

ing an opportunity to capitalize on the student interest in a topic that fitted into her own field. It was even suggested that earlier concentration on such issues in Cleveland schools might have helped prevent such a riot.

There was little argument that reading presents the basic educational problem of the disadvantaged and that learning to read is the key to the rest of the curriculum.

Donald Cleland, professor of education, University of Pittsburgh, described the integrated experience approach to communication at the University of Pittsburgh, which concentrates on reading, listening, writing, speaking, perceiving, and understanding nonvocal signals. Since the disadvantaged child has often acquired an aural-oral repertoire that is foreign to the materials given him in school, other steps must be taken before introducing him to books. Such steps could involve movies, tape recorders, field trips, conversations, dictating stories to the teacher. In the Pittsburgh experiment, trade books rather than basal readers are used since they better meet the interests of the children.

The group agreed that there is no one method and no one group of materials that is best. The point is to get the child to read, whether textbooks, paperbacks, comic books, sports pages, or other printed material. In one experiment in Princeton, disadvantaged high school boys who could not read finally became interested through discussing questions that interested them.

One stumbling block to removing reading deficiencies is the lack of knowledgeable teachers, both for preventive and remedial programs. (There was agreement that remedial programs are seldom effective.)

In discussing attempts to teach children to read, John Henry Martin, superintendent of Mount Vernon public schools, New York, suggested that the schools do not take advantage of the child's early curiosity, do not give children the chance to do things for themselves or to teach each other; teachers do too much of the talking.

Mrs. Kay Earnhardt, coordinator of reading, Atlanta public schools, reporting an inservice training program in Atlanta, noted the following reasons teachers sometimes teach over the heads of students:

- Teachers are not aware that children do not learn things at the same rate. The teacher should be able to present her subject at whatever level the student is.
- Teachers cannot diagnose reading deficiencies and so do not know what is holding back a child.
- Materials for teaching reading to the disadvantaged are not adequate.

- If materials do not meet the requirements of the curriculum, the administrator will not let the teachers use them.

In the Atlanta program, some teachers learn how to make their own materials, making use of such things as the Beatles records (with their great emphasis on repetition). Fleets of "floating" teachers take the place of other teachers for a week's program in teaching reading. Eleven promising elementary school teachers were encouraged to get their certification as reading specialists.

In Colorado Springs, 14 teachers were given a 60-hour course in reading. They now are teaching other teachers.

In eastern Kentucky, inservice courses are provided, giving teachers the opportunity to see demonstration classes in the teaching of reading. Seventeen college faculty experts give the courses in the region. Subexperts then become available in each area.

On the matter of reading materials, Mrs. Earnhardt said they found some Head Start materials useful for higher grades so they have simply taken the grade labels off all materials.

In various ways, States are making use of college and university faculty to advise local districts on reading projects and to help with the training of teachers.

Panel IIB

Just as middle-class values do not apply in the ghetto schools, so instructional materials designed for middle-class children are out of place there. That was an area of general consensus in panel IIB.

"I'm concerned by the large illiteracy rate of the Negroes in this country," said panelist Farmer. "Many are functionally illiterate, including some high school graduates. Some high school students are reading at the third and fourth grade levels. This is due to many factors, including the family structure of the Negro in the slums, as some authorities have pointed out. But it also is due to flaws in the educational structure. I am convinced that a big factor in the inability of the deprived youngster to learn is the lack of relevance on the part of much of the instructional material to the lives of the people using it."

Morris Epps concurred: "There is a paucity of good materials and will continue to be unless American educators stand up to be counted. When I was teaching in the South, one thing that hurt me very much was that the materials were all designed for white children. There was nothing to indicate to the Negro child that he amounted to anything."