The phonics approach to reading has been extant in the United States since the early 1800s, when it was introduced in an attempt to regularize an American language. In the past 100 years the pendulum has swung back and forth between the "look-say" approach to reading and the phonics approach, with elaborate rationale developed for both. Chall's *Learning to Read: The Great Debate* (1967), a three-year study of these two approaches, suggests that teaching children to decode (phonics) rather than using a total visual program appeared to result in better readers by third grade. DeHirsch, Jansky and Langford (1966) familiarized educators with the role that auditory discrimination, among other factors, plays in the reading process and in the prediction of reading failure. These findings were repeated in deHirsch, Jansky and Langford's *Preventing Reading Failure* (1972).

Robinson (1972) reported on the results of a study comparing the reading progress of pupils identified as having high visual-high auditory, high visual-low auditory, low visual-high auditory, and low visual-low auditory abilities when they entered first grade. A total of 232 of the children attended schools using a "look-say" approach to reading, and 216 attended schools employing a phonics approach. At the end of third grade neither method for teaching reading surpassed the other. Auditory discrimination made a signif-

*Grateful appreciation is expressed to the following undergraduate and graduate students who assisted in the testing: Matilda Bixby, Mary Donovan, Constance Forrest, and Sharmon Jordan. Support for the 1972 and 1976 study was provided by the General Faculty Research Funds of the College of Graduate Studies and Research, University of Delaware.
icant contribution to reading, while visual perception did not, regard­less of teaching method.

Deutsch (1964) correlated various measures of visual discrim­ination and the Wepman Auditory Discrimination Test with good and poor readers from grade levels I, III, and V. She found that poor readers had more difficulty with auditory discrimination, greater difficulty in shifting from one modality to another, and were more inefficient at a serial learning task with auditory stimuli than with visual. Deutsch also underlined the influence of social class in language acquisition.

Birch and Belmont (1964, 1965) developed a research design re­quiring children to match a pattern of events in one modality with a pattern of events in another modality, for example listening to a tapping pattern and then picking out a visual representation of the same pattern. Variations of this have been done by Beery (1967) and Blank (1968). Golden and Steiner (1969), using the revised edition of the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities (1968), investigated the relationship between specific auditory and visual functions and reading performance. They concluded that poor read­ers appear to be lacking in auditory rather than in visual functions. Mira (1968) reported that, when 24 children, half of them disabled learners, were presented electrical switches that required increasing strength of response to produce either visual or auditory stim­uli, definite modality preferences were noted.

Hall (1967) constructed a paired-associates test of visual and aural material to be given to kindergarteners and second graders. The results suggested that children do not learn faster aurally than visually. Otto (1962-63) studied the differential effects of verbal and pictorial representations of stimuli upon responses evoked in 80 fourth graders. The results suggested that (1) pictorial presentation of stimuli tends to evoke more responses than ver­bal presentations of the same stimuli, but that the magnitude of the difference is influenced by the particular stimuli used, and (2) responses evoked by the pictorially presented stimuli tend to differ in nature from responses evoked by verbally presented ma­terial.

Kling (1968) devised a test to examine the possibility that there is a direct relationship between audition and vision in terms of frequency, duration, and amplitude. The conclusions from this study suggested that individual differences in the sensory modes are not necessarily highly correlated. Dykstra (1966) studied the auditory discrimination abilities of 632 first-grade children. His overall conclusion was that presently available auditory discrimina­tion tests were significantly related to reading achievement, but that their main value was in predicting which child might encounter