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Signature Everett Dean Mikkelsen

Date August 4, 1974

READING INTERESTS OF MIDDLE GRADE STUDENTS

IN BOZEMAN, MONTANA

by

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A professional paper submitted in partial fulfillment
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ABSTRACT

Surveying reading interests of elementary school is not a new practice. The central problem of this study was to survey the reading interests of children at the Willson Middle School and report the findings to the librarian and communications teachers with the hope that the information will help in establishing improved class procedures and in school book ordering.

Literature was surveyed in the area of fifth and sixth grade reading interests. A questionnaire was administered to all fifth and sixth grade students at Willson Middle School to determine their interests in the areas of play and other activities, television, radio and movies, reading, vocational choice and educational interests. Percentage results from the questionnaire were compiled and major findings compared with other reading interest studies to see if differences in reading interests such as sex, age, maturity, background and availability of books existed.

The area of play and activities indicated both boys and girls mainly watched TV, engaged in general play and read books during leisure time. Boys preferred more physical type games, expressed more interest in making things and were more aware of tools at home than girls. Both groups had pets, liked to collect things, were involved in music and had hobbies.

Section two of the interest inventory showed results that both groups enjoyed TV, radio and movies. Boys enjoyed TV programs that were action-oriented, whereas girls preferred situation oriented comedies. It was noted that book preferences were often made into movies or introduced in communication classes. Responses from section three showed a variety of books read by both groups and that comic books and newspaper funnies were very popular.

Responses from section four revealed boys' vocational interests were quite different than girls'. Boys expressed more interest in attending college and getting a college education. It appeared that students' preference for subject area closely paralleled subject areas in which the student received better grades.

The writer recommended that (1) a repeat of this study be conducted in other schools, (2) this study be presented to the librarian and communication teachers at Willson Middle School for their consideration, (3) the library holdings at Willson Middle School reflect the students' interests in reading, pets, collecting, music, hobbies and vocational interests and (4) the librarian at Willson Middle School make use of the proposed student card reflecting student interests.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The practice of surveying reading interests of elementary school children is not a recent educational innovation. Prior to the writing of this paper approximately three hundred investigations into the reading preferences of children were conducted through questionnaires, interviews and library techniques asking questions about books, selections, titles and topics (Chiu, 1965).

Reading interests are the product of the general interests of children and youth. The process of stimulating reading interests involves the expansion and enrichment of the child's general interests. It has been determined that specific reading interests vary widely according to age, sex, intellectual ability, social class and reading ability (Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Fourth Edition).

Judging the reading interests of children should not be limited to adult standards. Reading interests of modern children have changed in comparison to those interests of adults. Peltola (1963) found little correspondence between 192 first-grade children's book choices and books judged superior by adults. Greenberg and others (1965) found evidence among disadvantaged fourth-grade Negro boys that the perceived value of reading is considerably higher than its perceived low potency or actual usefulness to them.

Through this study, an attempt will be made to gather data which

provide indices to reading interests among elementary children at Willson Middle School in Bozeman, Montana.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem to be pursued in this study is to survey reading interests and establish a data bank of information for use in communication classes and in selection of library material.

NEED OR PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Authorities have long noted that there is a real need in our schools to learn the reading interests of the children (Tinker, 1968). Therefore, the development of a continuing study in this area seems essential to a successful reading program.

The teacher is the key factor in the cultivation of children's reading habits (DeBoer, 1970). Findings in this study may be beneficial to teachers in planning lessons and recommending books. In view of the great importance of the school library in a good reading program, the librarian may be able to use this study in ordering books.

GENERAL QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

The collection of data in this study may reveal findings in reference to questions pertaining to middle grade reading interests:

What are the students' interests in the areas of play and other

activities?

What are the students' interests in the areas of television, radio and movies?

What are the students' interests in the area of reading?

What are the students' interests in the areas of vocation and education?

How do the indices as to student interest compare with the library holdings at Willson Middle School?

How do the indices as to student interest provide information for the communication teachers at Willson Middle School?

GENERAL PROCEDURES

The first step in this study will be to survey available literature and related research concerning middle grade reading interests.

During the 1973-1974 school term in Bozeman, Montana, all fifth and sixth grade children will be asked to respond to a questionnaire pertaining to reading interests. For the purpose of this study, the writer has selected Paul Witty's Pupil Report of Interests and Activities (Witty, 1966), (See Appendix A). A data bank will be compiled after the analysis of the questionnaire. A card will be prepared for each student noting critical items of information taken from the interest questionnaire. Where possible, the writer will then compare some of the major results of the reading interest survey in Willson

Middle School with those reported in Witty's study.

Recommendations will be made to the librarian and communication teachers of the Willson Middle School.

LIMITATIONS

The children participating in this study will be limited to those enrolled in the fifth and sixth grade and attending the Willson Middle School in Bozeman, Montana during the 1973-1974 school year.

Library research will be obtained from Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

For purposes of this study, the following terms are used in the below noted contexts:

Middle School - a separate intermediate school combining one or more of the elementary grades below grade seven with one or more of the grades usually assigned to the junior high school (Kindred, 1968).

Interest Inventory - a child-study questionnaire technique used for the purpose of determining students' reading interests and activities.

Middle Grade Students - for the purpose of this study, middle grade students will be considered those in grades four through six.

SUMMARY

Surveying reading interests of elementary school children is not a new practice. Consideration must be given to the many factors that determine a child's specific reading interests.

The central problem of this study is to survey the reading interests of children in the Willson Middle School.

The researcher will survey literature in the area of fifth and sixth grade reading interests.

A questionnaire will be administered to all fifth and sixth grade students. Percentage results from the questionnaire will be compiled and major findings will be compared with Paul Witty's study to see if a significant difference in reading interests exists.

Data collected from this study will be submitted to communication teachers and librarians of Willson Middle School with the hope that the information will help in school book ordering.

The first procedure to be reported in this study will be the review of literature and related research. This will be discussed in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

Introduction

Reading interests acquired during school years determine to a considerable degree the nature of the reading activities of the adult. A good reading program must instill in children a lasting interest in reading. It should foster the desire to read for personal development, to learn about the world and to gain increasing understanding of people and society (Witty, 1966).

Several studies have been conducted to determine the reading interests of children. A few of these studies will be discussed below along with the interests that are reported to be characteristic of boys and girls at the elementary level. Also, consideration will be given to other factors thought to influence reading interests, such as sex, age, reading ability, social class and intellectual ability.

During the past decade, the amount of reading material available to children has grown tremendously (DeBoer, 1970).

Brief History of Reading Interests in Elementary Schools

As early as 1934, Tinker conducted research on children's reading interests. He pointed out that a higher level of interest will result as the child's background of experience broadens, which will enable the child to discriminately select those reading materials which

help fulfill such needs as security, love, achievement, personal and social development (Tinker, 1934).

In looking at adult's influence on the type of books children read, Humphreys (1941) found that parent recommendations had great influence on the books children and youth selected. In more recent research, Peltola (1963) found little correspondence between the books selected by 192 first-graders and those books adults felt were superior. Researchers have reported that reading interests of young children do change as society changes (Hilbreth, 1958).

The analysis of the data in the study done by Bond (1967) revealed that interest patterns represent learned tendencies to selectively respond to particular contents or opportunities in one's environment. These patterns ordinarily create pleasant anticipation followed by the action itself, which in turn, tends to bring more pleasure.

Awareness that children will become better readers by reading materials that are of interest to them, has led Mair and Curtis (1968) to recommend that educators abandon workbooks, oral reading and vocabulary which are the causes for hatred and disinterest in reading by elementary children. MacDonald (1966) found less tendency for pupils to prefer reading as an activity.

In reviewing the methods used by researchers to determine children's tastes, Zimet (1966) noted that often there were conflicting

results given in studies done on reading interests, because of dissimilar population samples and different methods used in assessing children. Townsend (1960) referred to the fact that when children were given check lists with general categories such as humor, it was not possible to know the different varieties of humor. The interests expressed by the children were not always a guide to what the children really wanted to read.

Influence of Sex, Age, Reading Ability, Social Class and Intellectual Ability on Reading Interests

Results of research indicate that reading interests vary significantly with the times, sex, age, maturity, background and availability of books. The most significant factor in reading interests is differences in boy - girl preferences. Smith (1962) pointed out that cultural and biological considerations are credited for the differences. Peller (1958) asserted that sex differences during latency have been vastly under-estimated and that every successful children's book is a universal daydream. Children anticipate their separate and different adult roles in these daydreams. According to Norvell (1958), the sex of an individual plays an important role in determining certain selections of poetry and prose.

In considering age and maturity as a factor in reading interests, Norvell (1958) reveals that these two factors exert a great influence. As the child matures, the rate of change of interest

gradually diminishes and his range of interests become broader and deeper.

Greenberg and others (1965) secured evidence among disadvantaged fourth grade negro boys, that the perceived value of reading is considerably higher than its perceived low potency or actual usefulness to them. Smith (1962) compared reading interests of a group of urban middle-class first graders as indicated by their free-choice library selections with interests represented in thirty-seven preprimers and twelve primers from twelve publishing houses. The result was that neither the preprimers nor the primers corresponded to cultural reading interests of the group.

Reading Interests of Middle Grade Students

Middle grade students are at a stage of life when reading has an intellectual effect on their human value development. They have reached an independent reading level where more maturity is demanded in their story selection. This age group is very sensitive and curious as shown by their interest in stories about heroes, idols, stars and martyrs.

Witty and others (1946) found that stories which involved animals, humor, children in other lands and real stories of boys and girls were favorites in the middle grades.

Stories with elements of adventure, action mystery, humor,

realism of child life, animal life, and sports appealed to middle grade children (Lazar, 1937), (Hildreth, 1958), (King, 1967).

In a study by Young (1955) on science interests of this age group, she found that the universe, animals, earth, human growth and the weather were the preferences.

Stanchfield (1962) found that boys' interests turned toward suspense, action, everyday experiences, accounts of anger, hate, cruelty, fighting, brutality, excitement and unusual experiences. Of least interest were the areas of plants, music, plays, art, family and home life, and poetry.

Investigations revealed that differences in interests according to sex became prominent when students reach the ages of eight to ten. Although girls and boys shared the same liking for adventure and mystery, girls did not for the most part, care for science and invention. Also, boys tended to prefer prose and girls poetry (Norvell, 1958), (King, 1967).

Interest Inventory

Various methods may be employed to get at the specific interest reading patterns of a child.

The interest inventory record is one of the tools used in determining childrens' reading interests. This type of questionnaire consists of questions covering such interests and work done outside of

school, reading interests, television, radio, movies, vocational and educational interests, play, and other forms of leisure activities.

The results from an interest inventory record will give indices to a child's reading interests, what he likes to do, and what he likes to think and talk about (Hilbreth, 1958).

Summary

During the past few decades, numerous studies have been compiled to determine the reading interests of elementary children. Researchers had varied opinions on how factors such as adult selection, sex, age, maturity, social class and materials available influenced the interests and tastes of children's selection of books.

Studies show that a difference in reading interests occurs in boy - girl preferences. As a child matures, his rate of interest declines while his range of interests increases and the sex of an individual also determines his reading selections. Although both boys and girls preferred stories with elements of adventure, mystery, humor, realism of child life, animal life and sports; girls did not for the most part, care for science and invention. Also, boys preferred prose and girls poetry.

One of the methods employed to determine students' reading interests is the interest inventory record. Areas covered on this type of questionnaire include play and other activities, television, radio

and movies, reading, vocational choices and educational interests.

The responses on an interest inventory record will indicate what a student likes to do, think and talk about.

The second procedure to be reported in this study was to collect data and analyze the results. For this discussion, the reader is referred to Chapter 3.

Chapter 3

RESULTS OF READING INTEREST INVENTORY

Introduction

The problem in this study was concerned with determining the reading interests of fifth and sixth grade students of Willson Middle School, Bozeman, Montana.

The population sampled was all fifth and sixth grade students of Willson Middle School and totaled approximately seven hundred children.

Bozeman is located in southwestern Montana and classified as rural agricultural. The schools served a predominantly Caucasian population of approximately twenty-five thousand persons. The main income producing areas were farming, livestock ranches and Montana State University.

During the spring of 1974, a questionnaire (see Appendix A) designed to survey students' reading interests was administered by fifth and sixth grade communication teachers to students in their classes at Willson Middle School.

Items Included in Inventory

The questionnaire was divided into four main areas. The first category dealt with play and other activities. Questions asked concerned the activities students participated in after school, in the

evenings and on weekends. They were also asked what games they liked best, if they made things, if they had pets, collected things, had hobbies, were involved in lessons in music and dancing, were afraid of things and what one wish they would like to have come true.

The second area included interests in television, radio and movies. The students were asked how much time they spent watching television during the week and on weekends, their favorite television program, how much time they spent listening to the radio on weekdays and weekends, how often they went to the movies and what their favorite movie was.

Area three was intended to determine the reading interests of the students. Questions were asked as to what the best book they had read, the name of other books they liked, books they had at home, whether they liked to have someone read or tell a story to them, whether they went to the public library, did they read magazines, comics, newspapers, and what kind of books did they like best.

The final area pertained to vocational and educational interests. Questions referred to the kind of work they planned to do when they finished school, had they read books or stories about that kind of work, had they seen anyone on television or in the movies who did the kind of work they wanted to do, did they plan to go to high school and college, did they like school, what school subject did they like best, least, and in what subject did they receive the best or worst marks.

Reporting Procedure

Student responses to the items on the reading interest inventory were reported by percentage of total response. For the purpose of this study, major items receiving more than a 5 percent response have been noted in tabular form while varied additional responses have been grouped in a category entitled "other."

Data

Question number one on the reading survey concerned how students spent free, leisure time. Results are found in Table 1.

Table 1
Leisure Time Activities

Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
General play	26.0	Reading	25.4
Reading	10.9	TV	13.2
Ride bicycles	10.6	Ride horses	7.6
TV	9.7	General play	6.7
Baseball	9.1	Ride bicycles	6.7
Other	33.7	Basketball	5.6
		Other	34.8

The main areas of interest of boys were general play, reading, riding bicycles, TV and baseball. Other areas noted were basketball, skiing, making models, fishing and football. Main areas of interest of girls were reading, TV, riding horses, general play, bicycle riding and

basketball. Other areas noted were swimming, tennis, football, piano and drawing. Recreational activities would tend to indicate areas of interest which should necessarily be reflected in library holdings and free reading material suggested by classroom teachers. Activities noted at Willson Middle School were similar to those noted in Paul Witty's study (DeBoer, 1970) of interests of children. He found that boys' interests were TV, general play, reading, baseball and football. Girls' interests were TV, reading, general play and ice skating.

Question number two on the reading survey concerned how students spent their time after school, in the evenings and on weekends. Results are found in Table 2.

The main activities of boys after school were TV, general play, going home, basketball, homework and bicycle riding. Other activities were baseball, paper route, intramurals, reading and chores. Main activities of girls after school were TV, play, homework, chores, piano, visiting friends and riding horses. Other activities were reading and intramurals.

The main evening activities of boys were TV, play, reading and homework. Other activities were baseball, sleeping, and basketball. Main evening activities of girls were TV, chores, homework, reading and playing. Other activities were letter writing, talking, crocheting and records.

The major weekend activities of boys were play, work, TV,

Table 2

Time Spent After School, Evenings, Weekends

1. After School:			
Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
TV	21.8	TV	24.9
General play	16.9	General play	14.0
Go home	6.6	Homework	13.2
Basketball	6.0	Chores	11.7
Homework	6.0	Piano	9.6
Ride bicycles	5.4	Visit friends	8.8
Other	37.3	Ride horses	8.8
		Other	9.0
2. Evenings:			
TV	41.7	TV	26.3
General play	14.5	Chores	10.2
Reading	7.9	Homework	7.3
Homework	6.6	Reading	7.3
Other	29.3	General play	5.8
		Other	43.1
3. Weekends:			
Play	21.8	Play	17.3
Work	12.1	TV	12.0
TV	10.3	Chores	7.6
Camping	9.4	Other	63.1
Ride bikes	6.3		
Other	51.1		

camping and bicycling. Other activities were skiing, lawn mowing, basketball, baseball, football, swimming, movies and hiking. The main weekend activities of girls were play, TV and chores. Other activities were horses, movies, swimming, babysitting, reading and camping. Weekend activities of both boys and girls were similar.

It was interesting to note that TV was the main activity of both boys and girls after school and evenings; whereas on weekends general play was the number one preference. Girls reported chores as a main activity during the evening while boys listed this activity important on the weekends.

Question number three on the reading survey asked what game students liked best. Results are found in Table 3.

Table 3
Game Liked Best

Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Football	22.1	Baseball	16.0
Baseball	16.9	Monopoly	8.2
Basketball	14.8	Football	7.0
Other	46.2	Other	68.8

The best liked games of boys were football, baseball and basketball. Other games noted were tennis, pool, volleyball, Monopoly, chess,

soccer, kick the can, golf and bowling. Girls listed baseball, Monopoly, and football as the main games they play. Other games were kick the can, basketball, tag, badminton, cards, tennis, volleyball, Masterpiece, Aggravation and hide and seek. Boys appeared to prefer games that were more physically oriented whereas girls' priorities were both active and passive as seen by the popularity of Monopoly, cards, Masterpiece and Aggravation.

Question number four on the reading survey concerned if students made things and what things they made. Results are found in Table 4.

Table 4 indicates that boys expressed more interest in making things than girls. The main things made by boys were models, tree houses, and go-carts. Other things were bird houses, movies, chairs, candles, pottery, and bow and arrows. Girls were mainly interested in making pottery and clothes. Other things made were candles, flowers, doll clothes, necklaces, macrame, rings, cards and belts. Responses to this question revealed boys and girls showed a wide diversification as to the things they made.

Witty, (1966), reported similar results in which a larger number of boys (65.6 percent) than girls (58.7 percent) actually made things. The objects most frequently constructed by boys were boats and airplanes, whereas the girls frequently made doll clothes and doll houses.

Table 4

Whether Students Made Things and Things Made

1. Participation:			
Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Yes	81.3	Yes	57.0
No	10.0	No	31.6
No Response	8.7	No Response	11.4
2. Things Made:			
Models	35.6	Pottery	7.3
Tree House	7.3	Clothes	5.3
Go-Cart	7.3	Other	87.4
Other	49.8		

Question number five on the reading survey concerned what tools or playthings students had at home. Results are found in Table 5.

The main tools or playthings preferred by boys were bicycles, footballs, games, basketballs, hammers and baseballs. Other tools or playthings were motorcycles, drills, lawnmowers, screwdrivers, saws, wrenches, microscopes, snowmobiles, knives and wood burning sets.

Girls' main responses were in the area of playthings; namely footballs and bicycles. Other tools or playthings were tape recorders, tetherballs, basketballs, nails, hammers, knitting needles, shovels, potters

wheels and cards. Responses indicated that boys and girls were aware of playthings at home while boys' knowledge of tools exceeded that of the girls.

Table 5
Tools or Playthings at Home

Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Bicycle	14.8	Football	6.4
Football	8.2	Bicycle	5.3
Games	7.9	Other	88.3
Basketball	7.6		
Hammer	7.6		
Baseball	5.7		
Other	48.2		

Question number six on the reading survey concerned if students had pets and if so, what kind. Results are found in Table 6.

Response to both parts of this question showed near identical percentage of boys and girls who owned pets. Both boys and girls favored dogs and cats as the main kinds of pets owned. Other pets owned by both were fish, horses, birds, hamsters, turtles and gerbils. Witty's study (Witty, 1966) showed similar results listing dogs, birds, fish, cats and turtles as their favorites.

Table 6

Whether Students Had Pets and What Kind

1. Students with Pets:			
Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Yes	86.7	Yes	85.7
No	12.7	No	10.8
No Response	.6	No Response	3.5
2. Kinds of Pets:			
Dog	60.4	Dog	48.8
Cat	38.7	Cat	20.5
Other	.9	Other	30.7

Question number seven on the reading survey concerned if students collected things, and if so, what kind. Results are found in Table 7.

The responses of the boys and girls were strikingly similar. Over 50 percent of the boys and girls answered yes to collecting things and the main objects collected by both were rocks, stamps and coins. Other things collected by both boys and girls were sea shells, papers, stickers, bottles, models and magazines.

Table 7

Whether Students Collected Things and What Kind

1. Participation:			
Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Yes	51.4	Yes	57.6
No	19.3	No	35.1
No Response	29.3	No Response	7.3
2. Things Collected:			
Rocks	14.8	Rocks	23.4
Stamps	15.4	Stamps	7.6
Coins	13.6	Coins	7.6
Other	56.2	Other	61.4

Question number eight on the reading survey concerned if the students took lessons such as music and dancing and if so, what kind. Results are found in Table 8.

The responses of the boys and girls were significantly different. The girls' positive response was over 50 percent whereas the boys failed to answer over half the time. While both boys and girls favored the piano, the girls' percentage was much higher. Other instrumental lessons noted by the boys were trumpet, guitar and trombone. Girls

cited dancing, tumbling, flute and violin as other lessons they were involved with.

Table 8
Whether Students Took Lessons and What Kind

1. Participation:			
Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Yes	17.8	Yes	52.0
No	31.7	No	47.6
No Response	50.5	No Response	.4
2. Kinds of Lessons:			
Piano	6.6	Piano	24.3
Other	93.4	Clarinet	5.3
		Other	70.4

Question number nine on the reading survey concerned if the students had hobbies and if so, what kind. Results are found in Table 9.

The "Other" category indicates that both boys and girls had a wide variety of hobbies. The boys' other hobbies included basketball, rockets, motorcycles, fly tying, coins, hunting, stamps, skiing, hiking, rocks, fishing, and keeping in shape. The girls' other hobbies were painting, coins, fishing, swimming, polishing rocks, reading, skiing,

drawing, cooking and decoupage.

Table 9
Whether Students Had Hobbies and What Kind

1. Participation:			
Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Yes	80.7	Yes	60.5
No	13.6	No	39.1
No Response	5.7	No Response	.4
2. Kind of Hobbies:			
Models	24.2	Horses	8.8
Other	75.8	Macrame	5.8
		Other	85.4

Some writers (Witty, 1966) have asserted children tend to spend less time on hobbies since television became a popular pastime. Battin's study (Witty, 1966) on television and youth, however, found that over half the boys and girls followed the same hobbies as before TV. Moreover, less than 8 percent of the boys and girls indicated fewer hobbies.

Question number ten on the reading survey concerned if student could have one wish come true, what would it be. Results are found in Table 10.

Table 10
One Wish Come True

Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Get rich	14.2	Have horse	14.6
Have more wishes	13.0	More wishes	7.0
Other	72.8	Other	78.4

Varied responses were obtained concerning a wish come true. The main wish of boys was to get rich and have more wishes. Other responses were a new bike or motorcycle, stop all wars, a horse, have friends, be famous, no pollution, a car and live out in the country. Having a horse and more wishes was the main preference of girls. They cited a happy future, a monkey, to be rich, a new ten speed bike, to be Miss America, peace, go to Disneyland, no crime, be a farmer and meet a movie star as other wishes.

Witty's study (Witty, 1966) found the first wish of both boys and girls was to be wealthy. Similarity of both studies was seen in the boys' first wish, whereas girls felt wealth was not as significant.

Question number eleven on the reading survey concerned if students were afraid of things and if so, what were they. Results are found in Table 11.

Table 11
Whether Students Were Afraid and Things Feared

1. Expressed Fear:			
Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Yes	71.2	Yes	75.1
No	28.4	No	19.0
No Response	.4	No Response	5.9
2. Things Feared:			
Snakes	6.6	Snakes	15.5
People	6.3	Darkness	6.4
Bears	5.1	Kidnappers	5.8
Other	82.0	Dogs	5.3
		Other	67.0

Similar responses were seen concerning things students feared. Snakes were the number one answer of both boys and girls. Boys were also frightened of people, bears, ninth graders, brothers, spiders, darkness, dogs, hoods, drugs, bad dreams, kidnappers, horses and loud noises. Girls were frightened of darkness, kidnappers, dogs, heights,

murderers, strange people, brothers, spiders, bears and teachers.

Question number twelve on the reading survey concerned how much time students spent watching TV on school days and weekends.

Results are found in Table 12.

Table 12
Time Spent Watching TV School Days and Weekends

1. School Days:			
Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
0 hours	5.1	0 hours	7.0
1 hour	18.7	1 hour	17.5
2 hours	24.5	2 hours	24.9
3 hours	18.4	3 hours	15.2
4 hours	12.4	4 hours	14.6
5 hours	7.9	5 hours	12.6
Other	13.0	Other	18.2
2. Weekends:			
0 hours	0.0	0 hours	0.0
1 hour	7.9	1 hour	0.0
2 hours	10.6	2 hours	14.6
3 hours	10.9	3 hours	9.4
4 hours	9.1	4 hours	13.7
5 hours	9.7	5 hours	9.4
6 hours	7.9	6 hours	5.3
7 hours	5.1	7 hours	6.7
8 hours	5.4	8 hours	5.8
Other	33.4	Other	45.1

On school days, the number of hours both boys and girls watched TV appeared to be quite similar. Over 80 percent of the responses showed a watching time of one to five hours of TV viewing each weekday. Comparing this to the weekend, the table showed that 33 percent of the boys and 45 percent of the girls spent from one to eight hours viewing TV. Responses indicated that both boys and girls spent as high as twenty-four hours each weekend in front of the TV.

DeBoer (1970) stated that TV was the favorite leisure-time activity of young boys and girls and that children spent upwards of twenty hours a week staring at the television screen. Tables 2 and 12 of this study positively reflected his findings.

Question number thirteen on the reading survey concerned the students' favorite TV program. Results are found in Table 13.

MASH was the favorite TV program of both boys and girls. Other responses of the boys included Six Million Dollar Man, Star Trek, Kung Fu, Hogan's Heroes, Happy Days, Gilligan's Island, Emergency, Movie of the Week, Walt Disney, Wide World of Sports, Adam 12, and Monday Night Football. Girls listed Jeannie, Happy Days, Brady Bunch, Waltons, Apples Way, All in the Family, Emergency, Gilligan's Island and Walt Disney as other favorites. The boys seemed to prefer programs that were action-oriented whereas girls' preferences were more situation comedy oriented.

Table 13

Favorite TV Program

Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
MASH	18.7	MASH	19.6
Six Million Dollar Man	10.3	Jeannie	9.4
Star Trek	8.2	Happy Days	8.2
Kung Fu	5.1	Brady Bunch	6.7
Other	57.7	Waltons	5.6
		Other	50.5

Question number fourteen on the reading survey concerned how much time students spent listening to the radio on school days and weekends. Results are found in Table 14.

The boys' responses showed that 44 percent listened to the radio one hour each weekday compared to 28 percent for the girls. It was interesting to note, near the same percent of boys and girls never listened to the radio. On weekends, there was more of a variance in the hours that both boys and girls spent listening to the radio.

The Northwestern University - Office of Education Study - reported that the average amount of time spent weekly in radio listening was about eight hours for students in grades three through nine (Witty, 1966).

Table 14

Time Spent Listening to the Radio School Days and Weekends

1. School Days:			
Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
0 hours	18.1	0 hours	17.5
1 hour	44.1	1 hour	28.9
2 hours	13.6	2 hours	16.4
Other	24.2	3 hours	5.6
		Other	31.6
2. Weekends:			
0 hours	16.0	0 hours	20.2
1 hour	27.8	1 hour	17.3
2 hours	12.7	2 hours	14.6
3 hours	7.6	3 hours	9.1
Other	35.9	4 hours	5.6
		6 hours	5.3
		Other	27.9

Question number fifteen on the reading survey concerned how often students went to the movies and what movie they liked best. Results are found in Table 15.

Approximately 50 percent of responses of both boys and girls showed they attended movies at least once a month. Boys frequented the movies more each week while girls attendance was greater once a month. The preferred movies of both boys and girls included

Poseidon Adventure and The Sting. Others included Love Bug, Where the Lilies Bloom, Where the Red Fern Grows, Willy Wonka, Planet of the Apes, Paper Moon, Sound of Music, MASH, Cowboys, and That Darn Cat.

Table 15

Whether Students Went to Movies and Favorite Movie

1. Movie Attendance:			
Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Each week	15.4	Each week	11.7
Twice a month	17.5	Twice a month	18.1
Once a month	11.8	Once a month	22.0
Other	55.3	Other	48.2
2. Favorite Movie:			
Poseidon Adventure	12.4	Where the Red Fern Grows	9.1
The Sting	12.4	Poseidon Adventure	6.7
Other	75.2	Where the Lilies Bloom	5.8
		Other	78.4

Witty's study (DeBoer, 1970) concluded both boys and girls attended movies most frequently once a week followed by once a month. Twice a week attendance was less than 5 percent by both groups.

Question number sixteen on the reading survey concerned what book students liked best and other books students liked.

Varied responses by both boys and girls resulted in a less than 5 percent total for any one book. Several books were chosen by both groups with Where the Red Fern Grows being the most popular. Boys listed Charlie Brown Books, Where the Lilies Bloom, Tom Sawyer, The Hobbit, Scrub Dog of Alaska, Call of the Wild, Hardy Boys, Alfred Hitchcock Series, Charlotte's Web, Island of the Blue Dolphins, Twenty-Thousand Leagues Under the Sea, Swiss Family Robinson, My Side of the Mountain, Lion, Witch and the Wardrobe, A Wrinkle in Time, as other favorites. Girls cited Black Beauty, Helen Keller, Island of the Blue Dolphins, Tom Sawyer, Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory, Nancy Drew, Charlotte's Web, Harriet the Spy, Laura Ingall Wilders' Books, Where the Lilies Bloom, Little House in the Big Woods, Black Stallion, Little Women, Lion, Witch and the Wardrobe as other books read.

Preferred storybooks from Witty's study (DeBoer, 1970) indicated some similarities and differences to this study. The boys listed Black Beauty, Davy Crockett, Daniel Boone, Robin Hood, Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo and Custer's Last Stand as favorites; while girls selected Little Women, Cinderella, Snow White, Heidi and Black Beauty to read.

It was interesting to note that fifteen of the books chosen by both boys and girls were made into movies. Several of the books were also introduced in communications classes either before or after

students had seen the movie.

Question number seventeen of the reading survey concerned books students had at home.

Responses to this question by both boys and girls resulted in a less than 5 percent total for any one book. Boys listed That Darn Cat, Monster Stories, Exorcist, War Stories, Huckleberry Finn, The Hobbit, Outlaw Red, Big Red, Dr. Seuss, Green Ghost, My Side of the Mountain, Charlotte's Web, Twenty-Thousand Leagues Under the Sea, Encyclopedias, Britty of the Grand Canyon, Great Moments in Pro Football, Island of the Blue Dolphins, Bible, Charley Brown, Hardy Boys, Call it Courage, Tom Sawyer as books at home. Books that the girls had at home were Helen Keller, Lassie, Little Women, Black Beauty, Bible, King of the Wind, Peanuts, Nancy Drew, The Black Stallion, That Darn Cat, Heidi, MASH and Fourteen and Freckled.

Several of the responses from question sixteen were also indicated in question seventeen, which meant that some of the students' favorite books were in the home.

Question number eighteen on the reading survey concerned if students liked to have someone read or tell a story to them. Results are shown in Table 16.

Over half of both boys and girls responded positively to question eighteen; while the "no" answers of the boys was twice that of the girls. It was of interest to note the high percentage of

"no response" by the girls. The high negative response of boys and the girls' "no" and "no response" might indicate that more concentration should be given to this area in the communication classes.

Table 16
Storytelling or Reading to Students

Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Yes	58.4	Yes	57.9
No	40.3	No	20.5
No Response	1.3	No Response	21.6

Question number nineteen on the reading survey concerned how often students go to the public library. Results are found in Table 17.

Table 17
Use of Public Library

Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Seldom	55.0	Seldom	54.0
Never	27.5	Often	27.3
Often	14.2	Never	19.5
No Response	3.3	No Response	.2

Results indicated that 82 percent of the boys seldom or never used the public library compared to 73 percent for the girls. Also, 11 percent more girls used the library than boys.

The high response of both groups expressing they seldom or never used the public library might indicate that the librarian and communication teachers should place more emphasis on encouraging wider use of library holdings.

Question number twenty on the reading survey concerned what magazines students read. Results are found in Table 18.

Table 18
Magazines Read

Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Boys' Life	22.7	Young Miss	7.6
Sports Illustrated	16.0	Boys' Life	6.4
Mad	14.5	Mad	6.4
Outdoor Life	5.7	Teen	5.6
National Geographic	5.1	American Girl	5.3
Other	36.0	Other	68.7

The main magazines read by boys were Boys' Life, Sports Illustrated, Mad, Outdoor Life and National Geographic. Others included Field and Stream, Sports Afield, Hot Rod, Ski, Children's Digest, Time and Popular Mechanics. Girls preferred Young Miss, Boys' Life, Mad,

Teen and American Girl. Other magazines popular with girls were Red Book, Seventeen, Ski, McCalls, Young World, Better Homes and Gardens, Time, National Geographic and Sports Illustrated.

Some similarities were seen in Witty's study (DeBoer, 1970) of interests of children. He cited Life, Boys' Life, Look, Saturday Evening Post, Sports Illustrated and Ebony as most popular with boys and Life, Look, Saturday Evening Post, Jack and Jill, American Girl, Better Homes and Gardens the main preferences of girls.

It was interesting to note that ten of the magazines read by both boys and girls were included in the library holdings at Willson Middle School.

DeBoer (1970) stated that magazines, like comics, have selections that are short and usually well illustrated plus being expendable, timely and varied. It is therefore not astonishing that magazines are very popular with elementary children.

Question number twenty-one on the reading survey concerned if students read comic books and if so, what were their favorite comic books. Results are found in Table 19.

Response to the first part of question twenty-one by both boys and girls revealed over 70 percent read comic books. The main comics read by boys were Richie Rich, Mad, Superman, Dennis the Menace, Bugs Bunny and Sad Sack. Others read were Peanuts, Dick Tracy, Spiderman, Archie, Beatle Baily, Donald Duck, Horrors, Popeye and Tarzan. Archie,

Richie Rich and Dennis the Menace were the girls' main favorites. Other comics read by girls were Snoopy, Mad, Casper, Batman, Hot Stuff, Horrors, Superman, Betty and Veronica, Bugs Bunny, Charlie Brown, Sad Sack and Tweety and Sylvester.

Table 19

Whether Students Read Comics and Favorite Comics

1. Participation:			
Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Yes	71.0	Yes	77.8
No	23.3	No	22.2
No Response	5.7		
2. Favorite Comic Books			
Richie Rich	12.4	Archie	20.8
Mad	9.4	Richie Rich	7.9
Superman	6.3	Dennis the Menace	5.3
Dennis the Menace	5.1	Other	66.0
Bugs Bunny	5.1		
Sad Sack	5.1		
Other	56.6		

DeBoer (1970) stated that children under eleven years old like the "funny animal" comics who walk, talk and act like human beings in similar situations whereas eleven and twelve year olds prefer "fantastic

adventure" comics like Superman and Batman.

The findings of this study indicated that both boys and girls preferred comics of the "funny animal" and "humorous" types, while the "fantastic adventure" type was not as popular. Perhaps the preference in comics has changed since DeBoer conducted his study.

Question number twenty-two on the reading survey concerned whether students read the newspaper and if so, which parts. Results are found in Table 20.

Table 20

Whether Students Read the Newspaper and What Sections

1. Participation:			
Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Yes	43.8	Yes	77.5
No	18.4	No	16.1
No Response	33.4	No Response	6.4
2. Newspaper Sections Read:			
Funnies	46.8	Funnies	49.7
Sports	18.4	Dear Abby	15.8
All	8.5	All	6.1
Movies	5.7	Other	28.4
Other	20.6		

Table 20 indicated that boys spent less time reading the newspaper than girls. It was of interest to the writer to note the high percentage of "no response" by the boys. The funnies were by far the most popular section read by both groups. Boys indicated that sports, movies, entire paper, want ads, TV section and headlines were other parts read while "Dear Abby," front page, want ads, and the entire paper were other sections read by girls. The high response of boys and girls reading the funnies might indicate that books with comic-type illustrations might have higher appeal to students.

Question number twenty-three on the reading survey concerned what kind of books students liked best. Results are found in Table 21.

Table 21
Types of Books Preferred

Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Animals	20.2	Animals	53.5
Mystery	13.0	Mystery	24.6
Sports	10.9	Other	21.9
Space	6.6		
World Wars	5.4		
Humor	5.1		
Other	38.8		

The types of books boys liked best were animal, mysteries, sports, space, World Wars and humor. Others noted were adventure,

people, and fantasy. Girls listed animal and mystery books as their favorites. Joke, children, planet and sad types of books were also preferred by girls.

Similar results were reported in Witty's study (DeBoer, 1970). Both boys and girls preferred books that had adventure, humor, westerns, mysteries, animals and science fiction.

Question number twenty-four on the reading survey concerned what kind of work students wanted to do when they finished school. Results are found in Table 22.

Table 22
Vocational Preference

Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Policeman	6.0	Teacher	21.3
Athlete	5.4	Veterinarian	14.6
Doctor	5.1	Rancher	5.3
Architect	5.1	Secretary	5.3
Other	78.4	Other	53.5

The responses of the boys and girls were significantly different. The boys' main vocational preferences were that of a policeman, athlete, doctor and architect. Others noted were ranching, pilot, teacher, carpenter, contractor, lawyer, scientist, truck driver, military, mechanic, electrician, engineer, fireman, salesman, veterinarian, and

biologist. Girls listed teacher, veterinarian, rancher and secretary as their main occupational choices. Other responses included waitress, doctor, nurse, author, stewardess, lawyer, housewife, model, actor and oceanography.

Witty's study (DeBoer, 1970) indicated boys choices were those of a doctor, scientist, baseball player, engineer and soldier, whereas girls wanted to become a teacher, nurse, secretary, mother and housewife or airline hostess.

Question twenty-five on the reading survey concerned if students had ever read books or stories about the kind of work they wanted to do, and if so, name them. Results are found in Table 23.

Table 23

Books or Stories Read about Vocational Preferences

Participation			
Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Yes	40.8	Yes	12.0
No	57.7	No	84.2
No Response	1.5	No Response	3.8

Response to this question indicated less than half of the boys and 13 percent of the girls had read books or stories pertaining to

their vocational preferences. As to sections named, no one book received over a 5 percent total response. The main books listed by boys were in the areas of sports and mechanics while girls named animal and nurse books as their main readings. Vocational preferences would tend to indicate areas of interest which should necessarily be reflected in library holdings at Willson Middle School.

Question twenty-six on the reading survey concerned if students had seen anyone on television or in the movies who did the kind of work they wanted to do and if so, who. Results are found in Table 24.

Table 24

TV or Movie Personalities Who Portrayed Vocational Preferences

Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Yes	52.6	Yes	35.7
No	45.6	No	63.5
No Response	1.8	No Response	.8

Table 24 indicated that boys saw more people on TV or in the movies that portrayed their vocational preference than girls. As to personalities named, no one person received over a 5 percent total response. Boys listed John Wayne, Dr. Welby, O. J. Simpson, Neal Armstrong, Perry Mason, Owen Marshall, Henry Aaron and Joe Namath as people representing their future occupations in law, sports and space

whereas girls listed personalities who were lawyers, doctors and comedians.

Question number twenty-seven on the reading survey concerned whether students planned to go to high school, to college and did they want to go to college. Results are found in Table 25.

Table 25

Whether Students Planned to go to High School, College
and Wanted a College Education

1. High School:			
Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Yes	91.0	Yes	87.7
No	3.0	No	12.3
No Response	6.0		
2. College:			
Yes	81.3	Yes	47.1
No	10.0	No	9.9
No Response	8.7	No Response	43.0
3. Wanted College Education:			
Yes	78.2	Yes	45.9
No	12.7	No	14.0
No Response	9.1	No Response	40.1

The boys' responses indicated that the majority planned to go to high school, college and wanted a college education, whereas girls planned to go to high school but showed some indecision about college and wanting a college education. It was surprising to the investigator that 12.3 percent of the girls indicated a negative response as to attending high school.

Question number twenty-eight on the reading survey concerned if students liked school. Results are found in Table 26.

Table 26
Whether Students Like School

Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Yes	59.8	Yes	77.2
No	38.7	No	21.7
No Response	1.5	No Response	1.1

The responses of the boys and girls were appreciably different. The girls' positive response was 77 percent compared to the boys' 60 percent. Also, 22 percent of the girls answered "no" whereas 39 percent of the boys said they did not like school.

Question number twenty-nine on the reading survey concerned what subjects students liked best and least. Results are found in Table 27.

Table 27
Subjects Liked Best and Least

1. Subjects Liked Best:			
Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Math	26.6	Math	29.5
Science	23.3	Art	20.8
Art	17.8	Science	18.1
PE	11.2	Communications	15.8
Communications	7.9	PE	9.6
2. Subjects Liked Least:			
Music	28.7	Social Studies	28.9
Social Studies	21.8	Music	18.1
Communications	15.1	Math	15.8
Math	13.0	Science	12.3
Science	6.9	Communications	12.0
		PE	6.7

Responses to this question by both groups appeared quite similar. The ranked order of favorite subjects of boys was math, science, art, communications and P.E. Ranked order of girls' favorite subjects was math, art, science, communications and P.E. Subjects in

order liked least by boys were music, social studies, communications, math and science, while girls listed social studies, music, math, science, communications, and P.E. as least favorites.

Question number thirty on the reading survey concerned what subjects they received their best and poorest marks. Results are found in Table 28.

Table 28
Best and Poorest Marks of Students

1. Best Marks:			
Boys	Percent	Girls	Percent
Math	32.3	Math	17.0
Science	23.0	Science	12.9
P.E.	9.7	Communications	11.7
Social Studies	9.1	Social Studies	11.7
Communications	6.9	Music	10.2
Art	6.3	Art	8.8
Other	12.7	P.E.	5.8
		Other	21.9
2. Poorest Marks:			
Social Studies	27.2	Communications	16.7
Communications	18.1	Social Studies	14.0
Science	13.6	Science	13.5
Math	13.6	Math	12.9
Music	5.4	P.E.	5.3
Other	22.1	Other	37.6

Responses to this question by both boys and girls were somewhat similar. Subjects which both groups received good grades in were math, science, communications, social studies, music, art and P.E. Subjects in which both groups received poor grades were social studies, communications, science, math, music and P.E.

It was interesting to the investigator that the subjects both groups received their best grades in were similar to the favorite subjects listed. Subjects in which both boys and girls received poor grades were also similar to the subjects liked least.

Reporting Results to Librarian

One of the procedures of this study was to construct a student card for use by the librarian at Willson Middle School. This card will contain data such as name, sex, grade, I.Q., Holt Basic Reading System Placement Tests (Instructional Reading Level), school year and interest inventory results related to hobbies, favorite kinds of books, favorite magazines, vocational interests, educational interests and outside activities. Figure 1. shows an example of the proposed card.

Name: _____	Grade _____
Sex: _____	I.Q. _____
Holt Basic Reading System Placement Tests (Instructional Reading Level)	

Interest Inventory Results:	
Hobbies	_____
Favorite Kinds of Books	_____
Favorite Magazines	_____
Vocational Interests	_____
Educational Interests	_____
Outside Activities	_____

Figure 1

Student Card for Use by Librarian

Inclusion of Inventory
in Student Cumulative Folder

The writer feels that the interest inventory should be given to students during each succeeding school year and included in the students' cumulative folder for use by individual teachers in their various subject areas.

Summary

A reading interest questionnaire was utilized to examine students' interests in the areas of play and activities, television, radio and movies, reading, vocational choice and educational interests.

The area of play and activities revealed that both boys and girls mainly watched TV, engaged in general play, read books and rode

bicycles when they had free time on weekdays, evenings and weekends. Boys appeared to prefer games that were more physically oriented whereas girls' priorities were both active and passive. Boys expressed more interest in making things and had more knowledge of tools at home than girls, whereas both groups showed awareness of many playthings at home. The majority of both groups owned pets with dogs and cats being their favorites. Over half of both groups expressed a desire to collect things and rocks, stamps and coins were the main items collected. Girls indicated more involvement in music and dancing lessons than boys. Both groups gave varied responses as to their favorite hobbies and expression of one wish they desired to come true. Similar responses were seen concerning things students feared with snakes being the most feared.

Section two of the interest inventory asked students to respond to questions concerning television, radio and movies. Responses to time spent watching TV on school days indicated over three-fourths of both groups spent from one to five hours viewing television while on weekends the range was one to eight hours. As to the students' favorite TV program, boys seemed to prefer programs that were action-oriented whereas girls' preferences were more situation comedy oriented. Both groups indicated varied responses as to the number of hours they listened to the radio on weekdays and weekends. Movie attendance by boys was more frequent each week whereas girls' attendance was greater

once a month. Both groups listed The Sting and Poseidon Adventure as preferred favorites.

Section three contained questions about reading interests of students. Responses to the book students liked best and books students had at home resulted in a less than 5 percent total response for any one book. Storytelling or reading to students was popular with over half of both boys and girls. The majority of both groups indicated they seldom or never made use of the public library facilities. Magazines read by both boys and girls were similar to the holdings at Willson Middle School. Response to their favorite comic books revealed both groups preferred funny animal, funny people and fantastic adventure type comic books. Boys spent less time reading the newspaper than girls with funnies being the main section read by both groups. Both boys and girls preferred books that were about animals, mystery, science fiction and humor.

Section four asked questions about students' vocational and educational interests. Vocational preferences of boys were significantly different than girls. More boys read books, stories, saw TV programs and movies that expressed their occupational choices than girls. Both boys and girls responded "yes" to going to high school, but boys expressed more positively to attending college and getting a college education. Seventy-seven percent of the girls indicated they liked school compared to the boys' 60 percent response. Response to

what subjects students liked best, the least, and subjects they received their best and poorest grade in were similar with both groups.

The final chapter will present the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

Chapter 4

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

Surveying reading interests of elementary school children was not a new practice. Considerations must be given to the many factors that determine a child's specific reading interests.

The central problem of this study was to survey the reading interests of children in the Willson Middle School.

The researcher surveyed literature in the area of fifth and sixth grade reading interests.

A questionnaire was administered to all fifth and sixth grade students. Percentage results from the questionnaire were compiled and major findings compared with other reading interest studies to see if differences in reading interests existed.

Data collected from this study will be submitted to communication teachers and librarians of Willson Middle School with the hope that the information will help in establishing improved class procedures and in school book ordering.

During the past few decades, numerous studies have been compiled to determine the reading interests of elementary children. Researchers had varied opinions on how factors such as adult selection, sex, age, maturity, social class and materials available influenced the interests

and tastes of children's selection of books.

Studies showed that a difference in reading interests occurred in boy - girl preferences. As a child matured, his rate of interest declined while his range of interests increased and the sex of an individual also determined his reading selections. Although both boys and girls preferred stories with elements of adventure, mystery, humor, realism of child life, animal life and sports; girls did not for the most part, care for science and invention. Boys preferred prose and girls poetry.

One of the methods employed to determine students' reading interests was the interest inventory record. Areas covered on this type of questionnaire included play and other activities, television, radio and movies, reading, vocational choice and educational interests. The responses on an interest inventory record were intended to indicate what a student likes to do, think and talk about.

In this study, the area of play and activities revealed that both boys and girls mainly watched TV, engaged in general play, read books and rode bicycles when they had free time on weekdays, evenings and weekends. Boys appeared to prefer games that were more physically oriented whereas girls' priorities were both active and passive. Boys expressed more interest in making things and had more knowledge of tools at home than girls, whereas both groups showed awareness of many playthings at home. The majority of both groups owned pets with dogs

and cats being their favorites. Over half of both groups expressed a desire to collect things, and rocks, stamps and coins were the main items collected. Girls indicated more involvement in music and dancing lessons than boys. Both groups gave varied responses as to their favorite hobbies and expression of one wish they desired to come true. Similar responses were seen concerning things students feared with snakes being the most feared.

Section two of the interest inventory asked students to respond to questions concerning television, radio and movies. Responses to time spent watching TV on school days indicated over three-fourths of both groups spent from one to five hours viewing television while on weekends the range was one to eight hours. As to the students' favorite TV program, boys seemed to prefer programs that were action-oriented whereas girls' preferences were more situation comedy oriented. Both groups indicated varied responses as to the number of hours they listened to the radio on weekdays and weekends. Movies attendance by boys was more frequent each week whereas girls' attendance was greater once a month. Both groups listed The Sting and Poseidon Adventure as preferred favorites.

Section three contained questions about reading interests of students. Responses to the book students liked best and books students had at home resulted in a less than 5 percent total response for any one book. Storytelling or reading to students was popular with over

half of both boys and girls. The majority of both groups indicated they seldom or never made use of the public library facilities. Magazines read by both boys and girls were similar to the holdings at Willson Middle School. Response to their favorite comic books revealed both groups preferred funny animal, funny people and fantastic adventure type comic books. Boys spent less time reading the newspaper than girls with funnies being the main section read by both groups. Both boys and girls preferred books that were about animals, mystery, science fiction and humor.

Section four asked questions about students' vocational and education interests. Vocational preferences of boys were significantly different than girls. More boys read books, stories, saw TV programs and movies that expressed their occupational choices than girls. Both boys and girls responded "yes" to going to high school, but boys expressed more positively to attending college and getting a college education. Seventy-seven percent of the girls indicated they liked school compared to the boys' 60 percent response. Response to what subjects students liked best, the least, and subjects they received their best and poorest grade in were similar with both groups.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the review of related literature and the results of the reading interest inventory which was administered, the following were concluded:

1. authorities felt that reading interests acquired during school years determined to a considerable degree the nature of the reading activities of the adult.
2. administration of reading interest inventories was not a recent nor innovative procedure.
3. the amount and diversity of reading material available to children has grown tremendously in recent years.
4. reading interest surveys often yielded conflicting results.
5. reading interests varied significantly with the times, sex, age, maturity, background and availability of books.
6. boys still seemed to express a higher interest in physically oriented games and activities than did girls.
7. interest was expressed in pets, collecting, music and hobbies.
8. boys and girls gave similar responses concerning things feared.
9. students spent a large portion of their free time watching or listening to television, radio and movies.

10. boys seemed to prefer TV programs that were action-oriented while girls' preferences were more situation comedy oriented.
11. students' preferences for books were often those made into movies or introduced in class by communication teachers.
12. a high percentage of both groups seldom or never used the public library.
13. comic book choices showed a marked preference for the "funny animal" or "humorous" type characters.
14. the funnies in the newspaper were the most popular section read.
15. vocational preferences of both groups were appreciably different.
16. boys expressed more interest in attending college and wanting a college education than did girls.
17. it appeared that students' preference for subject area closely paralleled subject areas in which the student received better grades.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The writer recommended that:

1. a repeat of this study be conducted in other schools, changing the terms to fit the population and experiences of the students.
2. a reading interest inventory questionnaire be administered to all middle grade students each year.
3. this study be presented to the librarian and communication teachers at Willson Middle School for their consideration.
4. the library holdings at Willson Middle School reflect the students' reading interests.
5. the library holdings at Willson Middle School reflect the students' interests in pets, collecting, music and hobbies.
6. the communication teachers note the little use of the public library by students and attempt to stimulate greater use of library holdings.
7. the library holdings at Willson Middle School reflect the students' vocational interests.
8. the librarian and communication teachers at Willson Middle School note differences in sex preferences and provide diverse materials which reflect the different preferences.
9. the librarian at Willson Middle School make use of the proposed student card reflecting student interests.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

Interest Inventory Record

PUPIL REPORT OF INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES

NAME _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____ AGE _____

GRADE _____ SCHOOL _____ SEX _____ DATE _____

This is not a test. Your answers will not be graded, but they will provide helpful information. Please answer each question carefully and as fully as possible. If you need assistance, your teacher will help you.

A. PLAY AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

1. When you have an hour or two to spend as you please, what do you like best to do? _____

2. What do you usually do:

After School? _____

In the evening? _____

On weekends? _____

3. What game do you like best to play? _____

4. Do you make things? Yes _____ No _____ What things have you made? _____

5. What tools or playthings do you have at home? _____

6. Do you have any pets? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, what? _____

7. Do you collect things? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, what? _____

8. Do you take lessons such as music and dancing? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, what? _____

9. Do you have any hobbies? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, what? _____
10. Suppose you could have one wish which might come true, what would it be? _____
11. Are there some things you are afraid of? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, what are they? _____

B. TELEVISION, RADIO AND MOVIES

12. How much time do you spend looking at TV?
On a school day: _____ hours On a weekend? _____ hours
13. What is your favorite TV program? _____
14. How much time do you spend listening to the radio?
On a school day: _____ hours On a weekend: _____ hours
15. How often do you go to the movies? _____
Name the movie you have liked best _____

C. READING

16. What is the best book you have ever read? _____
Name other books you have liked: _____

17. Name some books of your own that you have at home: _____

18. Do you like to have someone read or tell a story to you?
Yes _____ No _____
19. Do you go to the public library? Often _____ Seldom _____ Never _____

20. What magazines do you read? _____

21. Do you read comic books? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, what are your favorite comic books? _____

22. Do you read a newspaper? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, which parts? _____

23. What kind of books do you like best? For example, books about animals, about pilots, about children at home, about children in other lands, or about the stars and the planets. Write the kinds of books you like best: _____

D. VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS

24. What kind of work do you want to do when you finish school? _____

25. Have you read books or stories about the kind of work you want to do? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, name them: _____

26. Have you seen anyone on television or in the movies who does the kind of work you want to do? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, who? _____

27. Do you plan to go to high school? Yes _____ No _____ To college? Yes _____ No _____ Do you want to go to college? Yes _____ No _____

28. Do you like school? Yes _____ No _____

29. What school subject do you like best? _____

What school subject do you like least? _____

30. In what subject do you get your best marks? _____

Your poorest marks? _____

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