academy as a part of the school's regular testing program. The twenty-eight pupils were subdivided equally into two separate groups for purposes of using a modern approach to spelling instruction with one group and a traditional approach to spelling instruction with the second group. The writer, in grouping the pupils, identified the group to be taught by a modern approach as Group M, while the group to be taught using the traditional approach was designated Group T. These groups were
heterogeneous groups and equivalent to each other in mean achievement in reading and in mean intelligence.

The modern group was classified as an experimental group and the traditional group was classified as the control group.

The mean reading achievement scores for these groups, statistically equal, represented performances at the 4.4 grade level as indicated on norms tables in manuals accompanying the test. These levels, then, indicate that the pupils were functioning below national norms in spelling achievement. Such a performance would indicate also a degree of retardation in spelling in terms of expected achievement especially when viewed in the light of group mean I.Q.'s of 100.

Table 1 shows the mean performance levels on the Stanford Achievement Reading Test, Form J. The mean raw

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMPARATIVE DATA OBTAINED FROM THE STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT READING TEST, FORM J</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

score for Group M was 19.64, representing a grade level
performance of 4.4. The mean raw score for Group T was 19.86 which is a grade level performance of 4.5. This performance was superior to that of Group M by one month. The standard deviation for Group M was 6.02 and for Group T was 6.01. The standard error of the mean for Group M was 1.67 and Group T was 1.67. The results of the comparison of the test ratings showed that the groups were equal to each other in reading achievement, for the "t" test of significance of difference indicated no significant difference at the .05 level of confidence.

The intelligence quotients as measured by the Kuhlmann-Anderson Intelligence Test, Form F were the criteria for selection following the subjects for this study.

Table 2 shows the results of the comparison of the mean of intelligence quotients as measured by the Kuhlmann-Anderson Intelligence Test, Form F, between Group M and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMPARATIVE DATA OBTAINED FROM INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENTS KUHLMANN-ANDERSON TEST, FORM F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Group T. The mean for Group M, the experimental group, was 100.1, while the mean I.Q. for Group T was 100.3 with a difference of .2 in favor of Group T. The standard deviation for Group T was 11.8 and Group M was 10.5. On a "t" test of significance this difference was not significant at the .05 level. The difference between the control group and experimental group slightly favored the control group but the difference was not a statistically significant one.

The results of the comparison of the test ratings showed that the groups were equivalent in terms of intelligence test performance.

Group M consisted of six boys and eight girls and Group T consisted of seven boys and seven girls. The average age of the pupils of both groups was eleven years.

At the beginning of the study, the writer administered the following pre-tests separately to Groups M and T: Stanford Achievement Test, Form K, The Morrison-McCall Spelling Scale, Test II, The Lincoln Spelling Test, Form A, and Specially Constructed Word Meaning Test.

The Stanford Achievement Test, Form K, was administered to determine and measure the performances and skills of the pupils in identifying the correct spelling of words through a multiple-choice selection of spelling words. The spelling tests consisted of seventy-two multiple-choice questions in which the pupils chose the correct spelling from among three possible spellings or marked "NG" if the
correct spelling was not given. The multiple-choice items eliminated pronunciation of a word as an aid to the pupils in spelling.

The Morrison-McCall Spelling Scale, Test II, was administered to Groups M and T. The tests were to measure the performances of pupils in spelling of isolated words from a selected list in response to dictation. The spelling tests consisted of fifty words in which the writer pronounced each word, used it in a sentence, then pronounced it a second time.

The Lincoln Test, Form A, was administered to Groups M and T in order to measure the performances of pupils in the spelling of words and placement of these words in meaningful sentences. This test consisted of one hundred words. The examiner presented one word at a time orally. The pupils responded by choosing a sentence written on their test booklets in which the word called could be meaningfully placed. The pupils then wrote the word in the blank space in the appropriate sentence.

Two Forms of a Word Meaning Test, were constructed by the researcher to determine the performances of pupils in responding with appropriate words to given definitions. Both tests consisted of fifty definitions. One form was administered to each group at the beginning of the study. These word meaning items elicited from the subjects single word responses which they were required to spell correctly.
Again, as in the **Morrison-McCall Test**, pronunciation could not be used as a cue in the spelling of the words.

Following the administration of the pre-tests, the two groups were instructed by two different methods in separate situations. They were taught thirty minutes each day for eight weeks. At the end of the eight weeks different forms of the same tests were administered. The data obtained were then assembled into appropriate tables and statistically treated as dictated by the purposes.

The statistics used in treating the data were the descriptive statistics of the mean, median, standard deviation, standard error of means, standard error of the difference between the means of two groups and the Fishers' "t" test of significance.

The writer presented and interpreted the data under the following headings: (1) Pre-instructional achievement levels of the experimental and control groups on four spelling tasks, (2) Description of purposes and procedures used in the two methods of teaching spelling, (3) Post-instructional achievement levels of the experimental and control groups on four spelling tasks, and (4) Summary.

**Pre-Instructional Achievement Levels of the Experimental and Control Groups on Four Spelling Tasks**

The spelling sub-test of the **Stanford Achievement Test** yields results which substantially approximates those
of a dictation type test, although the test itself offers certain advantages in the form of a more meaningful response requirement. It constitutes a natural form of questioning requiring some thought by the pupils in that they must identify the correct spelling of a word from four choices of spelling of the words. Essentially, information was sought as to the ability of the learners to discriminate between correct and incorrect spelling of words a life-like situation which operates in all written work required in the school. The results of this pre-instructional testing are presented in the next section.

A Comparison of the Performances of Groups M and T on the Stanford Achievement Spelling Test

Table 3 shows the scores of Groups M and T on pre-instructional performances on the Stanford Achievement Spelling Test, Form K. The mean raw score for Group M was

TABLE 3
A COMPARISON OF PERFORMANCE OF GROUPS M AND T ON THE STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT SPELLING TEST, FORM K

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E. Mean</th>
<th>S.E. M1-M2</th>
<th>S.E. M1-M2</th>
<th>&quot;t&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>8.30</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>9.98</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
23.4, representing a grade level performance of 3.6. The mean raw score for Group T was 23.7, indicating a grade level performance of 3.7, with a difference of .36 in favor of Group T. The standard deviation for Group M was 8.30 and for Group T was 9.98. The standard error of the mean for Group M was 2.31 and for Group T was 2.77. The standard error of the difference between the means of the two groups was 3.60. The "t" ratio 1.0 with 26 degrees of freedom was not significant, for it was less than 2.056 at the five per cent level of confidence. Therefore, the difference between the pre-instructional levels of performance of the two groups was not statistically significant on the spelling component of The Stanford Achievement Test.

The results of the comparison of the test ratings showed that Group M and Group T means are nearly the same. The pupils in Group M indicated a range from a high of 40 to a low of 11. This showed equivalent grade level of a high of 5.6 to a low of 2.7. The score of the pupils in Group T ranged from a high of 39 to a low of 7. This showed equivalent grade level of a high of 5.5 to a low of 2.3. The comparison showed, furthermore, that Group M's average was two years and four months, and Group T's, two years and three months below the standardized level of expectancy established for performances of sixth grade pupils. In view of mean I.Q.'s of 100 for both groups, all other factors being normal, these pupils may be expected to function
essentially at grade level on this test.

A Comparison of the Performance of Groups M and T on the Morrison-McCall Spelling Scale, Test II

The Morrison-McCall Spelling Test is constructed on the theory that achievement in spelling is a more mechanical memory task, in as much as it requires the learner to respond in writing only to an unrelated set of isolated words. The results of performances on this test prior to instruction are presented in Table 4.

### TABLE 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E. Mean</th>
<th>M₁-M₂</th>
<th>S.E. M₁-M₂</th>
<th>&quot;t&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>9.10</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>8.24</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A comparison of the test scores for Group M and for Group T on the Morrison-McCall Spelling Test, representing pupil achievement in the spelling of isolated words from dictation, is shown in Table 4. The raw scores of pupils in Group M ranged from a high of 48 to a low of 17. This shows an equivalent grade level range of 11.7 to a low of
3.4 on the Morrison-McCall Spelling Scale. The pupils in Group T ranged in spelling achievement scores from a high of 45 to a low of 18. This shows an equivalent grade level of a high of 9.8 to a low of 3.5. The average performance for Group M was below the standardized level of expectancy for sixth grade by eight months and for Group T, ten months below standardized level of expectancy established for performances of sixth grade.

A Comparison of the Performance of Groups M and T on the Lincoln Spelling Test, Form A

The Lincoln Spelling Test, Form A, emphasizes pronunciation and the use of rules. The words are arranged in an ascending order of difficulty, a feature which should enhance the validity of the test. The task imposed in this test was a spelling response to a stimulus in a sentence and presented orally to the examinee. Children should be expected to learn only those words for which clear cut meaning has been developed. The experiences in relating meanings as well as in the pronunciation of terms are important. Correct pronunciation is one of the important factors in learning to spell. As a factor, an understanding of multiple meanings of words in the English language is as important a factor, if not more, than is proper pronunciation. This aspect of the Lincoln Spelling Test makes it useful for measuring an additional, meaning spelling...
task. The results of pre-instructional administration of this test appear in Table 5.

### TABLE 5

**A COMPARISON OF PERFORMANCE OF GROUPS M AND T ON THE LINCOLN SPELLING TEST, FORM A**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E. Mean</th>
<th>M₁-M₂</th>
<th>S.E. M₁-M₂</th>
<th>&quot;t&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>1.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 shows that the mean raw score for Group M was 35.2, representing a grade level performance of 3.8. The mean raw score for Group T was 31.2, indicating a grade level performance of 3.5 with a difference of four months in favor of Group T. The standard deviation for Group M was 9.5 and for Group T was 10.2. The standard error of the mean for Group M was 2.63 and for Group T was 2.83. The standard error of difference between the means of the two groups was 3.86. The "t" ratio of 1.044 with 26 degrees of freedom was not significant for it was less than 2.056 at the five per cent level of confidence. The comparison of the test performances showed a difference in ranges of scores. Group M's scores ranged from a high of 48 to a low of 20. This shows equivalent grade level of a
high of 4.8 to a low of 3.3. The scores for pupils in Group T ranged from a high of 45 to a low of 12. This represented a grade level from a high of 4.5 to a low of 3.0. Group M's average was two years and four months, and Group T's, two years and seven months below standardized level of expectancy established for performances of sixth grade.

A Comparison of the Performance of Groups M and T on the Word Meaning Test, Form I

The Word Meaning Test consisted of fifty words and definitions. The student's task was to choose the appropriate word for each definition. In addition to items measuring knowledge of synonyms, of simple definitions and of ready associations, there are included items designed to measure higher levels of comprehension of the concepts represented by words, and fullness of understanding of terms. Word meaning is an important area in the realm of human achievement.

Table 6 shows the scores of Groups M and T on pre-instructional performances on The Word Meaning Test, Form I. The mean raw score for Group M was 20.1. The mean raw score for Group T was 19.3. The standard deviation for Group M was 10.42 and Group T was 9.45. The standard error of the mean for Group M was 2.89 and for Group T was 2.62. The standard error of the difference between the
means of the two groups was 3.90. The "t" ratio of 1.8 with 26 degrees of freedom was not significant, for it was less than 2.056 at the .05 level of confidence.

TABLE 6
A COMPARISON OF PERFORMANCE OF GROUPS M AND T ON THE WORD MEANING TEST, FORM I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>M₁ - M₂</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>M₁ - M₂</th>
<th>&quot;t&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>10.42</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>1.813</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>9.45</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An analysis of the distribution of the scores showed the performances of pupils in Group M ranged from a high of 36 to a low of 7. This shows a percentage of a high of 72 per cent to a low of 14 per cent. The performances of the pupils in Group T yielded scores ranging from a high of 37 to a low of 8. These scores represent a percentage of a high of 74 per cent to a low of 16 per cent. Group M's average was 40 per cent and Group T's average was 39 per cent.

Table 7 shows the grade level performances on four spelling tasks. The average performances for Group M and Group T were approximately two years below standardized level of expectancy established for performances of sixth
### TABLE 7

**A SUMMARY OF PRE-INSTRUCTIONAL PERFORMANCES ON FOUR SPELLING TASKS BY GROUPS M AND T**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spelling Task</th>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual discrimination of correct and incorrect spelling</strong> (Stanford Achievement Test)</td>
<td>M: 3.6</td>
<td>T: 3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Correct response to isolated words dictated to group</strong> (Morrison-McCall Spelling Test)</td>
<td>M: 5.4</td>
<td>T: 5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spelling responses to words recognized in specific contextual setting</strong> (Lincoln Spelling Test)</td>
<td>M: 3.8</td>
<td>T: 3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Correct response with appropriate words to given definitions</strong> (Word Meaning Test)</td>
<td>M: 40</td>
<td>T: 39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

grade pupils on the Stanford Achievement Test and Lincoln Spelling Test. The average on the Word Meaning Test for Group M was 40 per cent and for Group T was 39 per cent. The averages on the Morrison-McCall Test were nine months below the standardized level of expectancy established for performances of sixth grade pupils. Groups M and T showed better performances on isolated words.

**Summary**

Pre-instructional data revealed no significant
differences between the two groups compared on any spelling task measured. Both groups performed at higher levels of achievement where the spelling task was restricted to written responses to dictation of isolated words from a list. Where the spelling task required supplying missing words in sentences, performances were inferior to spelling from dictation of the words alone. A similar type of deficiency is typical of performances of some pupils in a normal instructional setting where spelling is taught utilizing tests which require spelling lists of words which have been memorized.

Where pupils were required to select the right spelling of a word from among three choices, the correct responses were not so high as when isolated words were called and written in list form. This comparative deficiency suggests perhaps: (1) a lack of knowledge of spelling generalization which could aid in a choice as must be made, (2) uncertain or nonstabilized knowledge of spelling such that confusion is easily induced, (3) an explanation for the need to teach certain structural aspects of words as aids to spelling as well as meaning, and (4) familiarity with the dictation mode of presenting spelling words and a consequent superior response to that mode.

Average performances for Groups M and T were approximately two years below standardized level of expectancy established for performances of sixth grade pupils on
the Stanford Achievement Test and the Lincoln Spelling Test. The average on the Word Meaning Test for Groups M and T was 39 per cent. The averages on the Morrison-McCall Test were nine months below the standardized level of expectancy established for performances of sixth grade pupils. Group M and Group T showed better performances on isolated words.

**A Description of Instructional Procedures**

**Used in the Teaching of Spelling**

**to Participating Subjects**

General instructional objectives.--The two groups were instructed by the writer for eight weeks. Instruction was guided by certain objectives around which certain activities were planned and executed. Examples of typical activities will be presented in this section of the report. General instructional objectives guiding the instruction of both groups were:

1. Recognition of new words through the use of contextual clues, and phonetic and structural analysis.
2. The utilization of forms of words such as plurals, possessives, abbreviations, and contractions.
3. Recognition of common variant endings in words.
4. An extension of word meanings through knowledge of homonyms, antonyms, and synonyms.
5. A knowledge of multiple meanings.
6. Recognition of root words.
A Description of Plans Used in the Modern Approach to Spelling Instruction

Specific instructional objectives.—One of the primary objectives of a modern approach to spelling instruction is the utilization of effective, carefully selected spelling techniques by pupils thereby exhibiting consistency in the correct spelling of words. Objectives were formulated for this purpose, they were:

1. A mastery of the spelling of high frequency words, i.e., words used often in speaking, reading, and writing.

2. A mastery of important spelling generalizations.

3. The correct spelling of words in all school-related writing activities.

4. The identification of appropriate spelling of homonyms in contextual situations.

5. An understanding of structural aspects of words as an aid to correct spelling.

A Description of Instructional Procedures Used in the Modern Approach to Spelling Instruction

The following procedures were used to achieve the objectives set forth for the group which was to be taught using a modern approach to spelling instruction. During the first week following the pre-testing period, the pupils began to gather words which they found difficult to spell as they engaged in writing in all areas of study. These words were compiled into a list and all pupils in this group were pre-tested on the list so compiled. When checked each child was given his own test sheet with check marks indicating the words he
had misspelled on the pre-test. These words, having been misspelled, were placed in his notebook under the topic "Words to be Learned." The pupils placed the words that they spelled correctly in their notebooks under the topic "Known Words." Each child had approximately 120 words in his notebook under the topic "Words to be Learned."

The teacher and pupils discussed the ways in which these procedures could become more meaningful and rewarding. The pupil-teacher plans included the following steps:

1. Each child made a notebook in which he kept a record of his activities.

2. The pupils consulted the dictionary for meanings of words and correct pronunciation.

3. The words were grouped as nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives.

Words were selected from the word list on the bases of frequency used and commonalty of use. The words were used in activities which were designed to achieve the first instructional objectives listed for this group. Samples of the types of activities are presented below:

1. Pupils practiced correct word pronunciation.

2. Pupils wrote sentences using words selected from the list.

3. Pupils matched words and definitions.

4. Pupils completed words with letters omitted.

5. Pupils took dictation from tape recordings and made comparisons with prepared written text.

6. Pupils wrote stories, poems and informal letters using the words on his list that the teacher
selected.

7. Pupils were given periodical materials and books to read to see could they recognize words found on the spelling list.

8. Games were used such as "crossword puzzles," "scramble," "dictionary detectives," and "word builders," from the spelling list.

A flexibility of the plan in terms of time usage enabled the words to be presented in a variety of meaningful situations rather than in a tightly structured pattern of non-varied lessons.

During daily procedures this plan showed its adaptability to pupil needs. A prescribed daily procedure was not used, but in general, the words were presented, studied, pretested by pupils, tape recorded, and finally the pupils were tested by the instructor.

Pupils were encouraged to become better spellers by involvement in many of the activities designed to capture and maintain interest while providing opportunities for learning and practicing the spelling of words chosen for study. Additional samples of practice exercises may be found in the Appendix.

A Description of Plans Used in the Traditional Approach to Spelling Instruction

Specific instructional objectives.—Specific objectives formulated for the purpose of guiding growth in spelling through the use of traditional procedures were:
1. Accurate pronunciation of words to be spelled with special emphasis on the recognition and pronunciation of syllables.

2. Mastery of sound symbol association of vowels.

3. The use of selected spelling principles, e.g., silent letters, double letters, variant endings and compound words.

4. The utilization of dictionary aids to pronunciation and spelling knowledge of effective application.

5. Recognition of common roots and affixes of words.

6. Utilization of words on selected spelling lists in sentences.

Description of General Procedures Utilized in a Conventional Approach to Spelling Instruction

The following procedures were used to achieve the instructional objectives for this group. Following the pre-test period, pupils were acquainted with the procedures to be used each day during this study. The learners were instructed as follows:

A. First day (Meet your words)

   1. Read the story given in the Speller test book.¹

   2. Repeat each of the new words after teacher. Note the spelling of the word as written on chalkboard.

   3. Study each new word silently and independently.

B. Second day (Use your words)

1. Look up the words either in dictionary or Speller dictionary.
2. Write each word in a sentence.

C. Third day (Try your spelling)

1. Listen carefully as the teacher dictates or calls word for written response (Trial Test).
2. Check your own papers (This is under teacher supervision).
3. Write the words missed on your trial test.

D. Fourth day

Study the words missed on the trial test.

E. Fifth day (Final Test)

The words are dictated to the pupils. The teacher marks and grades the individual spelling papers as pupil observes. The words misspelled in final test are recorded in individual word hospitals.

An Evaluation of Time Allotted to Specific Activities Under the Two Approaches to Spelling Instruction

The data as shown in Table 8 indicated that Modern Group utilized the weekly block of 150 minutes of spelling time in the following ways: (1) approximately 30 per cent of the time was used for direct instructional activities, with emphasis on phonetic skills, structural skills and dictionary skills; (2) approximately 30 per cent was allotted to practice activities, with emphasis on activities designed to motivate and stimulate ideas in the writing of
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Modern Approach Minutes</th>
<th>Traditional Approach Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repeating words after teacher (pronunciation drill)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written response to oral stimulus (diagnostic words only)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-pupil conferences on words misspelled on diagnostic</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading stories containing words to be learned</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictionary usage (locating words in dictionary for pronunciation and meanings)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction in phonetic and structural techniques</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Modern Approach</td>
<td>Traditional Approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minutes</td>
<td>Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word study--individually and in groups according to directions in textbook</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word study--in groups, using word games</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written response to taped stimulus, words in sentences</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written response to oral stimulus (sentences containing stimulus words)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Minutes</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
individual stories, poems, informal letters and original plays; (3) approximately 26 per cent of the time was devoted to reading activities, which included the reading of student stories, library books, newspapers and magazines; and (4) approximately 14 per cent of the time was set aside for weekly evaluation.

The Traditional Group utilized the weekly block of 150 minutes of spelling time in the following ways: (1) approximately 30 per cent direct was used for instructional activities with emphasis on phonetic skills, structural skills and dictionary skills; (2) 30 per cent was allotted to practice activities with emphasis on activities designed to motivate and stimulate ideas, writing sentences and written exercises from the textbook; (3) approximately 20 per cent was spent reading stories from the textbook and original sentences; while (4) approximately 20 per cent of the time was used for weekly evaluation.

Description of Textbook

The total Success in Spelling Series presents a total of 3,710 words for grades two and eight, 2,822 of these from a basic word list. The 1,000 most commonly used of these make up a mastery word list. There are 888 optional bonus lists for the upper three grades. Book six of this series was used as the main text for children who were in the control group in this study. The teacher's guide
outlines a prescribed weekly and review study plan with suggestions for adjusting lessons to varying ability levels.

The authors believe that in spelling the most effective motivation rests on seeing the relationship of skills being learned to that which the learner wishes to do well. A variety of activities are provided such as: (1) practical creative writing activities, (2) oral discussion of stories presented, and (3) games. Further, the authors express the belief that systematic instruction in word-study skills is an important means of developing spelling power, therefore such instruction is provided.

For example, the basic words include from 90 to 95 per cent of the words children will ordinarily use in their writing. The bonus words are for more able spellers and include words common in adult usage, not included in the basic list. The dictionary is the authority for selection, proper use, and spelling of a word.¹

An Analysis of Data Resulting From the Administration of Post-Instructional Tests to Subjects Participating in this Study

At the end of the eight weeks instructional period between August 2 and August 4, 1967, Group M and Group T were administered comparable forms of the tests which had been given prior to instruction. These tests were: (1) the

Stanford Achievement Test, Form M, (2) the Morrison-McCall Spelling Test, Form III, (3) the Lincoln Spelling Test, Form B, and (4) a second form of the Word Meaning Test, constructed especially for this study.

These post-tests were given to determine and measure performances on spelling tasks which varied in manner of presentation as well as in the nature of the responses required.

Conditions under which tests were administered did not vary significantly from test conditions prior to instruction.

The data obtained were assembled into appropriate tables and statistically treated as determined by the stated purposes of the study. All statistical data were analyzed and interpreted at the .05 level of confidence.

The analysis of findings, as well as an interpretation of the data constitutes the content of this section.

Post-Instructional Achievement Levels of the Experimental and Control Groups on Four Spelling Tasks

A Comparison of the Performances of Groups M and T on the Stanford Achievement Spelling Test, Form M

Table 9 shows the mean performance data for both groups of subjects who participated in this study. The mean raw score for Group M was 37.6, representing a grade level performance of 5.1. The mean raw score for Group T was 35.9,
which is a grade level performance of 5.0. This performance was inferior to that of Group M by one month. The standard deviation for Group M was 15.8 and for Group T was 14.9. The standard error of the mean for Group M was 4.13. The standard error of the difference between the means of the two groups was 6.0. The "t" ratio .28 with 26 degrees of freedom was not significant at the five per cent level of confidence, for it was less than 2.056. Therefore, the difference between the levels of performance of the two groups after eight weeks of differentiated instruction was not statistically significant.

A comparison of the distribution of test ratings for the groups showed that Group M and Group T were not the same. The pupils in Group M indicated a range from a high of 70 to a low of 18. This showed equivalent grade levels of a high of 11.9 to a low of 3.1. The pupils in Group T indicated a range from a high of 62 to a low of 11,
equivalent to a range of grade levels from a high of 9.5 to a low of 2.5. Group M exhibited a wider distribution of scores than did Group T, and the performance represented a range of higher scores than did Group T. This distribution of scores, despite means which are not significantly different, suggests that perhaps the modern instructional approach provided more adequately for individual spelling needs. The comparison showed, further more, that the Group M average is only eight months below standardized level of expectancy established for performances of sixth grade pupils, whereas the Group T average is one year below this level.

A Comparison of the Results of Groups M and T on the Morrison-McCall Spelling Scale, Test III

Table 10 shows the relative mean performance level on the Morrison-McCall Spelling Scale. The mean raw score for Group M was 35.5, indicating a grade level performance of 6.8. The mean raw score for Group T was 34.3 and indicated a grade level performance of 6.4 with a difference of approximately four months in favor of Group M. The standard deviation score for Group M was 10.15 and for Group T was 9.13. The standard error of the mean for Group M was 2.65 and for Group T was 2.59. The standard error of the difference between the means of two groups was 3.72. The "t" ratio .32 was not significant, for it was less than
2.056 at the five per cent level of confidence with 26 degrees of freedom.

**TABLE 10**

COMPARATIVE DATA OBTAINED FROM THE MORRISON-McCALL SPELLING SCALE, TEST III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E. Mean</th>
<th>M₁-M₂</th>
<th>S.E. M₁-M₂</th>
<th>&quot;t&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>10.15</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>9.13</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The comparison of the test ratings on the Morrison-McCall Spelling Scale, Test III, showed Group M and Group T to be nearly the same. The pupils in Group M indicated a range of a high of 49 to a low of 20. This showed equivalent grade level of a high of 12.5 to a low of 3.9. The pupils in Group T indicated a range from a high of 48 to a low of 18, equivalent to a range of grade level of a high of 11.7 to a low of 3.5. The comparison showed further that the average performance level for Group M is eight months and for Group T, four months above standardized level of expectancy established for performance of sixth grade pupils. It should also be pointed out that the average for Group M on the post-test instructional performance showed a gain of 1.4 while the average gain for Group T was 1.2.
A Comparison of the Results of Group M and T on the Lincoln Spelling Test, Form B

Table 11 shows the results of performances of both groups on Form B of the Lincoln Spelling Test. The mean raw score for Group M was 46.4, indicating a grade level performance of 5.6. The mean raw score for Group T was 35.9, indicating a grade level performance of 4.5 which represents a difference between performances of the two groups of one year, and seven months in favor of Group M. The standard deviation for Group M was 16.9 and for Group T was 14.6. The standard error of the mean for Group M was 4.69 and for Group T was 4.06. The standard error of difference between the means of two groups was 6.19. The "t" ratio 1.71 with 26 degrees of freedom was not significant, for it was less than 2.056 at the five per cent level of confidence.

TABLE 11

A COMPARISON OF PERFORMANCES OF GROUPS M AND T ON THE LINCOLN SPELLING TEST, FORM B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E. Mean</th>
<th>S.E. M1-M2</th>
<th>M1-M2</th>
<th>&quot;t&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>4.69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The comparison of scores on the Lincoln Spelling Test showed different mean performances for Groups M and T. The scores of pupils in Group M ranged from a high of 72 to a low of 18. This shows an equivalent grade level range from 11.8 to a low of 3.1. The scores of pupils in Group T ranged from a high of 62 to a low of 11. This shows a grade equivalent range of 8.0 to a low of 2.5. Group M exhibited a wider distribution of scores than did Group T and the performance represented range higher scores than did Group T. This distribution of scores, despite means which are not significantly different, suggests that perhaps the modern instructional approach provided more adequately for individual spelling needs. The Group M average is six months and the Group T average is one year and six months below standardized level of expectancy established for performances of sixth grade. It should be pointed out also that Group M on the post-test performance gained 1.8, while Group T gained 1.2 on the post-test.

Table 12 shows comparative mean scores from the Word Meaning Test, Form II. The mean raw score for Group M was 31.8. This represents a percentage of correct responses of 64 per cent. This mean raw score for Group T was 24.6. This represents a percentage of correct responses of 50 per cent. The standard deviation for Group M was 14.2 and Group T was 13.8. The standard error of the mean for Group M was 3.93 and Group T was 3.82. The
standard error of the difference between the two groups was 5.48. The "t" ratio 1.32 with 26 degrees of freedom was not significant for it was less than 2.056 at the five percent level of confidence.

### TABLE 12

A COMPARISON OF PERFORMANCES OF GROUPS M AND T ON THE WORD MEANING TEST II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E. Mean</th>
<th>S.E. M₁-M₂</th>
<th>S.E. M₁-M₂</th>
<th>&quot;t&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The comparison of the test scores shows that although the means were not significantly different for Group M and for Group T and the ranges of scores were different. The pupils in Group M indicated a range in raw scores from a high of 48 with a low of 5. This shows that the highest percentage of correct responses was a high of 96 per cent while the lowest percentage of correct responses was 10 per cent. The pupils in Group T indicated a range from a high of 45 to a low of 3. These scores represent a percentage of a high of 90 per cent to a low of 6 per cent. Group M's average was 64 per cent and Group T's average was 50 per cent.
Table 13 shows the grade level performances on four spelling tasks. The average performances for Groups M and T were approximately one year below the standardized level of expectancy established for performances of sixth grade pupils on the Stanford Achievement Test and Lincoln Spelling Test. The average correct response on the Word Meaning Test for Group M was 63 per cent and Group T was 50 per cent. The averages on the Morrison-McCall Test was one month above the standardized level of expectancy established for performances of sixth grade pupils. Groups M and T showed better performances on isolated words.

**TABLE 13**

A SUMMARY OF POST-INSTRUCTION PERFORMANCE ON FOUR SPELLING TASKS BY GROUPS M AND T

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spelling Tasks</th>
<th>Grade Level M</th>
<th>Grade Level T</th>
<th>Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual discrimination of correct and incorrect spelling (Stanford Achievement T.)</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct response to isolated words dictated to group (Morrison-McCall T.)</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling response to words recognized in specific contextual setting (Lincoln Spelling T.)</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct response with appropriate words to given definitions (Word Meaning T.)</td>
<td>Per Cent</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary

An analysis of the post-instructional test data revealed no significant differences between the performances of Group M and Group T on any of the four tasks measured. Both groups performed at higher levels of achievement where the required spelling task was restricted to written responses to dictation of isolated words from a list. These measures resulted from performances on the Morrison-McCall Spelling Test. The average achievement for both groups on all measures ranged from 4.2 to 5.0. On the spelling task which required supply missing words in sentences, performances were inferior with the average achievement for both groups representing a level of one year and three months below grade placement.

Where pupils were required to select accurate spelling from three choices, the correct responses were not so high as when isolated words were called and written by the child in list form. The average achievement for both groups was one year and four months. This gain in the post-test indicates that deficiencies for both groups were not as great in the post-test as the pre-test. Both groups increased their knowledge of spelling generalizations. Growth in this area was reflected in the more accurate choices made, on the multiple-choice task. Both groups increased their knowledge of spelling in using certain structural aspects of words as aides to spelling and meaning as is
indicated by the Lincoln Spelling Test.

Group M and Group T averages were approximately one year below standardized level of expectancy established for performances of sixth grade pupils on the Stanford Achievement Test and the Lincoln Spelling Test. The average for Morrison-McCall Test was six months above the standardized level of expectancy established for performances of sixth grade pupils. The average per cent of correct responses on the Word Meaning Test for Group M was 63 per cent and Group T was 50 per cent.

Table 14 shows the grade level performances on the pre-instructional and the post-instructional spelling tasks. Group M on the Stanford Achievement Test showed a gain of 1.5 grade placement, and Group T showed a gain of 1.3 grade placement. Group M scoring a gain of two months over Group T. This represents no significant gain. Group M on the Morrison-McCall Test showed a gain of 1.4 grade placement, Group T showed a gain of 1.2 grade placement. Group M showed a gain of two months over Group T. This represents no significant gain. Group M on the Lincoln Spelling Test showed a gain of 1.8 grade placement, and Group T showed a gain of 1.5 grade placement. Group M made a gain of three months over Group T. This gain was not significant. Group M on the Word Meaning Test showed a gain of 23 per cent. Group T showed a gain of 11 per cent. The difference in achievement between Group M and Group T is 12 per cent.
This gain represented no significant increase.

**TABLE 14**

**A SUMMARY OF PRE-INSTRUCTIONAL AND POST-INSTRUCTIONAL PERFORMANCES ON SPELLING TASKS BY GROUPS M AND T**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Pre-Test Grade</th>
<th>Post-Test Grade</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Significance in Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stanford Achievement</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morrison-McCall</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Meaning</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Not significant

**A Summary Comparison of Achievement in Spelling Where Two Approaches to Spelling Instruction Were Utilized**

The pre-test data and the post-test data on overall spelling tasks of this study are summarized below:

A comparison of the reading data of Group M and Group T from the Stanford Reading Test, Form J revealed an average mean of 19.75. The result of this comparison of the test rating showed that the groups were equal to or as nearly equal to each other in reading achievement.

On the Kuhlmann-Anderson Intelligence Test, Form F
revealed an average mean of 100.2. This indicated both groups were equivalent to each other intellectually.

Pre-instructional data revealed no significant difference between the two groups. Both groups performed at lower levels of achievement on the Stanford Achievement multiple-choice spelling task. The mean raw score for Group M was 23.35, indicating a grade level performance of 3.6. The mean raw score for Group T was 23.71, indicating a grade level performance of 3.7. The results of the comparison of the test rating showed that both groups' means were nearly the same. Group M's average is two years and four months below sixth grade level. Group T's average is two years and three months below sixth grade level.

Groups M and T performed at higher level of achievement on the Morrison Spelling Test where the spelling task was restricted to written responses to dictation of isolated words from a list. The mean raw score for Group M was 28.7, indicating a grade level performance of 5.4. The mean raw score for Group T was 28.1, indicating a grade level performance of 5.2. The average performance for Group M is eight months below sixth grade level. Group T's average performance on this test was ten months below sixth grade level.

Where the spelling task required supplying missing words in meaningful sentences on the Stanford Achievement Test performances were inferior to spelling from dictation
of the words alone. The mean raw score for Group M was 35.2, indicating a grade level performance of 3.8. The mean raw score for Group T was 31.2, indicating a grade level performance of 3.5. Group M's average was two years and four months. Group T's average was two years and seven months below sixth grade.

On the Word Meaning Spelling Test, specially constructed for this study, there was a mean raw score for Group M of 20.1, indicating a 40 per cent correct response. The mean raw score for Group T was 19.3, indicating a 38 per cent correct response.

Post-test instructional data revealed no significant difference between Group M and Group T. Both groups performed at higher levels of achievement where the spelling task on the Morrison-McCall Test was restricted to written responses to dictation of isolated words from a list. The mean raw score for Group M was 37.6, indicating a grade level performance of 5.1. The mean raw score for Group T was 35.9, indicating a grade level performance of 5.0. This comparison showed that the Group M's average was eight months below sixth grade level. Group T's average was one year below this level. Group M's average on post-test performance increased one year and five months. Group T's average on post-test performance increased one year and three months.

Where the spelling task required supplying missing
words in meaningful sentences on the Lincoln Test, performances were still a little inferior. The raw score for Group M was 46.4, indicating a grade level performance of 3.6. The mean raw score for Group T was 35.9, indicating a grade level performance of 4.5. The Group M average was one year and five months below sixth grade level. Group M's average on the post-test performance increased 11.2. Group T's average on the post-test performance increased to 4.7.

On the Word Meaning spelling task, the mean raw score for Group M was 31.8, indicating a 64 per cent performance. The mean raw score for Group T was 24.6, indicating a 50 per cent performance. It should be pointed out that Group M's average on the post-test performance increased 23 per cent. Group T's average on the post-test performance increased 11 per cent.

It was concluded from the results of these comparisons that both modern and traditional groups performed at higher levels of achievement in spelling of words in isolation.

It was also concluded from the results of these comparisons that both groups showed a deficiency in spelling of words requiring generalization or certain structural aspects of words as well as multiple-choice and word meaning sentences. The results of the test comparisons indicated that skills should be improved in multiple-choice and word
meaning sentences in both groups.

The results of this study indicated that no significant difference was evidenced by utilization of the modern method of teaching spelling, as opposed to the traditional method, however, the study showed that some progress was made by the pupils of both Group M and Group T when they were taught both approaches to the teaching of spelling.

When compared the results of the over-all testing indicated that all skills should be improved in all phases of spelling.

The results of the post-test indicated that both groups showed considerable progress in spelling skills. However, the modern approach showed a greater gain than the traditional approach.
CHAPTER III

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Spelling continues to be a thorn in the side of many teachers, parents, principals and administrators, not because it is so important itself, but it is so often used as a means of measuring the outcomes of public instruction. If instruction in spelling were planned in a more definite fashion, utilizing pertinent research findings, it could be made more meaningful.

Spelling, like handwriting is one of the most important tools used in written communication with others and as a means of self-expression. The ease and freedom with which the child engages in various forms of written expression of ideas depends upon his ability to spell. Spelling is a conventional tool useful to students so that they may communicate with persons not at hand. Spelling is complex, but it is not chaotic.

Various studies have investigated learning procedures for more effective spelling. It appears that words isolated in meaning and oral repetition are not sufficient, but learning to spell is a matter of organization. The
pupils must be stimulated to continue their interest and to increase their abilities in oral and written spelling.

The change from a traditional to a modern program is basically a shift in emphasis. The traditional program was devoted exclusively to spelling. All modern programs of teaching spelling utilize the sense of seeing, the sense of hearing, and kinesthetic sense.

The traditional program was usually based on abstract drill, memorization and no generalization. The modern program provides many opportunities for using spelling in meaningful situations. But is this traditional spelling program a long term advantage or disadvantage? In an attempt to shed a little light on this question, twenty-eight sixth grade pupils at Haugabrooks Academy, Atlanta, Georgia, were given an opportunity to learn to spell during the summer session of 1967.

**Evolution of the Problem**

The writer's interest in this study stemmed from a consideration of spelling as one of the most important tool subjects. Of special concern is that young learners gain a somewhat more rational approach to spelling than is provided by rote memory. Further, it is felt that conscious efforts can be made to consider the usefulness of varied techniques in presenting words which the child must learn to spell. It is to this end the present study has been
directed.

**Contribution to Educational Knowledge**

It is hoped that this study will be important to other interested persons in improving the teaching of spelling, to make it more interesting and meaningful to boys and girls. It is further hoped that the teaching procedures and the instruments utilized for teaching and testing specific skills in spelling should be of value in the instructional program.

**Statement of the Problem**

The problem of the study was to determine which of two different instructional methods would result in the greater gain in performance of selected spelling skills by sixth grade pupils.

**Purpose of the Study**

The major purpose of this study was to determine relative effectiveness of modern and traditional spelling instruction upon the performance of sixth grade pupils on a variety of spelling test items.

The specific purposes of this study were:

1. To determine the relative effectiveness of both modern and traditional methods through a comparison of the pupils' performances on spelling tests requiring the spelling of words on
multiple-choice type items.

2. To determine the relative effectiveness of the two methods through a comparison of the pupils' performances on tests requiring the spelling of the words in isolation.

3. To determine the relative effectiveness of the two methods through a comparison of the pupils' performances on a test requiring the placement of the words in meaningful sentences.

4. To determine the relative effectiveness of the two methods through a comparison of pupils' responses with appropriate words to given definitions.

**Definition of Terms**

The modern method of spelling instruction involves a new variation in the study of word development. Activities grow out of the immediate needs of the pupils in terms of spelling skills and content area demands as well as from circumstances of a more personal nature. A part of work activities is done on a group basis while other aspects of the work activities are individualized especially with children who are seen to lack a spelling sense. Thus, the practical value of correct spelling is held constantly before the children as they concentrate on learning the spelling they need to use in their writing.
The traditional method involves learning to spell by exposing children to a list of words each week from a basic speller. The authors of the speller have selected words from standard word lists such as Fitzgerald's, Horn's, and Dolch's word lists. Usually the children are assigned the words for the week on Monday, they are required to write them in sentences on Tuesday, have a trial test on Wednesday, study errors on Thursday, and are given a final test on Friday.¹

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study exist in the fact that it involved only twenty-eight sixth grade pupils. These pupils, who had similar backgrounds, chronological ages, and intelligence quotients were randomly selected from fifty sixth-grade pupils enrolled at the Haugabrooks Academy.

The Research Design

The subjects of this study were selected sixth-grade pupils of Haugabrooks Academy. There were twenty-eight pupils that participated in this study, thirteen boys and fifteen girls ranging in age from ten to eleven years. The twenty-eight pupils were selected on the bases of their

intelligence quotients as measured by the Kuhlmann-Anderson Test, Form F, and reading achievement scores attained on the Stanford Achievement Test, Form J. The twenty-eight pupils were sub-divided equally into two separate groups for purposes of using a modern approach to spelling instruction with one group and a traditional approach to spelling instruction with the second group. The writer in grouping the pupils into Group M, modern approach, and Group T, traditional approach, used a process of selection so as to constitute each group, M and T, a heterogeneous group and equivalent to each other in reading achievement and intelligence quotients.

The modern group was classified as the experimental group. This group contained six boys and eight girls. The traditional group was classified as the control group, which included seven boys and seven girls.

The following instruments were used in this study:
1. The Kuhlmann-Anderson Test, Form F.
2. Lincoln Intermediate Spelling Test, Forms A and B.
3. Morrison-McCall Spelling Scale, Lists II and III.
4. The Stanford Achievement Test, Forms J, K, and M.
5. Specially constructed Teacher Made Test, Forms I and II.

**Method of Research**
The method of research employed in this study was
the experimental method utilizing the parallel group method and employing tests as the main investigative tool.

**Research Procedure**

The following procedures were taken:

1. Permission to conduct the study was requested from proper school officials.

2. The twenty-eight, sixth grade pupils were matched on the basis of age, sex, I.Q. and achievement levels.

3. The following pre-tests were administered to test pupils' spelling achievement prior to the experiment:
   a. The Stanford Achievement Test, Form K
   b. Lincoln Intermediate Spelling Test, Form A
   c. Morrison-McCall Spelling Scale, List II
   d. Specially Constructed Teacher Made Test

4. Group M was instructed by the method previously defined as the modern approach and Group T was instructed by the traditional approach for a period of eight weeks.

5. The following post-tests were administered to test the pupils' spelling achievement subsequent to the experiment:
   a. The Stanford Achievement Test, Form M
   b. Lincoln Intermediate Spelling Test, Form B
c. Morrison-McCall Spelling Scale, List III
d. Specially Constructed Teacher Made Test

6. The statistics used in treating the data were measures of central tendency and variability. The Fisher's "t" was employed to determine significant mean differences. Differences were determined significant at the .05 level of confidence.

7. Implications and recommendations were formulated based upon the statistical analyses in the final thesis copy.

Summary of Related Literature

The related literature for this study was reviewed under the following sub-headings: (1) Spelling instruction: Its nature and purpose, (2) The modern approach to teaching spelling, (3) The traditional approach to teaching spelling, and (4) Research on the effectiveness of modern and traditional spelling instructional methods.

The instructional methods of teaching spelling in the primary and middle grades should involve a functional approach, relating what is spelled to the needs and meaningful experiences of the children.

The use of standardized lists of words and supplementary words which arise from the needs of the pupils in their writing activities seem to be the most functional
spelling program of today's schools.

1. All the children are taught the words which they probably will use most frequently in their writing.

2. Spelling is integrated with other curricular areas by using words derived from immediate classroom needs.

3. The use of the supplemental list provides opportunity for the individualization of the spelling program according to specific needs and abilities.

The traditional approach to teaching spelling may be an ineffective method, in so far as it fails to meet the needs of the pupils in their experiences and in so far as it fails to carry over to other situations.

Research on the effectiveness of modern and traditional spelling instructional methods indicates that there is substantial agreement among authorities for the view, that no one method of teaching spelling is best for all pupils. Variations in particular methods and combinations of methods, which are best for the individual pupils should be determined and utilized.

The findings of research in which there appears to be general agreement among authorities indicate that those instructional methods in teaching spelling which are most effective are those that: (1) help the child succeed in spelling the words he needs when he needs them, (2) help the child to help himself, (3) recognize the wide span in spelling abilities with any class or grade, (4) provide for
individual differences, and (5) foster in the child a desire to spell words correctly and pride in his growth in spelling ability.

Other isolated findings of research suggest that: (1) the development of word meaning is one of the most important factors in spelling achievement, (2) the use of textbooks in combination with visual and auditory perception of words was a significant factor in the development of spelling ability of intermediate pupils, and (3) the letter-mark-out method as compared with the non letter-mark-out method in the corrected test procedure evidences no significant superiority in spelling achievement for either method.

**Major Findings of the Study**

The following significant findings are indicated from the comparison of the two methods of teaching spelling as measured by the over-all average spelling test performances.

**Pre-Experimental Period**

1. A comparison of the reading data of Group M and Group T from the Stanford Reading Test, Form J indicated an average mean of 19.75, an average standard deviation of 6.01. Further, Groups M and T exhibited similar ranges from highs of 32 and 31 and lows of 8 and 7, respectively. The mean raw score for Group M was 19.64 and for Group T was 19.86 with a difference of .22 in favor of Group T. The standard deviation for Group M was 6.02 and for Group T was 6.01 with a difference of .01 in favor of Group M. The "t" ratio .94 was not significant, for it was less than 2.056 at the .05 level of confidence.
with 26 degrees of freedom. The results of the comparison of the test ratings showed that the groups were equal to or as nearly equal to each other in reading achievement.

2. On the Kuhlmann-Anderson Intelligence Test, Form F, it was revealed that the average mean was 100.2, and the average standard deviation was 11.1. Further, Group M and Group T exhibited similar ranges from a high of 127 and 125 to a low of 83 and 80, respectively. The mean raw score for Group M was 100.1 and for Group T, 100.3, with a difference of .02 in favor of Group T. The standard deviation for Group M was 10.5 and for Group T was 11.8 with a difference of 1.3 in favor of Group T. The "t" ratio was .46, less than 2.056 at the .05 level of confidence with 26 degrees of freedom. The results of the comparison of the test ratings showed that the groups were equal to each other in the intelligence test performance.

3. A comparison of the spelling data of Group M and Group T from the Stanford Achievement Spelling Test, Form K indicated an average mean of 23.53, and average standard deviation of 9.14. Groups M and T exhibited similar ranges from highs of 40 and 39 and lows of 11 and 7, respectively. The mean raw score for Group M was 23.35, and the mean raw score for Group T was 23.71 with a difference of .36 in favor of Group T. The standard deviation for Group M was 8.30 and for Group T was 9.98 with a difference of .68 in favor of Group T. The "t" ratio, 1.0 with 26 degrees of freedom, was not significant for it was less than 2.056 at the .05 level of confidence. Therefore, the difference between the two groups of pre-test performances on the multiple-choice type of spelling was not statistically significant.

4. The finding regarding the effectiveness of the two methods through a comparison of the pupils performance on the Morrison-McCall Test, List II, indicated an average mean of 28.4 and an average standard deviation of 8.67. Further, Group M and Group T exhibited a range from a high of 48 and 45 to a low of 18 and 17, respectively. The mean raw score for Group M was 28.7 and the mean raw score for Group T was 28.1 with a difference of .6 in favor of Group T. The standard
deviation for Group M was 9.10 and for Group T was 8.24 with a difference of .86 in favor of Group M. The "t" ratio, .18 with 26 degrees of freedom, did not reach 2.056 required for significance at the .05 level of confidence.

5. A comparison of the spelling data of Group M and Group T on the Lincoln Spelling Test, Form A revealed an average mean of 33.2, and an average standard deviation of 27.3. Further, Group M and Group T exhibited a high of 48 and 45 to a low of 20 and 12, respectively. The mean raw score for Group M was 35.2 and the mean raw score for Group T was 31.2, with a difference of .7 in favor of Group M. The standard deviation for Group M was 9.5 and for Group T, 10.2, with a difference of .7 in favor of Group M. The "t" ratio, 1.044 with 26 degrees of freedom, was not significant for it was less than the required 2.056 at .05 level of confidence. There was no difference in performance between the groups of pupils' spelling of words in meaningful sentences.

6. The finding in regard to the two methods through comparison of the pupils' performance on the Word Meaning Test, Form I, indicated an average mean of 19.7 and a standard deviation of 9.98. Further, Group M and Group T exhibited a range of highs of 37 and 36 to lows of 8 and 7, respectively. The mean raw score for Group M was 20.1 and the mean raw score for Group T was 19.3, with a difference of .7 in favor of Group M. The standard deviation score for Group M was 10.42 and for Group T was 9.45 with a difference of .97 in favor of Group M. The "t" ratio 1.813 with 26 degrees of freedom did not reach 2.056 required for significance at the .05 level of confidence.

Post-Experimental Period

1. A comparison of the spelling data for Group M and Group T on the Stanford Achievement Spelling Test, Form M, revealed an average mean of 36.75 and an average standard deviation of 15.35. Further, Group M and Group T exhibited a range of highs of 70 and 62 and lows of 18 and 11, respectively. The mean raw score for Group M was 37.6 and the mean raw score for Group T was 35.9 with a difference of 1.7 in favor of Group M.
The standard deviation for Group M was 15.8 and for Group T, 14.9, with a difference of .9 in favor of Group M. The "t" ratio, .28 with 26 degrees of freedom, was not significant for it was less than 2.056 at the .05 level of confidence. Therefore, the difference between the post-instructional levels of performance was not statistically significant.

2. A comparison of the spelling data of Group M and Group T on the Morrison-McCall Spelling Test, List III, indicated an average mean of 34.9 and an average standard deviation of 9.64. Further, Group M and Group T exhibited a range from highs of 49 and 45 to lows of 20 and 18, respectively. The mean raw score for Group M was 35.5 and the mean raw score for Group T was 34.3 with a difference of 1.2 in favor of Group M. The standard deviation score for Group M was 10.15 and for Group T was 9.13 with a difference of 1.02 in favor of Group M. The "t" ratio .32, was not significant for it was less than 2.056 at the .05 level of confidence with 26 degrees of freedom.

3. The finding regarding the effectiveness of the two methods through a comparison of the pupils performance of the Lincoln Spelling Test, Form B, revealed an average mean 41.15, and an average standard deviation 15.75. Further, Group M and Group T exhibited a range from highs of 72 and 62 and lows of 18 and 11, respectively. The mean raw score for Group M was 46.4 and the mean raw score for Group T was 35.9 with a difference of 10.5 in favor of Group M. The standard deviation for Group M was 16.9 and for Group T was 14.6 with a difference of 2.3 in favor of Group M. The "t" ratio was 1.71 with 26 degrees of freedom, was not significant for it was less than 2.056 at the .05 level of confidence.

4. A comparison of the results of Group M and Group T on the Word Meaning Test, Form II indicated an average mean of 33.2 and an average standard deviation of 14.0. Further, Groups M and T exhibited a range from highs of 48 and 45 and a lows of 5 and 3, respectively. The mean raw score for Group M was 31.8 and the mean raw score for Group T was 24.6 with a difference of 7.2 in favor of Group M. The standard deviation for Group M was 14.2 and for Group T was 13.8
Conclusions

From the analysis and interpretations of data resulting from this investigation, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The post-instructional data revealed no significant difference between the two groups compared on any spelling task measured. Both groups showed considerable progress in spelling skills. However, the modern approach showed a greater numerical gain than the traditional approach.

2. It was concluded from the results of these comparisons that both groups showed a deficiency in spelling of words requiring generalization or certain structural aspects of words as well as in meaningful sentences.

3. Since both groups showed considerable improvement but no significant differences in achievement in the various aspects of spelling development, it was concluded that both the modern and traditional approaches could be used to advantage in removing the following deficiencies which were definitely evident:
   a. Inaccuracies in choices of correct spelling of words on multiple-choice tasks.
   b. Lack of utilization of a more meaningful or definitive approach to the spelling of words so that any values in the superiority of the groups in reproducing words in isolation were not made functional.

4. Comparison of the over-all test results led the writer to conclude that all skills should be improved in all phases of spelling development.

Implications

From the analysis of findings and conclusions of this research, the following implications seemed feasible:

1. General trends in data led the writer to infer that both the traditional and modern approaches
have their respective advantages in the improvement of spelling skills.

2. The very considerable progress made on the post test in the experiment implies that both methods have possibility of improving spelling skills, but possibly with varied emphases.

3. The instances of numerical superiority within the modern group approaches may find a part of this explanation in further analysis of multiple-choice test results, with specific emphasis on the sentence meaning, and a more extensive use of the modern method to be considered in the teaching of spelling skills.

**Recommendations**

The findings of this study appeared to justify the recommendations that follow:

1. That both methods should be used to enhance spelling skills and techniques.

2. That spelling words should not be taught exclusively in isolation, but rather in context.

3. That opportunities should be provided for pupils to utilize their spelling words in meaningful situations.

4. That more words should be taken from the various content areas and grouped under proper headings in spellers for everyday spelling words.
APPENDIX A

SAMPLE I

DIRECTIONS: These sentences contain scrambled words. Unscramble the words and write them correctly.

1. The birdnob was tired in a nokt.
2. It was stundoored that gitenehe pupils would prepare the kloblot.
3. The road gnag made the thap wider.
4. His thorat was so sroe he could not eat.
5. There was a neek interest in the socer.
6. He's the orst of boy who gets poor mrkas.
7. That srikt is wrtoh the price.
8. She wore a marst dress.
9. The milk is bunod to turn osur.
10. His acnuoct of the fight does not agree with ours.

Name__________________________________________ Date__________

SAMPLE II

MATCHING WORDS AND MEANINGS

DIRECTIONS: Write the words matching the meanings listed below in each blank space.

1. Choose______________.
2. Different______________.
3. Chopped greens and dressing______________.
4. In the middle___________.
5. To make content or fulfill___________.
6. Very pleasing or charming___________.
7. A thought___________.
8. To be present___________.
9. Thing known to be true or to have happened___________.
10. Animal which is half donkey and half horse___________.

idea attractive satisfy attend
mule fact between salad
various select

Name_________________________ Date___________

SAMPLE III

SENTENCES

DIRECTIONS: Write spelling words to complete the sentences.

1. __________ is the science of flying.
2. A __________ is a plan for spending.
3. Danes live in _____________.
4. The Dutch live in a small country in Europe called the ____________, or _____________.
5. The French live in _____________.
6. ____________ have horizontal propellers.
7. Angels have wings; ____________ have corners.
8. A list of words is a _____________.
9. Tiny living plants are _____________.
10. An oily liquid found in the earth is called _____________.
SAMPLE IV
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

DIRECTIONS: Write the correct word for each definition. Write the words in the puzzle following the numbers across and down.

Across
1. made ready
5. bend forward
7. choose by vote
8. hit hard
11. useless plant
12. make cloth
13. a hold or crack

Down
2. true; actual
3. exercise
4. come in
6. supply; furnish
9. cloth for drying
10. large pile

Name ___________________________ Date ___________________
APPENDIX B

TEST I

MATCHING WORDS AND MEANINGS

DIRECTIONS: Select the word from the list given which matches the meaning given. Write that word in the blank spaces provided.

1. Thing known to be true or to have happened
2. A pig
3. Regular payment for the use of property or to take pay for the use of property
4.Feat or performance
5. Animal which is half donkey and half horse
6. To plunge head first into water
7. To make very hot
8. Flow of electricity
9. Way made by people or animal walking
10. Machine for forcing liquid, air, or gas into or out of thing
11. A prison
12. To turn up soil
13. Place in which work is done
14. To guard or defend
15. Underground passage
16. The lower hanging part of a dress or a coat, or to pass along the border or edge.
17. Person who write books, stories or articles
18. Land covered with grass kept closely cut
19. A small book
20. Courteous
21. Wood
22. To be present
23. A raised platform
24. A group of people belong to same race
25. Fashion
26. Blossoms
27. Something won
28. To say number in order
29. An open weaving
30. Do business in
31. To separate into parts
32. Full-grown, ready to be gathered and eaten
33. Series of links joined together
34. Cotton, silk or flax spun into a fine cord
35. Drop of salty water coming from the eye
36. Hard to get; rare
37. To plan or prepare
38. Very small soft green plants that grow close together on the ground or rocks, on trees
39. Group that sing together
40. Person who visits; guest
41. Bad to look at
42. Given or belonging to God; sacred

43. One who drives

44. Engine on wheels for pulling wagon trucks, plows

45. Examination

46. An insect that makes honey

47. Very small animals you cannot see

48. Something that bees make

49. Come up; an increase

50. The seven month

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<td>mule</td>
<td>jail</td>
<td>boil</td>
<td>visitor</td>
<td>rise</td>
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Approximate grade levels of pre-test words used on the tests constructed for the research study as they appear in *The New Spelling Goals*¹ and *Sound and Sense in Spelling*²

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<th>4th Grade</th>
<th>5th Grade</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1. lace</td>
<td>1. attend</td>
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<td>2. rise</td>
<td>2. chain</td>
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<td>3. tribe</td>
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<td>4. bee</td>
<td>4. moss</td>
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<td>10. polite</td>
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<td>16. path</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30 per cent</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


5th Grade—Continued

18. dive
19. jail
20. split
21. tractor
22. flowers
23. ugly
24. tunnel
25. arrange
26. costume
27. dozen
28. dive
29. jail
30. account

58 per cent
DIRECTIONS: Select the word from the list given which matches the meanings given. Write that word in the blank spaces provided.

1. To cook in a pan with fat__________.
2. A restaurant where you serve yourself__________.
3. Something used for making sidewalks__________.
4. Flow of electricity__________.
5. A kind of chair__________.
6. To enforce or compel__________.
7. Place in which work is done__________.
8. Service for a person who has died__________.
9. People of high rank__________.
10. Very small animals you cannot see__________.
11. Something that bees make__________.
12. A part of the body__________.
13. To observe in a special way__________.
14. A high officer in the army__________.
15. Away from__________.
16. A name for an action word like run, eat, and play______.
17. A machine for forcing liquid, air, or gas__________.
18. Promise__________.
19. To be present
20. Timber
21. A pail
22. Polite
23. To pound
24. An entertainment
25. A building for athletics
26. To step upon or walk heavily
27. Something won
28. Fashion
29. To say number in order
30. A coin
31. An air-tight bag
32. To fasten
33. A liquid food
34. Something used for climbing
35. To show
36. Crawled
37. A kind of candy
38. A flower
39. To exchange
40. A polite request
41. Four quarts
42. A day for fun
43. To make beautiful
44. A kind of fruit
45. Ability to remember
46. Amount paid for something
47. A piece of paper money
48. Distance from end to end
49. Used to find direction
50. Fine, dry soil

cement | celebrate | pump | tramp
---|---|---|---
tramp | enforce | ballon | current
office | hammer | dozen | ear
attend | stool | pledge | general
courteous | fry | peach | toward
germs | trade | cafeteria | verb
funeral | booklet | nobles | honey
wood | style | cafeteria | Dubai
button | gymnasium | prize | invitation
decorate | nickle | amusement | rose
chocolate | memory | bill | exhibit
price | gallon | length | crept
holiday | ladder | bucket | soup
dust | | |
Approximate grade levels of post-test words used on the tests constructed for the research study as they appear in *The New Spelling Goals*\(^1\) and *Sound and Sense in Spelling*\(^2\)

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<th>4th Grade</th>
<th>5th Grade</th>
<th>6th Grade</th>
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<td>4. general</td>
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19. chocolate
20. memory
21. exhibit
22. gallon
23. length
24. holiday
25. ladder
26. bucket
27. sentence
28. visitor
29. chorus
30. ugly
31. score

62 per cent
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