

ABSTRACT

This study is designed to develop a set of written reading comprehension activities which can be used as diagnostic materials with average Grade 4 students in Jamaican primary schools. Three hundred and twenty-four Grade 4 student in 3 urban and 3 rural primary and all-age schools were administered a battery of diagnostic written reading comprehension tests, which included reading skills such as vocabulary, listening, anticipating meaning, independent reading and following written directions. These activities were done in one sit-down test with short intervals between subtests.

The major findings of this research showed that: the majority of the subtests correlated significantly with each other, and the various subactivities within each subtest work together as a complete battery of tests. The overall test score demonstrated that the performance of the subjects in the sample varied differentially by gender of students and school location; with students from urban areas significantly outperforming their rural peers, and girls consistently receiving higher scores than boys. Results are discussed in terms of using the tests for diagnostic purposes in a general Grade 4 classroom setting.