1985

Teaching Reading with Worlds in Color In a Home Schooling Environment

Grace Indoccio Matty
SIT Graduate Institute

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/ipp_collection

Part of the Curriculum and Instruction Commons, Curriculum and Social Inquiry Commons, and the Educational Methods Commons

Teaching Reading with Words in Color

In a Home Schooling Environment

Grace Indoccio Matty

B.A. University of New Hampshire 1969

"Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Master of Arts in Teaching degree at the
School for International Training, Brattleboro, Vermont."

July 1985

This project by Grace Indoccio Matty is accepted in its
present form.

Date 9/9/85   Principal Advisor _____

Project Advisor/Reader: Nancy Wallace

Abstract

This paper purports that a home learning environment is a workable alternative to a formal school education. It examines the reading acquisition process of one child through the approach, Words in Color, in a home schooling environment. It's intent is to heighten awareness of the traditional system of education and to describe materials and techniques that can be used in helping a child to learn to read the English language.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

It was my experience at the School for International Training in Vermont that gave me the courage to embark on a home schooling program. While studying language acquisition and the teaching of ESL, I came to realize that the approaches I have adopted to language teaching could also be applied to the processes a child goes through in learning to read his native English language. It was natural that I began to apply what I was learning about my ESL students and about myself to my relationship with my son. From this evolved the home study program that follows.

This paper is the outgrowth of experiences shared by my husband, my son Jason and me in our daily interactions as both learners and teachers. Specifically, it pertains to the 8 months (September 1979 - April 1980) of instructing Jason in reading at home in New Hampshire. It is also the cumulative result of my personal experiences with formal education between the years 1953-1979.

I hope to be able to share this learning experience with others who may wish to take the responsibility for helping another individual to read, but who may have misgivings about their lack of training and have frustrations with their ability to select appropriate instructional materials. It is hoped that this paper will serve as an incentive for them and give specific information to those wishing to tap into the experienced teacher and learner in all of us.

In the interest of equality I have chosen to refer to parent and/or teacher in the female gender, and student and/or child in the male gender.

Matty 2

One day during the month that my son Jason was attending Kindergarten,
I asked him, "What did you learn today?" He replied, "I didn't go to
school today, remember, I was sick."

BACKGROUND

Home Schooling

The decision not to send Jason to school, but rather to educate him at home was clearly influenced by several factors: my own history as a student; teachers and classes that I had worked with and observed; children and parents who had been affected by the public school system; and several prominent writers in the field of education.

My readings helped reinforce my awareness of the tremendous turmoil in schools today. Some educators who are questioning the "conventional wisdom" of the public schools are Postmen and Weingartner who believe that reform and change are possible, Ivan Illich who condemns the idea of "institutionalizing values" and supports the idea of a deschooled society, John Holt who rejects the idea of compulsory education and advocates home education, and Silberman whose words from Crisis in the Classroom depict a climate in schools that we, as parents, often fail to recognize.

> It is not possible to spend any prolonged period visiting public school classrooms without being appalled by the mutilation visible everywhere - mutilation of spontaneity, of joy in learning, or pleasure in creating, of sense of self ... Because adults take the schools so much for granted, they fail to appreciate what grim, joyless places most American schools are, how oppressive and petty are the rules by which they are governed, how intellectually sterile and esthetically barren the atmosphere (10).

It is my concern that public schooling does not help to develop a child's individual potential even though this is its manifest aim. The method of

public school "teaching," with its emphasis on mass objectives, mass criteria, and mass instruction rewards those who conform, accept and comply, rather than those who question, criticize or demonstrate uniqueness. Silberman has noted that schools, regardless of their geographical location, are producing "patterns of behavior so uniform and constant over time and across cultures as to suggest that they form almost a subculture of their own" (22). Schools can dictate students' interests and attitudes by subjecting them to a mandatory, predetermined and inflexible curriculum that is neatly packaged and caters to the belief that every child learns in the same way, within the same amount of time and for the same reasons.[1] This mentality does not take into account the fact that learning is based on the individual experiences and perceptions of the learner at a specific time in his life.

Being dissatisfied with the way in which I myself had been "taught," I chose to adopt a program of instruction for my son based upon dynamic rather than static processes. A static learning environment, the type of environment common to public school, can numb and stifle a child's natural curiosity and desire for learning. In school I was trained to be a passive receiver of information. I was not encouraged to formulate personal opinions, nor was I urged to think about or to criticize ideas or situations. Only one correct answer was acceptable to the teacher, therefore my questions were quite infrequent and unsolicited. I remember thinking that there was not enough time allowed for questions, which led me to believe that they must not be important. Furthermore, I never felt comfortable expressing my thoughts or feelings about subject matter to my teachers, and thus I became disconnected from the content and the lessons.[2] Looking back now, I realize that I was functioning as a robot. I was going through the rituals, but my mind wasn't being stimulated or challenged.

School did, however, teach me an essential lesson: to rely on the teacher for approval, information and evaluation. I personally have been a victim of this educational philosophy and am still witnessing it in classrooms today. The following incident that occurred while I was observing a class of second graders forced me to examine the question of control and manipulation of teacher over student in the classroom. The children were about to make Valentine cards. The card was to be made in any way they liked. Before they began, two children wanted to know where to write their names on the paper. The teacher answered that they could write them wherever they liked. Again three more children asked the same question. Soon most of the class was concerned about this and would not begin until the teacher assured them that it was permissible and acceptable to write their names wherever they wished. The children's inability to proceed without the teacher's explicit direction exemplifies the extent to which authoritarian control had already begun to replace their natural spontaneity and initiative.

Memorizing rules without understanding their underlying concepts rendered much of my own schooling irrelevant and mechanical. I have been a student in many classes where "teaching" focused on presenting isolated fragments of information and where "testing" their degree of absorption was the ultimate goal of the course. John Holt's apt term for this is "Tell-'em -- and -- test-'em." The following incident from my high school days forced a change in my attitude toward grades and learning. I was taking a course in European History. I still remember studying for the first test of the fall term. It would be the kind of test that would require me to answer factual questions ... names of people, places, events, and dates. This type of test required that I invest many hours memorizing what I now see as isolated pieces of data. I did study (memorize) for that particular test for several days and I did in

act receive an "A." When presented with studying for the next test I realized
that I had forgotten much of what I had "learned" prior to this point. I
asked myself, "is this what learning consists of?" It was then that I made a
conscious decision to spend less time studying for tests and resolved to
accept a lower grade.

I see memorizing information that has no concrete connection to the
learner and is dependent on drill and repetition, as antithetical to effective
learning. Holt says:

> For children, the central business of school is not learning,
> whatever this vague term means; it is getting the daily tasks of
> school done, or at least out of the way with a minimum of effort and
> unpleasantness. Each task is an end in itself (How 24).

How much learning can be absorbed in this sterile and static process that is
so completely devoid of anything except the enormous amounts of resources,
time and effort that are wasted? I wonder if teachers are even aware of their
role in institutionalizing this process?

Establishing a Learning Environment

Gattegno's principles of learning have greatly influenced my home school
program. I first began to practice them in my ESL classes and later realized
that they were filtering down to my work with Jason. I think it helpful here
to list these elements that helped me to gain new insights into myself, my
students and my son.

1. The subordination of teaching to learning
2. Awareness of self in the learning process
3. Silence and non-interference on the part of the teacher
4. Fostering responsibility and independence in the learner

These elements are so broad and encompassing that they can be applied to all areas of learning. It need not matter whether the student is a foreigner learning a new language or a child learning to read his native language. I have chosen to demonstrate how I have incorporated them into an understanding of the reading process.

My alternative to the static learning process that I experienced and observed in schools is one that would nourish and guide the child in understanding through insight, discovery, and feelings. Acquiring knowledge by this mode of behavior would spark the learner's interest by allowing for spontaneity, which is crucial for the evolution of a dynamic learning environment. The type of environment in which spontaneity can blossom and flourish demands that the teacher critically examine her role in relation to the learner. In developing a method of reading instruction for my son, careful consideration showed me the necessity of relinquishing the authority that the traditional label of "teacher" allotted me, and of relagating to Jason the responsibility that would help him to become an independent learner.[3] I would allow him to apply previously learned skills and knowledge to new situations, without constantly monitoring his actions and interrupting with questions that were relevant only to me.

I would also learn to listen and observe; but most of all I would learn when to remain silent.[4] Once I began my work with Jason, I found that if I tried to break the silence when he was concentrating or if I voiced my impatience over his hesitancy to respond, he let me know that he was thinking, and asked that I wait quietly and not interrupt him. It was encouraging for me to see that as I became less of a director, he became more of an initiator. I have found that the parent-teacher can help develop the responsibility that is so central to Dr. Gattegno's philosophy, by giving the child a choice in

what he wants to learn, when, and how.[5] The choices Jason made concerning his own learning have contributed toward his positive self-image as a learner and have also expanded my awareness of his learning process.

I did not want Jason's natural curiosity, individual potential and desire for learning to be stiffled. I was determined that he would not become a passive recipient of information. I wanted him to learn by doing. I wanted his personal experiences and feelings to play a part in his assimilation of knowledge. I wanted insight and discovery to continue being his allies and hoped that he would continue to imbibe in the joy of learning. My main home schooling objective was that Jason remain comfortable with the natural process of learning and continue to learn about the world around him propelled by his own initiative and spontaneous curiosity.[6]

Establishing a Reading Environment

An important prelude to reading is to surround a young child from his beginning years with a rich reading environment. For me this included books, a rocking chair, spare time, and a typewriter. Books that a child knows are his own and must be taken care of by him is important. A child should be encouraged to choose a particular book in a store or library that he would like to take home. Reading to a young child, which seems quite obvious, can be of extreme importance in fostering a love of books.

Jason was eager to be read to at a very early age. I read to him in a rocker that he especially liked. It was a time of relaxation, joy and sharing. When he was a little older I used the typewriter to demonstrate the relationship between the spoken and the written word. Jason would tell me a story about a picture, or make a comment at random and I would type this for him (See Fig. 1). I handed him the paper with "his words" on it; he remarked, "are these mine?" He now had a very special keepsake. Soon the awareness

that the written word tells what someone is thinking and saying became his realization. That he could do what writers of books, do amazed him. He was on his way to understanding what reading is. I would point out to him the author's name and spend some time speculating about why the author chose to write a story on this specific topic. I saw these talks as an integral part of his reading preparation.

The environment I've described exposed Jason to a first hand experience with reading. Even as a young child he came to know that reading is a meaningful endeavor that can be entertaining, useful and exciting. I feel that introducing reading as a means of conveying ideas and reflections is a foundation that should precede the introduction of letters and sounds. Introducing decoding skills to Jason after initial exposure to books has rendered the reading process more natural, delightful and genuinely interesting for us.

Jason's Story

Words by Jason Matty   August 21, 1978

Once upon a time, there was this boy named Johnny who lived with his mother and father inside a haunted house. Once it was nighttime and when he went to bed he imagined all monsters and dinosaurs. When he was in bed he imagined a monster blowing fire over his head. He began to get hotter and hotter. He was brave enough to say "Who's there, and what do you want?" But he stood there laying down. Now it was morning when Johnny woke up. He got dressed, and he went outside playing on the swing set. And after he was playing on the swing set he went inside and got something to eat. He found out there was nothing in the refrigerator. So then he went back up in bed to take a little nap. When he woke up he found out the only thing that was in the regrigerator was an apple. When he opened it up he bit into a worm! The end.

Fig. 1 "Jason's First Story"

THE READING APPROACH - WORDS IN COLOR

The reading environment that I've described comprises what my definition of reading is. Even at the initial stages Jason's mind was actively involved in the thought process.

Since much of Jason's future learning would be connected with reading, I especially wanted his initial experience to be a successful one. The approach I adopted, "Words in Color," is flexible enough to embody my beliefs pertaining to teaching and learning. It is a truly active approach that refutes memorization as the key component in learning and utilizes and develops other functions of the mind such as reflection, discrimination, comprehension, flexibility, originality and experimentation.

Learning to read English presents the beginning reader with a specific problem. The English language has only 26 letters to represent more than twice that number of sounds.[7] To account for the number of sounds in English, a given letter can represent more than one sound and two or more letters can be combined to represent sounds.[8] In Words in Color, reading is facilitated by a system that "phoneticizes" the English language through the effective device of color. A given sound, along with its various signs, appears in the same color while a given sign with its various sounds, appears in different colors. All the sounds of English are made available to the learner through the Fidels and Word Charts (See Figs. 2 & 3). The following two examples show that:

1. a given sound can be represented by a variety of signs (letter or letter combinations)

    o in do   wo in two

    oo in too   ue in blue

    ew in new   oe in shoe

2. a given sign can represent a variety of sounds

<u>ie</u> in consc<u>ie</u>nce   <u>ie</u> in y<u>ie</u>ld

<u>ie</u> in s<u>ie</u>ve   <u>ie</u> in fr<u>ie</u>nds

<u>ie</u> in d<u>ie</u>

The signs representing the sound in the first example are all the same color, while the <u>ie</u> in the second example appears in five different colors, one color for each different sound.

Tools/Materials

Color

The sound-sign correspondence can be further clarified through the
following examples on the Word Charts. On Word Chart 1, the t in the word pat
and the tt in the word putt are the same color, which in turn indicates that
these two signs are pronounced in the same way. On Word Chart 2 appear the
words sun and son. The u and the o in these two words are both light yellow,
which indicates that they have the same sound. By becoming aware of the
convention that one color equals one sound, and that one sign may be
represented by many different colors, the learner is immediately introduced to
the consistent principle in written English that different sounds can mandate
the same sign.

Also, on Word Chart 1, the reverse principle is immediately evident,
namely, that the same sign can represent different sounds and thus warrant
different colors. Here the lilac s in is and the lime s in us appear. It is
useful here to emphasize that Gattegno does not delay introducing these two
principles to the young child. The use of color allows the learner to grasp
these pecularities of English very early in the reading experience.

One may ask, what else does color permit the learner to do that reading
in conventional black print does not? First and foremost, color serves as an
entry into the written language and acts as a trigger for initial decoding.
Once a sound is associated with a particular color, the learner can decode any
word that appears on the Word Charts in that color. Color allows the be-
ginning reader to decode words that would otherwise be delayed until he had a
firmer grasp of reading. The implication here is that reading material itself
may be extensive and varied early in the reading experience.[9] Jason was
reading books of his choosing two months after his reading instruction began.

Fig. 2   "The Fidels

WORDS IN COLOR WORDCHARTS

1
pot pit pet pot
pop at it up putt
tot tap tip tap opt
as pep us pup is
-s sat sit set sap -s
's stop step spot 's
stops steps pass pest
sips tess tests past
puppet asset

2
mat tim met tom mom
must mumps mast I
mops miss mess pump
a am stamps map sum
sam pam not nut
net ten man men 'm
tent spent sent pants
pin sun an in on son
tempt attempt assistant

3
fan fun of fist fit
if fat stuff puff -y
dad mad and dud dust
tennis sniff did mend
sad stand end this -ed
mud sand that fed -ed
them then than the -ed
yes fifth yam fifty yet
thin independent path

4
let doll dull sell tell
lit land less spell lot
lap lend lent pal -es
until ill mill still
last plus add slept
tummy daddy funny -i-
wit wet with will 'll
swim was well went
wind sunset else wind

5
ran rat after run rust
red sister rest strip
my mind wild mine ask
kit kill kid kiss any
skip skill silk milk
sick neck track truck
dress strike find -ly
time mile like love -d
fur were word world -d

6
hat has him her his hat
back do brick to black
two impossible too 've
father zoo mother -ing
food little work have
took full put look -n't
sorry worry been move
five by brother but give
from there won't don't

7
hate date late male 're
more for or nor horse
take same made fatal
be we me he the here
bone woke nose home
seven no go so iron -e-
use refuse united cute
girl bursts hurt first
egg got globe get leg

8
month thank think both
sold bankrupt told
come done gone some
hungry cold hundred
dirty thirty thirsty -er
hand off april dog -est
simple hope promise
lost difficult most
goes able big open does

9
shop shut chin she ship
chill china teach chips
wish push share cash
match much such watch
shell front shock shall
child channel children
far very are close car
michigan every chorus
hair ever air even pair

10
small chicken school
church cry all shred
schedule gym criminal
false adjective call
soldier box neither
judge next act job
education generation
potato crime tomorrow
orchestra ate character

11
phrase garden which
question quiet quickly
capable seen once one
blood fantastic see door
your you mouth young
foot sleep while feet
these between those
why what where when
since whom who whose

12
physics how elephant
photograph now courage
hour out soup our house
four courageous low fore
tooth could about teeth
should shoulder would
be- cause gun side busy
worse sugar better wood
sure good hind age want

13
eyes high height lie
night saturday might
under money above down
paid honey prayers mail
may finished field way
stopped conceit rolled
talk vision says walk
they day say greyhound
received england family

14
eighth eighteen eighty
freight wrong fright
list listen few news
fast fasten lesson heir
sword business sworn
know knee new knew
dumb buy said dye again
right written true write
soul knowledge -tieth

15
ear hear tear theater
read heart heard read
eat believe sieve friend
receipt meant seize
great please vein gauge
pear create ocean tear
pearl their means break
anxiety treasure anxious
exaggerate examination

16
during autumn daughter
pure taught water poor
doubt awe oh saw sore
tough laugh soar cough
thought through though
bough thoroughly help
board sew sow bored
cloak broke clock saw
sweet fruit suit suite

17
isle loaves calves aisle
number loaf half flown
woman flowers women
boy zero zip dizzy buoy
thursday oil wednesday
ghost diaphragm psalm
rhythm mission rhyme
key oh tissue sign quay
khaki ache schism waltz

18
hallelujah pneumatic
champion venture million
queue life jewel view
toward bathe awkward
pension clothes amoeba
often aerial shoes build
pigeon different mayor
special budget spatial
science equals straight

19
except exhibit accept
garage appreciate length
language conscientious
handkerchief humanity
chocolate asia cupboard
hymn mnemonic beauty
foreign heifer shepherd
ballet sapphire plaque
leopard finesse machine

20
guest guarantee tongue
bury stranger choir debt
medical acquire medicine
rogue blackguard signify
precious argue luxurious
asthma cassette azure
ancient certain student
direct direction distance
office exhaust official

Fig. 3 "The Word Charts to Words in Color"

Color also minimizes problems with letter reversals. For example, by making the letter b and d very close in color the learner is asked to focus on the shape of the letter and thus not to discriminate between them on the basis of their color. Furthermore, b and d are not presented in isolation. Prior to our work with this approach, Jason did confuse b and d, but I noticed it was only when they appeared in isolation or in nonsense syllables. He never did confuse these two letters when they were part of words in meaningful contexts.

Color aids the learner in developing an awareness of sounds and their spellings, and of most importance to me, it is a means by which the young child can begin to learn to teach himself. Jason was able to use the Word Charts with miminal supervision, writing his own sentences and then checking what he had written. He was functioning as both teacher and student, a message which is implicit in the tools and explicit in Dr. Gattegno's philosophy.

The Fidels

All the sounds and signs of the English language are displayed on eight Charts that are called the Fidels or phonic code (See Fig. 2). The Fidels are color coded to correspond to the colors of the Word Charts. They are set up in columns that are separated by vertical and horizontal lines. Each column is a different color and represents a particular sound. All the possible spellings for each sound are listed in these columns. The upper section lists all the various vowel spellings, while the bottom section consists of all consonant spellings. At first glance these charts may appear overwhelming, but they attest to a system that is finite and conquerable. This in itself is a powerful motivator to the learner who soon realizes that he can master all the sounds and signs that appear before him. Jason continuously compared

signs in columns that we had worked with to signs in columns with which he was not yet familiar. He expressed continual satisfaction that he was indeed making progress in adding to the number of signs that he knew. Pointing at the Fidels, he said to me, "Look, now we've learned almost half of all these charts." This was a powerful motivator. He was learning because he wanted to and because he was aware that he was making progress.

The Fidels[10] bring structure to the language by allowing the learner to see how words are put together. This global view of the English sign-sound correspondence serves as a framework for organizing the written language, and aids the learner in understanding the relationships, similarities and differences that exist in English. It is also an excellent reference tool for later learning.

The Pointer

Working with the Word Charts affords the reader the opportunity to become fully engaged in the reading process by actively involving the body and the mind in a natural way. Through the physical arm movements involved in the tapping, signs and words are linked through the use of a metal pointer. With the pointer in hand, words on the Word Charts and signs on the Fidel are "tapped out." The act of tapping is a dynamic one which can result in an inexhaustible number of new and different combinations. As the learner becomes accustomed to tapping, a feeling and a rhythm is established and intonation becomes more natural and melodic. Words begin to flow and the learner soon realizes that a subtle change in meaning can be demonstrated by stressing a particular word by means of a more emphatic tapping gesture. The sentence Jason tapped when he first discovered this convention was, Tim met mumps. At his own initiative he tapped Tim met mumps and then Tim met mumps.

It was exciting for me to watch as the use of the metal pointer allowed this often unconscious convention of the language to be revealed to him.

Tapping carries with it the power and freedom to communicate one's ideas and feelings as arm movements elicit and materialize what the mind is engaged in. One of Jason's favorite sentences from Word Charts 2 and 3 was <u>tim met mumps met mom met pat met tom met mud.</u> He had fun tapping this and was excited about stringing so many words together.

The act of tapping itself, gives the young learner an outlet for his physical energy that is used to directly compliment his learning. When Jason became fidgety during a lesson I asked him to get up and tap a sentence from the Charts. This gave him the chance to stand up, stretch his body and move about freely. He was clearly learning by doing as alertness of both his mind and body were called upon to function in unison in an integrative task. As mentioned above, I feel that effective learning occurs more readily if the child's emotions, mind and body are called upon during the learning process. The physical movement involved in tapping helps to reinforce what the mind is working on.

Readers R_1, R_2, R_3 and Workbooks

The words in the Readers and Workbooks are in conventional black print. The learner gets the needed exposure and practice of reading in one color through these books which correspond to the Word Charts. The learner then transfers information that is made available to him on the Word Charts to the print of these pages. These small booklets reinforce signs that have already been introduced on the Word Charts and also incorporate new words generated from familiar signs. Workbooks 1 and 2 contain worksheets which use the imaginative and cognitive powers of the learner by giving him restrictions within which to work and pour forth his creativity.

Book of Stories

The Book of Stories incorporates material learned on the Word Charts and in the Readers into a story format. There are 40 stories which progressively become more complex. The first story consists of one paragraph while the last one consists of seven short paragraphs.

Gattegno places all of the above tools in a teaching sequence (See Fig. 4). Cumulatively, the tools demand the learner's strict attention and concentration, but in an open and learner-centered environment. They reinforce and complement each other and offer variety and flexibility within a controlled amount of language which, when used in compliance with Gattegno's principles (See p.6) have the potential of fostering in a beginning learner a challenging, authentic and active involvement in his task.

CHALKBOARD

Signs introduced by drawing in color and
linked into words by Visual Dictation 1.

Word Charts help estab-
lish images of words and
fluency of sentences
through Visual Dictation 2

Book 1, 2 3, used at
appropriate times

Word Building Book is
introduced and is also
used with Worksheets

Phonic Code is
introduced when pupils
have met all signs
through Word Charts and
Word Building Book

Worksheets are related
to *all* other materials

Book of Stories to begin
the study of composition
and grammar

Word Cards are used in
a variety of ways for the
study of grammar

(Note: This first teaching sequence is the one developed in detail in this
book.)

Fig. 4 "Sequence of Tools, used in Words in Color" <u>Teaching Reading</u>
<u>With Words in Color</u>.

APPLICATION OF THE READING APPROACH: WORDS IN COLOR

In her book, <u>Learning to Read: The Great Debate</u>, Jeanne S. Chall reminds us that reading methods in public schools fall into two groups. One group emphasizes the mastery of a "code" (the alphabet) and the other group emphasizes the teaching of meaning. They are referred to as the code-emphasis and meaning-emphasis approaches. Chall's research shows that there is in most schools today, a prevalence for the meaning-emphasis approach, "Yet," she writes, "the research from 1912 to 1965 indicates that a code-emphasis method ... produces better results" (307).

Words in Color allowed me the flexibility to integrate these two methods of instruction from the beginning. Without the constriction of basal readers[11] I had the freedom to introduce sounds and their signs (spellings) from Jason's immediate environment and follow up with their meaning. What supports my conviction that Words in Color is a tremendous tool in establishing a foundation for both phonetic and meaning approaches, is the potential for its use. The responsibility of learning is placed on the learner. Jason's reliance on me as teacher slowly diminished after each week of instruction. The tools of the approach encourage this independent learning. After Jason was introduced to only one vowel sound, he was free (with my guidance) to make his own words. He had just learned the vowel sound in the word <u>sit</u>. Before the end of the lesson he had made the words <u>pit</u>, <u>mit</u>, <u>nit</u>, <u>tin</u>, <u>tip</u>, and <u>bin</u>. He also experimented with <u>spit</u> and <u>pits</u>.

The words Jason made were limited only by his imagination. This natural activity presupposed comprehension of the words. I knew what he understood by the manner in which he <u>used</u> words. In schools, "new words" are repeated, drilled and memorized. The child is then asked what the obvious meaning is to

prove comprehension to the teacher. Jason used his words in his own sentences thereby demonstrating a firm grasp of their meaning. Combining and linking words on the Word Charts has the potential of making available in print the child's own spoken vocabulary that arises from his personal interests and needs.

Introduction to the Word Charts and the Reading Lessons

Because the first three weeks of the project were the most challenging for me and demanded the most from Jason as a beginning reader, I have chosen to describe this period in detail. For the remainder of the project, October to April, refer to section on Progress (see p. 37). When the project began in September 1979, Jason was 6 years, 9 months old.

The conventions of a given language lie dormant in the unconsciousness of most native speakers and readers. One's language tends to be taken for granted until something forces specific awarenesses to surface. Recognition of my own learning process gave me the impetus to make my own Word Charts. Copying the set of mini charts from Educational Solutions, I reconstructed my own personal set of charts using black poster paper and colored chalk. My goal in making these charts was two-fold: to become familiar with the color-sound correspondence, and to become conscious of the relationship between the signs and their respective sounds. The process of re-creating the charts heightened my awarenesses by sensitizing me to the orthography of English, and by clarifying for me uncertainties that I had had about specific sounds and their spellings.

The colors I used on my charts closely resemble Gattegno's. The name of each color is merely a functional label for the teacher, and the reader need not be concerned with the names of specific colors. But it happened that Jason made up his own names to refer to particular colors. He distinguished between the 2 th colors by referring to them as "the dark one" and "the light one". The 3 oo colors were referred to as "the ugly green," "the ugly brown" and "the pretty green."

Re-creating the charts was an elucidating process that prepared me to be a more effective teacher with Jason. In presenting the Charts to Jason, I decided to take a casual approach, so I hung Word Chart 1 on the wall a week before we began a structured lesson. His first response was to insist that we play games with the Chart. He had his own ideas on how to make use of it. He placed it on the floor, got some chips from one of his games and began to toss them on various words. Where they landed depended on fate and the gentle toss of his hand. The word that a chip landed on was to be read by me and then by him. He also placed a chalk board near the Chart and copied words from it with the corresponding colored chalk. He had his pointer with which he picked out specific letters from the Word Chart and/or the chalk board by signaling them with a tap. If he dragged the pointer slowly under the word it meant that he wanted me to read the whole word, but if he tapped with a quick moving sweep of his arm he wanted me to consider only the letter. Thus the words pat, sit, nit, and pin issued forth.

I introduced each Word Chart by hanging the current one next to the one we had just studied. The Fidels were hung in succession on an opposite wall. After staring at them, Jason remarked, "Am I going to learn all that?" Glancing at the Fidels and Charts, it is hard to ignore their cumulative effect. I told him that after finishing work with the Charts he would indeed be able to read all the sounds of English. This pleased him very much.

With these encounters of the first week behind us, I was ready to embark on our first "planned" and "structured" lesson. In planning for this lesson, I examined Jason's past experiences with language and identified the following aspects of reading that he already had possession of. By the age of 6 years, 9 months Jason had accumulated quite an impressive reading inventory.

1.   He realized that written words carry meaning.

2. He observed that written words were separated from each other by blank spaces.

3. He observed directionality, telling left from right, top from bottom.

4. He knew the difference between a letter and a word.

5. He could identify small and capital letters.

6. He knew the sounds of most initial and final consonants.

7. He noticed that . ? " " existed in writing.

8. He could identify the words up, exit, stop and go by sight.

None of the above had been explicitly taught, but was the result of having been read to, of having handled books himself, and of our talks together about words and reading. These informal events were invaluable in preparing him to read and they made our initial structured lessons flow more easily. It was also inspiring for me to observe that, in fact, Jason had "acquired" this knowledge verses having been "taught" it.

I felt that now Jason was more than ready to begin reading. His incessant desire to know the secret messages of store signs and eye-catching advertisements was insatiable. He was constantly spelling words he saw and asking me what they said. At this time he made no attempt to sound out words; he would be doing this after our first lesson. Along with the above, what Jason brought with him to our first lesson was a highly developed oral language which included aspects of stress, intonation and rhythm. He was also a whiz at non-verbal communication. He had been endowed with the ability to communicate and to receive communications from the first smile that shone on his face as an infant. Now it was my turn to help him experience still another mode of communication that is irrevocably linked to the oral language...the written word.

<u>Week #1</u>

<u>Lesson Plan #1</u>

September 10, 1979

I.   GENERAL OBJECTIVES

   Maintain high interest by involving Jason actively in the lesson
   (cognitively and physically). Learn convention of combining
   signs with the pointer. Preparation for work with Word Chart 1.

II.   SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

   Learn sound/sign correspondence of:

   <u>a</u> as in at

   <u>u</u> as in up   <u>p</u>

   <u>e</u> as in pet   <u>t</u>

   i as in it

   <u>o</u> as in pot

   Work combining vc, cv and cvc patterns.

   Continue experimenting with the pointer.

III.   ORAL/VISUAL PRESENTATION OF NEW MATERIAL

   Present signs on chalk board with corresponding colored chalk;
   model the sound when necessary; elicit the response with pointer.

IV.   PRACTICE

   Jason will respond to written signs on chalk board. He will read
   words formed by linking signs with the pointer.

V.   APPLICATION

   Jason will identify above signs and sounds by reading them and
   tapping them with the pointer. Worksheet, game of tossing chips
   on Word Charts. Write words on paper.

VI.   MATERIALS NEEDED

   Chalk board, colored chalk, pointer, worksheet, chips.

<u>Procedure</u>

   Throughout the first lesson I worked with the chalk board using the
corresponding colored chalk to introduce the signs and their sounds. The
signs introduced appear on Word Chart 1 (See Fig. 5).

I wrote "a" on the chalk board. Jason watched. I then gave him the sound. He looked at the sign and said it. I then wrote "u" and "e" and followed the same procedure using the pointer to elicit appropriate oral responses. I pointed back and forth to each vowel at random, and gave Jason time to make the mental connection between each sign and its associated sound. When I felt he had an understanding of this, I moved on.

I wrote a "p" near the bottom of the chalk board. Tapping first the "a" and then the "p" I motioned to Jason with a gesture of the pointer that he was to combine these two colors. I waited silently. I repeated the tapping this time slowly and dramatically. I waited silently. He said "ap." I continued in this way with the vowels "u" and "e." I then worked with the cv pattern which produced "pa," "pu" and "pe." I wanted this activity to show Jason that each syllable can be reversed to make a new sound. When asked for his observations, he said "you are switching the colors around." I now gave the pointer to him and asked him to "switch" the colors around. He did this eagerly. He was now at the chalk board working with the pointer and it was I who was giving the responses. I then wrote "i" and "o" on the chalk board and worked with these signs in the same way as I had done with "a." I then worked with combining the above vowels with "p" in vc and cv patterns. Gattegno lists four things that have taken place within the learner after he has been engaged in working with combining the vowels with one consonant (Teaching Reading 14).

1. memory has not been loaded, since the learner is not required to retain anything; rather, there is a reason which directs him to say what he now says

2. initiative at a level not too demanding has been passed on to the learner

CONTENTS

CHART	NEW SOUNDS	NEW SPELLINGS	WORD PARTS
1	a (at), u (up), e (pet) i (it), e (puppet), o (pot) p, pp, t. tt, s (is), s (us), ss (pass),		-s (pets) -s (tens) 's (pat's) 's (sam's)
2	a (a mess), I (I am) m, n	o (son)	'm (I'm)
3	f (if), f (of), y (yes) d, th (this), th (thin)	e(independent), o (of) y(fifty) nn, ff	-y (puffy) -ed (fanned) -ed (puffed) -ed (mended)
4	l, ll, w 'll (i'll)	i (wind, mind) a (was), u (until) mm, dd, se (else)	-i- (funnier) -es (passes) 'll (I'll)
5	r, re(were), k, ck, ke(like) u (fur), e (were), o (word)	y (my), a (any), me(time) l (wild), le(mile), ve(love), ne(mine)	-d(loved) -d(liked) -ly(likely)
6	a(father), o(won't), e(there) o(to), oo(too), wo(two), ng(ing) oo (took), u(put), h, b	ee (been) rr (sorry) z (zoo)	've (I've) -n't(haven't) -ing (willing)
7	a(late), o(or), e(he), u(use) g(go), gg(egg) r(iron), re(here)	i(girl), v (seven), se(nose) on(iron), c (cute) te(late) be(globe), de(made),	-e- 're(we're)
8	o(off)	oe(goes), oe(does) n(think), pe(hope)	-er(wilder) -est(wildest)
9	sh, ch(michigan) ch(chin)	a(share), ai(air), ea(teach) ch(chorus)	
10	j, g(gym), d(soldier) dj(adjective), dge(judge) x (box)	a(all), ei(neither), ie(soldier), o(tomorrow) ow(tomorrow), t(education)	
11	o(one), ou(mouth) you (your), qu(quickly)	ee (see), oo (door) you, oo(blood), ou (young) ph(phrase), t(question) wh(which), wh(who), ce(once)	-
13	s(vision)	NOTE: except for the few sounds noted, Charts 12-20 introduce only new spellings.	
15	x(anxious), x(examination)		
17	m(rhythm)		
20	x(luxurious)		

Fig. 5 "Contents of Word Charts"

3. judgement of correctness has been left to the learner

4. reward has been ... the recognition ... that ability to function
   leads to better functioning

By now the chalk board looked like this:

                    a   u   e   i   o

                              p

I proceeded to link three signs together by tapping "p" "u" "p" slowly and
dramatically the first time and a little faster the second time. Jason began
blending the "pu" and hesitating with the final "p." After a few tries he
read the word "pup." Gattegno states that "mastery of the first example
chosen will lead to mastery of the rest" (Teaching Reading 15). I was careful
in selecting which word to use to set the stage for introducing the linkage of
three sounds, the cvc pattern. I chose the word "pup." Jason had just
received a puppy and this word was charged with affective nuances for him. He
received it well. Now we had all the necessary signs before us to generate
the words pap, pep, pip and pop. It was challenging to see how many words we
could make by merely combining and recombining just five vowels and one
consonant. When Jason did confuse the "o" sound in pop I said, "What's the
white sound?" He then read the appropriate word, correcting himself in
response to the clue I had given him. To end our first lesson in a dramatic
vein, I tapped pop it as quickly as I could with the pointer. Jason said
"What's that?" I tapped it two more times, much slower. Jason said "pop
it?" His rising intonation indicated that he wanted verification of the
correctness of his response. Instead of giving him a verbal reply I tapped
"pop it" again slowly. This time Jason said "pop it!" and chuckled.

Results

I felt we had surpassed meeting the objectives of the first lesson. For the remainder of the week Jason continued:

- decoding words

- doing work sheets

- asking more questions about sign/sound correspondences

- showing increased initiative in reading

- reading stories from his favorite books

- playing game of tossing chips on Word Chart

- going to the library for more books

I think it interesting here to summarize what transpired from the initial display of Word Chart 1 on the wall to the end of the first lesson that was not included in the lesson plan. By the end of the first week Jason had initiated all of the following:

- tossing of chips on Word Chart 1 and reading the words

- copying words from Word Chart 1 onto the chalk board

- experimentating with the pointer

- writing words from Word Chart (See Fig. 6)

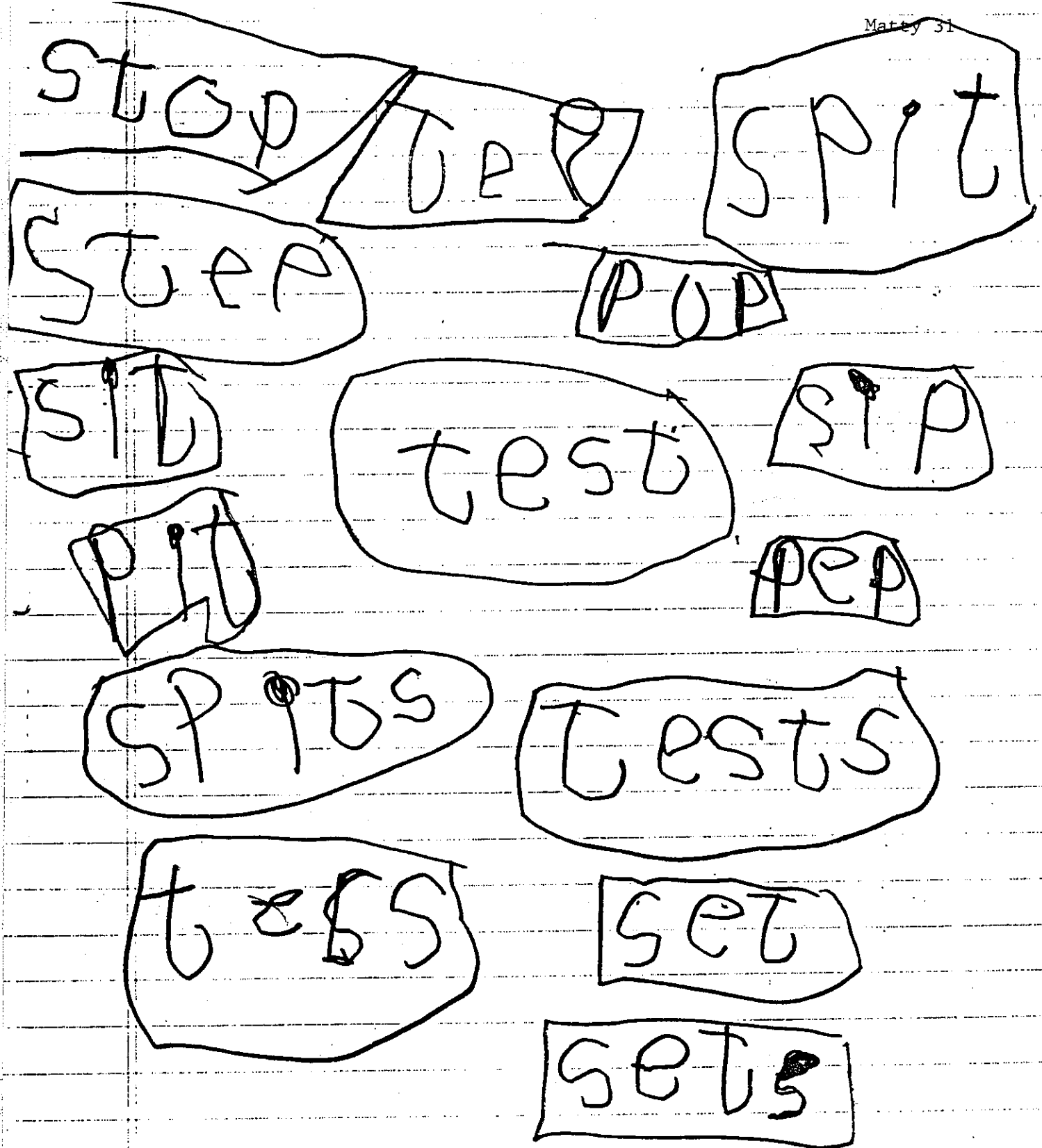- role reversals - Jason as teacher and me as learner

Fig. 6 "Words From Word Chart 1"   September 12, 1979

Weeks #2 and #3

Plans For Weeks 2 and 3

September 20-30, 1979

I.   GENERAL OBJECTIVES

Continue to combine sounds concentrating on varying the speed of
pointer to produce natural rhythm and intonation of English.

Increase speed of pointer.

Encourage Jason to make observations about words on Word Charts.

Continue to develop learning by "doing" and "discovering".

Maintain a child-centered learning environment.

Continue reading and being read to.

II. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Work with new signs and sounds on word level and sentence level.

Introduce new sounds, new spellings and word parts contained on
Word Charts 1, 2 and 3 (See Fig. 5).

Work with Word Charts 1, 2 and 3.

III. ORAL/VISUAL PRESENTATION

Review signs and sounds from lesson #1.

Present new signs on chalk board with corresponding colored
chalk; model the sound only when necessary; elicit response
with pointer.

Tap sentences from Word Charts.

IV. PRACTICE

Jason and I will work linking signs on chalk board to form words
and linking words on Word Charts to form sentences.

V.   APPLICATION

He will use above signs by combining them with pointer and by
reading them in $Reader_1$ and work sheets. We will tape
Jason's sentences and stories.

VI. MATERIALS NEEDED

Chalk board, colored chalk, pointer, Word Charts 1, 2, 3,
worksheets, $Reader_1$, chips.

Procedure

The activities for Weeks 2 and 3 would build on previous work so I always began our sessions with a review. When I thought that Jason felt comfortable using material from the review I proceeded to introduce the new sign-sound correspondences on the chalk board in the same way I did throughout Lesson 1. I then integrated the material covered in previous lessons with the new material presented. I continued presenting new sounds and their spellings in this way for Weeks 2 and 3 of the project.

From the first lesson Jason had been introduced to the concept of linking signs to form syllables and words. From this followed work with varying the speed of the pointer. During Week 2 it became apparent to me that my role would be one of introducing challenges to Jason that would expand his intellectual powers by building on what he already knew. Jason saw the relationships that exist among words by being actively involved in working with transformations (See Fig. 7). In transformations, signs are switched around through a series of four mental operations.

For example: the word at can generate

sat	addition
sit	substitution
spit	insertion
tips	reversal

Jason's mind was being attuned to the fact that words are linked together by signs, and by moving these signs around new words could be created. Throughout this thought process the mind is engaged in reasoning and

analysis

analyzation....not memory. We contined working with transformations throughout the next two weeks.
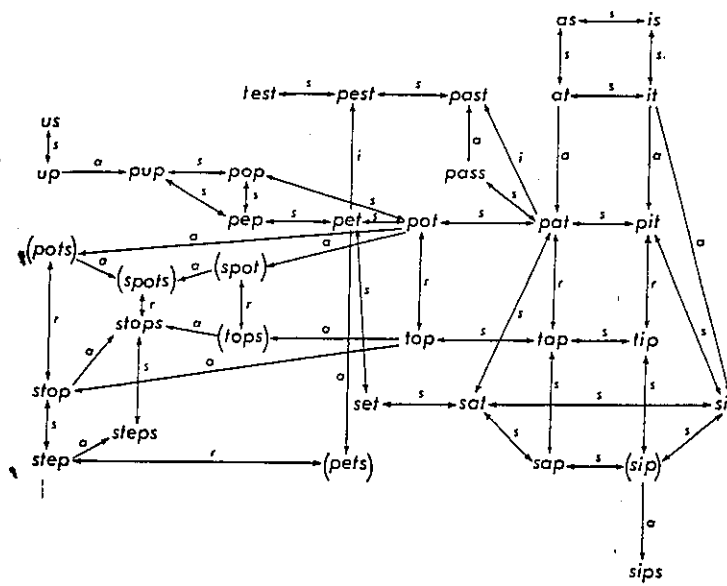
Fig. 7 "Links by Transformation" from Word Chart 1

Before introducing the new sounds and spelling from a given Word Chart, I carefully directed Jason's attention to it. I asked him to look at it and observe it. After observing Word Chart 1, he got up from the floor, went over to the Chart and pointed to the following words with his fingers as he read them: pat, pit, pet, pot, pop, at, it, up, tot, top, tap, pip, pup, sat, sit, set, sap, stop, step, spot and stops. He then said with a sense of satisfaction "I can read half of this Chart already!"

In working with Word Charts 1, 2 and 3, I learned to tap quickly words that Jason could decode easily and to tap slowly words that were still unfamiliar to him. It was tacitly agreed on that increase in speed with the pointer was a goal to be attained, and striving for fluent speech with appropriate intonation and rhythm was a natural outcome of my learning to handle the pointer with a skillful hand. As his fluent utterances issued forth I felt that I was mastering control of the pointer.

Initially I worked on speeding up the tapping movements by using the now familiar phrase sit on it. As I pointed I said, "say it faster." He did. I repeated the tapping and said "faster!" After a few attempts he said "sit on it!" as it would be uttered in spontaneous natural speech. Then I changed the phrase to step on it and worked on his producing this at a fast pace. I pointed randomly from sit on it to step on it at a quick energetic pace. I then added the word pop, and worked on integrating this word to the original phrases at a fast pace. He was soon reading sit on it, pop! and step on it, pop! with proper intonation, phrasing and rhythm. This example set a precedent for the remainder of our work with the pointer and the Charts, and striving for speed became a challenge that was kept in mind when decoding familiar signs and words.

Results

By the end of September we had worked with the new sounds and new spellings from Word Charts 1, 2 and 3 (See Fig. 5). We had finished Reader$_1$ and half of the worksheets. We were also becoming more comfortable and proficient at using the pointer to create new sentences. As days passed retention of signs and sounds became more automatic and required less effort. I noticed a speedier transfer from color to print and toward the end of the third week, I was able to introduce a larger number of new signs into each lesson.

Progress

It was exciting for me to witness Jason's progress as reading material
and library books he chose took on more depth and complexity. He was now
aware of the conventions of reading and and was gaining greater facility at
it. I observed that his progress was indeed cumulative, as new words were
becoming internalized daily. What he stumbled on on Monday became a part of
his reading register on Tuesday. On pages 38-41, the reader will find a
description of major characteristics marking Jason's progress from October to
April. During this time Jason continued to use decoding for new material
while he gained speed and fluency reading familiar material. Re-reading of
favorite storybooks helped increase fluency and voice expression dramatically.
I often recorded Jason reading the same story on two different occasions and
these tapes encouraged him to observe the differences in his voice and reading
style. It is important to note that Jason continued to choose his reading
material and that he was always reading in context ... whether it be
information on cereal boxes or directions for assembling car models. There
was never drilling of sounds or memorizing of spelling lists. Jason's
invented spelling code, though inaccurate, was communicative.[12] I didn't
always strive for accuracy in spelling because this frustrated him and would
have thwarted his attempts at further writing. I accepted his spelling code
and trusted his self-corrections to the passage of time which clarified and
solidified once unknown words and spellings. In reading the following
progress report, it is helpful to refer to Figure 4 "Sequence of Tools Used in
Words in Color."

Progress From October 1979 to April 1980

Date	My Observations of Jason's Reading Characteristics Skills/Strategies	Jason's Understanding of Characteristic Via Invented Spelling Code/Personal Observations/Generated Sentences/Words Read in Context	Medium Used to Practice Characteristic
Oct. 10 (age 6;10)	Writing u for all schwa sounds	This is u pup. "Oh yes, it's the yellow color."	Typing sentences (See Fig. 8). Working with transformations changing pop and putt.
Oct. 15	Spelling words as they are heard, omission of vowels.	p pit for puppet (See Fig. 9)	Writing sentences from Word Chart 1.
Oct. 29	Gaining fluency with use of pointer. Beginning of expressive intonation in reading short phrases during sub-vocalizations. (See p. 54)	Referring to work with pointer "I'm getting used to this now."	Tapping sentences from Word Charts 1 and 2. Reading books Hop on Pop, The Cat in the Hat.
Nov. 10	Can read all words on Word Charts 1-3, except test/tests/assest/ attempt/assistant. use of 's	"I don't know what these words mean, what does (pointing toward) attempt mean?" pat is pop's pet	Word Charts 1-2-3 Tapping and writing sentences from Word Chart 1, 2 and 3.

Date	Objective	Example	Materials
Nov. 15	Pointing to appropriate ed verb endings.	timed kissed sanded loved asked dusted	Word Chart 3 R_2 p. 8&9 (See Fig. 10)
	Expressive intonation, phrasing & rhythm in reading short declarative and interrogative sentences during sub-vocalizations.	"it is here, are the same words as is it here, but one is a question and one isn't."	R_2 p. 10 R_1 p. 10
Nov. 20	Differentiating between 2 sounds of digraph th.	"the light th is green and the dark th is brown." The path is muddy.	R_2 p. 6 Word Chart 3
Nov. 21	Spelling words as they are heard.	tom met tim at pam's hows. (see Fig. 11).	Typing sentences and short passages.
Nov. 30	Expressive intonation in reading longer familiar sentences during sub-vocalizations.		R_1 p. 16 Taping on tape recorder of favorite stories.
Dec. 14	Addition of Jason's words to Word Charts 5 & 6. pocket smelled fantastic flowers building mysterious	I have a pocket full of puppets. I smelled the flowers. (see Fig. 12).	Tapping, writing and typing sentences with these words.
Dec. 17	Clarifying i in milk and i in kind.	"I'm having trouble with these 2 sounds". generated words: pile swim dime jim tiger chin	Word Charts 3-4-5 R_2 p. 14&15
Dec. 20	Gaining recognition of different schwa spellings.	"It's the u color but it's an o." sun/son	Word Chart 2

Date			
Jan. 13	Writing longer sentences consistent with spelling code.	(See Fig. 13) bycus – because busit – doesn't lic – like tow – to wot – want wook – work hows – house stopid – stupid	Writing sentences using words on Charts 1-6.
Jan. 15-30	Can read all words on Word Chart 4 & 5 except independent.	"Tap a fast short one (sentence) and a slow long one".	Word Charts 1-5
	Assimilating new words at a faster rate.	"This Chart isn't difficult".	Word Chart 6
Feb. 5	Re-reading a favorite book. Gaining fluency in reading this book aloud. Beginning of silent reading.	"I'm learning a lot of new words in this book."	I Mean it Stanley
Feb. 10	Combining sentences to form a short story.	(See Fig. 14)	
Feb. 11 – Mar. 8	Reading favorite personal books and library books. Sub-vocalizations becoming minimal.	"This is more fun than the charts."	See Works Cited of Jason's Favorite Books.
Mar. 10	Adding ing to verbs.	(See Fig. 15)	Word Chart 6
Mar. 15-20	Sub-vocalizing only while decoding unfamiliar words. Most of reading now is silent. Eager to read more. c in center read as c in cat.	mice – place – office – called – kitchen "O can have many different sounds" gone – some – both "I didn't know ph sounded like f." telephone – elephant	Favorite story books.

Date	Observation	Examples
Mar. 20-25	Substituting appropriate synonyms while reading aloud to me.	The text read: I'm saving all my allowances. Jason substituted "money" for "allowances".
	Predicting in reading aloud.	Thelma wanted to go skating. Jason inserted word "ice" before skating.
April 11-15	Gaining fluency and speed reading. Able to decode new words in context.	attention, lies, ticket, quietly, noticed, enough, might toward, waiting, swallow, write, thief, huge, groaned piece, cage, owner, laughed, leaped, brought
April 12	Penmanship improving. Spelling code becoming more traditional.	(See Fig. 16)

A Bargain For Frances

Re-reading favorite books
Pinocchio
Cinderella

I Am pop   x   I Am pop x   .I Am PAt   tongng   mom
Asset is Up//   Ass   L

                                                          x

    The end//   this is u: pup. x   I standdd   on   //the sand
I am a pet.   x   Pat is A pet.   I am wet. I am still wet.
I am pop. pop is wet. Pop is still wet,   I am a yam.

Fig. 8 "Sample of Jason's Writing" October 10, 1979

Pop is a tock.
Pat is a pit.
Tom met Tim met mom, met
pop met pat
my sister is sick I g
tom is uppit sipt up
pass sipt op

Fig. 9 "Sentence Written From Word Chart 1" October 15, 1979

ed   ed   ed.

dusted   mended sanded fitted

spotted tended   tempted stuffed

stamped missed   messed   puffed

passed   stopped summed thinned

— I spotted it on this path

— tim mended the pants

— pam sanded the steps

— I stopped that mad man

— pat and pam sunned on the sand

— pat stamped and stamped and stamped

— mom and dad tended the stand

— the thin man tempted them

— sam dumped sand on tom

— pam passed us and sat on the steps

— as fast as mom mopped it, tom messed it up

— I puffed it and puffed it and it puffed

— it fit sam's span

— pat dusted the sand dumped on the mat

— I missed dad and mom

— pat dusted it

— a stuffed fist

— the pup stopped and sniffed

— sam and tim messed it up

— dad summed it up, that's it

— a spotted mat is in the tent

Fig. 10 "Pages 8 and 9 of R_2" November 15, 1979

Jason and Grace   the Monster it dies   Nov. 21 197

      once upon tINE THRE WASU LiDTLE Girls nAEd SALLY   SHWWNT
      FOR U WALK.SH SC U MOSTERR IT IS U/ mRRAAN: N
      IT HAD 3 3IS AND 44 nosse aOD TeN CNS AD 4 4 fit
      ad brot sally u way.than he turND SALLyX into
      umonster then   when t e monster died Sally ran home happily
      ever after.

                      The Bird Poem
        Oh Bird, bird tat flies so high. I wish I were a bird in the sky

      that flies so high, hi her than the mountains, higher than the
               clouds,some mts. are higer then the clouds,
   h   bus ytyty Oh gee, oh gee I wish I were a bird.

   oo I WisH I/ wUs u matin sow I/ couLd   be u mountain
   higheR thand cloudsb oX I/ wish

Fig. 11 "Typing Sentences and Short Passages" November 21, 1979

I AM FANTASTIC,

I HATE TOM

I'M I S IN
The top bILding

FA11 MySTARIoUS

TOM IS my BROTHOR

Fig. 12 "Words Jason Added to Word Charts 5 & 6" December 14, 1979

1. PAT IS A TRUCK

2 POP IS A brother but he is A sister he bust licit

3 PAt bUSit lI stow stop BY cUS It Is stoPiD

4 stpo off HOWS M bUSit not to woo ciM oo

Fig. 13 "Writing Longer Sentences" January 13, 1980

She got a
Truck it was
Red she
threw the
Truck out
Because it
was a
Junky Truck
Th

Fig. 14   Combining Sentences to Form a Short Story"   February 5, 1980

JASON

1 Stopped
2 Jogging   12 hoped
3 Robbed   13 Love
4 Robbing   Loving
5 hopping   14
6 hopped   15 Siting
7 hope   Setting
8 home   16
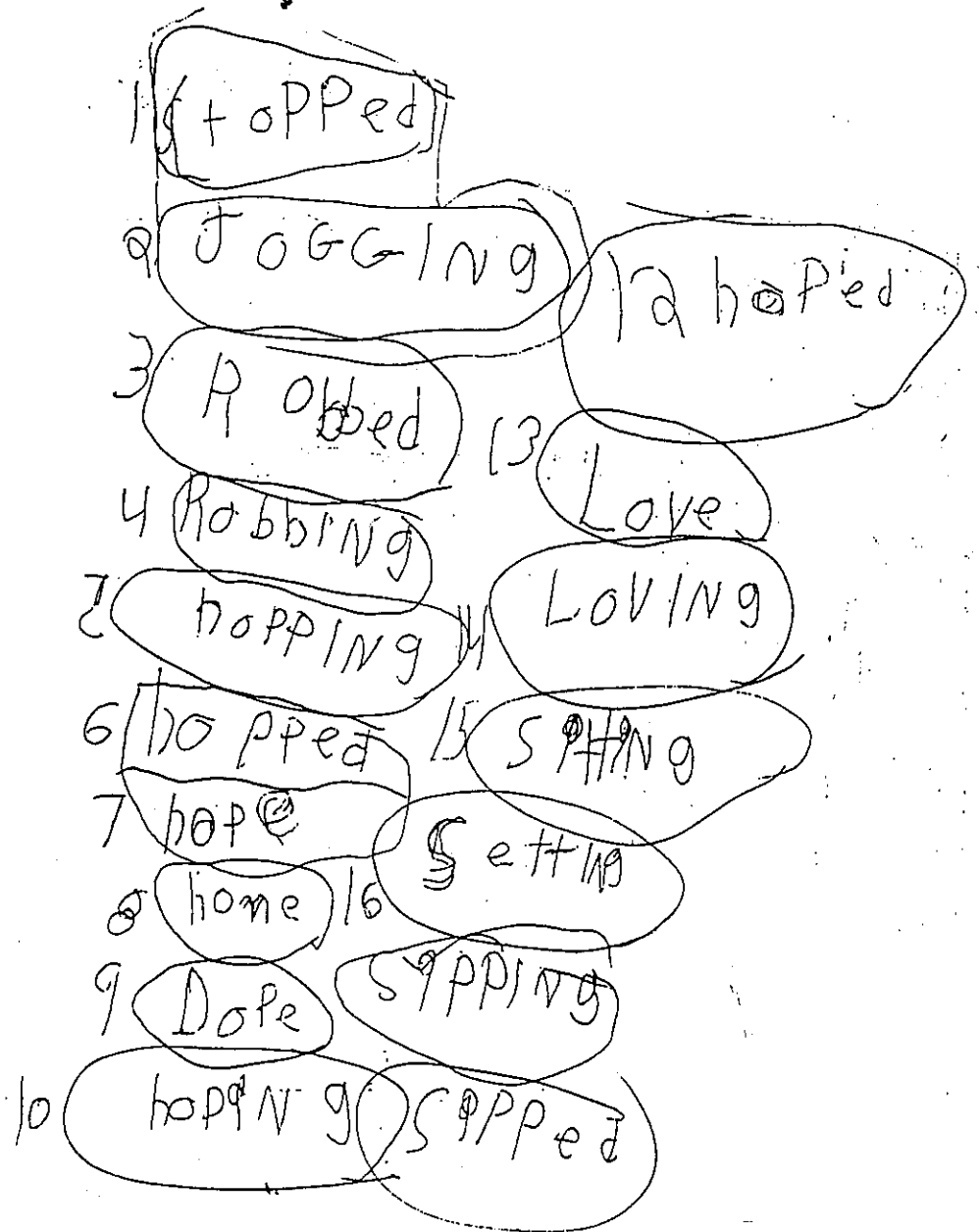9 Dope   Sipping
10 hoping   Sipped

Fig. 15 "Adding ing to Verbs" March 10, 1980

Tomorrow is Sunday.

Mat is the winner.

Miss Jonhson is a nice lady.

The man is fixing the engine.

At the garage and axel at the garage.

I am in the choir.

Jim is my best friend.

Fig. 16   "Spelling Becoming More Traditional"   April 12, 1980

Strategies Developed from October to April

Jason was demonstrating specific learning strategies as he progressed in reading. Precise learning and teaching strategies developed as a direct result of our proximity together. In response to these strategies I saw my role as "teacher" evolve into that of helper and guide. I feel that the mere fact that I was there with Jason at home had a direct effect on accelerating his reading progress. Being his mother and his teacher, I was there not only for the structured lessons, but for what turned out to be just as essential, for the times spent reading for enjoyment and pleasure. I was there as he was "discovering" the conventions of reading and as he was gaining confidence in himself as a reader.

Discovering Learning

We spent more time on the first four Word Charts than we did on subsequent ones; we usually progressed to a new Chart after having worked with the given words of a Chart in black and white from the readers and the worksheets. Work from the Charts was always reinforced through use of the chalk board and/or the corresponding readers, workbooks and personal books. So if a particular sound presented a problem we had many resources at hand to draw on. For example Jason read the i sound in with correctly from the Chart but was carrying over this same sound to the word mind, thereby not understanding what he was reading. We turned to the appropriate reader and read the sound i in with and the sound i in mile. We also worked with these two sounds by using them in our own phrases and sentences. It was not long before he stopped confusing them. The remarkable thing about this is that only a very short practice session was needed for Jason to perceive the distinction. Other sounds we reviewed in more informal ways. When Jason was first introduced to the sounds oo in foot and oo in tool he would mix them up

in his mind. I searched through his personal books and found a Dr. Seuss book
that made creative use of these words, and so we read this book together.
After one reading Jason no longer confused these sounds either; nor did he
have difficulty reading these sounds in other books. I began to accept the
fact that after being introduced to a new sign there would be an initial
period of incertitude. I saw this pattern emerge from the beginning and
repeat itself. I accepted it as a natural phenomenom of the reading process
that is quite obvious when thought about, but that is from my experience often
overlooked by educators in schools. New things take time to get used to,
whether it be a novice learning how to use a computer or a child learning how
to decode a new word. The learning time involved in training can depend on
how the complexity of the task is viewed by the learner. Jason knew that he
was making progress, and everyday he saw that he was learning something new.
By now he knew that reading was not something difficult and mysterious, but
was well within his grasp. With time and usage new skills are learned. How
much better to be patient and leave to Father Time what it accomplishes so
well than to tamper with it by burdening the mind with drills, repetition and
tests. Time became a friendly asset that I consciously learned to use to our
advantage in helping Jason toward discovery reading and learning.

When Jason read stories (October) he kept misreading particular words.
He failed to connect the written word with its given sound. For example: The
word stop appeared frequently throughout a story he was reading. He asked me
6 times what stop was, failing to identify it each time. A few days later
while he was reading, he asked what the word know was, but he only asked me 3
times before he was reading this word on his own. By this time he had
internalized the word stop. The next day he wanted to know what the word
chick was. I only had to tell him once. From then on I only needed to give

him the word once or twice before it became part of his reading register. I could have chosen to drill him on the words stop, know and chick and then "test" him, but I had learned that waiting would yield the desired results. What his mind was engaged in at this point was a natural phenomena of a beginning reader. In fact, as days passed I saw his awareness of words become more automatic. The more he read, the more his mind knew what to focus on. New words were being retained more readily and with less effort than they were in the beginning as he became better acquainted with the reading process and more invested in what he was doing. His reading register was expanding by leaps and bounds.

As Jason continued bringing books home from the library, they became wordier. Often they contained words that he didn't yet know. When he wanted, I would give him the words, but most often I found a way to help him discover them. At times, it was only a gesture of my hand that gave Jason realization of the word. At one point, he was having a problem reading compound words. For example: He read the words footstool and inkwell incorrectly. I covered stool with my hand. He read foot. Then I covered foot and he read stool. This prompted him to say the word correctly. He saw that these words actually contained two words. Before long he had generated the words footsteps, footprints, football, inkblot, inkstand and inkpen. The decoding problem was being solved without a word from me.

I continued to help Jason discover the solution to problems he encountered. For example, Jason wrote the word chicken as chicen. I asked him to think about the word sick and to write it. I then asked him to change sick to chick which he did. Now he knew what he had to do to make the chicken and he wrote it correctly. He was making new associations with signs that he was already acquainted with and felt comfortable with. Using transformations

kept his imaginative young mind flexible and active. His natural spontaneity led him to join signs together in sensical and non-sensical ways. He saw how changes in combinations resulted in new meanings. How different this process is from the basal readers used in the elementary grades. Jason was learning through understanding and not by memorization. Gattegno says that most of all "developing awarenesses of all these links within one's mind enables the memory to be still less burdened" (Teaching Reading 28). To my delight I found this to be true.

Sub-Vocalizations

When Jason began to read on his own, he would sub-vocalize. For me, his sub-vocalizations were inspiring, as I used them in a diagnostic way. I refined my strategies of observation. I watched him and listened carefully to all of his utterances. I could tell from his chuckles, pauses, phrasing and intonation that he was indeed understanding what he was reading. I didn't have to ask him questions in order to test his comprehension. If he made an error I reflected on the frequency and the possible cause. Was it due to a slip or a distraction? Did he just not understand the concept (for example attempt, assistant)? Did he try to sound it out or did he overlook it? Did not knowing the word affect the meaning of what he was reading? When he missed a word or a sound I dared not interrupt him with corrections. He was so involved in the story that my intrusions were met with overt frustration, so I did not strive for complete accuracy. My silence allowed me to witness Jason's self-corrections which I would have missed had I voiced my own concerns. I continued to observe carefully and took mental or written notes on his problems and progress and on his fluency and accuracy. It was not necessary for Jason to identify every word in order to understand and enjoy the stories. If he was content with the meaning that he had gleamed, how could I justify interfering with interjections and questions.

From listening to Jason's sub-vocalizations while reading, I could notice when he added, changed or skipped words. I could tell that he was predicting words when be began to substitute words. For example, in a particular story he sub-vocalized "stairs" for "steps." Here he was substituting an appropriate synomym. This showed me that he was reading with comprehension. I continued to allow Jason to direct his learning.

As Jason continued to read his own books, I observed that he was able to decode new sounds prior to their being presented in a structured lesson. Unconsciously the decoding process was taking a firm hold on him and I saw his reading fluency improve dramatically. He continuously initiated attempts to sound out unfamiliar words. By the end of October I found that it was no longer necessary to introduce new sounds and their spellings on the chalk board. We continued to work with the Word Charts and the other tools. Jason continued to borrow books from the library which he was quite eager to read. From the books of his choosing, he learned. The words "helper" and "guide" were becoming solidified for me when one day in October I noticed that Jason was sub-vocalizing the sh sound in shoe and the ch sound in chin. I asked him how he had come to know these two sounds. He said, "they're in the book I just read." He had incorporated these two sounds into his reading register without their having been presented in a formal lesson. He had learned them naturally, by seeing them in the stories he had been reading at the time. My awareness and understanding of this supported my belief that one needn't be "taught" in order to learn and that a great deal of learning could indeed be self-taught. This realization forced me to continue re-evaluating my role as "teacher" and gave me the confidence to pursue my assumption that it was not necessary to exhaust and test the "teaching" of a given sound until it was thought to be "known." I would continue to trust the learner in my son. So

as time passed and reading continued Jason internalized sounds that appeared in his books and that were relevant to him. These self-taught sounds, he never faultered on nor forgot. Learning couldn't be forced at my will even if I had wanted to. We continued with structured lessons, but Jason did in fact continue to learn sign-sound correspondences on his own. As time passed and Jason became a more fluent reader and depended less on me, I began to feel comfortable with the idea that I didn't have to "teach" him everything. I would observe his mistakes, analyze them and try to find the best way to help him overcome them. I was truly taking on the role of helper and guide. By the end of February our lessons became more informal as we continued to spend a lot of time engaged in the act of reading. Jason still wanted me to read to him and I took great pleasure in this time spent together.

Jason continued to learn by doing and through discovery. I was guiding him and helping him to develop solutions to problems. He was reaping the benefits of a child-centered environment as he continued to make progress as a reader by being engaged in reading.

Games and Activities Used in Reading

The following games and activities resulted from the proximity of our work together from October to April. I believe that my attitude of not striving for perfection and precise accuracy encouraged Jason to take risks and to offer his suggestions.

It was he who added an extra dimension of fun to the following activities, by suggesting the use of a timer. He enjoyed racing against the clock. We also varied the speed of an activity progressing from a slow pace to a faster one. This presented a challenge of its own. The activities below can be expanded upon in many ways. For example, the first activity can be done by saying the sound to oneself, then by closing the eyes and trying to

grasp the meaning, and lastly by saying the sound aloud. Many can be done
orally or written, or by tapping on the Word Charts. Use of a chalk board or
magnetic letters are other possibilities. A typewriter adds another dimension
of interest.

Example	Activity
	String letters together to make nonsense words and/or rhymes.
	One person looks at a word for only a few seconds. The other person covers the word with an index card. The first person must then "say it fast."
	Make as many words with a specific color as can be thought of. Good to use after having been introduced to a new sound.
Pat is a truck but he does not like to be a truck	One person writes a sentence on the chalk board from a given Word Chart/s. The other person reads it, but first to himself and then aloud. We timed how long it took to make the oral response.
	Show a picture. One person writes or taps a sentence elicited from the picture, but using only the words from a given Word Chart/s.
	One person dictates or taps a sentence from a Word Chart and the other person writes it.
	Make observations about a new word or a new sign.

The ____ is in my pocket.

One person makes a sentence leaving a blank space for the other person to fill in.

Unscramble scrambled letters in words or sentences in paragraphs.

Two people have a silent conversation with one another by tapping their utterances from the Charts. Use no oral language.

Two people have a written conversation with one another by writing messages. Use no oral language.

Make a grid with a letter in each box. Tap letters to form words.

Try to tap as many sentences as possible within a given amount of time.

Add new words to the Word Charts as they come up from daily activities.

Dad met mud and sniffed it and it smelled like rust.

Begin a sentence. Each person takes a turn adding on to the original phrase.

Work with a new sign to find as many words as possible containing this sign on the Word Chart/s.

One person closes his eyes and imagines the shape and spelling of a particular word before writing it.

Pop is a jerk.
Pot's in a jeep.

Change words in a given sentence thus changing meaning.

My pocket is full
of 50 puppets.

Make a sentence that is funny, serious, imaginative or
contrary to fact.

Time how long it takes to read all of the words in a
given Word Chart.

Time the number of sentences a person can tap in a given
period of time.

Read a Word Chart placed upside down.

Write as many words as possible containing a given sign.

Each person has a section of the chalk board and takes
turns writing a sentence that the other person dictates;
or write a sentence at the same time racing to see who
can complete it first.

CONCLUSION

After examining my own experiences with formal education and after looking around me and observing the concerns and problems my friends and relatives were having with their children in schools, I was forced to challenge the assumptions that public education thrives on. I believe that the present assumptions and curriculum do not suffice and that a creative approach is warranted. One need only examine, as I often did, the curriculum in an elementary school to see how meager, short-sighted and redundant it is. When Jason was 10 years old, he decided to go to school. He entered 5th grade. He returned mostly out of curiosity, to see if and what he was missing. By December he could no longer tolerate adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing by 2 numbers. He finished the year with a lot of absences. We learned at home on these days. He decided that for the amount of time he invested in class, the learning he had reaped was minimal. His reflections of 5th grade were "I didn't learn anything new in math this year," "There's no time to talk to my friends in school," "I didn't have time to read the books I wanted to this year." He has opted for home schooling in the fall.

I would like to share what I have learned from this project, in terms of my own growth as a learner and as a teacher. I believe that some of my assumptions are in contrast to those that I see operating in the school systems today. The following are what I have been made aware of throughout my work with Jason in reading in a home schooling environment. I have found that:

- Allowing the novice reader time to read, without being interrupted, was most welcome and appreciated.

- A novice reader needn't be able to read every word on a page in order to understand the passage.

- Silence on my part was important in permitting Jason to absorb what had been read, and in allowing time for self-correction.

- Sub-Vocalization during reading was an effective diagnostic tool.

- It was not necessary for Jason to "know" a given set of sounds before proceeding to more "difficult" ones. With the passage of time and self-initiated reading, he incorporated new words into his reading register.

- Error and mistakes are a natural part of the decoding process; perfection is not.

- Jason learned to spell by reading not by doing drills and memorizing word lists.

- Retention was an outcome of understanding, not of memorization and repetition.

- Learning was lasting and effective when Jason was given the time to discover solutions and answers.

- A positive attitude toward reading from the beginning contributed to a vivacious and encouraged reader.

- It was important to let Jason experience reading as something pleasurable and enjoyable as a very young child and later to experience reading as a vehicle for expanding knowledge.

- Because Jason experienced success and was aware of his progress, he was motivated to continue learning to read. The joy of learning and accomplishment of a goal was its own reward.

- Not having to compete for grades or recognition was an asset.

- Jason's past experience and knowledge of the world contributed to his becoming a proficient reader. His exposure to a variety of life experiences and his highly developed oral language helped him to understand concepts while reading.

- Jason observed his parent's attitude toward reading and was positively influenced by it.

- Growth and success in reading was directly related to Jason's developing self-image and feelings of self-confidence as a learner.

- It was beneficial to encourage Jason to trust his own judgment, formulate opinions and reflect on his own learning.

- It was not necessary for me to ask questions to prove comprehension.

- Providing a positive learning environment where I acted as observer, helper, guide and participant proved successful to effective learning. My role as such helped Jason to develop independence, self-observation and self-awareness in learning.

- By remaining open to the spontaneous and subtle happenings within Jason, I was able to learn more about his learning process and what his mind was engaged in.

- It was essential to remain open to learning about myself.

- A caring and trusting relationship was strengthened from our work together on reading.

- It was challenging to use Jason's individual experiences and interests to supplement the reading program.

- Jason's interests and progress influenced the way in which I used the reading materials and the sequencing of curriculum.

How do I feel about the project? Most importantly, our sessions together helped foster a positive relationship between me and Jason. As growth in the reading process developed, so did our relationship. To facilitate learning I found it desireable that a positive relationship exist between the learner and the teacher. The concern I had for Jason as a mother was carried over to the "teacher" role quite naturally, since I was my child's first nurturer, guide and teacher. I have strived to foster qualities of independence, responsibility and awareness throughout the learning process. I felt that if I had sent Jason to school at a young age, I would be unwittingly relinquishing my "power to influence" to a fleeting number of teachers with whom he would come in contact. I wanted to take charge of the responsibility that has for so long been the traditional domain of professionals. Pagnoni, a seasoned teacher says "I'm no expert, but sometimes I think that's an advantage" (38). Parents are experts and professionals ... professional mothers and professional fathers. I have lived with my child and I know him well. I know what makes him laugh and what makes him cry. I know when he needs a hug or when he needs to be disciplined. I know when his body is charged with energy or when he requires rest. I know when he needs time alone or when he needs to talk over his problems. Each child is an individual with his own particular learning style, therefore, I could not justify placing my son amidst the masses everyday where his educational goals and objectives would be those mandated by some remote authority that would not know or seek to know him as an individual. I belive that the classroom setting as it is today does not allow the teacher to know her student as the multi-faceted individual that he is.

When Jason was guided by a loving parent a trust developed as both of us participated in helping one another to learn and to grow. As a parent

teaching a child at home I carried over the qualities that had been instilled since birth, to the areas of academics. At home, as a mother "guide" I allowed Jason to see me as I really am. At home I do not bear the professional label nor am I performing in a mass situation. I have the luxury of being myself in all its glory. Jason saw two sides of me. The rational controlled side and the emotional uncontrolled opposite. When I was having difficulty presenting a lesson I could honestly say, "Jason I'm having trouble helping you to understand this" or "I really have to give this some more thought before we continue" or "Can you help me to help you?" Being truthful and admitting that I did not always have an immediate answer strengthened our relationship. It also put the responsibility on Jason to suggest possible solutions, making him a more independent and self-sufficient learner. He had to draw on resources from within himself that otherwise would not have been activated. I made it a point to ask him for his ideas and listened to his opinions that were indeed welcomed.

How do I view my dual role as "mother teacher?" As I have described, I see that "helper" and "guide" are the terms I'm partial to. For what I actually found myself doing after the first few reading lessons, was offering assistance, direction and suggestions. This is what I wanted teaching to be; not a series of tests, drills and memorizations. This was infinitely more challenging for me.

Throughout this project and our home schooling years I have worked to establish a learning environment that would integrate all the facets of Jason's being. I consciously chose to take into account Jason, the whole learner. Jason became associated with the reading process from the first time that I read to him as he fell asleep in my arms. Reading was a strong affective bond between us. The affective connotations for him were positive

and couldn't be disassociated from the cognitive workings of his mind. Jason showed me that his personal experiences, reflections and feelings had a definite place in what he was learning at the time, therefore I encouraged him to talk about his thoughts and to voice his opinions and suggestions. His powers for self-observation were also at work during this project as evidenced one day when he said "I've grown up and calmed down alot lately." On another occasion he said, "Learning to read was easy." New knowledge that Jason acquired was tinged with affect, and his willingness to articulate his fellings helped me to learn about him and about myself.

We are presently working together on a curriculum for next year. Jason has definite ideas about what he wants to learn, study and read. "I want to spend more than 45 minutes a day on Science and Geography", he says. His agenda is more exciting and comprehensive than the 6th grade curriculum in school. During the past three years Jason has taken courses at Kid's College in Manchester, New Hampshire. He has studied a variety of subjects including computers, wiring and electrical circuits, writing and mathematics. He enjoys these classes and learns a great deal from them. He often goes to work with his father and is learning about carpentry, plumbing and house building. Throughout all of this, he continues to be an avid reader. His reading level is well above that of his age and grade level. We continue to integrate reading and learning with our daily experiences.

For me, learning is a living dynamic process which is best nurtured in a non-coercive, non-competitive and flexible environment. The home schooling experience that Jason and I have been a part of has enabled me to make this type of learning a reality. The home schooling experience has helped to give Jason a strong sense of self. Because he experienced a positive learning environment coupled with small successes from the very beginning, he has

learned to accept new challenges not only willingly but with a determination to succeed. As he ventured into unkown territory he grew in self-assurance, and the inner satisfaction of having learned something new or of having read a new book was its own reward. Because he was encouraged to contribute his ideas and to give his opinions, he grew in self-worth and self-esteem. As he grew in self-confidence he took on more responsibilities. As he progressed in reading and gained more knowledge a new sense of self flourished. Learning is as multi-faceted as the human being who is engaged in it. Should teaching be any less?

Notes

[1]According to Illich this "neat packaging" is the result of a hidden curriculum that prevails throughout school systems. "Everywhere the hidden curriculum of schooling initiates the citizen to the myth that bureaucracies guided by scientific knowledge are efficient and benevolent...that increased production will provide a better life. And everywhere it develops the habit of self-defeating consumption of services and alienating production, the tolerance for institutional dependence, and the recognition of institutional rankings. The hidden curriculum of school does all this in spite of contrary efforts undertaken by teachers no matter what ideology prevails" (106).

[2]Silberman states that "getting through school also involves learning how to suppress one's feelings and emotions and to subordinate one's own interests and desires to those of the teachers" (151).

[3]For further reading see Gattegno's The Common Sense of Teaching Foreign Languages, Chapter 5 "Independence, Autonomy and Responsibility."

[4]For further discussion of silence in teaching reading refer to Gattegno, Teaching Reading with Words in Color (13-16).

[5]Silberman discusses student-teacher dependency in Crisis. "More important, schools discourage students from developing the capacity to learn by and for themselves; they make it impossible for a youngster to take responsibility for his own education, for they are structured in such a way as to make students totally dependent upon the teachers" (135).

[6]For an example of this type of learning see page 2 of the Home Schooling Application.

[7] The 1978 Edition of Words in Color which I used, lists 58 sounds.

[8] To have a clear idea of the English orthographic system, it is helpful to keep in mind that the 26 letters of the alphabet do not occur at random, but do follow patterns. Frank Smith explains in Understanding Reading that "if all 26 letters of the alphabet could occur without restriction in each position of a five-letter word, there could be nearly twelve million different five-letter words, compared with perhaps ten thousand that actually exist" (24).

[9] In The Disabled Reader, Gattegno attests to the fact that in Words in Color the "number of written words is almost the same as the number of spoken words, after approximately six weeks, while with the usual approaches we find the reading vocabulary is vastly less than the spoken vocabulary at the same point, or even in a year's time" (179).

[10] For an interesting discussion of the history of the Fidels see Pronunciation and the Silent Way Fidel.

[11] In Growing Without Schooling, "Writing to Read is Working", it is stated that "The typical child comes to kindergarten with a working vocabulary of 2,000 to 4,000 words. Rather than help him expand that remarkable linguistic achievement, which the child has brought off with no formal instruction, the school usually issues him a standard first-grade reading book that narrows his mind to about 400 words, and spelling book that runs to even fewer words (15).

[12] For an interesting in-depth study of one child's experience in spelling and writing see Bissex.

Works Cited

Ashton-Warner, Sylvia. Teacher. New York: Bantam, 1963.

Bissex, Glenda L. GNYS at WRK. A Child Learns to Read and Write. London: Harvard University, 1980.

Gallagher, Joan. With the Five Year Olds. Great Britain: Educational Explorers, 1969.

Gattegno, Caleb. Teaching Foreign Languages in Schools, The Silent Way. New York: Educational Solutions, 1963.

---. Teaching Reading With Words in Color. New York: Educational Solutions, 1968.

---. What We Owe Children. New York: Avon, 1970.

---. The Common Sense of Teaching Foreign Languages. New York: Educational Solutions, 1976.

---. The Common Sense of Teaching Reading & Writing. New York: Educational Solutions, 1985

Herndon, James. How to Survive in Your Native Land. New York: Bantam, 1971.

Holt, John. How Children Fail. New York: Pitman, 1964.

---. The Underachieving School. New York: Pitman, 1969.

---. What Do I Do Monday?. London: Pitman, 1970.

---. Escape From Childhood. New York: Ballantine, 1974.

---. Teach Your Own. New York: Delacorte, 1981.

---. ed. "Writing to Read is Working." Growing Without Schooling 38 (1984): 15.

Illich, Ivan. Deschooling Society. New York: Harper, 1970.

---. Tools For Conviviality. New York: Harper, 1973.

Kaye, Peggy. Games For Reading. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984.

Kohl, Herbert. Reading, How to. New York: Bantam, 1973.

Kozol, Jonathan. The Night is Dark and I am Far From Home. New York: Bantam,
     1975.

Leonard, George B. Education and Ecstasy. New York: Delta, 1968.

Mennell, Bonnie. Pronunciation and the Silent Way Fidel. Master's Thesis,
     School for International Training, 1977.

Money, John, ed. "Words in Color - The Morphological-Albebraic Approach to
     Teaching Reading," The Disabled Reader: Education of the Dyslexic Child.
     Maryland: John Hopkins, 1966.

Pagnoni, Mario. The Complete Home Educator. New York: Larson, 1984.

Postman, Neil and Weingartner, Charles. Teaching as a Subversive Activity.
     New York: Delta, 1969.

Silberman, Charles E. Crisis in the Classroom. New York: Vintage, 1970.

Smith, Frank. Understanding Reading: A Psycholinguistic Analysis of Reading
     and Learning to Read. New York: Holt, 1971.

Wallace, Nancy. Better Than School. New York: Larson, 1983.

Zintz, Miles V. The Reading Process: The Teacher and the Learner. Iowa:
     W.C. Brown, 1975.

Works Cited of Jason's Favorite Stories

Berenstain, Stan and Jan. Inside Outside Upside Down. New York: Random, 1968.

Bonsall, Crosby. And I Mean it Stanley. New York: Harper & Row, 1974.

Boegehold, Betty. Three to Get Ready. New York: Harper, 1965.

Disney, Walt. Pinocchio. New York: Random, 1973.

---. Cinderella. New York: Random, 1974.

Graham, Margaret B. Be Nice to Spiders. New York: Harper, 1967.

Hoban, Russell. A Bargain For Frances. New York: Harper, 1970.

Hoff, Syd. Danny the Dinosaur. New York: Harper, 1958.

---. Julius. New York: Harper, 1959.

Lord, John V. The Giant Jam Sandwich. Boston: Houghton, 1972.

Reinach, Jacquelyn. Goose Goofs Off. New York: Holt, 1977.

Dr. Seuss. A Cat in the Hat. New York: Random, 1957.

___. Hop on Pop. New York: Random, 1963.

---. The Foot Book. New York: Random, 1968.

---. Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You? New York: Random, 1970.

---. Marvin K. Mooney Will You Please Go Now! New York: Random, 1972.

Tison, Annette and Taylor Talus. Barbapapa's Voyage. Connecticut: Xerox, 1971.

---. Barbapapa's Ark. Connecticut: Xerox, 1974.

Young, Miriam. Miss Suzy. New York: Parent's Magazine, 1964.

Suggestions for Future Home Schoolers

Growing Without Schooling, John Holt, Editor. Available from Holt
Associates, 729 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116. Back issues of
the bimonthly newsletter are available as well as an index to all issues
published.

N.A.L.S.A.S. (National Association for the Legal Support of Alternative
Schools), P. O. Box 2823, Sante Fe, New Mexico 87501, publishes "Tidbits," a
newsletter reporting the legal battles of home-schoolers.

Meg Johnson of the Home Education Resource Center, P. O. Box 6420,
Nashua, NH 03063, publishes a very helpful "Legal Packet." Also included is a
"Legal Supplement: A Survey of the Fifty States and Compulsory Attendance
Statutes as They Affect Home-Schooling" completed in 1981.

Home Schooling Application
1980-81

Home Education Program submitted by Rudolph and Grace Matty for permission to instruct our son, Jason, at home. School year 1980-81.

Parent's Application Statement

    1.1   Jason Matty   Birthdate: December 23, 1972

    1.2   Rudolph J. Matty and Grace Matty   Address: Horseshoe Road
                                                    Windham, NH

    1.3   The home education program will be conducted in our home on Horseshoe Road.

    1.4   Enclosed is Jason's immunization record.

    1.6   Yes, we have considered Jason's wishes and he has not expressed objection to being educated at home.

    1.7   The date of the home education program is September 1980. Jason is learning constantly, throughout the day and the instructional time is equivalent to that of the standard school year. Summer instruction is also included in our program.

    1.8   We believe that this application meets all requirements for:
             manifest educational hardship
             parent qualifications
             evaluation of Jason's educational progress

Manifest Educational Hardship
Assignment and Attendance

    2.2   Educational Benefit

2.2.1 Our philosophy of education stresses that learning is a living dynamic process. This process of learning can best be nurtured in a non-coercive, non-competitive and flexible environment which a home education program can easily provide. Since we believe that learning is a dynamic process, like being alive is a dynamic process, then learning is not something that can be taught - just as an inanimate object cannot be "taught" to come to life. But the learning process can be nurtured just as the life process can be nurtured - in a healthy supportive environment. For us, the home is the BEST place to foster such an environment.

We are both educators by profession and have years of experience behind us. Jason gets the full benefit of this on a very intensive level that the one to one home education program provides. Books are a natural part of our home environment and it has become just as natural for Jason to pick up a book and derive enjoyment from reading it, as it as for us.

Our main objective is that Jason remain comfortable with the natural process of learning and continue to understand the world about him propelled by his own initiative and spontantous curiosity. The following example will serve to verify the above.

Jason became interested in the animals around our home when we began feeding them. Birds, red and grey squirrels and chipmunks became frequent feeders in our back yard. Jason gave me a book, A Field Guide to the Birds, for Father's Day which he has used to help him recognize many species of birds. He has become an ardent bird watcher. He became intrigued with the idea of catching a bird and rigged up a cardboard box with a string attached to a bottle that served as an opening. For many hours he tried to catch a bird. Some would way that he "had no luck." We would say that he was very lucky became he was learning - directed by his own initiative and relying on his own resources. I could have built an

elaborate trap and given Jason directions as to its proper use and function thereby "teaching" him how to catch a bird; but I didn't. I just said, "those birds are pretty smart." That thought, coupled with his own experiences incubated in him for a while and hatched one day when we were at the town dump. He noticed a discarded bird cage and immediately placed it in the trunk. I knew what he wanted it for. His old plan was once again revived. He was quite excited. He was learning, and the process once again rooted itself inside of him, this time to grow and expand. He was clearly continuing from where he had left off more than one month ago. He learned how to put the seeds around and inside the cage; how to let the birds investigate the cage and become comfortable with it; and how to adjust the string to snap the door shut. He caught several birds that day, painted their feet and let them go. He was "taught" very little, but he learned a great deal.

2.2.3   Jason is learning through interaction with children. He has taken gymnastic classes with eight children. He is on a basketball team. Our yard makes an excellent ball field and all the children in the neighborhood (enough to make 2 teams) gather here after school and in the evening to play football, baseball or soccer. The children are also building forts in our yard.

Jason is learning much from the adults that we come in contact with daily. His grandfather teaches him the art of baking. His grandmother and aunt practice Italian with him. His older cousins have taught him how to latch and hook. A friend of the family, a lion trainer, is teaching him how to train his pet parakeet and how to care for the birds in the wild. Jason has constructed bird houses and feeders and has also learned how to plant crops and weed the garden.

2.2.4   Jason makes use of the Derry Library. This year we will make
         frequent trips to the Salem library and also to Nesmith Library.
         He will also start piano lessons this fall. He took part in the
         Derry Library pet show and won a ribbon for his parakeet.

2.2.5   Jason applies the skills he learns at home to practical, real life
         situations. He checks out and returns books at the library. He
         calls the librarian if his books are overdue to notify them and to
         receive a time extension.

         He applies math skills daily. At the grocery store he adds items,
         pays the cashier and counts the change. He buys staples at the
         corner store and is responsible for giving the correct amount of
         money and for receiving the correct change in return. He measures
         ingredients when cooking.

         When eating out, he is given the bill with the money and is asked
         to stand in line and "please pay the bill."

         We go to the bank together and he is learning about savings and
         checking accounts.

         He works on the car (and on other machines) and is quite
         knowledgeable in this area.

2.2.6   Jason's creative abilities are expressed daily ... from bird
         watching to reciting a poem. He enjoys drawing, painting, piano
         and planting flowers. He is very inventive in weight lifting and
         in acrobatics. He also enjoys cooking.

2.2.7   Because of the 2 to 1 or 1 to 1 teaching-learning situation, we are
         constantly aware of Jason's level of understanding and further
         teaching is based on this awareness. Jason frequently learns
         through doing. For example, he takes apart machines to see how
         they work and how the parts are related.

2.2.8   Our educational plan provides that the majority of instructional time is on a one to one basis; that is, one teacher and one student.

2.2.9   We are studying and will continue to study reading, writing, literature, consumer awareness, environmental issues, social studies, health and nutrition, science, music, art, Italian, practical skills and physical education. The approach used is different than that used in public schools but nonetheless equivalent in value and importance. He also enjoys typing his assignments.

Jason's Educational Program

3.1   Yes

3.2   All of Jason's waking hours are involved in learning. Summer is included. Formal instruction time is 5 to 6 hours a day.

3.3   The required instruction specified below is being provided.

3.3.1   Required Instruction

3.3.1.1   Reading/Literature

Jason will continue to be an avid reader. His desire to read will be encouraged by the supply of books that surround him. To enhance his understanding of the world, we will continue to read aloud to him quite often. These readings will expose Jason to new vocabulary and ideas. This year he will be reading some biographies. Included will be Helen Keller, Alan Shepard and others. He will continue his study of phonetics, spelling, decoding and encoding. Jason will continue to demonstrate an understanding of the English Language through exposure to a variety of types of literature and by developing some of the following skills through reading, writing, listening and speaking.

a.   drawing or painting a picture to reveal thoughts and feelings about a given selection

b. writing or telling a story based on ideas on a literature
    selection
c. creating a picture story
d. identifying story theme and characters
e. discussing meaning of fiction and non-fiction
f. recognizing the sequential order in a story
g. locating particularly vivid words in a poem or story
h. recognizing that at times poets say that one thing is - or is
    like something else
i. recognizing rhyming patterns in a poem
j. recognizing humor or nonsense in some poems
k. awareness of author's intent

Written Composition

a. awareness that ideas can be expressed orally, in writing or in
    pantomine
b. creating and writing a story based on a picture
c. taping original stories into recorder and then writing them
d. suggesting words to complete a poem
e. writing notices, directions, recipes, or letters
f. practicing upper and lower case letters
g. keeping a diary
h. keeping a photo album and souvenirs of momorable events
i. keeping a folder of favorite poetry and selections
j. creating or changing an ending for a poem or story
k. writing in Italian
l. typing

Language

a. distinguishing between sentences and non-sentences
b. ordering words to make sentences ... different possibilities
c. identifying sentences that are questions, exclamations
d. using appropriate pronouns
e. changing intonation to exemplify changes in meaning

Skills of English

a.   capital letters

b.   punctuation

c.   alphabetical order with telephone book and dictionary

d.   map reading

e.   graphs and charts

f.   table of contents/glossaries

g.   synonym/antonym

h.   prefix/suffix

i.   homophones

j.   decoding multi-syllabic words

k.   digraphs, dipthongs, schwa sounds ... relationship between sound and spelling

l.   contractions

m.   possessives

3.3.1.2 Mathematics

Jason will continue to understand math concepts by working with cusinaire rods and by applying these concepts to real life situations.

1.   Odd and even numbers

2.   Counting by 2, 3 4, 10

3.   Sets and number words

4.   Missing addends

5.   Addition of 3 digit numbers

6.   Subtraction of 4 digit numbers

7.   Greater than and less than

8.   Money 1) value of and 2) solving word problems

9.   Telling time

10. Place value

11. Word Problems

12. Graphs

13. Geometrical figures

14. Multiplication of 2 digit numbers

15. Division by 1 number

16. Fractions

Science

Jason is learning about animals. This involves caring for them, learning about their habitats and identifying them. He has a microscope which he uses. He is learning how to read schematic diagrams for simple circuits. He is learning mechanical construction with various objects. He continues to read National Geographic World Magazine.

The books we will be using are:

Fluid Dynamics

Science Experiments You Can Eat by Vicki Cobb

The Chemistry of a Lemon by A. Harris Stone

We will also be borrowing books from the library on "how things work".

History

The Indians of Manchester

Indian ways of life

Knowledge of Town of Windham

Identifying surrounding towns of a map

Trip to Concord

3.4.1　The learning activities outlined here are appropriate to Jason's age and need.

3.4.2　The learning materials are sufficient ot implement the required instruction.

Qualification of Parents

4.1　We believe we are qualified and have adequately addressed the conditions of educational hardship.

Evaluation of the Child's Educational Progress

5.1 The "plan of evaluation" shall be developed by mutual consent between the parents and school authorities, and such plan shall be related to the eduational program actually adopted.

5.2 This evaluation shall be conducted on a quarterly basis for the first year.

5.3 The modes of evaluation may include the following:

5.3.1 Periodic testing of the child by standardized or teacher-made tests, providing there is mutual consultation between the parents and school authorities regarding the manner by which the tests will be administered.

5.3.2 Evaluation of the child's educational progress by a qualified third party after mutual consultation between the parents and school authorities.

5.3.3 Use of a portfolio or sampling of the child's work completed under the home study program.

We would like to suggest the mode by which we feel our program would be most effectively evaluated. Since home schooling is a way of life, it would be difficult to submit this intention to a standarized test. Furthermore, to subject Jason to such a test at this time would be unfair and unkind. We do not rule out this type of test for the future, if circumstances warrant its use. We would like to suggest adoption of mode 5.3.3. and include a periodic appraisal by a "qualified third party" suggested in 5.3.2.

We would like to recommend Susan Martin, a fourth grade teacher at South School in Londonderry, as a qualified third party.

Fall colored skirts in their patent black feet
Walled desks lined in advancing retreat,
Uniformed hosts, whose play is conditioned
Amorphous black figures seeking contrition.

The grounded play of angels encircling the flow,
Skyless blue above seeks its firmament below;
The line of permanence is in the middle drawn,
Commandments pronounce them dead with the dawn.