UNIT FOUR

MATERIALS

by

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Morehead, Kentucky

July 19 - August 6, 1971

The research reported herein was performed pursuant to a grant with the Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under Government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their professional judgment in the conduct of the project. Points of view or opinions stated do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT
OF
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

OFFICE OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20202

Funded under the authority of the Adult Education Act Section 309(c), Title III, P.L. 91-230.
INTRODUCTION

The unit on materials should be especially helpful to all trainers unfamiliar with the materials used by ABE teachers and also to those trainers who have some expertise in the area. The unit has been written in a "step-by-step procedure" format in order to be most practical for ABE teacher trainers. Included in the unit are step-by-step demonstrations of the most widely used ABE materials; several small group exercises to familiarize teachers with ABE materials; and a section on the teacher construction of Individual Skills Kits (ISK).

The monograph, Teaching Reading in Adult Basic Education: Materials and Sources, although not a practical, step-by-step guide for trainers is, however, a very integral part of a trainer's education in materials. It has been included as a separate monograph in order to provide a comprehensive review of available ABE materials. Trainers will find it most valuable when used to give them a broader perspective of this area of the field. It can serve as a guide to sources of materials and it includes, therefore, not only a critique but lists of materials, publishers, and addresses.

The Editors
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Despite the war on poverty and the increased attention directed toward basic education for adults, millions of Americans still suffer from the handicap of too little education. Moreover, the dearth of literacy materials which prevailed during the Moonlight School days of early literacy training still prevails.

In the past, literacy education has been concerned with teaching only the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic and much of this teaching has been done using elementary school materials. Even now, there are very few materials available for adult basic education which provide a sound basis in reading instruction for adult illiterates in the same sense that many materials provide a sound basis for elementary school children. It is the purpose of these sessions to suggest, demonstrate, and evaluate reading materials appropriate for use in ABE programs.

There are several considerations in the selection, understanding, and evaluation of reading materials for literacy training. These are:

1. individual differences
2. attitudes of adults toward success
3. content of the material,
The first consideration concerns individual differences in learning rates. Young people and adults who enroll in your classes for literacy training will differ widely in their rate of progress; certainly all of us are aware of these differences in rate of learning. You may be able to learn how to type faster than another person learns it. This doesn't necessarily mean you are smarter than they, but it does indicate differences in rates of learning to type. In your classes, those who learn slowly often cannot keep up with the rest of your students, and those who learn rapidly are often unduly held back. This is especially the case when instruction is intended for or geared to the average student. For this reason, methods of instruction and instructional materials should be highly individualized (and let us stress this word—individualized, for you have heard it in sessions on diagnosis and it is equally important in the consideration of reading materials); so we are saying, methods of instruction and instructional materials must be highly individualized in order to provide for these different learning rates of students—whether these rates be fast, slow, or somewhere in the middle. In other words, for the purposes in this workshop, "highly individualized" materials are those that are extensive, not only in relation to interest areas but also in relation to readability levels (or difficulty levels or grade levels, if you prefer these terms), and which are so structured that students may move through the material at their own rate without being dependent on another student's rate in order to progress to the next level.
Let's talk about what we mean by extensive in relation to readability. We all know that extensive means broad, comprehensive, thorough, expansive, ample, plenty, a lot of. Readability level refers to how different the material is to read. We often say this student can read material at the 4.5 readability level. Some of us are more comfortable saying "material at the 4.5 grade level," and some of us prefer saying "material at the 4.5 difficulty level." But no matter which term we prefer, we are all talking about the same thing—how difficult the material is to read.

Now let's put our two concepts—extensiveness and readability—together and consider highly individualized reading materials. For a reading material to be considered highly individualized it must have many different selections or exercises at many different readability levels. For example, at readability level 2.0 there might be as many as 10 selections; and between readability 2.0 and 2.5 there might be another 10 selections; and between levels 2.5 and 3.0 there would be 10 selections, and so on. So if material that covers readability levels 2.0 through 3.0 contains quite a number of selections at each sub-level, it can be considered quite extensive. A student at readability level 2.0 who progressed rapidly might not need all 30 selections before he was ready to begin working at level 3.0. On the other hand, another student at level 2.0 might need all 30 selections before he was ready for level 3.0. An extensive material would provide each student with as much or as little as he needed, and each student would progress through the selections at his own rate—fast, slow, or whatever.
Practically, this means you will want to examine materials for extensiveness. When you examine materials, look for the number of selections at each level and then make a decision about how extensive the material is. In the classroom, a material that covers readability levels 1-8 and only contains 4 lessons at each level is going to be of very little help because such a material certainly couldn't be considered extensive, could it?

The second consideration in the selection, understanding, and evaluation of reading materials for ABE concerns the attitudes of the adult illiterate toward success. Most adults attending adult basic education classes are doing so on a voluntary basis. These students are failure oriented, and they often do not continue to attend classes if they do not meet with success in developing skills that lead to increased ability to read. It is very important that reading materials designed for adults in ABE classes be such that the student works individually at his own rate, in competition with himself. Highly individualized reading materials provide for this immediate and continued success and enhance the student's success oriented, rather than failure oriented, attitude.

The last consideration is the content of reading materials. The content of much literacy material has emphasized only the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Some of this material seems more appropriate for children than for adults. However, in today's world, the adult functional illiterate needs to acquire a command not only of the
basic communication and learning skills, but also of a great deal of
information about the society that surrounds him, if he is to become a
productive member of that society. Basic instruction in tool skills
should relate directly to the immediate interests and experiences of the
adult; it should be centered in material that contains the social informa-
tion the adult illiterate must acquire. "Dick and Jane" materials fall
far short of this criteria!

The need for such content oriented materials is felt today. The
adult needs the knowledge and skills that are basic to the adult world.
He needs not an elementary education program but an adult basic educa-
tion program, and materials used to teach reading to him should contain
information in such areas as: occupational orientation, use of leisure
time, law for the layman, consumer education, family and civic responsi-
sibilities, and basic science concepts.

Our three considerations--highly individualized, attitude toward
success, and content of materials--must constantly be considered in
previewing and using materials for ABE. The remainder of our time will
be devoted to helping teachers become intimately familiar with some of
the ABE materials available. Each time you see or use one of these ma-
terials, keep in mind the three considerations and evaluate the material
accordingly. Are there any questions so far? [Trainer: Wait to see if
there are questions.]
Demonstration of Materials

Reading Development Kits

[Trainer: Please have these Kits in front of your teachers for demonstration.]

The first material we will preview is the Reading Development Kits by Addison-Wesley Publishing Company. The Reading Development Kits are multi-level materials packaged in three boxes. Kit A, this green box, contains lesson cards on the first three levels 1-3; Kit B, the tan box, contains lesson cards on levels 4-6; and the red box, Kit C, contains lesson cards on readability levels 7-10.

Each Kit contains the reading lessons, two of each card so that two students can be reading on the same level without conflict, and they also contain critical reading lessons. Every student you place in the Kits, using the Placement Inventory technique you learned, should work through all of the critical reading lessons before he begins work in the Kit. The critical reading lessons are marked as Series X in the first Kit, Series Y in the second Kit, and Series Z in the third Kit.

Along with each Kit come packages of placement tests and answer books. If you use the Placement Inventory technique, you don't need to use the tests. In fact, it is better to place the students yourself than to give them a formal-looking test. As you know, tests like that are reminders that the adult student failed in school, and students are likely to be fearful of your class if you hit them with such a test.
The answer books are also formal and rather complicated. You could have your students answer on their own paper just as easily as answering in the books. If you don't use the answer books or the test, you won't have to replace them, so you can use that money to buy more materials every year.

You may have noticed that I haven't told you where the answer keys are to the reading lessons. That's because they are not in the Kits—they are in the students' books. By putting the answers in these books, the company hopes to convince you to continue to purchase them. One way around this pressure selling is to cut the answers out of a couple of student books and paste them on cards. This way, the students can use them without having to learn how to do all the folding required in the answer books.

Here is one of the reading lessons. Notice that a "Getting Ready" exercise is on the front. This introduces the hard words from the reading lesson, so the student can meet maximum success in his reading. Inside the card is the reading passage and on the back are the comprehension questions. When a student uses a card, he should proceed like this:

First, he works through the introductory exercise and checks and corrects his answers. When he has done this, he is ready to meet the new words in an article. He should then turn the card over on the back and look at the questions he will have to answer. This gives him purpose for reading. He then reads the selection, answers the questions, checks
his answers, and finds the place in the article where answers are given for any question he missed. He is then ready to go on to the next lesson.

Now, as you look at this box full of lessons, you can tell that this material is extensive. In fact, it is one of the most extensive materials produced for adult students. Because there is so much of it, the publisher has gone to a lot of trouble to help you keep it organized. Let's look at Kit A, for example. Kits B and C are organized just like it.

You can see the four blocks of materials, rising up like stair-steps. Well, the highest block is also the hardest while the lowest is the easiest. You recall that this Kit contains lessons of three levels of difficulty, plus lessons on critical reading. The first block of cards contains the critical reading lessons, to be done first by every student. Each of the other blocks of cards are reading lessons on the various difficulty levels.

Now, let's look at one of the reading lessons. You can see this little color coded tab on it. That tab keeps the card in the right place in the box. Cards with blue tabs are easy and go in this section. Cards with red tabs are on second readability level and go in the middle, and the green tabbed cards show third level difficulty and go up here.

You will also notice that right beside the color tab is the name of the article. Also, there is the interest area and the series number. There are five interest areas in the Kit. These areas are the ones found to be of greatest interest to adult students. The five areas are given here on
the front of the box-top; they are: law, safety, health, science, and
the world of work. Each section, each difficulty level, contains articles
in each interest area at each progressive step in difficulty. That's what
this code number--this series number--tells you. For example, Health
201 is a lesson in the interest area of Health, is written in the second
difficulty level, and is the first step in that level. In other words, it
is approximately 2.0 in difficulty. There is also a 201 level card for
each of the other interest areas, so a student who reads at this level
can see as many as five lessons on level 2.0 before he moves on to
series 202. Since level two is broken into six steps, 201-206, for five
interest areas, the student may work as many as 30 lessons as he pro­
gresses from 2.0 to 3.0.

Let me outline the material for you and summarize its use; then
we'll take time to answer questions and take a closer look at this ma­
terial.

1. The material is in three boxes with the following
   lessons in each box:
   A. Kit A--critical reading (series X cards), level
      one (series 100 cards), level two (series 200 cards),
      and level three (series 300 cards). There are two
copies of each reading lesson and four copies of
each critical reading card.
   B. Kit B--critical reading (series Y cards), level
      four (series 400 cards), level five (series 500
cards), and level six (series 600).
   C. Kit C--critical reading (series Z), level seven
      (series 700), level eight (series 800), level nine
      (series 900), and level ten (series 1,000).

2. The material contains 30 lessons on each level ex­
cept for level one--level one is only the top portion
of first level difficulty since easier material cannot be written in this format. These first level lessons number 15 with only one-fourth grade level change in difficulty.

3. The lessons are divided into 5 interest areas and are organized by using the color coding tabs and keeping the series numbers in order.

4. The Kits are used by students after you have:
   a. placed them on their instructional levels, and
   b. made sure they have done the critical reading lessons.

5. The student does each lesson in 7 steps:
   a. he does the introductory exercise;
   b. he looks at the questions on the back;
   c. he reads the article to find the answers;
   d. he answers the questions, looking back in the article if he must;
   e. he checks his answers;
   f. he finds where the correct answers are given in the selection for every question he missed; and
   g. he changes his answers according to the answers he found in the selection.

6. The student should do all of the lessons on his instructional level before he goes on to the next level (unless you adjust the level he is to work on). For example, if you place a student at series 203; that student should do all five of the 203 lessons before he goes on to 204. Of course, some of your faster students won't need to do all of the lessons. When you have located the students who are rapidly moving up, you can have them do only the lessons they want to do, say three or four of the five, before going on. You will want to keep a fairly close check on these students so you can be sure to adjust their levels often enough.

Now, do you have any questions? [Trainer: Take all the time necessary to answer questions and explain. If only one or two teachers are having a hard time with these new concepts, start the others on Exercise One and work with the one or two who have difficulty.]
[Exercise One]

If no one has questions, we need to examine the material closely. The best way I know for you to get a good idea of the content and process of the material is to use it just like you would if you were a student. So this is what we are going to do: each one will take a critical reading card and a reading lesson card from one of the Kits—it doesn't matter which one. Do both lessons as if you were a student, checking your answers and all. Remember: be sure to write on your own paper, not on the cards!

If you finish before everyone else, get another lesson from a different level and do it. Getting your lessons and putting them back will help you see how the material is organized, and working through a couple of lessons will help you see how they are done. [Trainer: Give no more than 45 minutes of work in the material. The teachers are very likely to become absorbed in the interesting articles and want to read more than is necessary to learn to use the material. While they work, circulate and help where you are needed. You may also use the time to answer individual questions. Keep your eyes open for anyone about to write on the cards -- teachers are prone to doing so--in ink.]

Programmed Reading for Adults

[Trainer: Please have these materials on hand for demonstration.]

Programmed Reading is intended for individual student use: it allows even your lowest level readers to work independently. The material is
made up of eight programmed textbooks and some related material. At this time, the state of the art is not such that the related material is very useful. There are placement and achievement tests which have the same faults as other tests. There are three teacher's manuals full of whole-class exercises; of course, these exercises are very inefficient because whole classes never need the same instruction at the same time. A "sound" book is part of the series and serves little purpose. Also included are sets of alphabet cards and word cards--extremely useful for the teacher who uses the Fernald method, for she can have the student trace the letters or words on the cards.

The eight programmed textbooks are consumable. This makes them expensive, since you must have an entire set for every student. Later, I will offer some suggestions for converting the material into non-consumable form so you will never have to buy more than a set or two--unless it just "wears out," as all materials eventually do.

Programmed material is a little different from other types of material. When a material is programmed, it is organized into small steps, each step just a tiny bit harder than the step before it. The student reads each "frame" or step, makes a written response, and checks to see if his answer is correct. This way, the student is rewarded for every bit of work he does. He can see his success--and there is a lot of it--because the material is set up so the student should never make a wrong response. He is taught everything in bits and knows each bit when he responds.
Such immediate and continuous success makes the material very popular--and it does teach.

Since the material is set up for individual use, the student can work at his own rate. There is one problem with programmed material, however. The student cannot skip parts he already knows. That is, he can work at his own rate, but he must do it all; he cannot skip lessons he doesn't need. This is a small price to pay for continuous success, but does decrease the flexibility of the material.

Here is a sample of the material. As you can see, the answers are given at the left side of the page. These answers are covered by a "mask" and are uncovered, one-at-a-time, after the student has responded. The student reads the frame, answers, then moves the mask down to uncover the correct answer. If the student is correct, he goes on with a feeling of success. If he is wrong, he knows it immediately, finds his mistake, changes his answer, and is ready for the next step. He works through the book, then turns it over and works back through it. That's why the left-hand page is upside-down. The student works on the right-hand page all the way through, turns the book over, and works back to the front--still working on the right-hand side.

The process of using the material is very simple. The author has done the work to insure success on every page and to make the material easy for the student to use. There are, however, some considerations you should know about.
As I have already said, students learn from the programmed texts. Their understandability is very weak. I want to emphasize that point. Your students will do much better if you throw this manual away. Each of you knows how to teach and you will be learning the best methods for using the material. You do not need the class exercises found in the manual.

When I said to throw the manual away, I was talking about this one--for books three to eight. You can’t throw away the manuals for books one and two. And that is another weak point in the material. You must lock-step your students through the first two books. Of course, that is the slowest possible method of teaching, but there are ways around that problem.

The first two books teach the letters of the alphabet and introduce the learning of words. Few of you will ever have more than one or two students at any one time who don’t know any words to the letters of the alphabet. You may have one such non-reader in each class, you may even have two. But most adults who come to your class can read just a little. So you won’t have to use books one and two with everyone.

Since you will have only one or two students who need the first two books, you can place the rest of the class on their instructional levels and use books one and two individually with the few students who need it. This way, you won’t be holding other students back.
Now, books one and two teach the letters and introduce word-learning. The other six books run up through the third difficulty level. Here is how I suggest you use the material.

Give your students the Placement Inventory and put them in material such as the Reading Development Kits on their instructional levels. Then, look in your notebook and list the names of students who placed anywhere in Kit A or who could not read well enough to have an instructional level. All of those students who are in Kit A can be called up as one of your multiple-flexible groups. You can show the group how to use the programmed books. Then assign them like this (you may want to write this down):

1. Students who placed in series 100 should start in Book 3 and work through the entire series.
2. Students who placed in series 200 can start in Book 4.
3. Students who placed in series 300 can start in Book 5.

If you have the students working at different times, you probably will need only one set of material (I am going to show you how to make one series serve everyone, in a few minutes). The students should work through five to ten pages and then give the book to a classmate who is also working in it. This is one benefit to using a wide variety of material. Some students can work in one while other students are working in others.

Now, we have talked about placing students who were working in Kit A, levels one through three. Students who place in Kits B and C probably won't need to work in Programmed Reading, but Books 7 and 8
are difficult enough for some profitable learning. We have talked about all of the students except those who placed below Kit A. These are the students you need to check for alphabet recognition. If they have any problem, work with them in Book 1. If they do not, they can be started in Book 3.

I promised to show you how to make one or two copies of this consumable material serve all of your students. The method is simple, but let me caution you now that using it for Books 1 and 2 is not a good idea. Students at such low levels don't need their learning complicated at all. So let them consume the first two books. You won't have many students at that low a level, so you can afford to replace the books after the students use (consume) them.

In order to prevent the other six books being consumed, use a sheet of cheap acetate—not the expensive acetate used for making transparencies—a grease pencil or wax crayon. The student puts the acetate over the page, puts his mask over the answers, answers on the acetate with the grease pencil, checks his answers, then wipes the acetate clean when he is ready to go on to the next page.

There is one last point to make about the material. Each book contains achievement tests built into it. You don't have to tell your students about them. These pages are just like the others, except that the answers are not given. When a student gets to one of these pages, he will want to know his answers. You check his work to see if he is making more
than one error per page. If he is, then he has not learned fast enough to keep up with the advancing difficulty of the material. The publisher says to start the student over, having him repeat the material since the last test. This is not a good practice for use with adults because it shows them that they have failed. Instead, make a note of the errors and teach the student those words. There is no reason for him to redo an entire unit of the material when all he needs is instruction on a few words.

[Exercise Two]

[Trainer: Please have enough grease pencils and acetate for your teachers to use in this exercise.]

That's how the material is used. At this time, you will profit most from working a lesson in the material. When you pick up a book, remember to get a sheet of acetate and a grease pencil. I don't want my material consumed either!

If you have any problem, hold up your hand. Remember, too, to check each answer as soon as you have made it by moving the mask down.

[Trainer: Provide 15-20 minutes for material's use. Circulate and demonstrate to anyone who doesn't understand how to use the material.]

EDL Study Skills Library

[Trainer: Please have these materials on hand for demonstration.]

The Study Skills Library is a series of boxes, like these, that contain 10 lessons each (published by Educational Development Laboratories).
There are three different content areas for each difficulty level: Science, Social Studies, and Reference Material. The Library covers difficulty levels 3 through 9. However, since the material has such a high concept load, your students will profit most from working in the kits at a level below their instructional level by a year or a little less. For example, if a student is working on an instructional level of high 3rd, he could profitably use Library C. But if he had just started work on level 4.0, he would not be able to handle Library D because it has 4th level difficulty plus a high concept load.

You can tell the level of this material by the letters on the side—C is 3rd, D is 4th, and so on.

Here is how the student does a lesson: First he takes out the material he needs. In the Reference Library there are two pieces to each lesson and in the Science and Social Studies Libraries there are three pieces of material for each lesson.

The first piece of material is the lesson card. Just like the Reading Development Kits, these cards introduce the hard words before the student meets them in his reading. Unlike the Reading Development Kits, these cards do not give the student a chance to use the words, only to study them.

After studying the words, the student surveys the card by reading the first paragraph, reading the sub-headings, looking at the pictures, reading the captions, and taking a look at the questions. Then the student reads the lesson.
The questions are answered on answer pages. The answer pages are consumable but they are cheap enough to use up. The student writes his answer in the column provided. When he has finished, he folds the answer sheet over and checks his answers against the right answer given on the other side. He then finds the place in the card where the answer is given to any question he missed, just as he does in the Reading Development Kits, and changes his answer.

After checking and justifying answers, the student turns the card over on the back and receives instruction in a particular reading-study skill. Of course, instruction is not efficient unless the student is given a chance to use the new information. The answer sheet that the student uses also contains practice exercises for the reading-study skill. So the student follows the directions and does the practice exercises. When he has finished both sides of the practice sheet, he uses the third piece of material, the tinted card. This card contains the answers to the practice exercises. Once again the student should look back at the instructions and exercises to find the correct answers to any part of the exercises he missed.

The Reference Library works about the same way except that there is no reading selection. The Reference Library boxes contain only two pieces of material for each lesson: the instruction necessary for learning to use reference material and a practice exercise page on which to work.
Do you have any questions? [Trainer: Answer questions, then have the teachers do a Reference Library skill lesson, a lesson from the Science Library and a lesson from the Social Studies Library. Limit their time; this is another material which excites the dedicated teacher and leads her to doing more lessons than you have time for.]

Reader's Digest Adult Series.

[Trainer: Please have these materials on hand for the presentation.]

This series of slim magazines doesn't take much explaining. The teacher's manual gives the progression of difficulty from easy to hard. The readability is not controlled as carefully as it could be, so the series is best used just for pleasure reading. Since adults also need chances to read for pleasure, the books are very useful to have around.

You would use a Placement Inventory to determine which books the student could read without frustration, and you would let him read in that book and all easier ones when he had a few minutes and wanted to read.

Questions follow the stories and should be answered on the student's own paper. Answers are given in the teacher's edition. The student should check his own answers and, again, find in the article the answers to questions he missed. [Trainer: Answer questions and provide time for each teacher to read a story and answer the questions.]

SRA Kits

[Trainer: Have one or two of these kits on hand for the presentation.]
There is a series of materials published for elementary school use that ABE teachers have found very beneficial over the past few years. Science Research Associates publishes a series of kits that are much like the Reading Development Kits. If you use only kits number II or higher, the content will not offend adults. If you use kits Ia, Ib, or Ic, you can be sure you will lose students because the material is obviously child oriented in the early levels.

SRA kits are color-coded similarly to the Reading Development Kits, but the levels are not indicated on the cards. If you are going to use SRA kits, write the level for each color in your notebook for handy reference.

In using the kits, the student looks over the comprehension questions, reads the selection, answers the questions on his own paper, checks his answers, and finds the place where answers are given for questions he missed, then corrects his answers.

Let me caution you about the exercises meant to teach word attack skills. Most of the lessons are poorly designed and poorly written. Many of them demand proficiency in the skill before the student can do the exercise. Of course, such lessons are a waste of time. You might find that these kits are most profitably used if you instruct your students to ignore the "Working with Words" exercises.

To place students in SRA kits, you would use a Placement Inventory, just as you would for the other materials we have discussed.

There are several special kits produced by the same company. If you can get one of these kits, let me suggest that you do. They have the
Dimensions series of kits that have good content. One is a social studies kit and one is a kit on Black America that is very good if you have black students. Other kits teach map reading skills, globe use skills, how to read graphs, charts, diagrams, and so on. The company even produces some math kits for individualizing computational skills. (By the way, in our opinion, the best math kits are those published by L.W. Singer-Random House.)

Use of kits is pretty much the same, no matter which kit you have. You place the student on his instructional level, have him do the exercises, check his answers, find information to answer questions he missed, and change his answers.

[Trainers: Answer questions; let the teachers work a reading lesson and one each of lessons in any specialty kits you have.]

Specific Skills Series

[Trainers: Please have these materials on hand for demonstration.]

There is one other material originally published for children that is perfectly acceptable to adults if you do not use the first and second levels. Barnell Loft publishes this series of booklets designed to develop specific reading skills. All of these are useful except the series "Working with Sounds" which isn't too sound, if you will pardon the pun.

Levels three through six have seven different titles, six, if you discount the unsound series. Each different title develops a particular reading skill: Using the Context, Locating the Answer, Getting the Main Idea, Following Directions, Drawing Conclusions, etc. Once more, you
would us the material by placing the student on his instructional level, having him do the exercises on his own paper, and checking and justifying answers.

[Trainer: Answer any questions, then have the teachers do one lesson in each of the six books.]

**Conclusion**

A teacher who has a wide variety of materials, hopefully one each of those you have seen, is able to keep all of her students successfully engaged at their instructional levels. There are, of course, many other materials published for adults or useful in an adult class. However, most other materials lead to lock-step teaching and other undesirable approaches.

I would like for you to work in all the materials we looked at in this session. And please, work in the ones you are least comfortable with at this time. After all, you won't learn anything new by working in a material you already know backwards and forwards.

[Trainer: Spend the rest of the time, if you have any left, helping teachers become comfortable in all six materials.]
SECOND SESSION
MATERIALS
Selling Materials

[Trainer: If you have more participants than you have materials, break the teachers up into very small groups. Remind them that you want each of them to participate in what you are about to do today--no group is to put the load on one or two members.]

One of the best ways to learn about a material is to work in it. This we did in the First Session. But being intimately familiar with materials takes time and requires doing many things with it.

In this Session we are going to prepare for this afternoon. We are going to change roles this afternoon. Instead of being teachers, we are going to be sales people. I'm going to draw the name of a material from this pile for each group. That name will be the name of the material you will sell this afternoon. This morning you will have all the time you need to prepare your "sales-pitch." Each member of the group should participate in the selling. This afternoon you will sell your material to the rest of us. You may examine the materials, the teacher's manuals, and advertising for the material. You may have any other help you need. Then, work up a "sales-pitch" for the rest of us. Remember, you want to sell us on buying this material. After lunch, each group will present
its material to us. The group that does the best selling job will receive a reward.

I don't want to take up a lot of your time...but you will have 15 minutes to present your materials this afternoon. Salesmen get paid according to the number of teachers they can sell on their material; so remember, we are going to have a nice reward for each member of the group you vote did the best job of selling.

If you have any questions, need any materials or anything for your presentation, let me know and I'll see what I can do to provide it for you.

[Trainer: Assign materials. After lunch, give the groups another hour to finish. Then have the presentations. Let all participants vote, not on the materials but on the presentations. The winners get the prizes (keeping the group down to 2 or 3 helps reduce expenses). Good prizes are show tickets, free dinner, materials (especially for the ISK), or even getting away an hour early the next day.]

**Evaluation of Materials**

So far, you have seen a demonstration of each material, you've done a lesson or two in each one, and you have examined one material closely enough to sell it. In this part of Session Two we are going to evaluate all of the materials.

I am going to pass out copies of an evaluation form and I'll leave some more on the table, in case you want extra copies. These forms should be read carefully, start to finish. Then you will want to **go back**
to each material and examine it for the qualities listed on the evaluation forms. Then check off, from one to ten, the quality of the material. A rating of 1 represents a lack of whatever quality is listed and a rating of 10 represents the perfect quality.

I will ask you to turn in your evaluations (if you want copies for yourself, make them as you go along); they will be used by various administrative groups in making decisions about the purchase of materials. If you will also make comments on the strong and weak points, with suggestions for improvement, we will know how you feel about the material. By doing a careful evaluation, you will help improve materials, help provide information to the state department on preferences, and will help clarify in your own minds the strong and weak points of each material.

[Trainer: Pass out the evaluation forms. Answer questions and offer guidance. As teachers finish, collect evaluation forms.]
EVALUATION FORM
A SCALE FOR EVALUATION OF ADULT BASIC EDUCATION INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Evaluator: _______________________________________

Material (s): _______________________________________

My position in ABE is: Administrator, Supervisor, Full-time teacher, Part-time teacher, other: _______________________________________

Directions: Please put the symbol for the material you are rating in the space you feel represents the quality of the material for the attribute mentioned in the question. A rating of 10 would be for a perfect material; and a rating of one would be for a completely inadequate material.

1. Have you taught students using this material? Yes______ No______

2. How familiar do you feel you are with this material?

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

3. Do the materials contribute to the teaching of those values necessary for the ABE student's becoming a productive member of society?

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

4. Does the content of the material contribute to the teaching of those general concepts necessary for the ABE student's becoming a productive member of society?

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10
5. Does the content of the material conform to the areas in which your experience has shown the ABE student to have an interest?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. Is the format of the material adult in appearance?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. Does the material provide for the teaching of word attack skills?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. Does the material provide for the teaching of comprehension skills?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. Does the material provide for the teaching of critical reading skills?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. Does the material adequately take into account individual differences in learning rates?

    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11. How easy do you feel it would be to use the material?

    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

12. If the material were modestly priced, would you recommend that it be bought for your ABE program?

    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Feel free to make additional comments:
THIRD SESSION

THE INDIVIDUAL SKILLS KIT

Introduction

In the course of teaching reading, teachers often find a student needing extra work in a particular skills* area or in several specific areas. When this occurs, teachers are faced with the problem of writing a "prescription" that will raise the student's ability level in that skill. This is a difficult assignment, for it requires finding extensive exercises in one skill at one level, often for several students at once. Most workbooks do not contain sufficient exercises. Moreover, it is often difficult to acquire a variety of materials on one difficulty level for specific skill development. True, through the years, most teachers have accumulated an extensive collection of isolated workbooks, texts, and worksheets. But the time consumed looking through the entire assortment for exercises each time a student needs development in a specific skill makes the material almost unusable. What is needed is an orderly arrangement, by difficulty level, of exercises developing particular skills. What is needed is an optimum material: an Individual Skills Kit.

*This reference to "skills" refers to the various comprehension, word attack, and study skills. The reference avoids "phonic skills."
Several factors are important in developing this optimum material. First you must take into account individual differences in learning rate; specifically, some students learn faster than others. In a group of 15 students, none will actually learn everything at the same rate. Further, of the 15, rarely more than 2 or 3 will be at exactly the same point on the achievement continuum in the specified skill. It is rare indeed to find two students with approximately the same learning ability at the same point on any skills continuum. Even considering three students at the same point on the continuum with the same learning rate, their abilities, although totally about the same, may be quite different in the different sub-skills that have combined to put them at this particular level.

The result of all these student differences is the inadequacy of any one skill lesson for all students. Lessons must be highly individualized. Grouping does not start the student at his own point and continue him at his optimum learning rate. This is the reason for constructing "kits" rather than workbooks or other materials often used in group work or in group assignments.

The second important factor in optimum materials should be their extreme extensiveness. There are two reasons for this. One, materials must be extensive enough to include every point on this ability continuum; and two, they must include enough material for every student to be able to progress from one point to another. Extensive materials help to prevent student failure. The steps (levels) must be graduated, so students may progress from low levels to high levels smoothly.
Since students have individual differences in interests as well as in ability and achievement levels, the third factor concerned with optimum materials should be their interest to anyone who reads them. A great number of interests should be represented.

In brief then, optimum materials need to be extensive, highly individualized, and interesting. The Individual Skills Kit (ISK) meets these three requirements.

The ISK is a box divided into difficulty levels. Each level is divided into skill areas, with folders in each area containing exercises on different aspects of the main skill. For example, in level three, the main areas might be comprehension, word recognition, study skills, and word meaning. Folders under the division of comprehension might include exercises in such specific skills as main idea, noting details, inferences, following directions, and cause and effect sequence. A sample index of skills for the ISK is listed on the following pages. After reviewing this index, it is obvious that not all of the skills listed are appropriate for inclusion at each level. Certainly, the study skills and some of the comprehension skills are not appropriate for level one. In constructing the ISK, the teacher will have to decide which of the skills should be included in each difficulty level and which should be delayed to later levels or omitted completely.
Sample Index of Skills for An Individual Skills Kit

1. Word Meaning
   A. Antonyms
   B. Synonyms
   C. Homonyms
   D. Multiple Meanings

2. Word Recognition
   A. Word sets (patterns)
   B. Context Clue
   C. Structural Analysis
      1. Compounds
      2. Contractions
      3. Inflectional endings
      4. Root words (in sets)
      5. Suffixes
      6. Prefixes
      7. Syllabication

3. Comprehension
   A. Main Idea
      1. Sentence
      2. Paragraph
      3. Story
   B. Noting details
   C. Following Directions
   D. Classifying
   E. Logical Conclusions
   F. Inferences
   G. Judgments
   H. Sequence of Events
   I. Comparing and Contrasting
   J. Predicting Outcomes
   K. Generalizing
   L. Critical Reading
      1. Fact vs. opinion
      2. False analogy
      3. Card stacking
      4. Either-or fallacy
      5. Glittering generalities
      6. Name-calling
7. Red-herring technique
8. (Many others)

4. Study Skills
   A. Maps and Charts
   B. Book Parts
   C. Alphabetizing
   D. Locating Information
   E. Outlining
   F. Skimming
   G. Dictionary Skills

A variety of materials may be used in constructing your ISK. Old workbooks, texts, or worksheets may be cut up and used very successfully. This is an excellent time for teachers to make use of teacher-made materials, materials inherited from the last teacher in the room, or those accumulated through years of teaching. Another source of materials is the publishing world. Included at the end of this section is a list (by companies) of a few of the materials found most useful in preparing the ISK. Many of these materials are low in cost and have a format especially conducive to kit construction.

How To Make An ISK

1. Decide which difficulty level you want to work with first (or next).

2. Choose a main skill area from the sample index (such as word meaning) and label a divider.

3. Label a folder with one of the specific skills in that area: such as "-an" word pattern, following directions, etc.

4. Find a material at your chosen level and look through the material for a lesson in the skill you have chosen.

5. If you find a good lesson use a razor blade and cut out the page.
6. If you don't find an example, choose another material and follow the same procedure, or make up a lesson yourself.

7. When you have cut out the page, trim the edges and place the finished product in its appropriate folder.

8. Repeat this procedure for all the skill areas and for every grade level.

9. Take two sheets of acetate* and bind together on the left hand side with adhesive tape to make a binder. When a student needs to work in the ISK, he takes a lesson, places it in the binder, answers on the binder with grease pencil, checks his answers, erases the binder with a paper towel, and gets another lesson.

You may find you want to use one side of several pages and not the other side. If the skills on these pages are similar and go under the same category, paste the pages together so that the desired exercises are on either side of the finished product.

**How To Use The ISK**

Once you have completed construction of the ISK, it is time to put it to good use. The ISK can be used as a supplement to the basic reading program or for remedial work with students needing concentrated study in a specific skill area.

When a student needs special help in a skill, he should not have the additional worry of difficult aspects of reading such as vocabulary

*Reprocessed blue x-ray film is inexpensive and serves as well as the more expensive acetate used for making over-head transparencies.*
or concept load. Consequently, for remedial help, the student should work in the ISK at a level **below** his instructional level. If the ISK is used as part of the basic reading program, the student should work in it on the **same** level as his instructional level.

The ideas and suggestions mentioned in the Session have been specifically directed to the area of reading itself. However, an ISK could be constructed for the areas of science and math, or any of the other content areas. Teachers should assess the needs of their students and examine the structure of the subjects they teach. Then they will know the areas in which construction of an ISK might be most beneficial.
Published Materials* for the ISK

Allied Education Council
Mott Basic Language Skills Program
Mott Comprehension Series

Bennell Loft
Specific Skills Series

Harper and Row
The Linguistic Workbooks

Laidlaw
Study Lessons for Developing Reading Skills Workbooks

J.B. Lippincott
Reading for Meaning Workbooks
Workbooks for the Basic Reading Series

McGraw-Hill Book Company
Step Up Your Reading Power

Charles E. Merrill
Merrill Linguistic Workbooks
Using the Library Skilltext
Diagnostic Reading Workbooks
Building Language Power Workbooks

Modern Curriculum Press
Phonics Workbooks (upper level)

Science Research Associates
Basic Reading Series Workbooks

*NOTE: These are but a very few of the many materials for your ISK.
Steck-Vaughn Company

Many of ABE Workbooks

Teacher's College Press, Columbia University

Standard Test Lessons in Reading
Gates Peardon Reading Exercises
Test Lessons in Reading Reasoning

Weekly Reader

Table and Graph Skills
Science Reading Adventures
Map Skills for Today
Read, Study, Think

Acetate: Joseph Newstack Company
8501 August Street
Philadelphia, PA

$2.75/100 sheets of acetate
$27.50/1,000 sheets of acetate

Boxes: Fidelity File Box, Inc.
705 Pennsylvania Avenue, South
Minneapolis, MN 55426

A 440 Letter-legal flip-top storage box
12w x 10h x 15L

About $1.20 each for orders under 50.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty level</td>
<td>--Readability level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade level</td>
<td>--Readability level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual differences</td>
<td>--The educational concept that all people are different and that the differences are relevant to differentiation of instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readability</td>
<td>--The area of study pertaining to difficulty of written material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readability level</td>
<td>--The difficulty of written material expressed in terms of mean grade placement of normative samples of students who can read the material without frustration.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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