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January 1975

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### Recommended Citation

Pelkki, Jo (1975) "Reading Improvement in Math Class," *Michigan Reading Journal*: Vol. 9 : Iss. 1 , Article 5.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/mrj/vol9/iss1/5>

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# READING IMPROVEMENT IN MATH CLASS

by Jo Pelkki

“Spelling in a math class!!” The students were indignant that the instructors would so openly cross disciplinary lines. However they soon forgot their feelings as they became involved in putting together five words from the sets of syllables they were given. The first sets of words were taken from lists that would be familiar and fun such as ice cream flavors, makes of cars, the TV characters, etc. Later sets reflected the use of prefixes and suffixes or pertinent science terms.

Following the formation of the words the student was asked to write each word on a scrap of paper. A quiz on the five words was then given with the score reflecting the total number of syllables spelled correctly! Friday's spelling test included all the words used during the week.

The second phase of our reading program included the use of story problems. Sometimes the student was asked to draw a picture to illustrate the problem. Another exercise involved writing the question part of the problem involving certain facts that were given.

Pre and post testing with a spelling test and the vocabulary, reading comprehension and math computation sections of the California Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills shows a gain in score. The students' comments at the end of the program also reflect the thought that the exercises helped not only in math but in other classes too.

(Jo Pelkki is a teacher at North Intermediate School, Saginaw.)