

McCALL-CRABBS

Standard Test Lessons in Reading

TEACHERS MANUAL

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Teachers College, Columbia University
New York and London

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INTRODUCTION

The basic idea for *Standard Test Lessons in Reading* was proposed many years ago by Professor William A. McCall, a pioneer in the development of widely used measurement techniques. While administering reading tests as part of a research program in New York City, Professor McCall of Teachers College, Columbia University, observed that testing had a tremendous capacity to increase student motivation. Even reluctant readers appeared to enjoy reading test selections and completing the questions.

Thus the idea for *McCall-Crabbs* was born. Why not design a series of instructional materials based on an actual reading test format? These short test lessons could become an integral part of any reading program, both as a supplement to other activities and as a monitor of reading progress. Most importantly, a well-balanced instructional program that included these test lessons might actually help students *want* to improve their reading ability!

For over fifty years tens of millions of students have proved that the test lesson format works. *McCall-Crabbs* has been adopted by school districts all over the United States and Canada and has been used to monitor the improvement of reading skills throughout the school year. Reading growth is a complex and long-term goal, and *McCall-Crabbs* provides highly motivating "feedback" that can help sustain progress toward longer-range goals.

This completely revised fourth edition of *McCall-Crabbs* continues the tradition of helping students grow in reading skills. The *McCall-Crabbs* format is carefully designed for easy classroom use, and it remains unique in the entire instructional materials marketplace.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SERIES

Each lesson consists of a passage to be read silently by a student, followed by eight multiple-choice questions about the passage. Regardless of whether the student is instructed to mark in the book itself or on a separate answer sheet, the circle preceding the answer chosen, (A) (B) (C) or (D), should be filled in with standard pencil. If grade score norms, G scores, are to be used, each lesson should be timed at three minutes. The usefulness of the test lessons will naturally depend on the care with which they are administered. *Before you administer any lesson, please study carefully the directions given on page 6.*

The *McCall-Crabbs* series consists of six reading levels. For example, Book A is designed for grade 3, and so on as illustrated below:

GR.	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Book A		A									
Book B			B								
Book C				C							
Book D					D						
Book E						E					
Book F							F				

Note that while Book A is intended for *average third graders*, it may also be appropriate for advanced *second graders* or remedial *fourth graders*. In some cases, the appropriate grade level can best be determined after administering sample lessons from more than one book.

This new fourth edition retains the essence of the popular *McCall-Crabbs* format while adding many new improvements:

- Each book contains 60 three-minute reading exercises, each of which contains eight multiple-choice questions.
- There are six books in the *McCall-Crabbs* series. Book A is based on a grade 3 reading level, and each succeeding book covers one higher reading level, with Book F spanning grade 8 through high school. These grade level designations are estimates for average readers. Ideally, more than one *McCall-Crabbs* level may be used in any classroom to match the individual capabilities of different students. The *McCall-Crabbs* format allows for considerable individualization across different reading levels.

- Each book may be used in a consumable manner by letting students mark their answers directly on the pages. Perforated pages also provide the option of assigning one page at a time.
- Each book may also be used in an economical nonconsumable way by having students mark their answers on a newly designed answer sheet, which can be ordered separately.
- G scores (grade score norms) were derived from a large field testing program during the fall of 1978 in which a wide range of socioeconomic and minority groups were fully represented. Even though the G scores are not intended for precise measurement purposes, they are the product of an extensive research program and the participation of thousands of students.
- After scoring their own lessons, G scores at the bottom of each page enable students to monitor their progress in reading improvement. While these G scores are not intended to replace more rigorous standardized tests, they are sufficient for providing a rough estimate of growth in reading over a period of time. In short, *McCall-Crabbs* G scores are intended primarily for instructional purposes rather than for the formal evaluations required for school records and similar uses.
- *McCall-Crabbs* lessons were prepared at Teachers College, Columbia University, by many different writers, resulting in a wide range of interesting topics. All lessons were carefully reviewed for cultural, minority, and sexual bias, and test questions were prepared according to the highest professional standards.

The format of this new edition allows for many different possibilities, and directions can be easily altered to suit varying instructional needs. For example, remedial reading teachers may wish to use the booklets with individuals or small groups, or they can be used for oral reading practice or teacher-dictated work. In these and other applications described later, the teacher may choose not to use the G score norms, particularly since altering the directions may invalidate the norms. *If the G scores are to be used, care must be taken to follow the prescribed directions, including the three-minute time limit.*

The decision on whether to use separate answer sheets (nonconsumable use) or have students mark directly in the booklets (consumable use) should be made before placing an order for *McCall-Crabbs* materials. Consumable use has many advantages, particularly with young or problem readers. Students are not faced with the task of transferring their answers onto a

separate answer sheet, sometimes a source of error among many students. Consumable use is helpful for tutors and allows students to easily review the kinds of errors they may have made. Also individual pages can be sent home to show to parents.

Nonconsumable use, on the other hand, is more economical, and most students today are more familiar with using a separate answer sheet than in the past.

DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING THE LESSONS

Materials Needed:

Each student will need:

- a *McCall-Crabbs* booklet
- a standard pencil with a good eraser
- (in NONCONSUMABLE use, an answer sheet)

You will need:

- this *McCall-Crabbs* Teachers Manual
- a *McCall-Crabbs* booklet
- (if applicable, an answer sheet)
- a watch or clock with a sweep second hand
- extra pencils, sharpened and ready for use

Classroom Atmosphere

Provide a classroom atmosphere that is relaxed to reduce students' anxiety, but one that will encourage attention and interest. The seating arrangement should prevent students from easily seeing each other's work.

Arrangements should be made to give the lessons at a time that will be free of classroom disruptions, such as public address announcements, fire drills, and the like. Remember that each lesson should be timed at three minutes. Recording the exact starting time will facilitate precise timing.

Beginning the Testing

Nonconsumable Only

1. Distribute one *McCall-Crabbs* answer sheet to each student.
2. Have students fill in as much information as desired on the answer sheet.