

OPHTHALMOLOGY

Clue to Personality

► THE WAY your eye scans this story reflects the type of person you are.

If you read each word carefully and stop to look again, you tend to be a perfectionist or a scientific person. If your eye movements are irregular and you read too fast with little comprehension, you might be high-strung, under pressure, or even neurotic. The well-adjusted person reads comprehensibly at a good rate of speed. He might miss one or two words in a phrase but he gets the important facts.

This new theory of judging people's personality from results of an eye graph is advanced by Hilda Widener Yoder, director of the Reading Clinic, Institute of Ophthalmology, Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center, New York.

The number of eye pauses, fixations and regressions are some of the many eye habits recorded photographically by the ophthalmograph.

With new ways of measuring reading skills, our current intelligence tests may not be valid, stated Mrs. Yoder, director of Yoder Reading Improvement Center, New York.

"A person's reading success is determined by factors other than intelligence," she said. "Visual perception, for instance, or auditory discrimination, or emotional factors are better indicators of reading success than an I.Q. score."

VITAL STATISTICS

Good Health in 1955

► GOOD HEALTH for the nation in 1955 is foreseen by statisticians of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in New York.

The predicted healthy '55 will follow a year in which "the health of the American people has been the best on record."

In 1954, the national death rate has dropped to an all-time low of 9.2 per 1,000 population, or five percent under the previous low point registered the year before, the statisticians report. The country has now experienced death rates below 10 per 1,000 for seven years in succession.

The unusually favorable mortality in 1954, which is based on the experience for the first 11 months, reflected in part an absence of any major outbreaks of respiratory disease.

"Noteworthy also is the fact that in 1954 the death rate from tuberculosis fell to about 10 per 100,000 population," the statisticians point out. "Thus in a single year mortality from tuberculosis was reduced by approximately 20%. As recently as 1951, tuberculosis mortality in the United States was twice as high as it was in 1954."

"Exceptionally favorable also was the record for influenza and pneumonia. The death rate from these causes was only about

Americans are poor readers. Basic reading instruction usually ends after the third grade, and children are left to their own reading devices. Most people today are little better than sixth grade readers, Mrs. Yoder states.

Surveys show that 90% of our college graduates read two to five times slower than a competent reader, and lower school graduates read ten times slower.

Reading is the last of the three R's to be streamlined. In the past 50 years, shorthand and typing have speeded up writing, and many machines have carried arithmetic into modern living tempos. Today's average reader, however, still plods along in horse-and-buggy style.

Reading is an acquired skill, reports Mrs. Yoder. You can be trained to note key words such as subjects, verbs and negative words; to "switch gears" to match the material you read; to read ideas instead of words; to read beginning and ending paragraphs.

By using these principles, in 20 weeks of careful study you can double your speed of reading business or professional letters, pamphlets, reports.

Reading skill as measured in time, understanding, and absorption, has been increased from 2% to 500%, even among college graduates.

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includes coronary artery disease, remained at about the same level in the two past years. The death record from diabetes in 1954 was somewhat lower than in 1953."

The fatal accident situation in our country improved somewhat during the year, decreases in death rates being recorded for motor vehicle accidents, home accidents, and occupational accidents. On the other hand, the homicide rate rose somewhat and suicides remained at about the same level as a year ago.

Both infant mortality and maternal mortality continued to decline to new low levels.

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