The Journal of Educational Research

ISSN: 0022-0671 (Print) 1940-0675 (Online) Journal homepage: <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/vjer20>

News Items and Communications

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To cite this article: Walter S. Monroe (1921) News Items and Communications, The Journal of Educational Research, 4:1, 68-74, DOI: [10.1080/00220671.1921.10879181](https://doi.org/10.1080/00220671.1921.10879181)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00220671.1921.10879181>

Published online: 15 Dec 2014.

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News Items and Communications

This department will contain news items regarding research workers and their activities. It will also serve as a clearing house for more formal communications on similar topics, preferably of not more than five hundred words. These communications will be printed over the signatures of the authors. Address all correspondence concerning this department to Walter S. Monroe, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois.

A letter from Henry D. Rinsland, Director of Department of Research and Guidance, Ardmore (Oklahoma) City Schools, gives the following information concerning educational research activities in his state.

Educational Research in Oklahoma At the invitation of County Superintendent Mrs. M. O'Daniel Rinsland, a survey is being made of the public schools of Johnston County. This is the first county survey in Oklahoma. The members of the survey staff are from the University of Oklahoma and two of the state normal schools. The survey has been organized in seven divisions as follows:

Division 1. Organization and Administration

Division 2. Buildings and Equipment

Division 3. Attendance and Enrollment.

Division 4. Instruction, Course of Study

Division 5. Teacher Status

Division 6. Tests and Measurements

Division 7. Finance.

Mr. Rinsland also reports the extensive use of intelligence tests in the public schools of Ardmore under his supervision. He has also spent some time in Henrietta supervising the giving of educational and intelligence tests in that city.

At the University of Kansas, Dean F. J. Kelly of the School of Education conceived the idea of a bureau whose function would be primarily service rather than research. At the present this Bureau of School Service University of Kansas is under the direction of F. P. O'Brien. A recent letter from Professor O'Brien gives the following information concerning the work of this bureau.

"The Bureau has directed a survey of the curriculum and building problems of the Lawrence school system. The report was completed early in January and will soon appear in printed form. The Bureau is at the present time cooperating with the schools in cities of the first, second, and third classes, in making a study of the teacher-salary situation in the schools of the State. The report is nearing completion and will soon be distributed to the school systems in this State so that it will be in their hands before the time for the re-employment of teachers for the coming year. The Bureau is also conducting a survey of the school situation as it is found in several of the school districts in an adjoining county of Kansas. Some of these districts are in a condition of distress due partly to the fact that several small high schools are maintained where one should be adequate. The financial burden of the present arrangement is crushing for certain districts. They made an appeal thru the County Superintendent to this

Bureau of the University for some professional assistance in advising them what to do. That whole section of the county is now anxiously awaiting the report of our investigation.

"It is evident that such undertakings are chiefly of the service type but the Bureau has also been promoting Research Work in a smaller way by assisting and encouraging students interested in experimental or research study."

Dr. Evan T. Sage, Professor of Latin of the University of Pittsburgh, is developing some Latin tests. In a recent letter he says, "We are going on this assumption for the time being that in addition to certain qualities which we may not be able to measure a student needs some knowledge of forms, vocabulary and syntax. There are of course tests in existence to measure all these things separately. But as the concrete aim of Latin teaching is ability to translate it should be possible to make a translation scale which will measure achievement in all these things at once and also serve as a basis for investigation of the other elements involved in successful translation. The tests of this sort which are now in existence seem to be open to the objection that they are not based on the standard vocabulary and standard syntax. Unfortunately inflections have not yet been standardized though we are working on that problem."

It is quite within the bounds of reason that a Latin test by a professor of Latin may take precedence over every such test now available. We have long thought in the testing of abilities in subjects taught in secondary and higher educational institutions the experts in these subjects should be heard from. It takes something more than a mere scale maker to devise acceptable instruments of this sort. We hope Professor Sage will carry his investigations to a successful conclusion.

We are in receipt of a "Bulletin on Silent Reading" from Superintendent F. S. Camp of Stamford, Connecticut. It is addressed to his principals and teachers. It is one of the best we have seen. Both silent and oral reading are divided into intensive and extensive activities, each of which is defined and illustrated.

"Silent intensive reading" is largely study. "Silent extensive reading" is reading for pleasure and individual interests. "Oral intensive reading" includes in the early grades the conventional mechanics of reading and in the upper grades the study of masterpieces and "group study reading," i. e., reading in which all children have the same texts before them and are actuated by a common purpose. "Oral extensive reading" occurs when one person reads to a group of listeners.

The bulletin gives for each of these four types of reading activity a suggested proportion of time to be utilized in each of the eight elementary grades. The shift of emphasis from grade to grade, so far as the program may show it, is thus clearly set forth in the table on page 70. The entries indicate the number of tenths of the entire reading time in each grade.

Superintendent Camp discusses the question of reading from these four points of view and provides definite means by which the principals and teachers may check up their success in meeting the objectives he sets up. Several blanks for recording the amount and character of the reading done by children are provided. This sort of a bulletin cannot fail, especially when followed up by the supervisory staff, to produce *measurable* improvement.

SUGGESTED TIME VALUES, TEN REPRESENTING THE BASE FOR
READING

Type of Reading Activity	Grades							
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
Silent intensive reading	2	1	a	a	a	0	0	0
Silent extensive reading	0	1	2	3	5	6	7	7
Oral intensive reading	7	6	5	4	3	2	2	2
Oral extensive reading	1	2	3	3	2	2	1	1

a Large time values here in grades where the child must *learn* from the printed text; but as it is not considered as falling under "reading exercises" in the ordinary sense, no ratio numbers are assigned.

Schoolmen's Week at the University of Pennsylvania was held Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, April 7-9. There were 1,885 persons registered while 8,565 attendances were noted in 31 programs. The number of registrations and attendances were both larger than in any preceding year, the previous highest records, 1,392 and 3,802 respectively, having been made in 1920.

Among the speakers from outside the state were, J. H. Kirkland, Chancellor, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee; Frank Aydelotte, President-elect of Swarthmore College, now Professor of English, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; John W. Withers, former Superintendent of Schools of St. Louis, now Dean of School of Education, New York University; Walter S. Dearborn and John M. Brewer, Harvard University; William S. Gray, School of Education, University of Chicago; Professor N. L. Engelhardt, Otis W. Caldwell, and Miss Fannie Dunn, Columbia University; and C. J. Galpin, Specialist in Farm Life Studies, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

Social and recreational features took the form of visitation of the campus and buildings, including the museum and library. The guests of the university were given luncheons on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at noon, and on the evenings of Thursday and Friday. On Saturday over 650 luncheons were served, a reception was tendered by the Acting Provost, Doctor Josiah H. Penniman after the Friday evening program. Several hundred accepted the invitation of the Athletic Association to witness the baseball game between Pennsylvania and Swarthmore, Saturday afternoon. On Thursday night two hundred superintendents and supervising principals were given stage seats at the Academy of Music and the Metropolitan Opera House where the American Legion gave a program of unusual interest for the purpose of stimulating the spirit of Americanism.

It was generally considered the most successful meeting yet held. This result was due in large part to the faithful and cordial cooperation of the members of the General Committee, the Reception and Registration Committees, and the Advisory Committeemen, and to the support given by State Superintendent Thomas E. Finegan and City Superintendent Edwin E. Broome and their assistants. The executive officers

were the same as in previous years—Harlan Updegraff, Chairman, General Committee; Arthur J. Jones in charge of Secondary School Conferences and LeRoy A. King, Secretary, General Committee.

Equivalence of Forms I and II of the Burgess Picture Supplement Scale for Measuring Silent Reading Ability

Soon after the beginning of the present semester, the Burgess Picture Supplement Scale for Measuring Silent Reading Ability, Form I, was applied to about 1,000 seventh- and eighth-grade pupils with the following results:

Class	No. Tested	Paragraphs (Median)	Credit (Median)
VII-B	238	7	35
VII-A	263	8	38
VIII-B	242	9	41
VIII-A	219	9	38

It was expected that later in the semester Form II of the same scale would be applied for the purpose of securing a measure of the progress that is being made under present methods of instruction.

In order to get an idea of the practice effect of taking the test once, a group of high sixth-grade pupils was given Form I on April seventh. Under exactly the same conditions so far as it is possible to secure such a situation the same group was given Form II on the following day. The records of all pupils not present at both tests were discarded.

As in the case of the seventh and eighth grades, this group fell below standard, securing a median score of only 43. But to our surprise the median on the following day with Form II jumped to 64. Forty individuals made gains totaling 198 paragraphs, four neither lost nor gained and two lost a total of 2 paragraphs.

These gains were so notable that it seemed as if they could not be attributed entirely to practice effect. Therefore another group of 45 high sixth-grade pupils was selected and given Form II, followed on the second day thereafter by Form I. Instead of an improvement appearing as the result of experience there was manifested a decided loss. The median score dropped from 55 to 49. Twelve pupils gained twenty paragraphs. Nine neither gained nor lost and twenty lost a total of 55 paragraphs. This helped to conform our suspicions that the gains of group one were partly due to a difference in difficulty of the two forms and not altogether to practice effect.

To further satisfy ourselves as to whether or not Form II is as difficult as Form I, a third group of high sixth-grade pupils was given Form II and after a brief rest, Form I. The general results agreed with the facts already noted. This class scored 58 on Form II and after a few minutes rest fell to a score of 49 on Form I. Seven pupils made a total gain of 10 paragraphs, over the record made on Form II, seven pupils made the same score and eighteen pupils lost a total of 43 paragraphs.

Our brief experience with this test may be summarized thus: (1) Form I appears to be considerably more difficult than Form II; (2) inasmuch as all of our Form I

median scores are below standard and all of our Form II median scores are above standard we may be justified in a suspicion that Form I standards may be a trifle high and that Form II standards may be too low. Of course, we claim for our results no values beyond that of the proverbial straw that indicates which way the wind is probably blowing.

Information concerning the experiences of others bearing on the main questions here involved will be eagerly awaited. Meanwhile we shall be in doubt as to how to complete our undertaking to secure a correct measure of the semester gains made by our seventh- and eighth-grade classes.

H. C. DALEY

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The Illinois Examination

While there is much discussion both pro and con in regard to tests students of education, supervisors, and teachers may be interested in reading of the use of the Illinois Examination in Bureau County and the Princeton city schools in October, 1920. The writer has been actively engaged in working with this battery of educational tests in Bureau County since the sixteenth of last August. The examination in this county involved three hundred eighty-five teachers and about five thousand five hundred boys and girls. It is impossible to give any account of the Princeton city schools without discussing the work of the entire county.

County Superintendent George O. Smith of Bureau County is not only a firm believer that educational tests will be a big factor in the solution of future school problems but he is also anxious that his teachers be prepared to participate actively in the use of them. As a result the writer offered work on educational tests two periods a day in the August institute. The Illinois Examination and Teachers' Handbook were made the basis of instruction. Two sections of about one hundred teachers each were formed. The work of each section was similar. Consultation periods were also provided. The work was given under the following divisions:

1. Each teacher was given the test in exactly the same manner in which she was expected to give it.
2. Each teacher was taught how to score the papers using her own as a sample.
3. The interpretation of mental age and intelligence quotient in terms of ability to do work of the grade in which the child was located was explained.

4. The interpretation of achievement ages and achievement quotients was considered with reference to planning suitable remedies for unsatisfactory instruction.

After giving tests, teachers were asked to make out record sheets like the one below. These are on file for reference at any time pupil promotions are being discussed. The column marked "Health" is to be marked for each pupil with 1, 2, or 3. One stands for excellent health, two good health, and three poor health. The health statement is filled out by the school nurses. The remainder of the sheet is filled in for each child from his examination.

Many criticize tests because we do not follow up. In the case of Bureau County and the Princeton city schools the follow-up work was carefully planned and carried out. The entire county was divided into districts for the convenience of the teachers.

BUREAU COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ILLINOIS EXAMINATIONS GIVEN October 7, 1920

School Lincoln (Princeton) *Teacher* T.V.Fisher *District* 115

Names of Pupils (alphabetically)			Chronological Age yrs. mos.	Mental or Achievement Ages					Intelligence or Achievement Quotient				
				Intelli- gence	Arith- metic	Reading			Intelli- gence	Arith- metic	Reading		
						Aver- age	Com- pre- hension	Rate			Average	Com- pre- hension	Rate
Arthur Rhoek	3	5	14	10	7	10	8	12	75	71	100	80	120
.....													
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A called teachers' meeting was held in each district. At the meeting the test was carefully reviewed and the typical type errors called to the attention of the teachers. First of all, teachers were urged to secure a textbook¹ that would deal with the subject of remedies in detail. The arithmetical errors we arranged as to type. It was found that in arithmetic pupils were generally weak in the fundamental operations. To improve this condition drill cards² in arithmetic were secured. The teacher was then instructed to go over the test papers carefully and let each child work on those drills in which he did not make satisfactory scores. Each teacher is also provided with a sheet of problems showing the different abilities required in the fundamental operations. This same idea was carried out in all phases of the work in arithmetic. It will be readily seen that in this way the pupil received individual attention and was not required to drill or work on material that he could handle successfully.

The grade medians for the Princeton city schools are approximately equivalent to the grade standards in the case of general intelligence. This means that the boys and girls in the different grades of the Princeton city schools have, on the average, about the same capacity to learn as that exhibited by the average corresponding grade in other places. This does not mean that every boy or girl is up to standard with respect to general intelligence. We have some pupils who differ from it by as much as three years. In grade VII we have mental ages ranging from nine to eighteen years. The least range is found in the third grade.

The median scores for silent reading were up to the standards. This verifies several other tests that have been given in the last two years to the pupils of the Princeton city schools and is probably due in a measure to the methods used in the teaching of the subject.

¹ Monroe, W. S. *Measuring the results of teaching*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1918.

² Clark, M. G. *Arithmetic Habituated, Series A*.

The median scores in arithmetic are not satisfactory to the teachers nor are they up to the standards of the examination. There are several known causes back of this:

1. The test involved, in certain grades, operations that are not introduced in the Princeton city schools until later in the life of the child.
2. Previous to the present school year the arithmetic text was not satisfactory nor practical.
3. The instruction was not suitable as it was based entirely on the text in use.

The first of these causes cannot be overcome in our course of study. The second has been remedied by a change in arithmetic textbooks. The third is being worked out as rapidly as possible. At present some improvement has been shown. The superintendent has gone over the pupils' papers with the classroom teacher and the errors have been checked. Drill is being given each day on the basis of the individual needs.

The use of the Illinois Examination in Bureau County and the Princeton city schools has suggested the following observations with reference to its value.

The Illinois Examination is simple enough in its operation to make it a valuable aid to both rural and city schools. It is very easy to administer.

Teachers who have used it are inclined to diagnose more carefully all cases of failure to do good school work.

Teachers, upon discovering that this work is constructive and not for the purpose of finding fault with teachers, cooperate very willingly.

While the examination is standardized for the group and was not used for promotional purposes it has designated certain children as worthy of larger opportunities to make progress.

A better understanding of school situations is developed between teachers and supervisors.

The examination forms a preliminary basis for the study of gradation or grouping by mental rather than chronological ages.

It will be no small factor in making teachers realize that there is a scientific side to teaching that cannot be neglected.

CARLETON BLOSE SMITH

Superintendent, Princeton, Illinois