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PREFERENCES OF BLACK CHILDREN IN THE PRIMARY GRADES FOR BASAL READING BOOKS

By

Pauline Viola West Grissom

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Education)
in The University of Michigan
1975

Doctoral Committee:

Associate Professor Laura Williams, Chairman
Associate Professor Howard Brabson
Assistant Professor Bernadine Denning
Associate Professor Charles Moody

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INTRODUCTION

"Black Pride," "Black Power," and "Black Is Beautiful" are recent popular phrases that reflect the concerns of Black Americans about their identity and future. W. E. B. DuBois was sensitive to the significance of these concerns and articulated his feelings decades earlier. In 1934 he said:

> It is the race-conscious black man cooperating together in his own institutions and movements who will eventually emancipate the colored race, and the great step ahead today is for the American Negro to accomplish his economic emancipation through voluntary, determined cooperative effort.[1]

More than forty years later, educators are still wresting with methods, materials and educational approaches to meet the needs of their black pupils so that they, in turn, can fulfill their vital roles as articulated by DuBois.

The black children who will make a difference in the direction the race takes need skills to aid their development. Reading is the most critical skill because it is fundamental to learning in most disciplines. Therefore, discovering what influences and aids reading efforts of these children is essential. As educators, the better we see what needs to be done, the more effective we can be in doing it.

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[1]W. E. B. DuBois, Editorial, Crisis Magazine. N. Y., N. Y., January, 1934.

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

People generally have more success when involved with things they like. This axiom is true with children as well as adults. The implication is, therefore, that if a task, such as reading, is designed for children to perform, this task enjoys greater success if it is presented in an attractive, appealing fashion. As Blom, Waite and Zimet concluded, "The motivational factors identifiable within the stories relate to motivational factors in the learning process itself."[1]

On the assumption that children have preferences in reading material and that when these preferences are respected they will be more highly motivated to do their best in reading, this study was designed to tap such preferences as they relate to basal readers. In particular, there was an attempt to examine preferences in basal readers to determine whether or not black children prefer books with multi-racial illus-

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[1]Gaston Blom, Richard Waite, and Sara Zimet, "A Motivational Content Analysis of Children's Primers," in Readings in Child Development and Personality, eds. Paul Henry Mussen, John Janeway Conger, and Jerome Kagan (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 453.

trations of human beings over books with only white people depicted in such illustrations. In addition, an attempt was made to discover whether the pictures influenced such decisions to a greater extent than other characteristics such as print, cover and content. The relationship between the reading level and sex of subjects and their choices was also of interest to the researcher.

The larger purpose behind the study was to provide some factual information on black children's preferences in reading material to aid those responsible for making decisions on such materials to be more sensitive to their audience when preparing and modifying reading material. In a sense, the study tested the position of Whitney Young, who said,

> "There is no better way to reach the black child than through his books. He must see himself in books, as he is, as he can be. . . Omission of these crucial images in books . . . tells the black child . . . you have no image today and no future tomorrow."[1]

A popular notion relevant to this research maintains that what one thinks of oneself influences one's behavior. Several studies have supported this conclusion that self concepts have

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[1]Whitney Young, Jr., Newark, New Jersey, Evening News, (October 1965), p. 23-24.

a causal relationship to academic achievement. Lamy[1] investigated the relationship between children's perceptions about themselves and their world while in kindergarten and their subsequent first-grade reading achievement. She found that these perceptions rendered achievement predictions as accurately as intelligence scores. She suggested that more than just being related to reading achievement, the child's perceptions about himself and his world may be causal factors.

Wattenberg and Clifford[2] conducted a similar study. Using self referent statements from the children as they drew pictures of their families and finished incomplete sentences, the researchers obtained measures of the self concepts of kindergarteners. The scores were then considered as representing two dimensions of the child's self concept: goodness and competence. The results of relating these scores to beginning achievement in reading during the second grade indicates that measures of self concept seem to be antecedent to and predictive of reading achievement in the

---

[1]M. W. Lamy, "Relationship of Self-Perceptions of Early Primary Children to Achievement in Reading," Human Development: Readings in Research, ed. I. J. Gordon, (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1965.)

[2]W. W. Wattenberg and C. Clifford, "Relationship of Self-Concept to Beginning Achievement in Reading." U. S. Office of Education, Cooperative Research Project No. 337. Detroit: Wayne State University, 1962.

second grade.

As the significance of the relatedness between self-concept and reading achievement becomes more apparent through repeated studies, educators must reexamine their efforts to insure every child an opportunity for developing a positive self-image. If illustrations in reading books can play even a small role in that effort, it becomes critical that we strive to make that role as effective as possible.

The fact that black children have experienced less success in their reading efforts than their white counterparts has been well documented. This evidence, however, does not clearly describe the reasons for lower achievement by black children. Perhaps a partial explanation can be found in determining what these children prefer in reading materials, especially as it relates to illustrations in reading books.

As stated earlier, this study investigated the preferences of black children with regard to basal readers. The rationale for limiting the subjects to black children is based on the following assumptions:

1. A plethora of statistical evidence dramatically cites the failure of black children in their reading efforts. This evidence, rather than implying innate limitation, suggests that alternative strategies are essential.

2. When black children look at pictures, their ability to identify with characters is related to the similarity of the characters to themselves. Therefore, identification would imply modification of their reading material.

3. The 1970's have seen a continuation of unabated racial crisis. One approach to alleviating the negative racial attitudes and behaviors of black Americans is to nurture the self-esteem and racial pride of black Americans through illustrations in reading books.

4. Historically, most basal readers and texts reflected majority attitudes by depicting and dealing with white characters and situations that the white majority experiences. Those experiences and situations might not stimulate a minority student to be as interested and as successful in his reading efforts as his white counterpart. It seems important to study black children's preferences in readers rather than base decisions upon either historical precedent or pure supposition no matter how logical the latter may seem.

Therefore, answers to these questions were sought in the present research:

1. When black children in Primary I, Primary II, or third grade pupils are presented two basal readers from the same company, one using all white persons in their human illustrations and one using a mixture of Caucasian, Negro and Latin-American persons in their human illustrations, which will the pupils say they would prefer to read?

2. If the black pupils demonstrate a preference when presented with such materials, do the preferences relate to such variables as:

a. race of the illustrated characters?

b. grade level of the pupil?

c. sex of the pupil?

d. reading achievement of the pupil?

3. When given four choices of reasons for a preference, which will be considered most important by the pupils:

a. cover?

b. stories?

c. print?

d. pictures?

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Illustrations and Technical Factors

Bamberger conducted one of the earliest studies relative to children's preferences in pictures entitled, "The Effect of the Physical Makeup of a Book Upon Children's Selection."[1] The study included 317 children, Grades one to three, and 65 teachers.

The author found that children prefer books in which pictures occupy at least 25 per cent of the space. In addition, she learned that with the sample children the most popular pictures were larger ones, as well as ones that were in color. While the younger children preferred crude or primary colors, older children indicated a preference for pictures with softer tints and tones. Bamberger also concluded from the study that less difference exists between the children's choices and the opinions of adults.

More than a decade after Bamberger conducted her study, Jeanette Morrison directed a related study entitled

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[1]Florence Bamberger, "The Effect of the Physical Makeup of a Book Upon Children's Selection." John Hopkins University Studies in Education. (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1922), p. 7.

"Children's Preferences for Pictures."[1] After examining lists of recommended children's books, she found that there was no agreement between those lists. Further, she found that children's preferences frequently differed from those books on the lists. After examining the actual books, she found that the range of illustrations usually used were less broad than primary children liked. Morrison also found that pictures of children were comparatively insignificant to the children studied. Unlike Bamberger, Morrison was impressed with the difference in preferences based on sex in the primary grades. Picture preferences changed from grade to grade, but the author noted the regularity of picture selection was based on story interest.

More recently J. E. French[2] conducted a study to examine children's pictorial preferences as related to complexity of patterns. The study used 142 first grade children, 554 children in other grades and 98 elementary teachers. The author permitted the children to select from two sets of illustrations in which the complexity of the pictures varied

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[1]Jeanette Morrison, Children's Preferences for Pictures. Cambridge: The University Press, 1935.

[2]J. E. French, "Children's Preference for Pictures of Varied Complexity of Pictorial Pattern." Elementary School Journal 53: (October, 1952), 90-95.

while the subject matter was the same. Eighty-nine per cent (89%) of the first grade children selected the more simple pictures. A marked preference for complex illustrations became apparent beginning at the fourth grade level.

Ruth Helen Amsden[1] studied children's preferences in picture books fairly recently. The study involved a sampling of 60 boys and girls from various nursery schools who were between three and five years of age. The researcher showed two sets of 10 illustrations with identical subject content for all the pictures within a set. The amount of color, value of color, and style of drawing varied in each picture. She found that the children preferred light tints and dark shades to bright and that photographs were preferred over line drawings in black and white.

Illustrations and Content

Up to this point the studies cited have addressed children's preferences more in terms of characteristics of the reproductions (i.e., color and size). Sister Frances Joseph commented in a recent article that newer books have tended to attract attention to insignificant incidents in

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[1]Ruth Helen Amsden, "Children's Preference in Picture Story Book Variables." Journal of Educational Research 53: (October, 1966), 309-12.

stories "with an oversized, gaudy picture."[1] These pictures, then, draw the child's attention from the central idea of the story which leaves the child puzzled. She suggests that meaning and content should be emphasized more than color in story books.

Whipple's[2] study of black and white children in Detroit examined preferences more closely related to Sister Joseph's concern. After introducing and investigating the use of the City Schools Series of books, she reached several conclusions with regard to the importance of illustrations in enriching the reading experience. She reports that size, color, center of interest, type of action and theme affect the interest of all boys and girls. Whipple asserts that the center of interest, action and theme were the critical ingredients in the pictorial preferences of the children sampled.

Self-Image of Black Children

Except for Whipple's report, specific references are not made to the races of the children studied. We can assume, therefore, that most investigations were less concerned with

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[1]Sister Frances Joseph, "Criteria for Judging a Picture Book." Catholic School Journal 69: (February, 1969), 32-33.

[2]Gertrude Whipple, Appraisal of the City Schools Reading Program. Detroit Public Schools, November, 1963.

race as a variable in children's preferences in illustrations. This assumption is based on the knowledge that education and educators until quite recently have been primarily concerned with satisfying the needs of the American white majority.[1] As that exclusive concern is being modified toward more democratically satisfying needs of both majority and minority children, other investigators have begun examining minority group preferences.

Clark and Clark conducted research to determine the preferences of black children in selecting black versus white dolls. Their study revealed that the majority of the subjects did prefer the white dolls. The findings suggest that the black children had learned to regard and prefer white images. The explanations for identification with the white dolls elicited comments that give real cause for concern. To illustrate, one black child explained that he was actually white but, "I look brown because I got a suntan in the summer."[2]

Comments of this nature by black children underscore

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[1]Michael Katz, Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools. New York: Prager, 1971.

[2]K. Clark and M. Clark, "Racial Identification and Preference in Negro Children," Readings In Social Psychology. (New York, Holt, 1958), p. 56.

the validity of concern articulated by black leaders in education and the arts. In a letter to the book editor of the New York Times Julius Lester wrote, "We live in a world where race has meaning, conferring superiority to white and inferiority to black, and what blacks are now trying to do is destroy that value system, because that value system destroys them."[1]

Effects of White Values on Black Children

Ivory Toldson[2] maintains that the cultural and racial images of white people have been projected upon black children. Those images are extensions of the white man's best self, and he has assigned significant value to them. His self and world are then defined in terms of others like him. He sees images of that group reflected in himself and is thereby able to discover his identity.

The sense of self and identity for black children in a world of white images is negative. Carolyn Gerald suggests that blacks see a zero image of themselves. The source of

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[1]Julius Lester, "Black and White: An Exchange" in The Black American in Books For Children, Donnarae MacCann and Gloria Woodard. New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1972) p. 33.

[2]Ivory L. Toldson, "Developmental Stages of Black Self-Discovery: Implications for Using Black Art Forms in Group Interaction," Journal of Negro Education, (Spring, 1975) 131.

the negative black self-concept, she asserts, is the white man's interpretations of the black psyche:

> The white man has developed a myth of superiority based on images which compare him symbolically with the black man. The very fact of this interconnection is at once a holdover from previous bondage and the most effective means of perpetuating that bondage. . . For to manipulate an image is to control a peoplehood.[1]

Exposure to racism of this sort has serious consequences upon black children. Educators are now examining possible self-victimization behaviors that result among black youngsters. Some scholars suggest that exposure to racism may cause young Blacks to identify strongly with Whites.[2] Identity crises and distortions in self concepts may result when black children over identify with the white population. The dilemma manifests itself sometimes in a flight from blackness and a yearning to be white. Psychologists interpret this behavior as an expression of self-hatred,

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[1]Carolyn Gerald, "The Black Writer and His Role." Addison Gayle, Jr. (ed.), The Black Aesthetic. Garden City: Doubleday, 1972: 352.

[2]J. Banks and J. Grambs, Black Self Concept. New York, McGraw Hill, 1972.

a type of self-victimization.[1]

The literature supports the significance of racial identity for black children. While the need for identity has been consistently articulated, the behavior has frequently been absent.

Behavior patterns that develop from negative inner feelings are rarely productive to the individual or society. The role of books as causative agents or vehicles for improvement must be considered in an effort to expand the meaningfulness of reading.

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[1]C. Silberman, Crisis In Black and White. New York, Random House, 1964: 112-114.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Subjects

Subjects for this study were selected from the 558 black students in Primary I (first year out of kindergarten), Primary II (second year out of kindergarten), and Grade three at Jamieson Elementary School in Detroit, Michigan. The population at each level was divided into three groups according to reading achievement as follows:

1. Children achieving at grade level plus nine months or above (1.8+, 2.8+, 3.8+).
2. Children achieving at grade level plus seven months and eight months (1.7, 2.7, 3.7 or .8).
3. Children achieving at grade level plus six months or below (1.6-, 2.6-, 3.6-).

The reading achievement scores of the students on an April, 1975, administration of the "Primary I Stanford Achievement Tests" (Form X), "The Primary II Stanford Achievement Tests" (Form X), and the "Iowa Test of Basic Skills," Level 9 (Form 5) served as the basis for the grouping of the populations of Primary I, Primary II and Grade three respectively. The prescribed levels for each pool were, therefore, predicated upon pupil performance after seven and one-half months of instruction in each grade. The pools were

further subdivided into male and female groups in order to have even numbers of boys and girls in the study. The pools are illustrated in Table 1.

Male and female students were chosen at random alternately until 16 students were chosen at each achievement level from each grade level pool. This resulted in 48 students per grade, or a total of 144 black children, 72 boys and 72 girls, who were the subjects of the study. The numbers of subjects are listed by grade and achievement levels in Table 2.

The groups were divided by grade levels and reading achievement levels within each grade level and further by sex. Table 3, that follows, describes range, means, a standard deviations of each group and subsequent subgroup. Tables 43, 44, and 45 in the Appendix present the reading scores for each subject.

The black children selected for this study were residents of Detroit. They reside in an inner-city neighborhood that is more than 95% black. A large segment of families in this community are dependent upon financial assistance from governmental agencies. The school, therefore, is funded by Title I and Chapter 3 monies.

Materials

Basal readers from the Ginn Publishing Company were used as preference foils. This company has produced two series of

TABLE 1

POPULATION POOL FOR PREFERENCE STUDY

Grade Level	Sex	ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL			Total
		.9 and Above Grade	.7 and .8 Above Grade	.6 and Below Grade	
Primary I	Boys	17	14	44	75
	Girls	31	21	45	97
Primary II	Boys	40	11	32	83
	Girls	40	14	34	98
Grade 3	Boys	32	10	53	95
	Girls	49	12	49	110
Totals		209	82	267	558

TABLE 2

DESCRIPTIONS OF SUBJECTS BY GRADE LEVEL, SEX, SIZE AND ACHIEVEMENT

Grade Level	Sex	READING ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL			Row and Column Totals
		Above Average	Average	Below Average	
Primary I	Boys	8	8	8	24
	Girls	8	8	8	24
Column Totals		16	16	16	
Total					48
Primary II	Boys	8	8	8	24
	Girls	8	8	8	24
Column Totals		16	16	16	
Total					48
Grade 3	Boys	8	8	8	24
	Girls	8	8	8	24
Column Totals		16	16	16	
Total					48
Column Total	Boys	24	24	24	72
Column Total	Girls	24	24	24	72
Row Totals		48	48	48	144

TABLE 3

DESCRIPTIVE MEASURES OF GROUPS BY GRADE AND SEX

Grade	Number	Sex	Minimum Reading Score	Maximum Reading Score	Mean	Standard Deviation
Primary I	8 8	Boys Girls	1.2 1.2	4.0 2.9	1.8 1.8	.54 .45
Primary II	8 8	Boys Girls	1.7 2.0	4.1 4.1	2.7 2.8	.51 .58
Grade 3	8 8	Boys Girls	1.8 1.8	5.9 6.4	3.7 3.7	.92 .98
Primary I Primary II Grade 3	72	Boy subjects	1.2	5.9	2.7	1.02
Primary I Primary II Grade 3	72	Girl subjects	1.2	6.4	2.8	1.06
Primary I Primary II Grade 3	144	All subjects	1.2	6.4	2.8	1.0

readers which are in use in some Detroit Public Schools. This series was used since it represents a typical basal reader program and because the subjects had not been exposed to the books at Jamieson School. The Revised Edition of the series, published in 1961, presents only white characters in its illustrations of human beings, while the 100 Edition, published in 1966, presents illustrations of humans who are of white, black, and other minorities. These editions were selected because they had similar types of content and identical volume titles.

Each of the grade level groups of subjects examined the volume in each series appropriate to the group. The Primary I subjects examined both editions of The Little White House, the primer in this basal reading program. The Primary II subjects examined the 2.2 level readers entitled Around The Corner, while the Grade three subjects examined the 3.2 level readers, Friends Far and Near.

Sampling Procedures

Subjects' preferences for the materials were sampled in individual conferences during which the materials and sampling questions were presented as follows:

1. The two books to be examined by each subject were placed side by side on a desk at which the subject was seated. The positions of the books were alternated for each subject

before presentations were made. This controlled for the effect of book position on choice.

2. The directions for examination of materials and statements and directions regarding solicitation of the preference for materials were standard for all subjects as follows:

"I am trying to find out what books children like to read. Look these two books over, please, and decide which you would like to have a chance to read later on." (The examiner waited six minutes while the child looked through both books. Subjects were encouraged to use three minutes to peruse each book.)

"Now, here are two cards which match the colors of the books you looked through." (The cards were placed atop the corresponding books.) "Give me the card which matches the color of the book you would like to read later on." (The examiner accepted the card and recorded the choice.)

"I can think of four things about books which might make children choose them. They

are: the cover, the pictures, the print, the stories."

"Which of these things caused you to choose the book you chose? I'll say them again: the cover, the pictures, the print, the stories." (The oral response was recorded by the examiner.)

"Do you have any other reason for choosing the book you did?" (The oral response was recorded. If the response was "yes," 'What was that reason'? The oral response was recorded.)

To control for the effects of the order of the foils on reasons given for preferences for books, each subject at each reading level (above-average, average, below-average) in each grade (Primary I, Primary II, Grade three) was offered a different order in foils. Thus, sixteen different orders were used for each of the sub-groups sampled.

Statistical Procedures

Examination of Differences Between Editions

In order to determine whether there were true differences between the two editions used to sample preferences,

frequencies of the following characteristics of the illustrations were tabulated for each volume.

1. Number of pictures per volume and for all volumes.

2. Number of pictures per volume and for all volumes featuring:

People.

Only white people.

Only black people.

Both black and white people.

People of other minorities.

No people.

3. Number of pictures with people featuring:

Only males.

Only females.

Both males and females.

A close examination of the books revealed few significant differences other than pictures and the colors of the covers, which varied at each level. The stories in the two editions of The Little White House were identical with two exceptions. First, the names in the titles were changed in

five stories to correspond with non-white characters introduced in the 100 Edition but the stories remained in tact. One story was eliminated from the 100 Edition which accounts for the only other difference in stories between the editions. The covers were different in that a boy was shown on the Revised Edition, while boys and girls were on the cover of the 100 Edition.

The stories in the two editions of Around The Corner were almost identical also. The only changes made in the 100 Edition were name differences in three of the titles to correspond with new characters added to introduce black people in the readers and the addition of a poem at the end of the last unit. The cover on the Revised Edition showed a white boy and girl watching a parade. The cover of the 100 Edition showed boys and girls, one of whom is black, watching television. No other differences were found between the Revised and 100 Editions.

There were more story changes in Friends Far and Near than the other readers, but the differences were still minimal. Out of 28 stories, only five were new in content. Five poems, three review pages and a glossary were added which provided the other structural changes in the 100 Edition. Covers of both editions showed people from foreign lands.

The Chi Square test was applied to the data in examining the following null hypotheses:

1. There will be no differences between the Revised Edition and the 100 Edition with respect to frequencies with which people are depicted or not depicted in the illustrations.

2. There will be no differences between the Revised Edition and the 100 Edition with respect to the frequencies with which white, black and other minority people are depicted in pictures.

3. There will be no differences between the Revised Edition and the 100 Edition with respect to the frequencies with which males and females are depicted in pictures of people.

Examination of Research Questions

The questions posed in Chapter I of this report were converted into the following null hypotheses and the data were examined as they relate to these hypotheses using the Chi Square test. In all cases the Yates Correction was employed, since the values in each cell were small.

1. When black children at Primary I, Primary II and Grade Three levels are offered a choice between the Revised and 100 Editions of Ginn Basal Readers appropriate to their

grade levels, there will be no difference between the frequencies with which each is preferred. This hypothesis was tested by grade level for all readers and for boys and girls.

2. When black children of the previously noted levels are offered a choice between the above editions, there will be no differences between the choices of boys and girls. This hypothesis was tested for each grade level and combined levels and also for each achievement level within grade level, and within combined grades.

3. When black children of the previously noted levels are offered a choice between the above editions, there will be no differences among the choices of above average, average and below average achieving readers. This hypothesis was tested for each grade level and for combined levels.

4. When asked to indicate the reason for the choice made between the Ginn editions, there will be no differences among the frequencies with which the cover, stories, print and pictures are indicated as influencing the

children's choices. This hypothesis was tested for all readers and for boys and girls by basal reader choice and for either preference as well as by grade level, achievement level and sex.

At the outset of the study the following limitations were recognized:

1. The study did not include an examination of the content of the pictures and stories with regard to the roles of male and female characters, as well as the roles of blacks and other minorities depicted in illustrations and stories.

2. A second limitation was the size of the sample of subjects when questioned regarding preferences by sex on grade and achievement levels.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The organization of the results is based upon the null hypotheses which served as the focus for this study. Analyses were made to compare differences in materials, preferences, and reasons for preferences.

Testing Null Hypotheses For Materials

Hypothesis 1

The first null hypothesis with regard to materials was: There will be no difference between the frequencies of people depicted and pictures in which people are not depicted in illustrations of the Revised Edition and the 100 Edition of the Ginn Basal Readers. This hypothesis was tested by the Chi Square test, the results of which are summarized in Tables 4, 5, 6 and 7, which follow. No significant differences were found between the editions for this variable. The probabilities of these findings resulting from chance were .36 for The Little White House, .37 for Around The Corner, and .15 for Friends Far and Near. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no difference between the series on the grounds of illustrations with and without people in them was supported.

TABLE 4

COMPARISON BETWEEN ILLUSTRATION FREQUENCIES IN THE LITTLE WHITE HOUSE BY PEOPLE VERSUS NO PEOPLE

	People	No People	Total
100 Edition Row% Column%	133 77.8 49.3	38 22.2 46.3	171
Revised Edition Row% Column%	137 75.7 50.7	44 24.3 53.7	181
Totals	270	82	352

Chi Square= 0.113 D.F.= 1

Significance Level= 0.7362

Maximum Likelihood= 0.214549

Significance Level= 0.6432

Exact Probability= 0.368399

TABLE 5

COMPARISON BETWEEN ILLUSTRATION FREQUENCIES IN AROUND THE CORNER BY PEOPLE VERSUS NO PEOPLE

	People	No People	Total
100 Edition Row% Column%	126 61.2 51.2	80 38.8 49.1	206
Revised Edition Row% Column%	120 59.1 48.8	83 40.9 50.9	203
Totals	246	163	409

Chi Square= 0.104 D.F.= 1

Significance Level= 0.7469

Maximum Likelihood= 0.179569

Significance Level= 0.6717

Exact Probability= 0.373452

TABLE 6

COMPARISON BETWEEN ILLUSTRATION FREQUENCIES IN FRIENDS FAR AND NEAR BY PEOPLE VERSUS NO PEOPLE

	People	No People	Total
100 Edition Row% Column%	146 65.8 50.9	76 34.2 45.8	222
Revised Edition Row% Column%	141 61.0 49.1	90 39.0 54.2	231
Totals	287	166	453

Chi Square= 0.895 D.F.= 1

Significance Level= 0.3440

Maximum Likelihood= 1.09042

Significance Level= 0.2964

Exact Probability= 0.172025

TABLE 7

COMPARISON BETWEEN FREQUENCIES OF ILLUSTRATIONS IN ALL BOOKS BY PEOPLE VERSUS NO PEOPLE

	People	No People	Total
100 Edition Row% Column%	405 67.6 50.4	194 32.4 47.2	599
Revised Edition Row% Column%	398 64.7 49.6	217 35.3 52.8	615
Totals	803	411	1214

Chi Square= 1.012 D.F.= 1

Significance Level= 0.3145

Maximum Likelihood= 1.13792

Significance Level= 0.2861

Exact Probability= 0.157242

Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis concerning materials used to sample basal reader preferences of black children was: There will be no differences between the frequencies for illustrations of people by race in the Revised Edition and the 100 Edition. This hypothesis was rejected. The basis of the rejection was a comparison of frequencies when put to the Chi Square test. Tables 8, 9, and 10 indicate that all comparisons yielded differences far beyond the .01 level of probability. The differences are based upon an addition of illustrations depicting black and integrated black-white groups in all three volumes of the 100 Edition and to a lesser extent an increase of other minorities in Around The Corner and Friends Far and Near. The biggest change was the inclusion of integrated groups where there had been none before. Each table is illustrated graphically in two figures that immediately follow those tables.

As described by the tables and figures, the researcher's informal decision to use these two editions of the Ginn series for comparisons of the children's preferences with the racial content of the illustrations as a variable was supported.

TABLE 8

COMPARISON BETWEEN ILLUSTRATION FREQUENCIES IN THE LITTLE WHITE HOUSE BY RACE

Book	White Only	Black Only	Black and White	Total
100 Edition Row% Column%	89 86.4 39.4	3 2.9 100.0	11 10.7 100.0	103
Revised Edition Row% Column%	137 100.0 60.6	0 0.0 0.0	0 0.0 0.0	137

Chi Square= 19.775 D.F.= 2

Significance Level= 0.0001

Maximum Likelihood Ratio= 24.8480

Significance Level= 0.0000

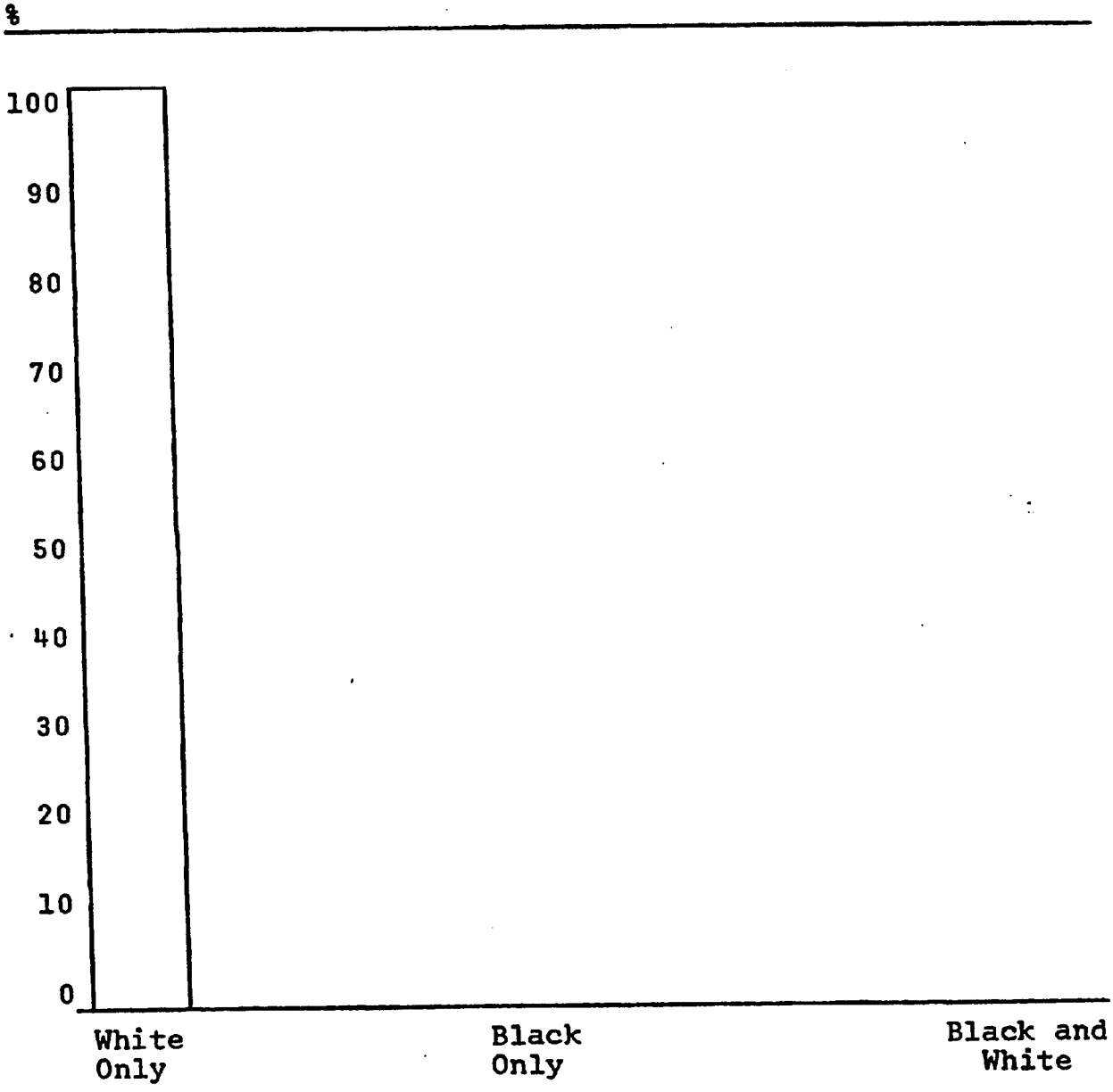


Fig. 1. Distribution of Illustrations in Revised Edition of The Little White House by Race.

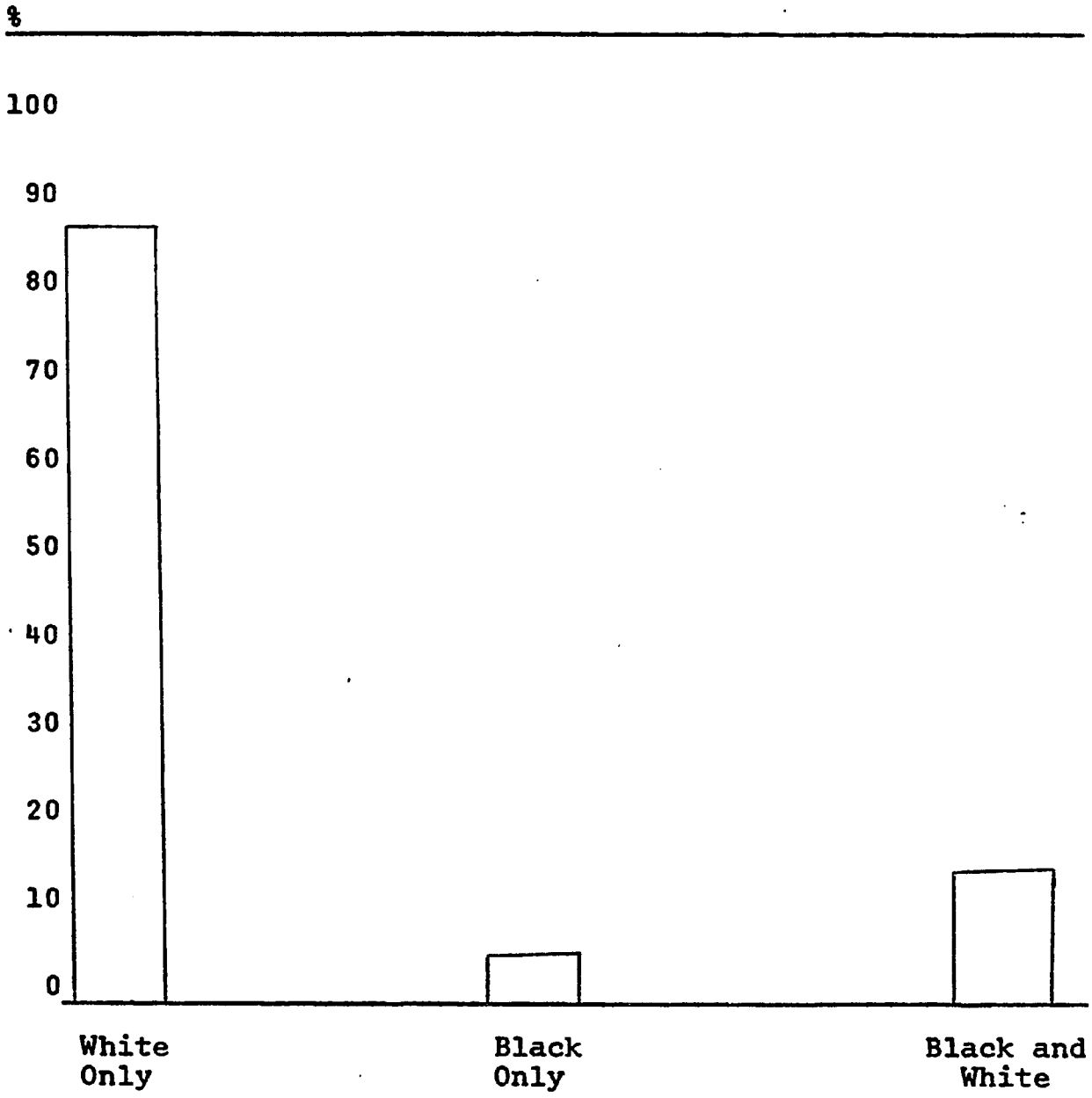


Fig. 2. Distribution of Illustrations in 100 Edition of The Little White House by Race.

TABLE 9

COMPARISON BETWEEN ILLUSTRATION FREQUENCIES IN AROUND THE CORNER BY RACE

Book	White Only	Black Only	Black and White	Other Minorities	Total
100 Edition	90	9	12	15	126
Row%	71.4	7.1	9.5	11.9	
Column%	43.7	100.0	100.0	78.9	
Revised Edition	116	0	0	4	120
Row%	96.7	0.0	0.0	3.3	
Column%	56.3	0.0	0.0	21.1	

Chi Square= 30.522 D.F. = 3

Significance Level= 0.0000

Maximum Likelihood= 39.0389

Significance Level= 0.0000

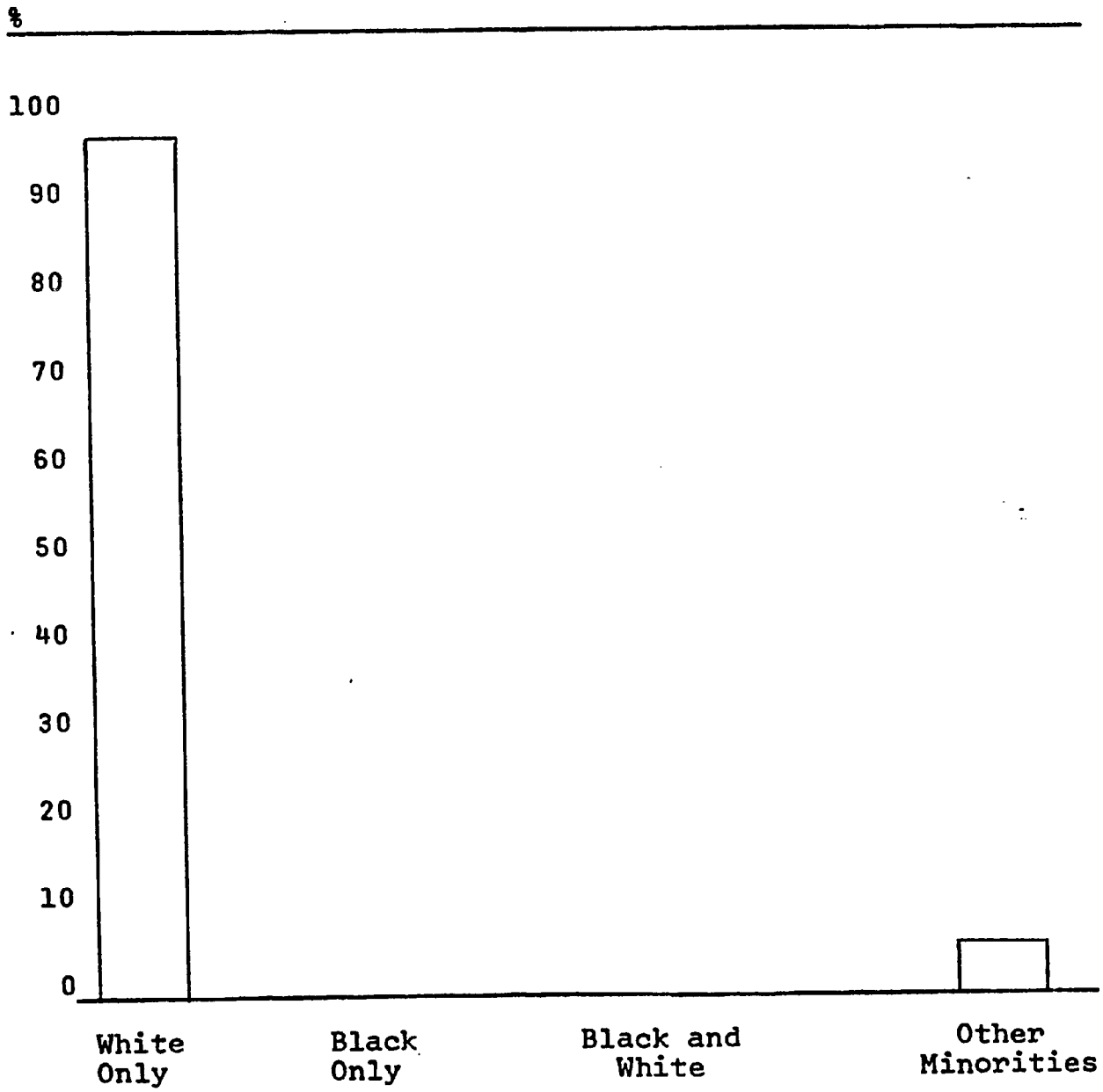


Fig. 3. Distribution of Illustrations in Revised Edition of Around The Corner by Race.

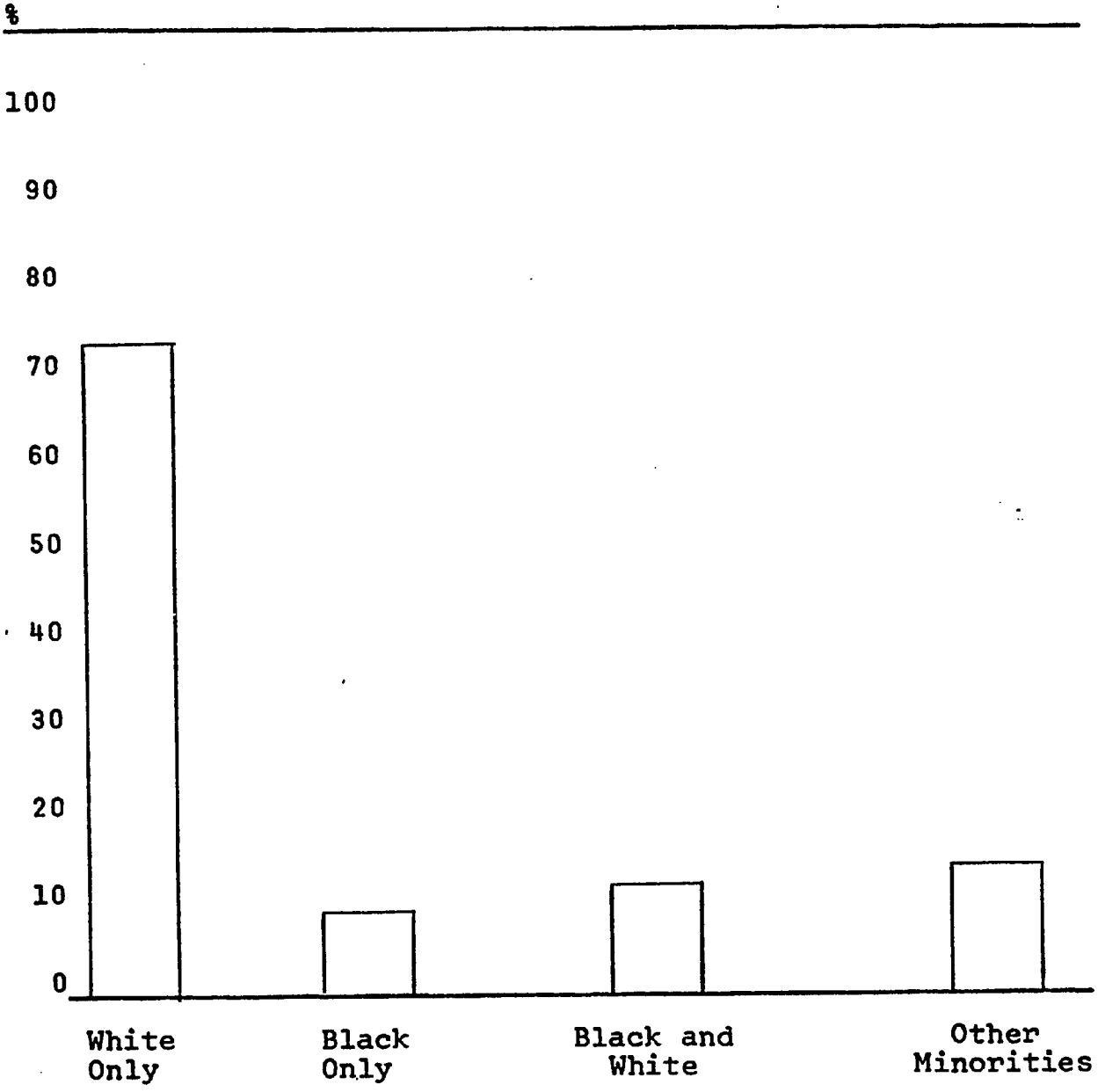


Fig. 4. Distribution of Illustrations in 100 Edition of Around The Corner by Race.

TABLE 10

COMPARISON BETWEEN ILLUSTRATION FREQUENCIES IN FRIENDS FAR AND NEAR BY RACE

Book	White Only	Black Only	Black and White	Other Minorities	Total
100 Edition Row% Column%	97 66.4 47.5	9 6.2 100.0	4 2.7 100.0	36 24.7 51.4	146
Revised Edition Row% Column%	107 75.9 52.5	0 0.0 0.0	0 0.0 0.0	34 24.1 48.6	141

Chi Square= 13.464 D.F.= 3

Significance Level= 0.0037

Maximum Likelihood= 18.4823

Significance Level= 0.0003

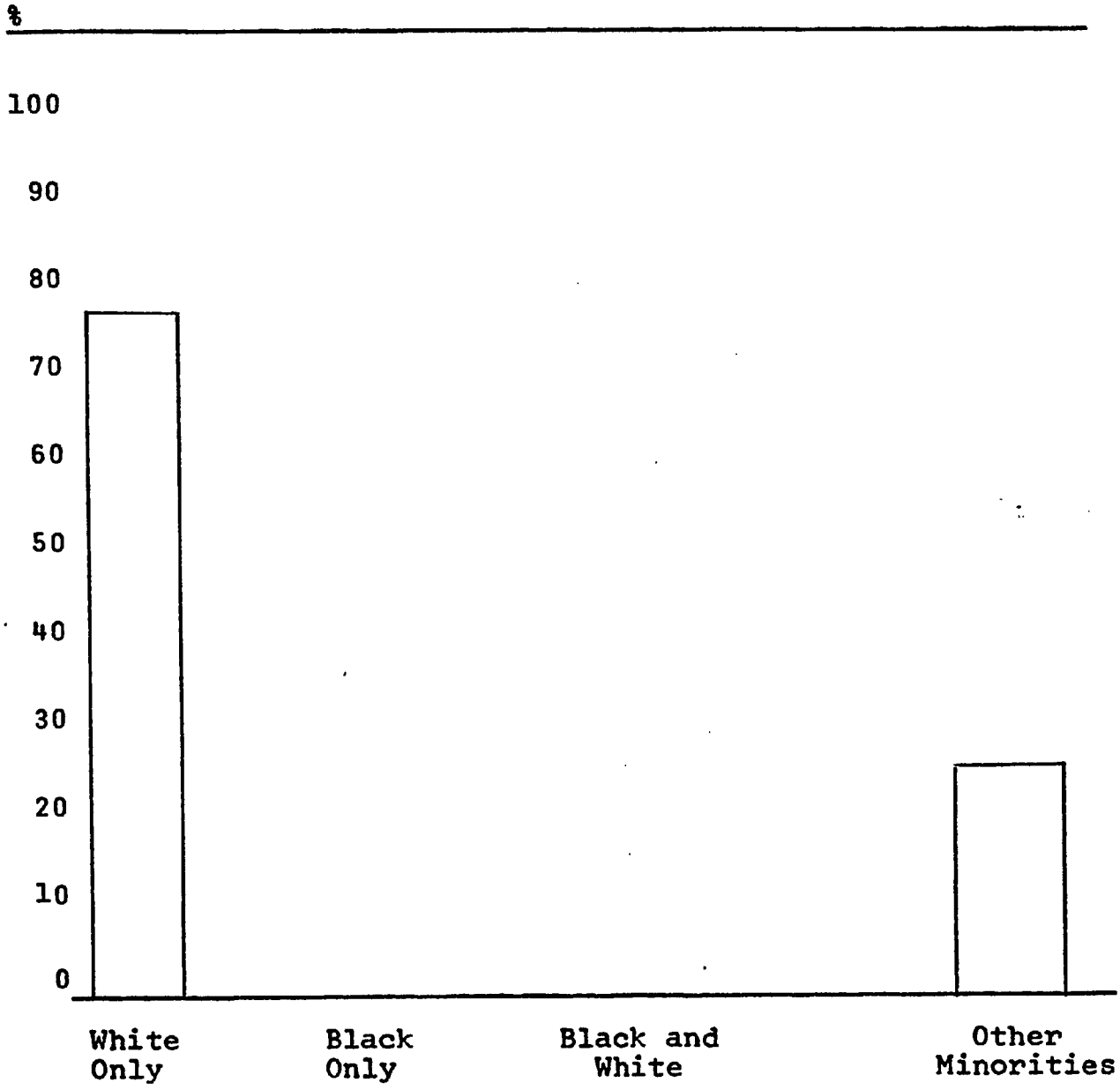


Fig. 5. Distribution of Illustrations in Revised Edition of Friends Far and Near by Race.

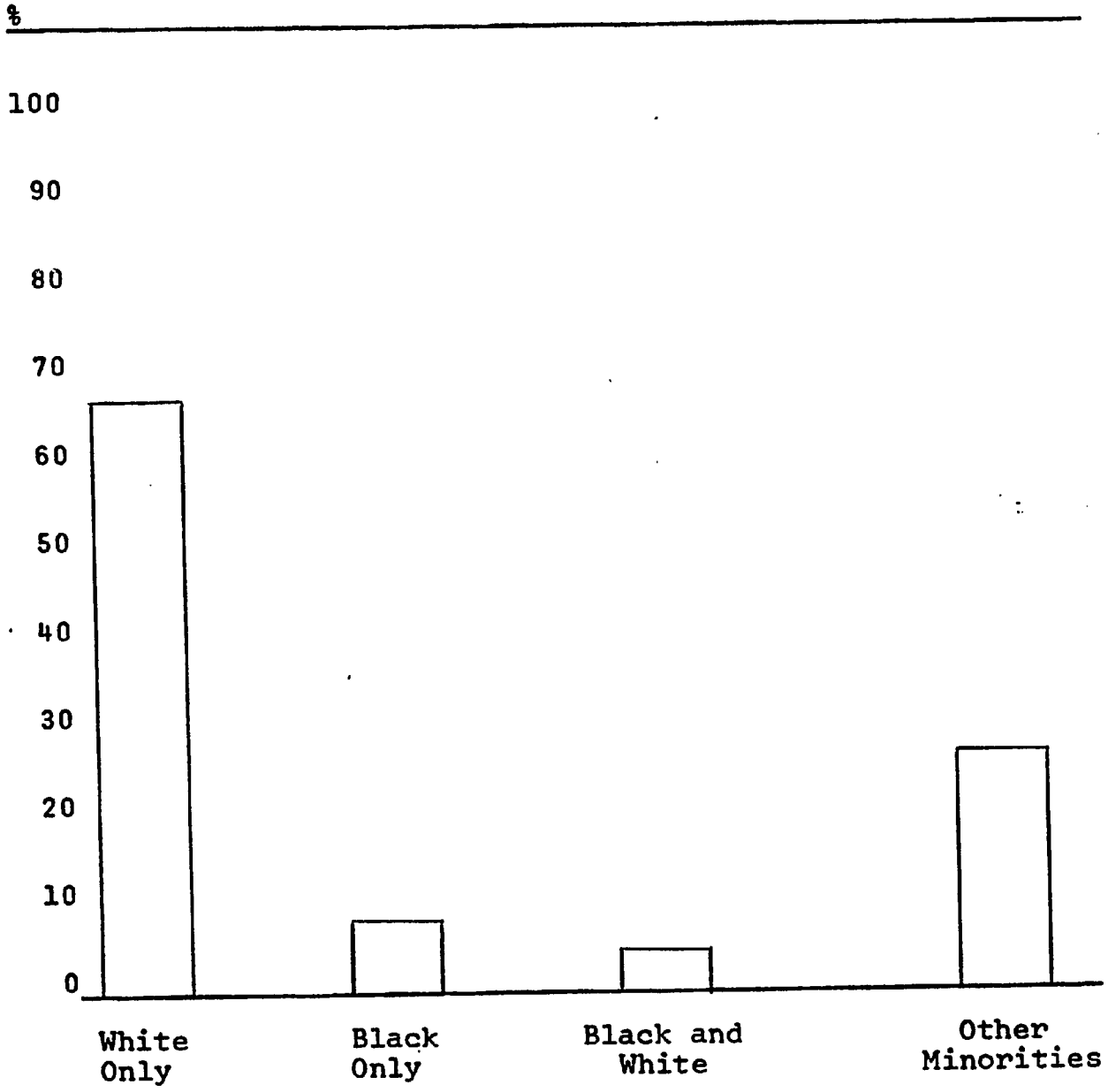


Fig. 6. Distribution of Illustrations in 100 Edition of Friends Far and Near by Race.

The final hypothesis tested with regard to differences between the materials was: There will be no differences between the Revised Edition and the 100 Edition with respect to the frequencies with which males and females are depicted in pictures of people. The hypothesis was supported by the evidence.

When the Chi Square test was applied, the sex differences in illustrations were significant between the 100 Edition and the Revised Edition. The total number of illustrations remained constant in the books. While one additional female-only picture was found in the 100 Edition, one less male and female illustration was presented. Otherwise, the frequency of male illustrations and female illustrations in both editions remained the same.

The frequencies of illustrations in Around The Corner as defined by the sex of characters represented were not significantly different when the 100 Edition was compared to the Revised Edition. Males and females were represented equally in the number of illustrations found in both editions.

There was no significant difference between the number of male-female illustrations in the 100 Edition and the Revised Edition of Friends Far and Near. The null hypothesis which concerns the differences in illustrations between editions by sex was accepted. Tables 11, 12, and 13 describe these findings.

TABLE 11

FREQUENCY COMPARISON OF PEOPLE IN ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE LITTLE WHITE HOUSE BY SEX

	Males	Females	Males and Females	Total
100 Edition Row% Column%	21 16.3 50	20 15.5 48.8	88 68.2 50.3	129
Revised Edition Row% Column%	21 16.3 50	21 16.3 51.2	87 67.4 49.7	129
Totals	42	41	175	258

Chi Square= 0.030

D.F.= 2

Significance Level= 0.9851

TABLE 12

FREQUENCY COMPARISON OF PEOPLE IN ILLUSTRATIONS IN AROUND THE CORNER BY SEX

	Males	Females	Males and Females	Total
100 Edition Row% Column%	55 56.7 50	9 9.3 47.4	33 34.0 52.4	97
Revised Edition Row% Column%	55 57.9 50	10 10.5 52.6	30 31.6 47.6	95
Totals	110	19	63	192

Chi Square= 0.175

D.F.= 2

Significance Level= 0.9164

TABLE 13

FREQUENCY COMPARISON OF PEOPLE IN ILLUSTRATIONS IN FRIENDS FAR AND NEAR BY SEX

	Males	Females	Males and Females	Total
100 Edition Row% Column%	60 56.6 53.6	12 11.3 50	34 32.1 51.5	106
Revised Edition Row% Column%	52 54.2 46.4	12 12.5 50	32 33.3 48.5	96
Totals	112	24	66	202

Chi Square= 0.137

D.F.= 2

Significance Level= 0.9336

In the case of the hypotheses posed about differences between the Ginn series, only one, that of no differences in race content of pictures, was rejected. Therefore, it can be argued that children's choices based on pictures may well be related to the racial content of the illustrations.

Testing Null Hypotheses on Preference

Preferences for either edition of basal readers yielded data which was used in examining the null hypothesis related to those preferences. The Chi Square test was used in comparing the differences and in each case the Yates correction was incorporated due to the existence of small cells.

Hypothesis 1

The first preference hypothesis was: There will be no difference between the frequencies with which the Revised Edition and the 100 Edition are preferred for all the subjects, for boys or for girls by grade levels.

Tables 14, 15 and 16 offer the results of the Chi Square test for this hypothesis. In all cases the differences between grades were not significant.

TABLE 14

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES
OF ALL READERS BY GRADE LEVELS

Preference	Primary I	Primary II	Grade 3	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	48 33.3	48 33.3	48 33.3	144 144
Revised Edition Row% Col%	27 37.0 56.2	23 31.5 47.9	23 31.5 47.9	73 50.7
100 Edition Row% Col%	21 29.6 43.7	25 35.2 52.1	25 35.2 52.1	71 49.3

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	.89090	.6405
Chi Square	.88906	.6411

DF= 2 N= 144

TABLE 15

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF BOYS BY GRADE LEVEL

Preference	Primary I	Primary II	Grade 3	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	24 33.3	24 33.3	24 33.3	72 72
Revised Edition Row% Col%	9 32.1 37.5	10 35.7 41.7	9 32.1 37.5	28 38.9
100 Edition Row% Col%	25 34.1 62.5	15 31.8 58.3	14 34.1 62.5	44 61.1

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	.11643	.9434
Chi Square	.11688	.9432

DF= 2 N= 72

TABLE 16

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF GIRLS BY GRADE LEVEL

Preference	Primary I	Primary II	Grade 3	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	24 33.3	24 33.3	24 33.3	72 72
Revised Edition Row% Col%	12 26.7 50.0	15 33.3 62.5	18 40.0 75.0	45 62.5
100 Edition Row% Col%	12 44.4 50.0	9 33.3 37.5	6 22.2 25.0	27 37.5

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	3.2469	.1972
Chi Square	3.2000	.2019

DF= 2 N= 72

Hypothesis 2

The second preference hypothesis was: There will be no differences between the choices of boys and girls for the Revised Edition and the 100 Edition. This hypothesis was tested first by grade level. The results of the Chi Square testing are found in Tables 17, 18 and 19. The only significant difference was found at the Primary I level where the preferences of girls for the 100 Edition was twice as great as that of boys. The boys' preference for the Revised Edition was three times as great as that of the girls'. The strengths of these preferences influenced the composite results. Figure 7 displays the significantly different composite preferences when preferences of boys and girls in all grades were compared.

The preferences of all readers at Primary I were significant at the .01 level. The girls registered the strongest preference with 79.2% of them preferring the 100 Edition of The Little White House while 20.8% preferred the Revised Edition. Sixty-six and seven tenths per cent (66.7%) of the boys preferred the Revised Edition, and only 33.3% preferred the 100 Edition.

TABLE 17

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF ALL PRIMARY I READERS BY SEX

Preference	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	24 50.0	24 50.0	48 48
100 Edition Row% Col%	8 29.6 33.3	19 70.4 79.2	27 56.2
Revised Edition Row% Col%	16 76.2 66.7	5 23.8 20.8	21 43.7

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	10.674	.0011
Chi-Square	10.243	.0014

DF= 1 N= 48

TABLE 18

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF ALL PRIMARY II READERS BY SEX

Preference	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	 24 50.0	 24 50.0	48 48
100 Edition Row% Col%	11 47.8 45.8	12 52.2 50.0	23 47.9
Revised Edition Row% Col%	13 52.0 54.2	12 48.0 50.0	25 52.1

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	.83503 -1	.7726
Chi Square	.83478 -1	.7726

DF= 1 N= 48

TABLE 19

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF ALL GRADE 3 READERS BY SEX

Preference	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	24 50.0	24 50.0	48 48
100 Edition Row% Col%	9 39.1 37.5	14 60.9 58.3	23 47.9
Revised Edition Row% Col%	15 60.0 62.5	10 40.0 41.7	25 52.1

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	2.1025	.1471
Chi Square	2.0870	.1486

DF= 1 N= 48

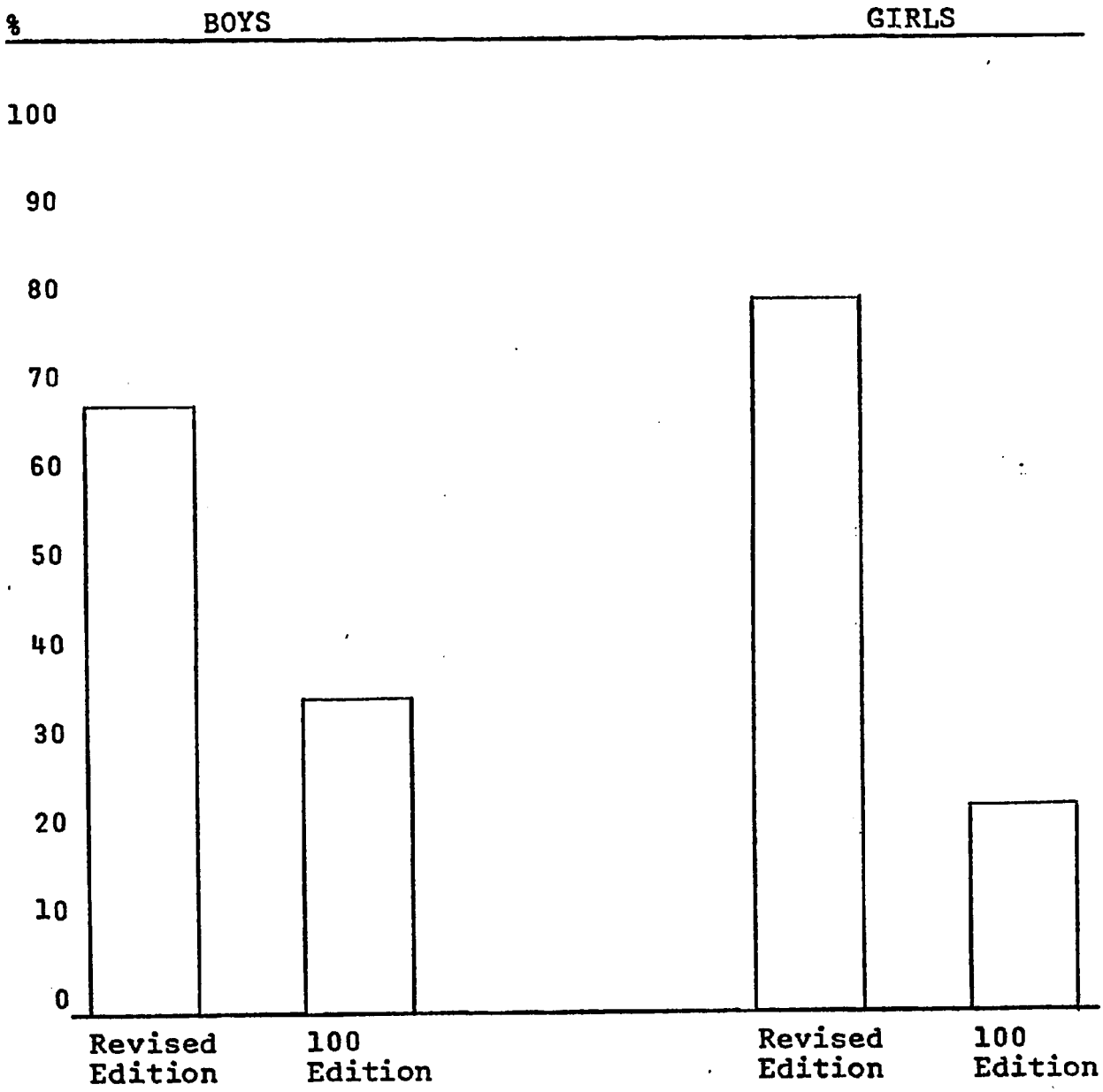


Fig. 7. Basal Reader Preferences of All Primary I Readers By Sex.

As indicated above, the no sex difference hypothesis was tested for combined grade levels. Table 20 offers evidence that rejects the null hypothesis. Again, as in the Primary I finding, all girls chose the 100 Edition significantly more often and all boys chose the Revised Edition more frequently. The effects of the Primary I and the small trend in that direction for Grade 3 influenced the composite results.

In examining the preferences of all readers involved in this study by sex, it was noted that the differences between preferences had significance beyond the .01 level. Sixty-one and one tenth per cent (61.1%) of the boy population preferred the Revised Edition of the reading books while 62.5% of the girls preferred the 100 Edition.

The preferences of children in Primary I had a strong influence in the composite results. At that level, it should be recalled, 79% of the girls preferred the 100 Edition and 68% of the boys preferred the Revised Edition. Though the trend was less dramatic at the Grade 3 level, 70% of the girls preferred the 100 Edition while 63% of the boys preferred the Revised Edition. This trend, too, influenced the composite results.

TABLE 20

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF ALL READERS IN PRIMARY I, PRIMARY II AND GRADE 3 BY SEX

Preference	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	72 50.0	72 50.0	144 144
100 Edition Row% Col%	28 38.4 38.9	45 61.6 62.5	73 50.7
Revised Edition Row% Col%	44 62.0 61.1	27 38.0 37.5	71 49.3

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	8.1057	.0044
Chi Square	8.0293	.0046

DF= 1 N= 144

The hypothesis that there will be no differences between preferences for the two editions for boys and girls was also tested for achievement levels within each grade. In Tables 21, 22 and 23, the reported results indicate that for the above-average children significant sex differences existed only in Primary I. Figure 8 illustrates this data.

The above-average readers at the Primary I level demonstrated preferences which were significant beyond the .002 level of significance. While 87.5% of the boys preferred the Revised Edition of The Little White House, 87.5% of the girls at the same level preferred the 100 Edition of The Little White House.

The preferences of the above-average readers at the Primary II level were not significantly different based on sex. The preferences as recorded did measure some difference, but those differences are not varied enough to be meaningful statistically.

The above-average readers in the third grade did not demonstrate a significant difference between the sexes' preferences for illustrations in Friends Far and Near, 100 Edition and Revised Edition.

TABLE 21

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF ABOVE-AVERAGE PRIMARY I READERS BY SEX

Preference	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	 8 50.0	 8 50.0	16 16
100 Edition Row% Col%	1 12.5 12.5	7 87.5 87.5	8 50.0
Revised Edition Row% Col%	7 87.5 87.5	1 12.5 12.5	8 50.0

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	10.124	.0015
Chi Square	9.0000	.0027

DF= 1 N= 16

TABLE 22

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF ABOVE-AVERAGE PRIMARY II READERS BY SEX

Preference	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	 8 50.0	 8 50.0	16 16
100 Edition Row% Col%	5 71.4 62.5	2 28.6 25.0	7 43.8
Revised Edition Row% Col%	3 33.3 37.5	6 66.7 75.0	9 56.3

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	2.3477	.1255
Chi Square	2.2857	.1306

DF= 1 N= 16

TABLE 23

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF ABOVE-AVERAGE GRADE 3 READERS BY SEX

Preference	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	8 50.0	8 50.0	16
100 Edition Row% Col%	3 50.0 37.5	3 50.0 37.5	6 37.5
Revised Edition Row% Col%	5 50.0 62.5	5 50.0 62.5	10 62.5

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	.71054-14	1.0000
Chi Square	0.	1.0000

DF= 1 N= 16

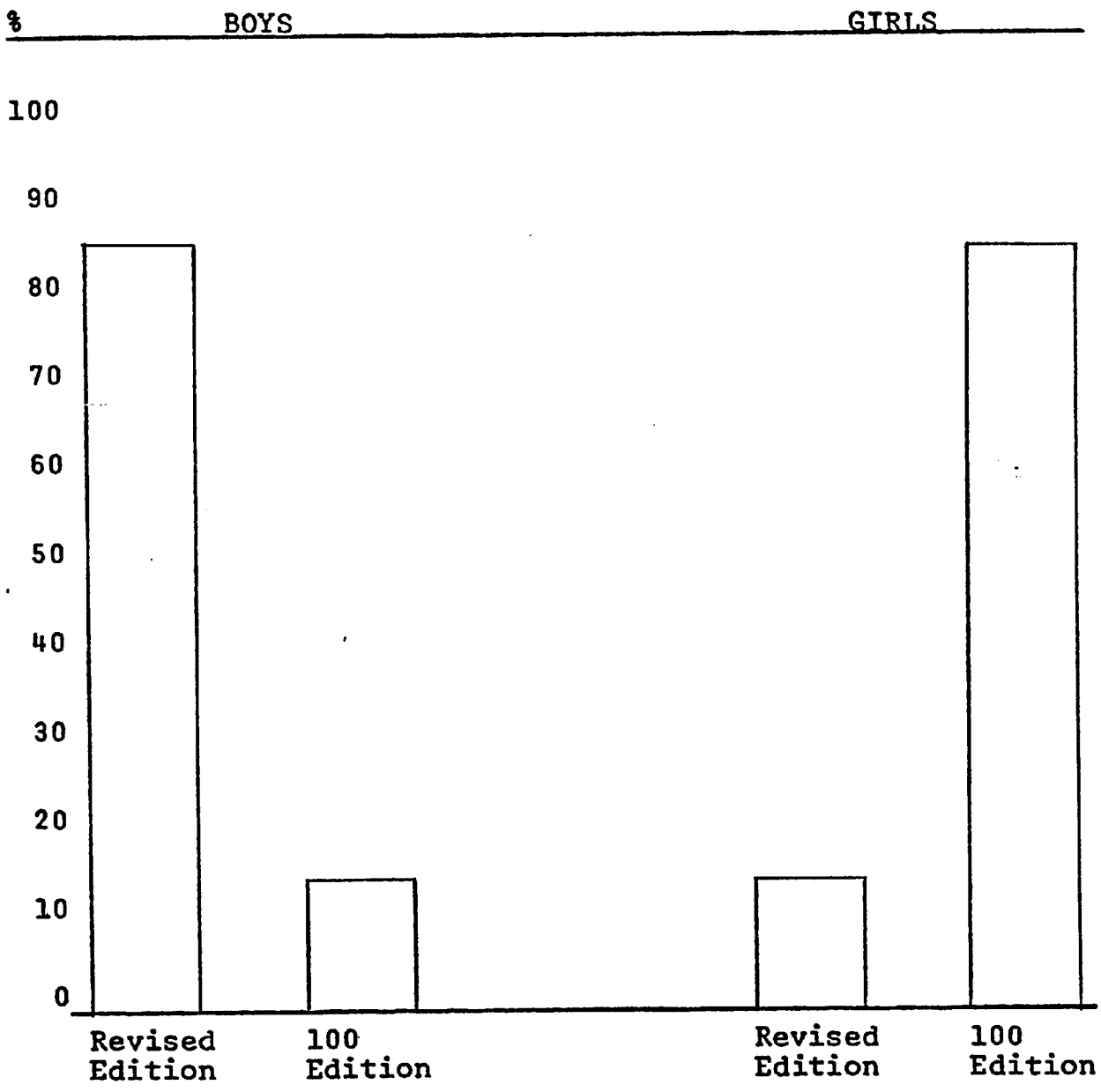


Fig. 8. Basal Reader Preferences of Above-Average Readers in Primary I.

The testing of the hypothesis for average readers reported in Tables 24, 25 and 26 resulted in only one significantly different outcome which was noted at the Primary I level with boys and girls differing in their preferences in the same directions, but less intensely as their above-average peers. Figure 9 shows the differences between average readers at the Primary I level.

The average readers at the Primary I level demonstrated preferences that were significant at the .05 level. Eighty-seven and five tenths per cent (87.5%) of the girls preferred the 100 Edition of The Little White House to the Revised Edition. Sixty-two and five tenths per cent (62.5%) of the boys preferred the Revised Edition of The Little White House.

The preferences of boys versus girls registered by average readers at the Primary II level were not significant. Though 75% of the boys preferred the Revised Edition of Around The Corner, 50% of the girls had the same preference and the difference was rendered insignificant.

Table 26 reflects the first instance where more boys preferred the 100 Edition of the reading series to the Revised Edition. Nonetheless, the difference between preference for reading books between boys and girls who were average readers at the third grade level was not significant.

TABLE 24

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF AVERAGE PRIMARY I READERS BY SEX

Preference	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	8 50.0	8 50.0	16 16
100 Edition Row% Col%	3 30.0 37.5	7 70.0 87.5	10 62.5
Revised Edition Row% Col%	5 83.3 62.5	1 16.7 12.5	6 37.5

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	4.5567	.0328
Chi Square	4.2667	.0389

DF= 1 N= 16

TABLE 25

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF AVERAGE PRIMARY II READERS BY SEX

Preference	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	8 50.0	8 50.0	16
100 Edition Row% Col%	2 33.3 25.0	4 66.7 50.0	6 37.5
Revised Edition Row% Col%	6 60.0 75.0	4 40.0 50.0	10 62.5

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	1.0823	.2982
Chi Square	1.0667	.3017

DF= 1 N= 16

TABLE 26

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF AVERAGE GRADE 3 READERS

Preference	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	8 50.0	8 50.0	16 16
100 Edition Row% Col%	5 55.6 62.5	4 44.4 50.0	9 56.3
Revised Edition Row% Col%	3 42.9 37.5	4 57.1 50.0	7 43.8

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	.25469	.6138
Chi Square	.25397	.6143

DF= 1 N= 16

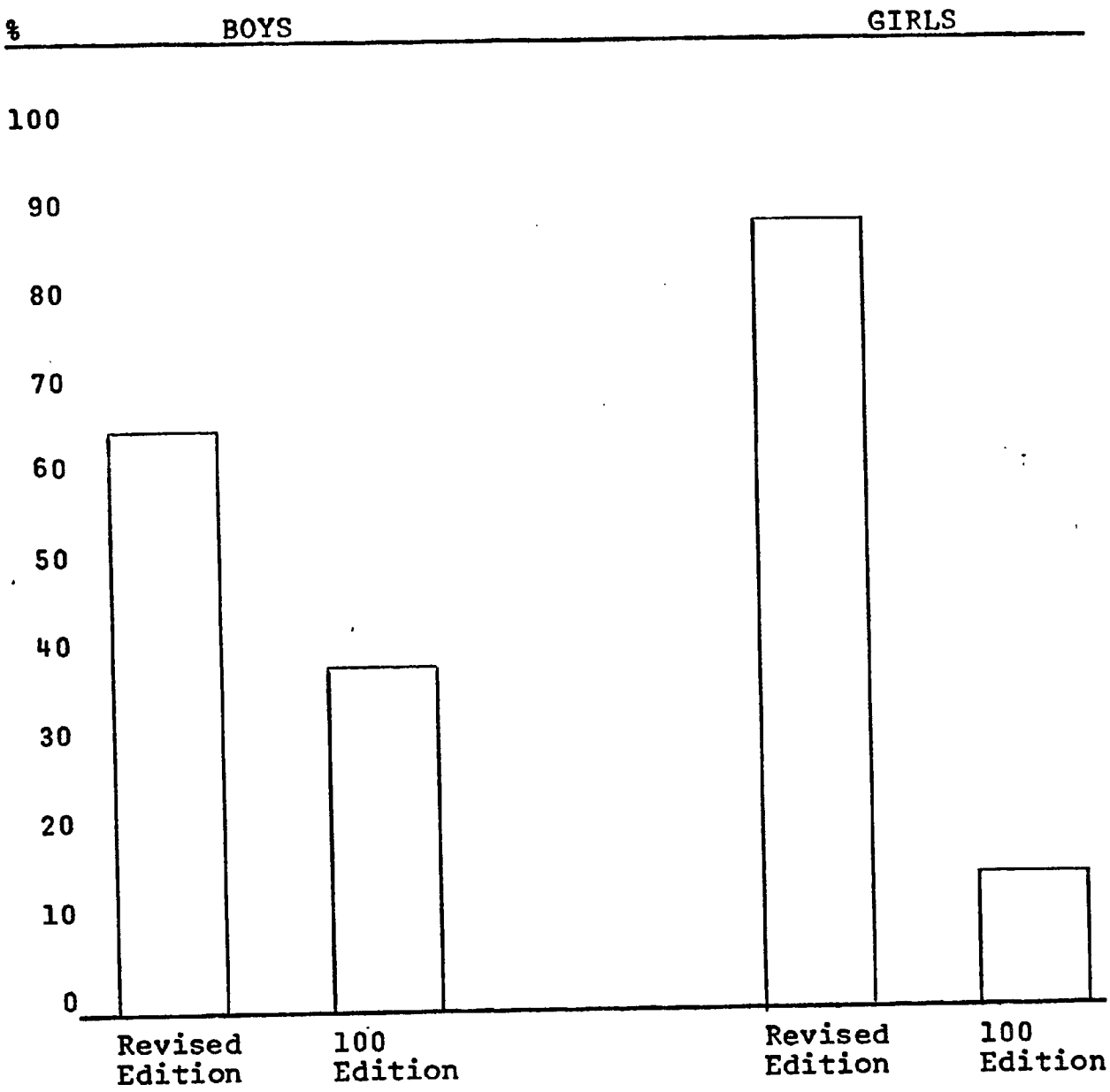


Fig. 9. Basal Reader Preferences of Average Primary I Readers By Sex.

When the hypothesis was examined for below-average readers at each grade level, only the testing at the third grade level resulted in a significant difference. Here, the direction of the responses was precisely the same as it was for Primary I, above-average readers. These results are in Tables 27, 28 and 29. Figure 10 follows to graphically represent this evidence.

The boys in Primary I were divided in that 50% preferred the 100 Edition and 50% preferred the Revised Edition of The Little White House. Sixty-two and five tenths per cent (62.5%) of the girls preferred the 100 Edition. The differences were not significant, however.

There was no significant difference registered in the preference for a reading book between boys and girls of below-average reading ability at Primary II level. The boys preferred equally the 100 Edition to the Revised Edition. Seventy-five per cent (75%) of the girls preferred the 100 Edition.

Below-average readers in the third grade demonstrated a preference beyond the .003 level of significance. Eighty-seven and five tenths per cent (87.5%) of the boys preferred the Revised Edition of Friends Far and Near while 87.5% of the girls preferred the 100 Edition of that book.

TABLE 27

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF BELOW-AVERAGE PRIMARY I READERS BY SEX

Preference	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	8 50.0	8 50.0	16 16
100 Edition Row% Col%	4 44.4 50.0	5 55.6 62.5	9 56.3
Revised Edition Row% Col%	4 57.1 50.0	3 42.9 37.5	7 43.8

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	.25469	.6138
Chi Square	.25397	.6143

DF= 1 N= 16

TABLE 28

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF BELOW-AVERAGE PRIMARY II READERS BY SEX

Preference	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	8 50.0	8 50.0	16 16
100 Edition Row% Col%	4 40.0 50.0	6 60.0 75.0	10 62.5
Revised Edition Row% Col%	4 66.7 50.0	2 33.3 25.0	6 37.5

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	1.0823	.2982
Chi Square	1.0667	.3017

DF= 1 N= 16

TABLE 29

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF BELOW-AVERAGE GRADE 3 READERS BY SEX

Preference	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	8 50.0	8 50.0	16 16
100 Edition Row% Col%	1 12.5 12.5	7 87.5 87.5	8 50.0
Revised Edition Row% Col%	7 87.5 87.5	1 12.5 12.5	8 50.0

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	10.124	.0015
Chi Square	9.0000	.0027

DF= 1 N= 16

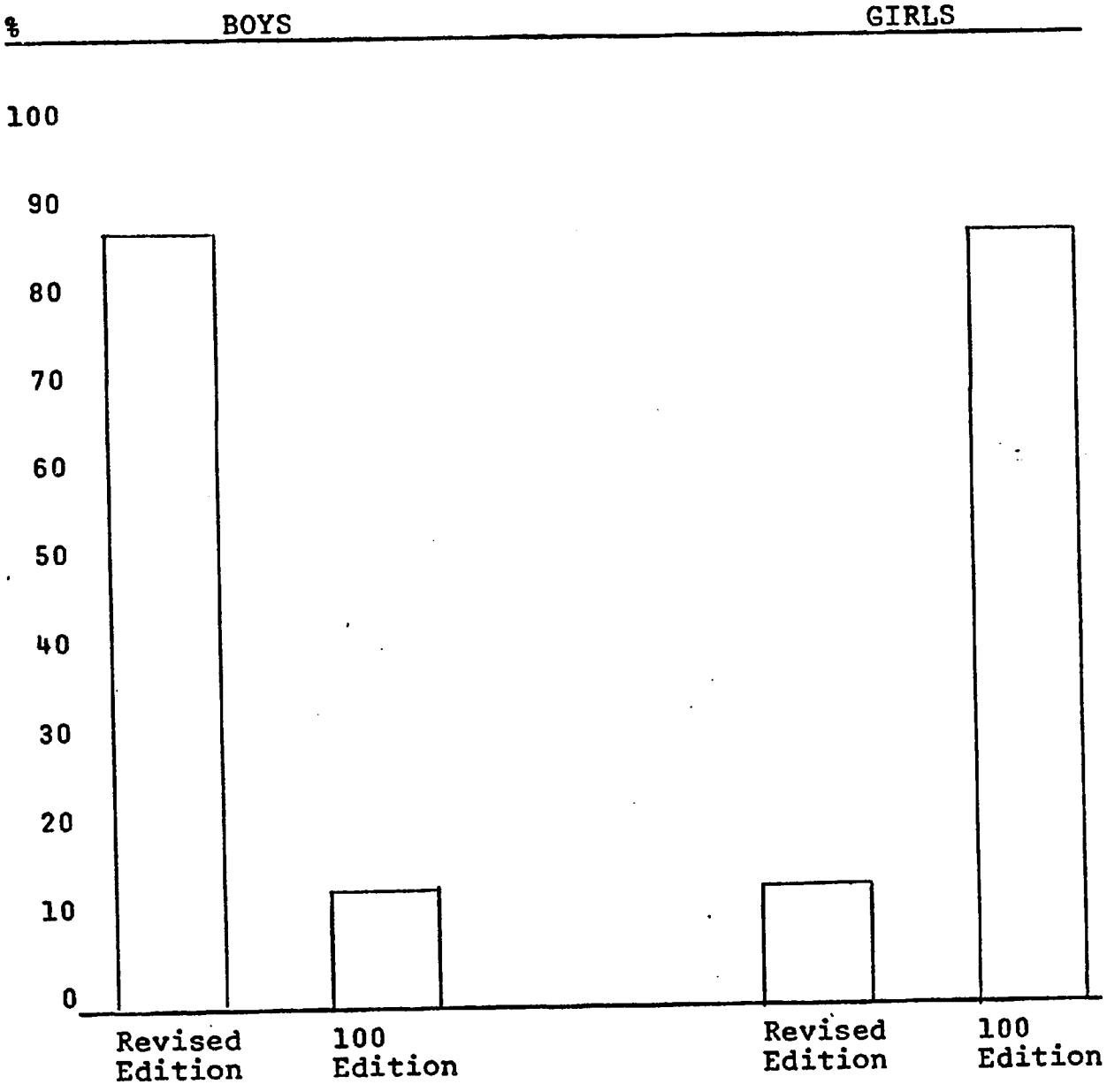


Fig. 10. Basal Reader Preferences of Below-Average Readers in Grade 3.

When combined grade groups of above-average, average, and below-average readers were compared for preferences, only one significant difference was found and that was between boys and girls of below-average achievement. The direction for preferences was 100 Edition for girls and Revised Edition for boys. Tables 30, 31 and 32 reflect these findings.

The statistical examination of preferences of boys and girls for the two editions of Ginn's Basal Reader Series revealed that boys preferred the Revised Edition while girls preferred the 100 Edition at the Primary I level. The examination of readers at different achievement levels by grade levels indicated that this direction of preference held true for average and above-average readers. At the Grade 3 level, significant differences were found in the same direction for below-average readers. When all readers at all levels were examined by sex, a significant difference was found with girls favoring the 100 Edition and boys favoring the Revised Edition. Figure 11 illustrates this evidence.

In further clarifying this finding, it is noted that the above-average readers in Primary I had demonstrated a preference that was significantly different in an earlier table in which 87.5% of the girls preferred the 100 Edition and 87.5% of the boys preferred the Revised Edition. The difference, however, was negated in the composite finding by above-average readers in Primary II and Grade 3. The above-average subjects in these two grades did not demonstrate preferences in concert with Primary I subjects.

TABLE 30

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF ALL ABOVE-AVERAGE READERS BY SEX

Preference	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	24 50.0	24 50.0	48 48
100 Edition Row% Col%	9 42.9 37.5	12 57.1 50.0	21 43.7
Revised Edition Row% Col%	15 55.6 62.5	12 44.4 50.0	27 56.2

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	.76406	.3821
Chi Square	.76190	.3827

DF= 1 N= 48

TABLE 31

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF ALL AVERAGE READERS BY SEX

Preference	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	24 50.0	24 50.0	48 48
100 Edition Row% Col%	10 40.0 41.7	15 60.0 62.5	25 52.1
Revised Edition Row% Col%	14 60.9 58.3	9 39.1 37.5	23 47.9

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	2.1025	.1471
Chi Square	2.0870	.1486

DF= 1 N= 48

TABLE 32

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES OF ALL BELOW-AVERAGE READERS BY SEX

Preference	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	24 50.0	24 50.0	48 48
100 Edition Row% Col%	9 33.3 37.5	18 66.7 75.0	27 56.2
Revised Edition Row% Col%	15 71.4 62.5	6 28.6 25.0	21 43.7

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	7.0430	.0080
Chi Square	6.8571	.0088

DF= 1 N= 48

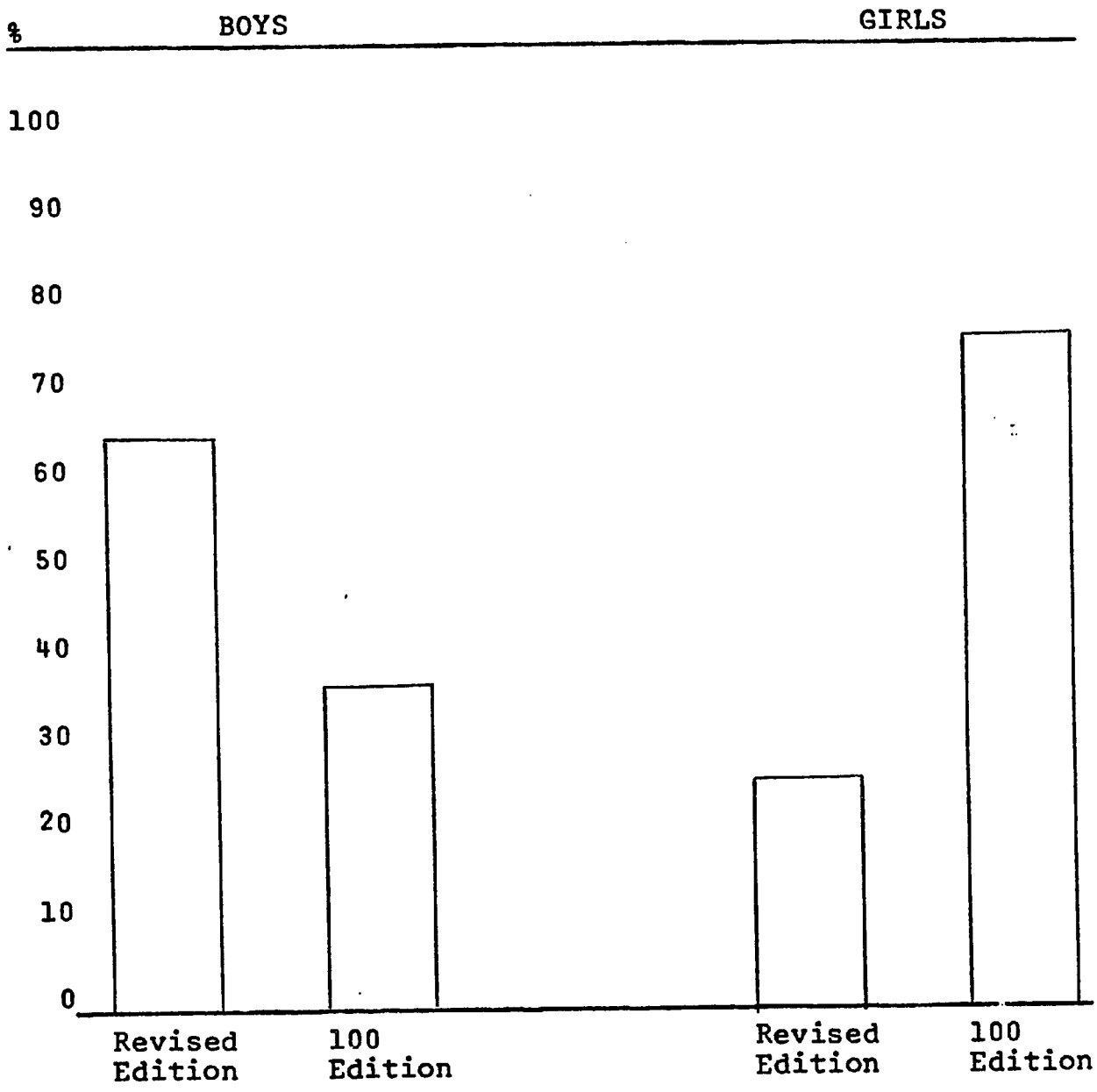


Fig. 11. Basal Reader Preferences of All Below-Average Readers in Primary I, Primary II, and Grade 3.

Hypothesis 3

The third hypothesis was: There will be no differences among the choices of above-average, average, and below-average achieving readers. This hypothesis was supported by the evidence presented in Tables 33, 34, 35 and 36.

Fifty per cent (50%) of above-average readers preferred the Revised Edition and 50% preferred the 100 Edition at the Primary I level. The average and below-average groups were not quite as equal in the differences between preferences but the differences were so small that they were not significant.

At the Primary II level, the largest differences were revealed in the findings for average and below-average readers. More average readers preferred the Revised Edition to the 100 Edition. With below-average readers the contrary was true in that more subjects here preferred the 100 Edition.

The differences in preferences among above-average, average, and below-average readers in Grade 3 were small. More above-average readers preferred the Revised Edition while more average readers preferred the 100 Edition. The below-average readers were equally divided in preferences.

In none of the cases were the differences significant when the Chi Square test was applied.

TABLE 33

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES BY ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

PRIMARY I READERS

Preference		Above-Average	Average	Below-Average
N=	48			
Total=	48	16	16	16
Row%		33.3	33.3	33.3
Col%				
100 Edition	27	8	10	9
Row%		29.6	37.0	33.3
Col%	56.2	50.0	62.5	56.3
Revised Edition	21	8	6	7
Row%		38.1	28.6	33.3
Col%	43.7	50.0	37.5	43.8

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	.50938	.7752
Chi Square	.50794	.7757

DF= 2 N= 48

TABLE 34

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES BY ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

PRIMARY II READERS

Preference		Above-Average	Average	Below-Average
N=	48			
Total=	48	16	16	16
Row%		33.3	33.3	33.3
Col%				
100 Edition	23	7	6	10
Row%		30.4	26.1	43.5
Col%	47.9	43.8	37.5	62.5
Revised Edition	25	9	10	6
Row%		36.0	40.0	24.0
Col%	52.1	56.3	62.5	37.5

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	2.1887	
Chi Square	2.1704	

DF= 2 N= 48

TABLE 35

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES BY ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

GRADE 3

Preference		Above-Average	Average	Below-Average
N=	48			
Total=	48	16	16	16
Row%		33.3	33.3	33.3
Col%				
100 Edition	23	6	9	8
Row%		26.1	39.1	34.8
Col%	47.9	37.5	56.3	50.0
Revised Edition	25	10	7	8
Row%		40.0	28.0	32.0
Col%	52.1	62.5	43.8	50.0

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	1.1780	
Chi Square	1.1687	

DF= 2 N= 48

TABLE 36

COMPARISON BETWEEN BASAL READER PREFERENCES BY ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

COMBINED GRADES

Preference		Above-Average	Average	Below-Average
N= Total= Row% Col%	144 144	48 33.3	48 33.3	48 33.3
100 Edition Row% Col%	73 50.7	21 28.8 43.7	25 34.2 52.1	27 37.0 56.2
Revised Edition Row% Col%	71 49.3	27 38.0 56.2	23 32.4 47.9	21 29.6 43.7

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	1.5595	
Chi Square	1.5559	

DF= 2 N= 144

Hypothesis 4

The fourth hypothesis was centered upon reasons for preferences. It stated: There will be no differences among the frequencies with which the cover, stories, print and pictures are indicated as influencing the children's choices.

In general, when reasons for choice are given there is a trend for pictures to be given most frequently by black children. Stories ranked a close second. Cover and print were given only 15 and 9 times respectively out of 144 responses. (See Table 37 and Figure 12.)

The results of the examination of differences among reasons for preferences by editions are presented in Table 37. It was noted that a significant difference beyond the .002 level was found. The reasons which influenced the results were stories and pictures. The largest percentage of choice for the 100 Edition was made because of stories (52.1%). The reason receiving the largest percentage of choice for the Revised Edition was pictures (60.6%). Figures 13 and 14 depict this evidence.

It will be recalled that it was pointed out that the stories did not essentially differ between the two editions. However, significant differences were found in the racial content of the pictures with the 100 Edition featuring inclusion of blacks and other minorities.

TABLE 37

REASONS FOR PREFERENCES OF ALL SUBJECTS BY BASAL READER CHOICE

Reasons	100 Edition	Revised Edition	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	73 50.7	71 49.3	144 144
Cover Row% Col%	8 53.3 11.0	7 46.7 9.9	15 10.4
Stories Row% Col%	38 69.1 52.1	17 30.9 23.9	55 38.2
Print Row% Col%	5 55.6 6.8	4 44.4 5.6	9 6.2
Pictures Row% Col%	22 33.8 30.1	43 66.2 60.6	65 45.1

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	15.283	.0016
Chi Square	14.956	.0019

DF= 3 N= 144

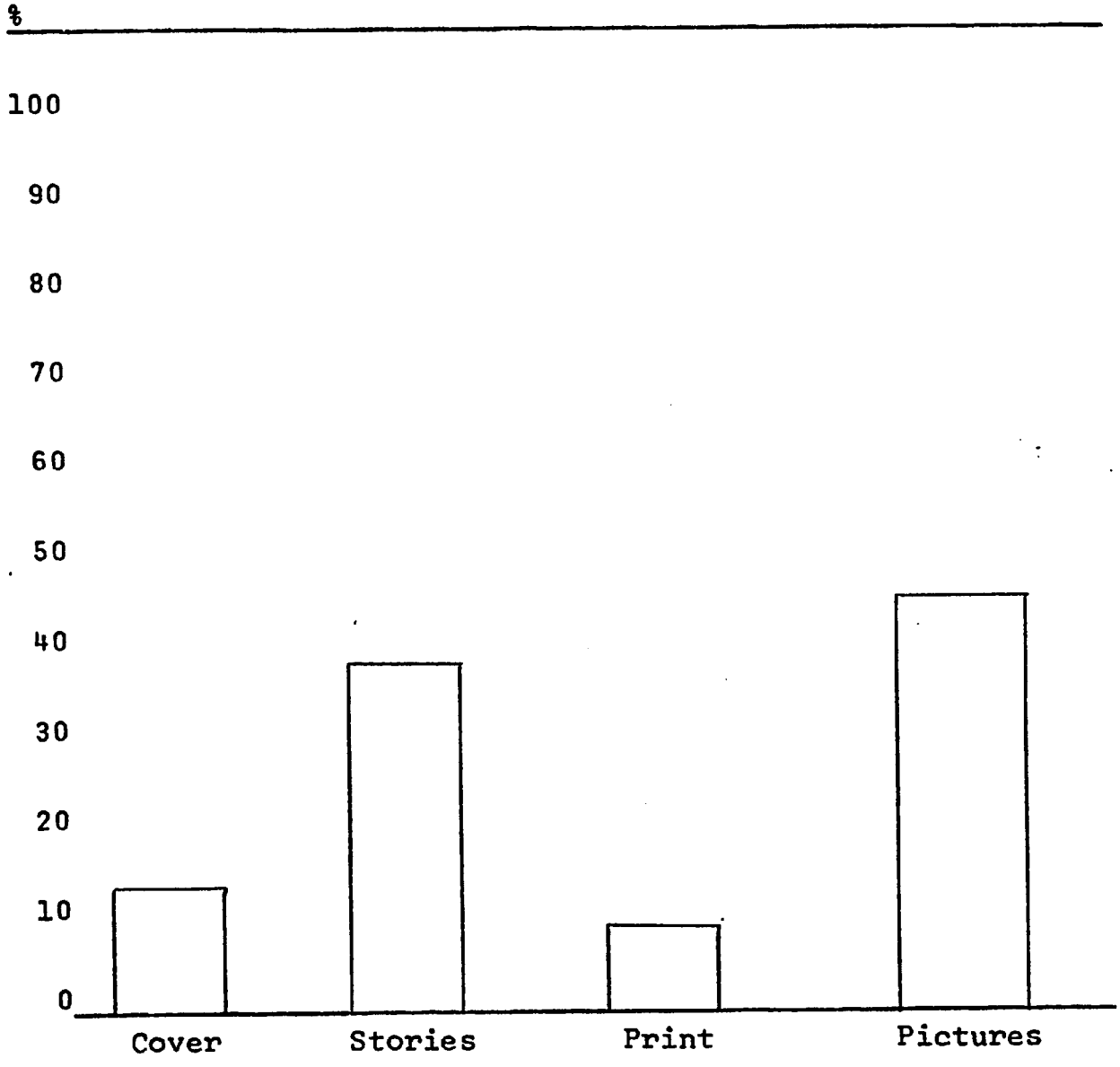


Fig. 12. Reasons for Preferences of Total Subject Population.

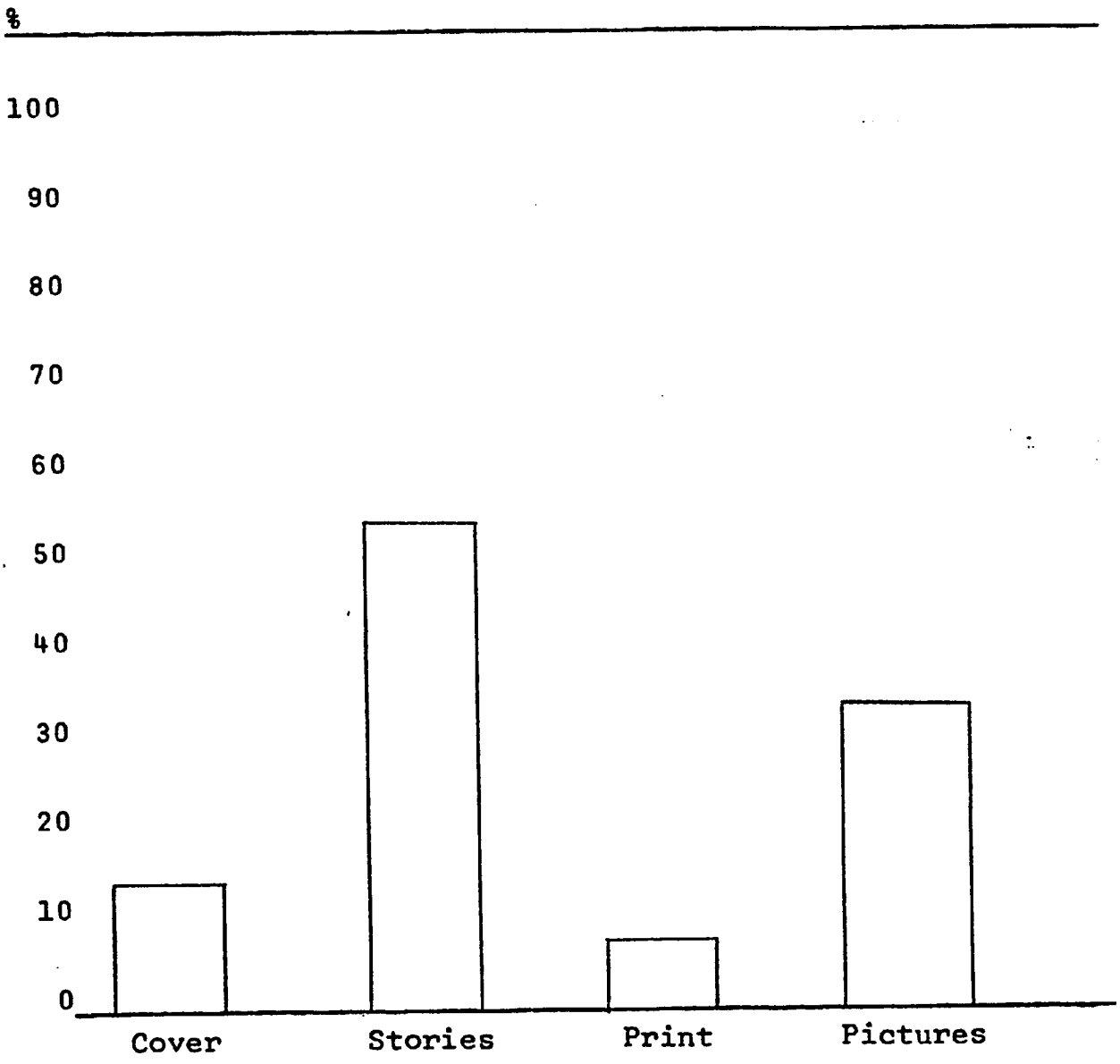


Fig. 13. Reasons for Preferring 100 Edition.

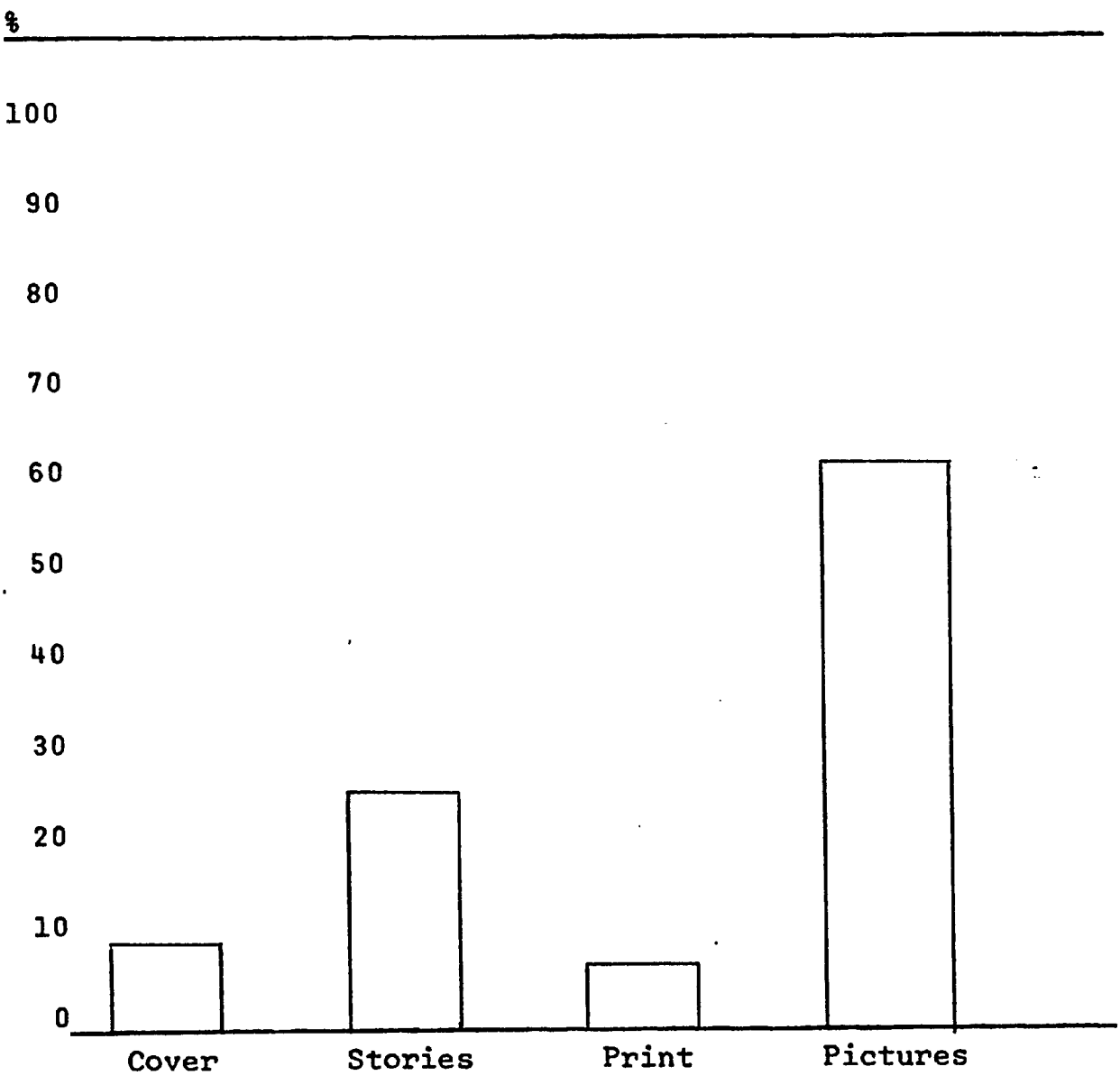


Fig. 14. Reasons for Preferring Revised Edition.

When the reasons for preferences by each edition were examined for boys and girls, only the boys' reasons differed significantly for each edition. The boys' reasons for preferences were significant at the .01 level. Less than 39% of the boys preferred the 100 Edition. Of that population, 25% gave pictures as their reason. Sixty-four per cent (64%) of these boys gave stories as the reason for choosing the 100 Edition. The larger segment of boys preferred the Revised Edition. Almost 64% of this group cited pictures as their reason for preference. Stories were given by only 20% of the boys for choosing the Revised Edition. Cover and pictures were given as reasons by only a few of the boys for either choice. Table 38 reports the boys' responses and Figures 13 and 14 illustrate these results graphically.

Even though there were no significant differences noted among the reasons for the girls' preferences, the direction remained the same as that of the boys. That is, pictures and stories were the two most important reasons for choosing a book. Table 39 reports the responses of the girls.

TABLE 38

REASONS FOR BOYS' PREFERENCES BY
BASAL READER CHOICE

Reasons	100 Edition	Revised Edition	Total
N=			72
Total=	28	44	72
Row%	38.9	61.1	
Col%			
Cover	3	5	8
Row%	37.5	62.5	
Col%	10.7	11.4	11.1
Stories	16	9	25
Row%	64.0	36.0	
Col%	57.1	20.5	34.7
Print	2	2	4
Row%	50.0	50.0	
Col%	7.1	4.5	5.6
Pictures	7	28	35
Row%	20.0	80.0	
Col%	25.0	63.6	48.6

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	12.399	.0061
Chi Square	12.102	.0070

DF= 3 N= 72

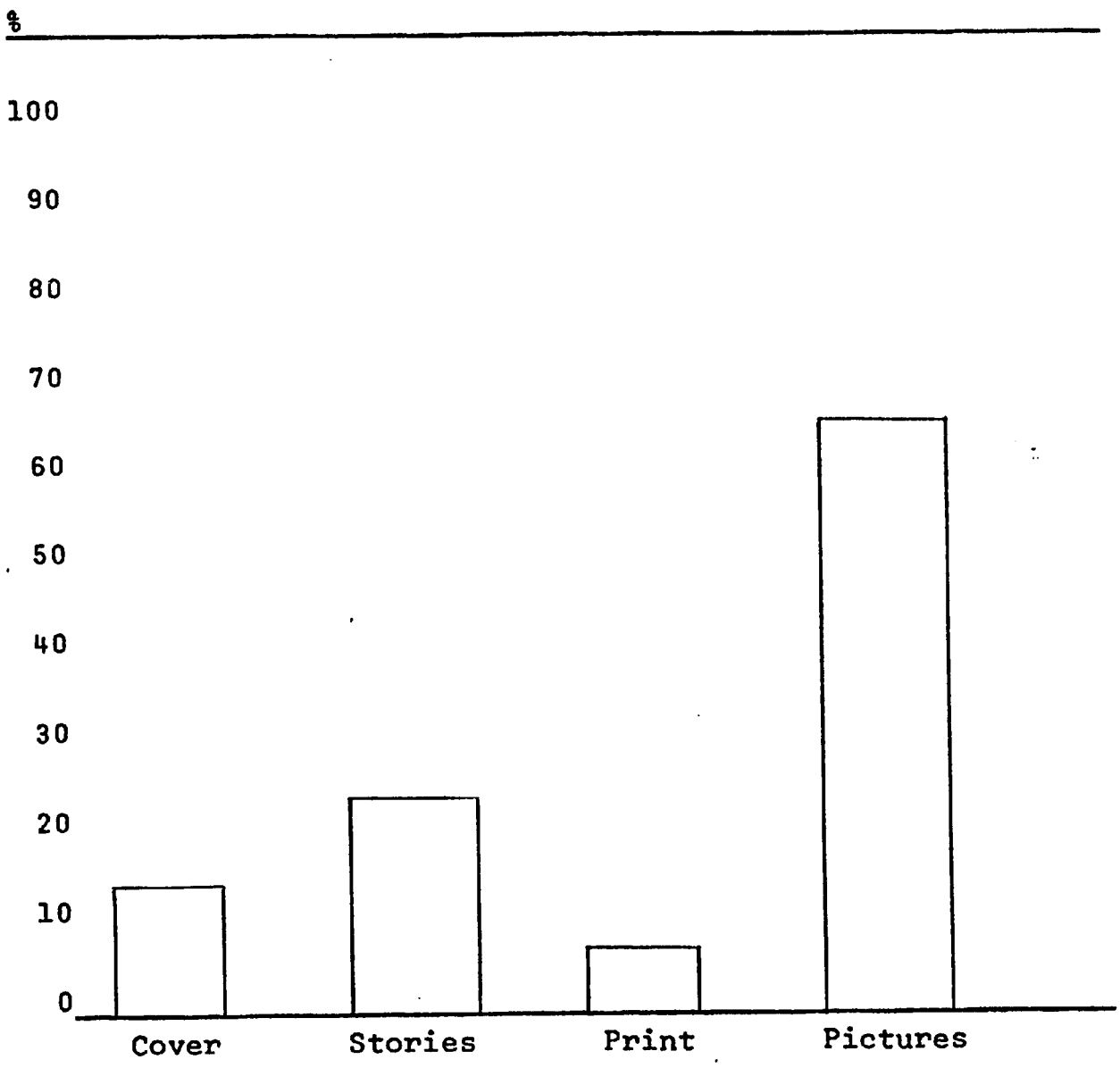


Fig. 15. Reasons for Preferring Revised Edition Given by Boys.

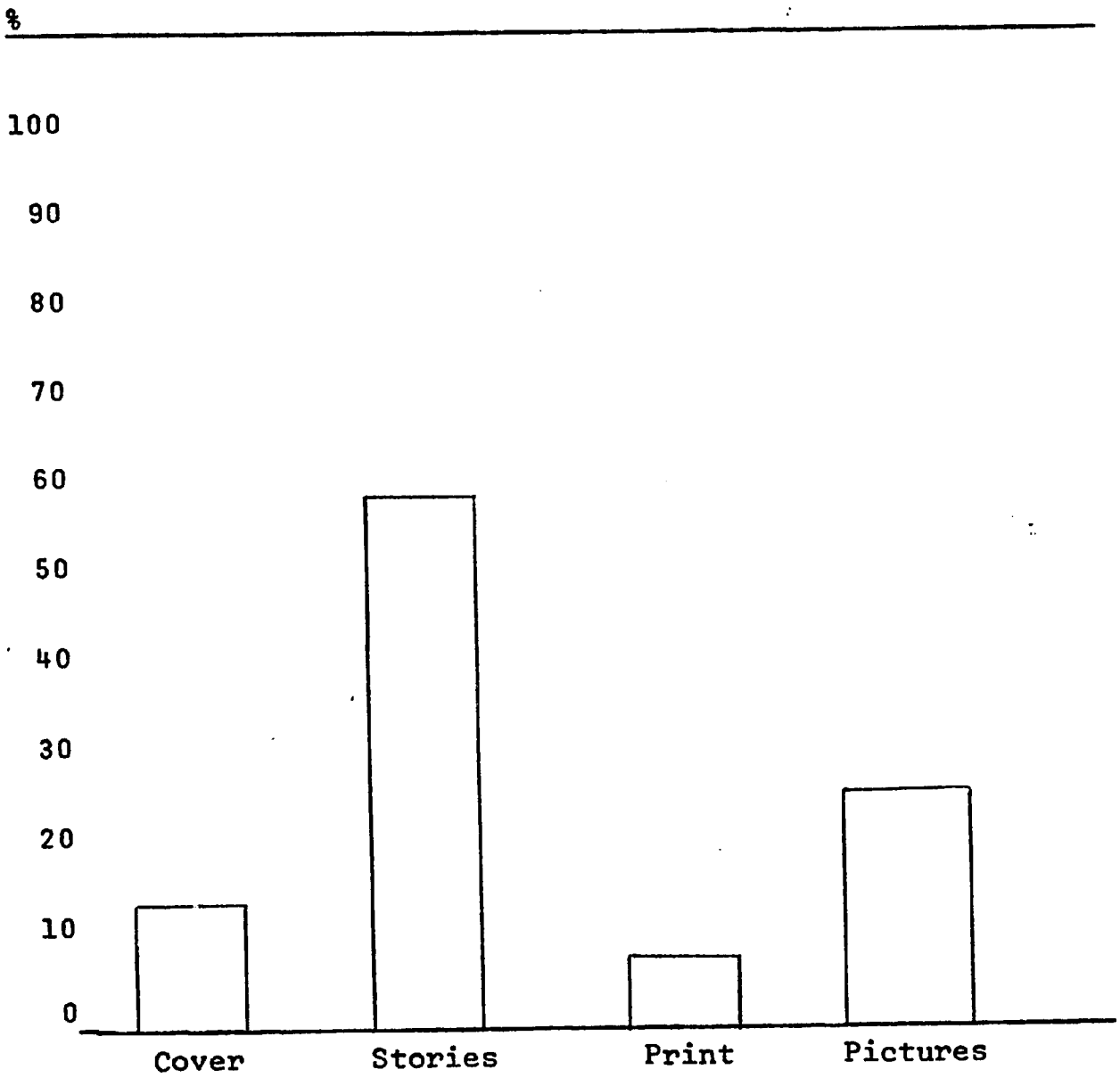


Fig. 16. Reasons for Preferring 100 Edition Given by Boys.

TABLE 39

REASONS FOR GIRLS PREFERENCES BY
BASAL READER CHOICE

Reasons	100 Edition	Revised Edition	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	45 62.5	27 37.5	72 72
Cover Row% Col%	5 71.4 11.1	2 28.6 7.4	7 9.7
Stories Row% Col%	22 73.3 48.9	8 26.7 29.6	30 41.7
Print Row% Col%	3 60.0 6.7	2 40.0 7.4	5 6.9
Pictures Row% Col%	15 50.0 33.3	15 50.0 55.6	30 41.7

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	3.7755	.2868
Chi Square	3.7537	.2893

DF= 3 N= 72

The results of the examination of reasons for preference by grade are presented in Table 40 and support the null hypothesis with regard to no difference between grades. It should be noted, however, that at all grade levels pictures and stories influenced preferences to a much greater extent than print and cover. The trend was for pictures to influence choice to the greatest degree.

The hypothesis of no difference among reasons for either preference by reading achievement levels of the children was tested and the results are offered in Table 41. The hypothesis is rejected because the differences were significant. The primary differences lay in the fact that above-average readers most frequently gave stories as their reason for selecting either edition, while average and below-average readers most often reported that pictures were the reason for their choice.

Almost 46% of the above-average readers gave stories as their reason for choosing a book while almost 40% gave pictures as their reason. More average readers gave pictures as the reason for preference than those who gave stories. Both reasons, though, were cited frequently. As with the average readers, more of the below-average subjects cited pictures as the reason. Forty-five per cent (45%) of these children indicated that their preferences were based on pictures while 38% said that stories influenced their choices.

TABLE 40

REASONS FOR EITHER PREFERENCE BY GRADE

Reasons	Primary I	Primary II	Grade 3	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	48 33.3	48 33.3	48 33.3	144 144
Cover Row% Col%	7 46.7 14.6	2 13.3 4.2	6 40.0 12.5	15 10.4
Stories Row% Col%	18 32.7 37.5	19 34.5 39.6	18 32.7 37.5	55 38.2
Print Row% Col%	3 33.3 6.2	5 55.6 10.4	1 11.1 2.1	9 6.2
Pictures Row% Col%	20 30.8 41.7	22 33.8 45.8	23 35.4 47.9	65 45.1

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	6.3976	.3802
Chi Square	5.7184	.4555

DF= 6 N= 144

None of the above-average readers gave print as a reason for choice. There were some average and below-average readers who did cite print as a reason even though that element was absolutely identical in both editions.

The cover was given as a reason for preference by 14.6% of the above-average and below-average readers. Only 2.1% of the average readers cited cover as a reason.

The null hypothesis with regard to reasons for either preference was supported when tested by sex. Application of the Chi Square test to the data revealed no significant differences between boys' and girls' reasons for choice as shown in Table 42.

In summary, when reasons for choice between the two editions of the basal reader were examined, there were significant differences between the reasons for choosing each edition. Pictures influenced the choices of those who selected the Revised Edition about twice as often as they influenced those choosing the 100 Edition. On the other hand, stories influenced those choosing the 100 Edition about twice as often as those choosing the Revised Edition. This trend for pictures followed by stories as reasons for choice emerged when boys' and girls' reasons were examined separately, but only in the case of boys are the differences significant. The direction also holds true by grade level. Only in the case of above-average readers,

TABLE 41

REASONS FOR EITHER PREFERENCE BY
READING ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL

Reasons	Above Average Readers	Average Readers	Below Average Readers	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	48 33.3	48 33.3	48 33.3	144 144
Cover Row% Col%	7 46.7 14.6	1 6.7 2.1	7 46.7 14.6	15 10.4
Stories Row% Col%	22 40.0 45.8	17 30.9 35.4	16 29.1 33.3	55 38.2
Print Row% Col%	0	6 66.7 12.5	3 33.3 6.2	9 6.2
Pictures Row% Col%	19 29.2 39.6	24 36.9 50.0	22 33.8 45.8	65 45.1

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	16.209	.0127
Chi Square	12.512	.0515

DF= 6 N= 144

READING LEVELS

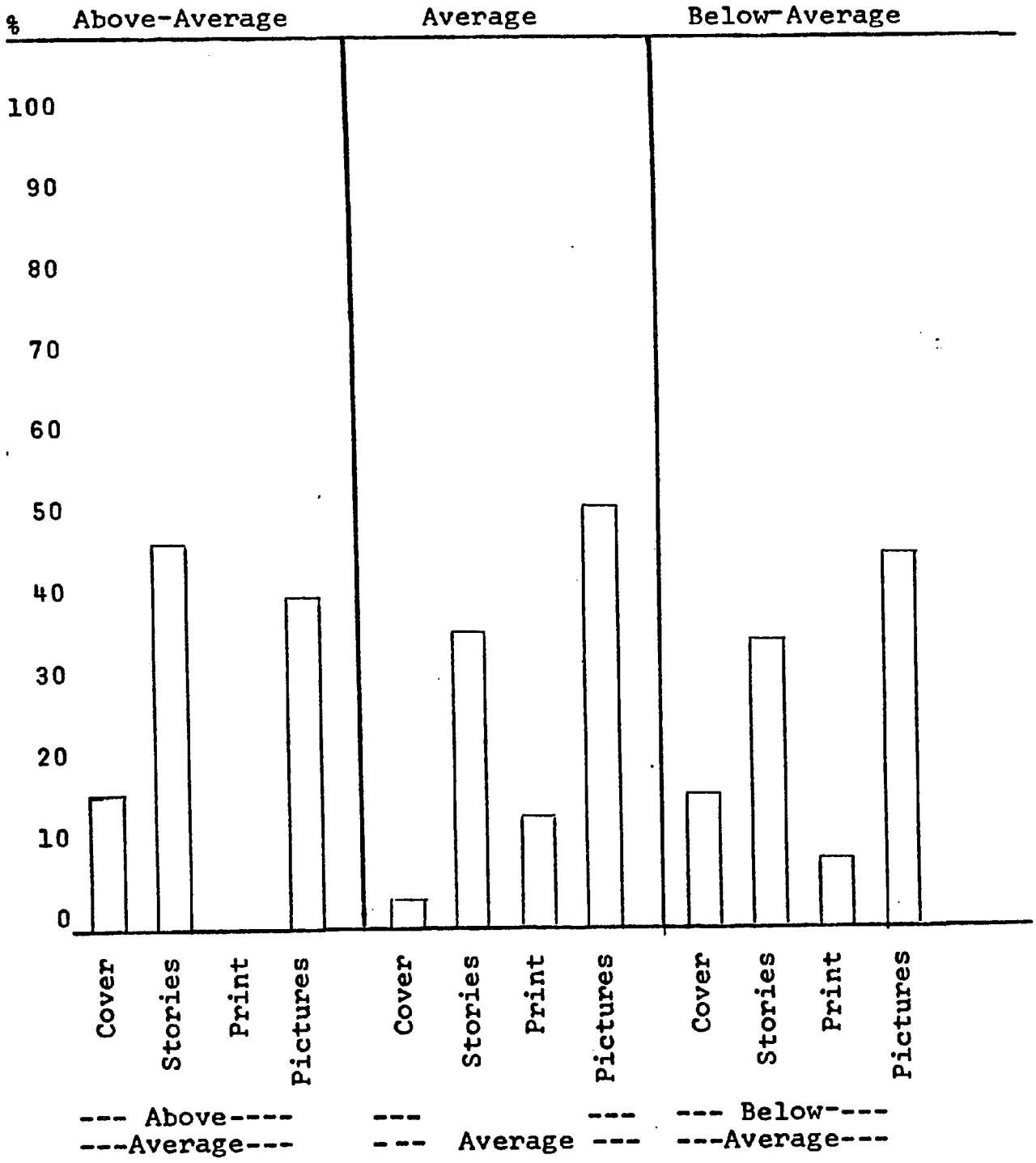


Fig. 17. Reasons For Preferring Either Edition by Achievement Levels.

where stories were given more frequently than pictures as reasons for choice, was this trend interrupted to such an extent that it resulted in a significant difference when achievement levels were compared. There was no difference in reasons for preference for either edition.

TABLE 42

REASONS FOR EITHER PREFERENCE
BY SEX

Reason	Boys	Girls	Total
N= Total= Row% Col%	72 50.0	72 50.0	144 144
Cover Row% Col%	8 53.3 11.1	7 46.7 9.7	15 10.4
Stories Row% Col%	25 34.7	30 45.5 41.7	55 54.5 38.2
Print Row% Col%	4 44.4 5.6	5 55.6 6.9	9 6.2
Pictures Row% Col%	35 53.8 48.6	30 46.2 41.7	65 45.1

Tests of Independence	Statistic	Significance
Maximum Likelihood	1.0182	
Chi Square	1.0169	

DF= 3 N = 144

Summary of Results

Materials

The frequencies of people versus no people illustrations in both editions of the Ginn Basal Reading Series were constant. There appeared to be no attempt by the publisher to avoid the issues of race or sex in pictures by using fewer illustrations of people in the new editions.

Significant differences were registered with regard to race between the two editions. Blacks were depicted in the 100 Edition while they had been completely excluded from the Revised Edition. The frequencies of other minorities depicted in illustrations increased in the 100 Edition.

Males and females were treated equally in the illustrations of both editions. The numbers of male and female illustrations negated any sexual bias on that account.

Null Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis regarding no differences between the frequencies with which the 100 Edition and the Revised Edition are preferred was tested for all readers, for boys and for girls. The null hypothesis was rejected because boys in Primary I and Grade 3 demonstrated a preference significant at the .01 level for the Revised Edition and girls in Primary I and Grade 3 demonstrated a preference significant

at the .01 level for the 100 Edition.

Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis which proposed no differences between the choices of boys and girls was tested for each grade, combined grades, and each achievement level within grade levels and within combined grades. This null hypothesis was rejected also.

In Primary I, above-average boy readers indicated a preference that was significant at the .01 level for the Revised Edition while the above-average girl readers indicated a preference of equal significance for the Revised Edition. These differences made a strong influence on the significant finding at the .01 level of the composite preferences of Primary I readers. The average readers' preference, though significant at only the .05 level, influenced the composite results also. In this case the boys again preferred the Revised Edition and the girls preferred the 100 Edition.

At the third grade level a sex difference significant at the .01 level was identified for below-average readers. Almost 68% of the boys in this category preferred the Revised Edition while 71% of the girls preferred the 100 Edition.

An examination of all below-average readers identified another rejection of the hypothesis for no sex difference between preferences. The evidence showed that 62.5% of below-average boy readers preferred the Revised Edition and

75% of the girls preferred the 100 Edition.

Hypothesis 3

The third hypothesis concerned no differences among the choices of above-average, average and below-average achieving readers and was tested for each grade level and combined levels. The tests in each case supported this null hypothesis.

Hypothesis 4

The fourth hypothesis regarding no differences among the frequencies with which the cover, stories, print and pictures influenced children's choices was tested for boys and girls by basal reader choice and for either preference, as well as by grade level, achievement level and sex.

When the reasons for preferences of all subjects by basal reader choice was examined, 52% of those choosing the 100 Edition cited stories as the reason, and only 30% cited pictures. Of those subjects preferring the Revised Edition, 60.6% cited pictures as their reason and 23.9% cited stories. Cover and print as reasons were negligible in terms of the frequency of citation by the subjects.

The boys' reasons for preference support rejection of the null hypothesis when examined by basal reader choice. More than 57% of the boys gave stories as their reason for preferring the 100 Edition. Almost 64% of the boys who chose

the Revised Edition gave pictures as the reason.

No significant differences were registered between grade levels, which supports the null hypothesis regarding no differences among frequencies of reasons cited. Worthy of note, though, is the fact that pictures were generally the most frequently mentioned reason for choice.

When boys' and girls' reasons for preference were compared, the null hypothesis of no difference between those reasons was supported since boys and girls tended to give each reason with similar frequency.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

Assuming that children do have preferences in reading material and that respect for those preferences might stimulate the children's best reading efforts, this study attempted to examine such preferences as they relate to basal readers. The design was conceived with special emphasis on determining the influence of multi-cultural illustrations on black children's preferences for basal readers.

The 144 subjects for the study were selected randomly from a population of 558 black children in a Detroit Public School. They were divided into groups of eight by sex and by their reading achievement scores on standardized tests in Primary I, Primary II and Grade 3. The subjects were generally from low socio-economic backgrounds.

The larger purpose of this research was to provide factual information regarding black children's preferences in reading material to assist those responsible for modifying reading materials. The older Revised Editions and the newer 100 Editions of the Ginn Basal Series were, therefore, used. Only the 100 Editions in the Series depicted Blacks in the illustrations while the stories and content remained almost identical between the two editions.

The children examined both editions and chose that book which they preferred. These preferences were tested for significant differences between sexes, grade levels, and achievement levels.

Major Findings

Materials

The actual numbers of illustrations featuring black children were quite small in the 100 Editions of the Ginn Basal Reader Series. These editions were significantly different from the Revised Editions, nonetheless, because Blacks were at least introduced in the illustrations. Races and names were changed for a few of the characters which provided the only real differences between the two editions since the stories and content remained almost identical.

The illustrations by sex presented relatively equal numbers of males and females. Preferences which were significantly different were almost exclusively determined by sex of the subjects. The preferential differences, however, could not be attributed to the frequencies with which males and females are depicted in illustrations of either edition of the basal readers since those representations were fairly equal.

Preferences

As previously noted, the major differences in preferences were related to sex. Boys generally preferred the

Revised Editions of the reading books. This preference can only be reported as an overall trend. A definite preference became apparent in only two areas: in the top group at Primary I level and the lowest group at the third grade level. Otherwise, the preferences were relatively equal.

A general preference for the 100 Edition was indicated by the girls' responses. In direct contradiction to the boys' preferences, the top girl readers at the Primary I level and the least capable readers at the third grade level demonstrated a preference for the 100 Edition. The girls in other groups in the three grades were as equally divided in their preferences as the boys.

A majority of the boys expressed a preference for the Revised Edition to the 100 Edition. A majority of girls, on the other hand, expressed a preference for the 100 Edition. These expressions were consistently apparent in examinations by grade levels, by achievement levels within grade levels and combined levels.

Additional Finding

The girls demonstrated a strong preference for the 100 Edition at the Primary I level where 79.2% of them chose the 100 Edition. The girls' preferences lost intensity, though, in Primary II and Grade 3 where only 50% and 58.3% preferred the 100 Edition respectively. The girls seemed to grow away

from preferring the book with which they could identify racially as they progressed through the grades.

Limitations of the Study

The cells for each group studied were small. While the Yates correction was employed to compensate for any margin of error, a larger subject population would have provided even more strength to the evidence.

A second limitation was that the study did not examine content of illustrations and stories. The roles of boys and girls as depicted in pictures and stories might further justify the preferences as registered by sex.

Implications

Illustrations were appealing to children. The importance of illustrations was emphasized by the large percentage of children who said that they selected a book based on its illustrations. Publishers recognized the value of illustrations in attracting readers and capitalized on the insight. Their efforts to expand the appeal of reading book illustrations by including ethnic minorities in pictorial representations was laudable but limited.

Several tables and prior discussions note that the actual number of black-featured illustrations in the 100 Editions of The Little White House, Around The Corner and

Friends Far and Near was quite small. If the publishers' intent was a fair portrayal of what black and white children see in their worlds, those publishers missed the mark. For example, the actual black population represents more than 20% of the total population in America, yet in Around The Corner, a mere 4.4% of the illustrations presented black-only subjects. Another 5.8% of the illustrations portrayed blacks in scenes with whites. When black-featured and black-included illustrations are combined, the total black pictorial representation is little more than 10% in the book. Blacks in The Little White House and Friends Far and Near were, unfortunately just as under-represented in illustrations.

In spite of these inadequacies, the majority of black children interviewed for this study preferred the multicultural edition of each book. The preferences in a general way indicate an awareness of and appreciation for books which present illustrations that include black images. The degree of preference may have been so small because the percentage of multi-cultural illustrations was so small. If black-featured illustrations are to make a dramatic difference, they must be presented in sufficiently high frequencies so as to be immediately and consistently apparent to even the casual reader. A few token pictures of blacks are simply not adequate motivation for preference or stimulation to read.

It is reasonable to suggest at this juncture that the

quantity of illustrations depicting blacks be substantially increased in reading books. Such action would be justified on two fronts. First, potential black readers would have more to identify with visually. Second, white children would be encouraged positively to see the significance of black images. Accuracy in depicting the complexion of the national population would dictate a ratio of no less than 20% black representation in illustrations, which should be a minimum standard. An effort at counterbalancing the disservice done to blacks in past books would justify a frequency of black-featured illustrations at a 30% to 50% level. Such action would also be more realistically representative of racial populations in large cities.

The illustrations as indicated by the children were a significant element for preferences. Stories rated as the next most important element in making preferences. Though this research did not directly examine the shortcomings of stories in the books, the failure to address life styles of black and other minority cultures is apparent to any informed observer of stories in the books. A more realistic presentation of non-white life situations must be considered valid in improving reading books' appeal for black children.

The two suggestions in the preceding discussions are viable approaches. They are offered as a means to correct the wrongs that have been indigenous to past racist American

culture reflected in reading books. Further study would determine their validity.

Another dimension for concern was the large boys' preference, as well as the preferential statements by Primary II and third grade pupils for the Revised Edition. The facts indicate that portions of the black-child population decreased in their identification with black images. A case at point is the girls' decrease in preference for the 100 Edition from Primary I to Grade 3. The decrease can be attributed to a trend toward low self-esteem by individuals in the group and/or acceptance of white values as acculturation occurred. The black children who were victims to either rationale were party to identity dilemmas which will not lead to healthy, productive behaviors unless satisfactorily resolved. Everyone involved in the educative process, therefore, must make concerted efforts to help each child caught in the identity conflict come to an acceptable resolution. These efforts can be accomplished by improving self-concepts through books that positively present the black image through behaviors that show acceptance of blacks and through a constant system of monitoring and discussing problems identified by black children.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It can be concluded that black children in this study

were influenced by illustrations when choosing basal readers. However, mere token representations of blacks and minorities may not be sufficient to influence black children strongly to select books with multi-racial illustrations. Here black girls selected books with multi-racial illustrations more frequently than boys did. There was a decrease in this preference as the age increased. This trend poses questions related to self-concept and dominant culture values. Perhaps a study should be made using materials with greater black and minority representations in one of the foils. In addition, a longitudinal study might reveal whether the shift in girls' preferences is due to developmental reasons or to discrete differences among the groups of girls studied. In other words, will these Primary I girls select multi-racial materials less frequently by the time they are in Grade 3? The reasons why pictures, stories, print, or cover influence choice were not plummed in this study. This, too, might have relevance for future research in this area.

APPENDIX

TABLE 43

READING ACHIEVEMENT SCORES

PRIMARY I

Above-Average Readers

2.3	2.7	2.0	2.0
2.0	1.9	2.3	2.1
2.3	2.7	1.9	2.4
2.9	4.0	2.2	2.0

Average Readers

1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8
1.8	1.8	1.7	1.7
1.8	1.8	1.7	1.8
1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8

Below-Average Readers

1.3	1.5	1.6	1.6
1.4	1.4	1.6	1.5
1.6	1.6	1.2	1.6
1.2	1.5	1.2	1.3

TABLE 44

READING ACHIEVEMENT SCORES

PRIMARY II

Above-Average Readers

2.9	4.1	4.0	3.3
3.4	4.1	3.1	2.9
3.8	2.9	3.0	2.9
3.2	3.1	3.9	3.5

Average Readers

2.7	2.7	2.8	2.8
2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8
2.7	2.8	2.7	2.8
2.7	2.7	2.8	2.8

Below-Average Readers

2.0	2.3	1.7	2.5
2.6	2.4	2.6	2.5
2.6	2.3	2.5	2.5
2.0	1.9	1.8	2.5

TABLE 45

READING ACHIEVEMENT SCORES

GRADE 3

Above-Average Readers

4.0	4.7	4.5	4.0
5.3	5.2	4.7	4.8
4.0	5.9	4.2	4.3
4.0	6.4	4.0	4.9

Average Readers

3.8	3.8	3.7	3.8
3.8	3.7	3.8	3.8
3.7	3.7	3.8	3.7
3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8

Below-Average Readers

3.4	1.8	1.8	2.8
2.7	2.8	2.1	3.5
2.4	3.6	3.4	2.4
3.6	2.2	2.8	3.6

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