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FOCUS ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

RELATING EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT TO INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING

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ASSESSMENT AND INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING

One of the positive effects of the learning disabilities movement has been the focus on "diagnostic/prescriptive teaching," a synergistic relationship between the assessment of learning and treatment procedures. While this relationship is desirable, there is often a gap between the assessment of learning and the delivery of appropriate learning activities.

Several explanations can be offered for the distance between psychoeducational assessment and instructional planning. These include:

1. The diagnostic effort is often removed in its context from the treatment effort.
2. In many instances, the diagnostician is not the same person who delivers the instruction.
3. It is often assumed that the evidence uncovered in a diagnostic procedure "causes" the dysfunction in academic performance, when in fact the diagnostic evidence is simply a correlate of the dysfunction.

Of importance here is the recognition that the typical model for diagnosis is reductionistic, and that this reduction overlooks the context for the learning and assigns inappropriate causes to the presumed disorders. This reductionistic approach is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1 shows that referrals of children with learning problems flow from a recognition of poor performance in academic areas (I). To verify this, norm-referenced tests are used (II) to estimate the degree to which the child is falling behind his or her peers. When this degree of "behindness" is established, a search is begun to locate causes. This search more often than not results in "correlate" testing (IV). It can be seen, then, that the direction of reduction is a movement from an academic context in which the referral was made to an analysis of the correlates of the problem. Missing from that reduction, and of importance for this paper, is a qualitative analysis (III). The premise of this paper is that the more nearly the assessment of learning approximates the context in which the learning problem was found, the greater the degree of success in matching instructional planning to instructional assessment.

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The search through this qualitative realm is of particular use by both diagnosticians and instructors, because it forms the interface between the two. At some point, the interpretation of diagnostic data must be related to instructional planning. Correlate measures may hold clues as to *how* to teach a given child, but rarely do such measures provide information about *what* to teach a child. This paper offers techniques for developing ways of qualitatively assessing learning behavior as it relates to classroom performance.

TASK ANALYSIS

Instructional planning and the evaluation of the outcomes of that planning are directly related to the degree to which learners and learning activities are appropriately matched. Task analysis provides a way of displaying and evaluating diagnostic data for the purposes of making this a sound match. Lerner (1976) explains the meaning of task analysis properly:

> . . . task analysis is a method that is used to provide further diagnostic information; it is an approach to evaluation designed to lead to appropriate teaching. Two ways to think about task analysis are . . . (1) the *modality-processing* approach . . . (2) the *skills-sequence* approach. . . . The first analyzes the child, while the second analyzes the content to be learned (p. 108).

Lerner's definition recognizes that instruction and the evaluation of instruction are based on both processes and products. From the perspective of task analysis, "processes" refer to those correlates of learning which reside with the child. "Products" are those content elements of the learning situation which are related to academic skill areas, curriculum, and instructional materials. Essential, then, for instructional planning and evaluation is a matching of processes (correlates) with products (content). From the standpoint of the practitioner, decisions regarding instructional planning and evaluation depend upon an ability to develop hypotheses within the realm of process and product analysis. In effect, the instructional planner must have a repertory of questions available for continuous use throughout the course of the instruction. The next two sections of this paper offer schedules of such questions which attend to the correlates and content of instructional planning and evaluation.

Developing Correlate Questions

To provide for task analysis using correlates of learning, a grid is provided in Figure 2. The Task Analysis Grid contains a series of items in three general areas: decoding, processing, and encoding. Each of these areas is further divided into major components, with each component subdivided into specific qualities.

The *decoding* area contains haptic, auditory, visual, and sensory integration (SI) components. These represent the modality systems available in the learner for application to the perception of a task. Each of the modality systems has been subdivided into task demands which may require discrimination, closure, memory, or sequencing. The decoding component of sensory integration (using two senses simultaneously) has been separated into auditory-visual (Aud.-Vis.) and visual-haptic (Vis.-Hap.).

The *processing* area is described by features taken from Guilford's (1967) work and Meeker's (1969) analysis of Guilford. Guilford suggests that there are intellectual processes known as "operations" and defined as:

1. *Cognition*—referring to recogniton or discovery of information.
2. *Memory*—referring to the retention and reproduction of information.
3. *Convergent production*—referring to the process of arriving at the single conventional solution to a problem.
4. *Divergent production*—referring to the process of developing novel solutions; creativity.
5. *Evaluation*—referring to the development of value judgments.

In addition, Guilford postulates that these operations act on various forms of content, of which four types have been defined:

1. *Figural*—referring to information that is concrete (that can be seen, heard, or felt).
2. *Symbolic*—referring to data in the form of abstract symbols (letters, numerals).

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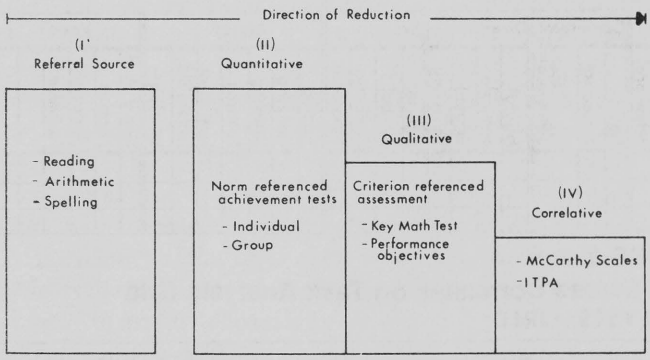
FIGURE 1
Reductionistic Factors in the Evaluation of Learning



3. *Semantic*—referring to the attachment of meanings to symbolic information.
4. *Behavioral*—referring to information of an affective nature regarding the self or others.

The *encoding* area is divided into the major components of "motor" and "vocal." Each of these components is subcategorized into empirically determined behaviors, as required by various tasks. Motor behaviors include tracing, copying, drawing, pointing, gesturing, pattern building, and writing. Vocal behaviors are described along a sliding scale defined by single word utterances, phrases, sentences, and extended speaking (telling a story), as demanded by various tasks.

Overall, then, the Task Analysis Grid provides 45 correlate behaviors which may be implicated in the learning process in varying patterns, depending on the task at hand. In essence, these correlates act as question sources which aid in deciding how a child is processing information in a given task setting. The correlates may be observed informally, or tested by formal procedures.

To illustrate how the Task Analysis Grid might be used, Figure 3 presents an analysis of the 12 subtests from the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities (Kirk, McCarthy & Kirk, 1968). It shows the distribution of the 12 ITPA subtests across the 45 possible correlates on the Task Analysis Grid. (Note: The analysis of the ITPA across the grid correlates is based on "best fit judgments." Only the major correlates deemed to be required for solving ITPA subtest questions are indicated.)

If we wish to show the relative strengths and weaknesses of these correlates in a given case, this can be done by rating the ITPA subtest performances as "good" (+), more than six scale score points above the child's mean; "average" (0), within six scale score points of the child's mean; or "poor" (−), more than six scale score points below the child's mean. Figure 4 illustrates the conversion of ITPA scale scores into the three rating categories, and the distribution of those rating patterns on the Task Analysis Grid.

By inspecting the pattern of "+," "o," and "−" symbols on the grid, statements about the relative strengths and weaknesses of the various correlates may be made for this case. It can be seen in this instance that, on a comparative basis, the rated ITPA scores show strengths in visual decoding correlates and weaknesses in auditory ones. Beyond this, an analysis of the processing correlates indicates that the child exhibits difficulty in manipulating tasks containing semantic content, while tasks containing figural and symbolic content are processed relatively easily. An inspection of the rating patterns for the encoding correlates supports the picture of a child who can express himself better motorically than vocally. (You should explore other rating patterns and develop hypotheses regarding the relative strengths and weaknesses displayed by this child.)

It is important to recognize that this type of analysis requires the evaluator to view the interaction among decoding, processing, and encoding correlates. For the pattern of rated scores given in Figure 4, there is a relationship between the depression in certain auditory decoding correlates and processing correlates. Negative ratings have been applied to those correlates of the ITPA subtests which require the auditory processing of semantic content. When the content of the auditory subtests is symbolic in nature, the child shows relatively good performance. An analysis of this sort reminds the evaluator that the descriptive statement, "The child presents evidence of auditory decoding problems," is insufficient unless it is coupled with the modifier, "when the task requires the processing of semantic content."

The existing patterns of correlate behaviors as described by the Task Analysis Grid are valuable only as they explain academic problems. Knowing that a child exhibits a visual sequencing deficit has meaning only to the extent that it helps to shed light on the child's spelling or reading problem.

Developing Content Questions

The task analysis of academic skill areas is best accomplished through the use of sets of instructional objectives. Many sources exist for lists of such objectives. To illustrate the use of instructional objectives, the materials

FIGURE 2
Task Analysis Grid Showing Correlate Behaviors

TASK ANALYSIS GRID

	DECODING												PROCESSING																				ENCODING											
	Haptic				Auditory				Vision				SI		Cognition				Memory				Convergent				Divergent				Evaluation				Motor							Vocal				
TASK	Discrim.	Closure	Memory	Sequen.	Discrim.	Closure	Memory	Sequen.	Discrim.	Closure	Memory	Sequen.	Aud.-Vis.	Vis.-Hap.	Figural	Symbolic	Semantic	Behavioral	Figural	Symbolic	Semantic	Behavioral	Figural	Symbolic	Semantic	Behavioral	Figural	Symbolic	Semantic	Behavioral	Figural	Symbolic	Semantic	Behavioral	Tracing	Copying	Drawing	Pointing	Gesturing	Pattern Bld.	Writing	Single Word	Phrases	Sentences	Extended Sp.

FIGURE 3
Distribution of the Twelve ITPA Subtests Across Correlates on Task Analysis Grid

TASK ANALYSIS GRID

	DECODING												PROCESSING																				ENCODING											
	Haptic				Auditory				Vision				SI		Cognition				Memory				Convergent				Divergent				Evaluation				Motor							Vocal				
TASK	Discrim.	Closure	Memory	Sequen.	Discrim.	Closure	Memory	Sequen.	Discrim.	Closure	Memory	Sequen.	Aud.-Vis.	Vis.-Hap.	Figural	Symbolic	Semantic	Behavioral	Figural	Symbolic	Semantic	Behavioral	Figural	Symbolic	Semantic	Behavioral	Figural	Symbolic	Semantic	Behavioral	Figural	Symbolic	Semantic	Behavioral	Tracing	Copying	Drawing	Pointing	Gesturing	Pattern Bld.	Writing	Single Word	Phrases	Sentences	Extended Sp.
AUD. REC.					•						•					•				•				•																•				
VIS. REC.									•							•				•				•														•						
VIS. SEQ. MEM.											•	•				•				•				•															•						
AUD. ASSOC.					•	•	•	•									•				•				•															•				
AUD. SEQ. MEM.					•		•	•								•				•				•															•						
VIS. ASSOC.									•							•				•				•															•						
VIS. CLO'S.									•	•						•				•				•															•						
VERB. EXP.	•								•					•	•				•				•				•													•	•	•				
GRAM. CLOS.					•	•			•								•				•				•															•						
MAN. EXP.									•							•				•				•															•						
AUD. CLOS.					•	•										•								•															•						
SOUND BL					•											•								•															•						

FIGURE 4
Rated ITPA Subtest Scale Scores Distributed Across Correlates on Task Analysis Grid

TASK ANALYSIS GRID

	DECODING												PROCESSING																				ENCODING											
	Haptic				Auditory				Vision				SI		Cognition				Memory				Convergent				Divergent				Evaluation				Motor							Vocal				
TASK	Discrim.	Closure	Memory	Sequen.	Discrim.	Closure	Memory	Sequen.	Discrim.	Closure	Memory	Sequen.	Aud.-Vis.	Vis.-Hap.	Figural	Symbolic	Semantic	Behavioral	Figural	Symbolic	Semantic	Behavioral	Figural	Symbolic	Semantic	Behavioral	Figural	Symbolic	Semantic	Behavioral	Figural	Symbolic	Semantic	Behavioral	Tracing	Copying	Drawing	Pointing	Gesturing	Pattern Bld.	Writing	Single Word	Phrases	Sentences	Extended Sp.
− AUD. REC.					−																																							
o VIS. REC.									o							o		−		o		−		o		−														−				
+ VIS. SEQ. MEM.											+	+				+				+				+															+						
− AUD. ASSOC.					−	−	−	−									−				−				−															−				
o AUD. SEQ. MEM.					o		o	o								o				o				o																o				
− VIS ASSOC.									−							−				−				−																				
+ VIS CLOS.									+	+						+								+															+						
o VERB. EXP.	o								o					o	o				o				o				o													o	o	o				
− GR CLOS.					−	−			−								−				−				−															−				
o MAN. EXP.									o							o				o				o															o						

ITPA scale scores and ratings for a child-

Aud. Rec.	17 −	Aud. Seq. Mem.	31 o	Gram. Clos.	17 −
Vis. Rec.	30 o	Vis. Assoc.	10 −	Man. Exp.	27 o
Vis. Seq. Mem.	43 +	Vis. Clos.	34 +		
Aud. Assoc.	9 −	Verb. Exp.	28 o		

provided by the Instructional Based Appraisal System (IBAS) will be used (Meyen, 1976).

Table 1 is a partial listing of instructional objectives from IBAS for reading and mathematics. (Note: For reading, the complete list from IBAS includes 73 objectives categorized under the headings of reading readiness, word attack skills, comprehension, study skills, and reading extension. For mathematics, 100 objectives are categorized by numeration, symbols and geometry, addition and subtraction, multiplication and division, fractions, word problems, measurement, money, and time.)

One feature of the IBAS objectives is the fact that they address the instructor and/or evaluator. By using the verb phrase "to assist," allowances are made for reaching the objective by capitalizing on the pattern of correlate behaviors defined by the Task Analysis Grid. Essentially, these lists of instructional objectives represent a question pool for evaluating learning.

If the objectives as listed in IBAS are appropriately descriptive of the instructional program in a given classroom, the objectives can serve several purposes.

1. The lists may be used as an evaluative checklist for each child. Notations may be made indicating when a child shows evidence of having mastered an objective.
2. The lists may be used as criterion-referenced schedules for evaluating measurement devices. For example, items from the Peabody Individual Achievement Test (Dunn & Markwardt, 1970) can be matched to lists of objectives to determine the variety of skills and behaviors measured.
3. The lists may be used as a framework for the design of instructional activities. In this regard, the instructional objectives define *what* should be taught, while the pattern of the correlates from the Task Analysis Grid defines *how* the activity is to be presented.
4. The lists may be used to evaluate features of instructional materials. Knowing that certain instructional materials are aimed at the acquisition of specific objectives allows for a more cogent match between the materials and the learner.
5. The lists may be used as a communication device between diagnostician and instructor. If instructors can develop their referral questions in terms of the objective statements, diagnosticians can focus on areas of inquiry related to these referrals.
6. The lists may be used as reporting devices to parents and teachers for communicating the instructional progress of a child.

In general, then, lists of instructional objectives become referents for making qualitative judgments to bridge the gap between quantitative and correlate measurement. Instructional objectives can be applied directly to the planning and evaluation of educational activities. If the planning is appropriately designed, teaching/learning activities become both diagnostic and prescriptive in nature.

BLENDING QUALITATIVE AND CORRELATE ANALYSES

To illustrate the relationship between qualitative analysis (the use of instructional objectives) and correlate analysis (Task Analysis Grid), the sample inquiries which follow were developed. The inquiries employ instructional materials in the form of transparent overlays as shown in Figure 5 (Weiss, et al., 1966). (Note: Each overlay is projected in sequence. As an overlay is added, more information is added. Following the addition of each overlay, questions are asked and responses are recorded.)

The nature of questions to be asked and the tolerance limits for responses must be adjusted by the instructor/evaluator as a function of the purpose of the exercise. In earlier sections of this paper, two sources of questions were made available. One set of questions may be developed from instructional objectives (Table 1). Another set of questions evolves from the Task Analysis Grid (Figure 2). To provide a framework for these question sources, Goldstein's (1975) inductive teaching procedure is helpful. The inductive teaching procedure is a way of eliciting responses from children in a systematic way.

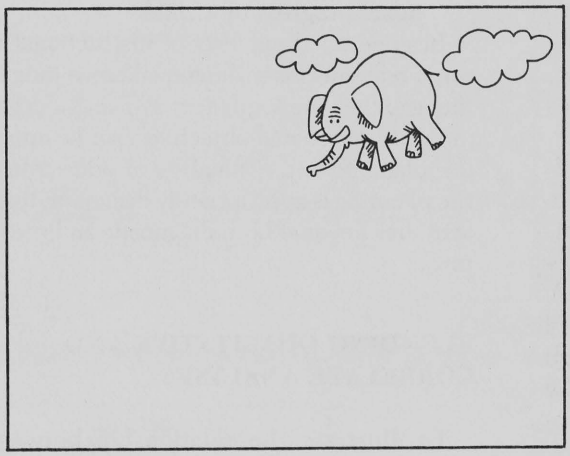
What follows, then, are three areas of inquiry—inductive, instructional objective, and correlative—useful for framing diagnostic/prescriptive teaching activities. For each area of inquiry, a brief explanation is provided, followed by suggested questions.

Inductive Inquiry

Goldstein (1975) suggests the use of inductive questioning when presenting instructional activities. This approach is in the form of a five-stage paradigm. The stages are as follows:

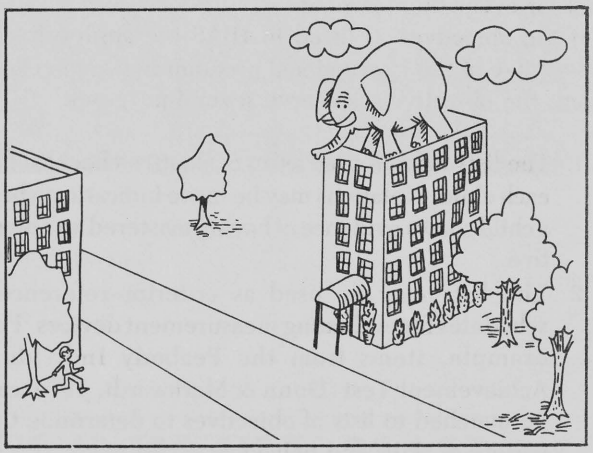
1. *Labeling.* Questions which elicit the identities of the major components of what is to be explored (e.g.,

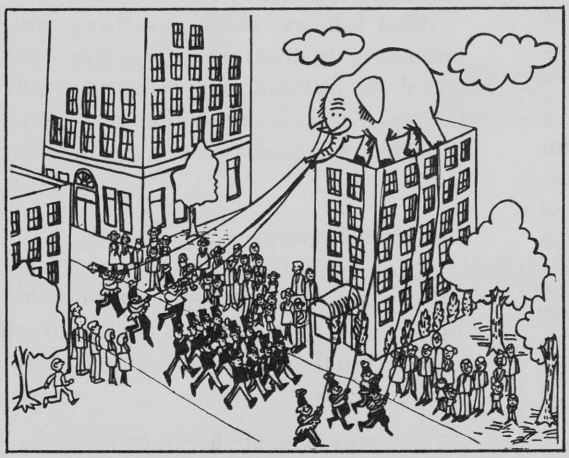
FIGURE 5
Transparency Overlay Sequence



Overlay 1

Overlay 2





Overlay 3

TABLE 1

EXAMPLES OF INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES TAKEN FROM THE INSTRUCTIONAL BASED APPRAISAL SYSTEM

Index to Reading Objectives

A. Reading

Reading Readiness

A-2 To assist the student in the recognition of shapes.
A-3 To assist the student in matching objects by categories.
A-9 To assist the student in indicating words which sound alike and words which sound different.

Word Attack Skills

A-14 To assist the student in identifying the initial consonant.
A-15 To assist the student in identifying the final consonant.
A-18 To assist the student in identifying the short vowels.
A-19 To assist the student in identifying the long vowels.

Comprehension

A-42 To assist the student in the use of picture clues.
A-45 To assist the student in finding the main idea of a story.
A-51 To assist the student in predicting outcomes.

Index to Mathematics Objectives

B. Mathematics

Numeration

B-1 To assist the student in identifying sets of actual or pictured objects.
B-2 To assist the student in matching equal sets.
B-4 To assist the student in matching unequal sets.
B-5 To assist the student in correctly using the terms "more than," less than," and "the same as."
B-7 To assist the student in correctly using the ordinals: first, second, last.

Symbols and Geometry

B-17 To assist the student in identifying geometric shapes: circle, square, triangle, rectangle.
B-19 To assist the student in drawing the following geometric shapes: circle, square, triangle, rectangle.

names of objects or actions).

2. *Detailing.* Questions which elicit the attachment of specific characteristics to major components (e.g., size, color, position, quantity).
3. *Inferring.* Questions which elicit the conclusion of what the function or condition of a major component is, based on appropriate labeling and detailing.
4. *Predicting.* Questions which elicit responses about the inference when additional data are made available. These questions often take the form of "What if?" questions.
5. *Generalizing.* Following a series of prediction questions, the elicitation of a response of conceptual nature that provides the child with a category or classification for the major component(s) under consideration.

The inductive questioning procedure is a reductionistic method. If a generalization cannot be reached, more opportunities for prediction must be given. If inappropriate responses to prediction questions are given, the inference must be reestablished. If the inference is incorrect, details must be reviewed or expanded. If details are

TABLE 2

INDUCTIVE INQUIRY

Overlay 1	
Questions	**Anticipated Responses**
"What do you see?"	"An elephant."
"What else is there?"	"Clouds."
"What can you tell me about the elephant?"	"It has legs, tusks (teeth), tail, eyes, ears."
"How many clouds are there?"	"Two."
"How many elephants are there?"	"One."
"Where is the elephant?"	"Up there in the clouds, in the sky."
"How did the elephant get there?"	"It flew" (accept any response)
Overlay 2	
Questions	**Anticipated Responses**
"What do you see now?"	"Elephant, houses, trees, a boy, a street, buildings, bushes."
"What can you tell me about the buildings?"	"They are big (tall); they have windows."
"How many trees are there?"	"Four."
"How many windows are there?"	"A lot." (any reasonable count)
"Where is the elephant?"	"On top of the building, on the roof."
"Where is the boy?"	"Next to the building, near the tree, under the tree."
"What is the boy doing?"	"Running, looking at the elephant."
"How did the elephant get there?"	"In the elevator," "It was dropped by a helicopter." (accept any response)
Overlay 3	
Questions	**Anticipated Responses**
"What do you see now?"	"A parade, more people, another building."
(Continue asking questions to elicit all pertinent details.)	
"How did the elephant get there?"	"It's a balloon."

not perceived, the major component (label) to be explored must be redefined.

Table 2 is an inductive inquiry related to the instructional materials shown in Figure 5. Because Table 2 is only a sample of an inductive inquiry, not all possible questions or responses can be presented. The issue is one of moving from label and detail questions through to inference, prediction, and generalization questions. As responses are elicited, begin to consider those questions to be used in the instructional objective inquiry.

Instructional Objective Inquiry

The instructional objectives shown in Table 1 may be converted to questions for the purpose of assessing student performance, or for developing diagnostic/prescriptive activities. In the inquiry that follows, (Table 3), the instructional objective code is listed and an illustrative question(s) is provided related to the content of each overlay of the transparency material shown in Figure 5. In addition, each question will be based on the responses elicited in the inductive inquiry.

The choice of instructional objectives for use in an inquiry such as this is a function of what needs to be known by the instructor/evaluator. While this inquiry is being developed, begin to think of those correlate behaviors (Task Analysis Grid) that warrant investigation.

TABLE 3
INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVE
INQUIRY

Overlay 1	
Objectives	**Questions**
A-14	"Listen to these words: tail, tusks, teeth. What sound do these words begin with?"
A-15	"Listen to these words: tusks, legs, eyes, ears, clouds. What sound do these words end with?"
A-9	"Do these words sound the same or different? elephant-clouds; teeth-legs, trunk-ears."
A-51	"How did the elephant get there?"
B-1,B-4,B-5	"How many clouds are there? How many elephants are there? Are there more clouds than elephants?"
Overlay 2	
Objectives	**Questions**
A-9,A-14,A-15	Repeat as in Overlay 1 with added words: house, boy, street, buildings, bushes, windows.
A-42	"Can someone tell me a story about this picture?"
A-51	"How did the elephant get there?"
B-1,B-2,B-4,B-5	"How many trees are there? How many buildings are there? How many people are there? How many elephants are there? How many clouds are there?"
	"Are there more trees than clouds? Are there more trees than buildings? Are there the same number of people as elephants?"
Overlay 3	
Objectives	**Questions**
A-9,A-14,A-15	Repeat as in Overlays 1 and 2, using added words.
A-42,A-45	"What happened in this story?"
A-51	"How did the elephant get there?"
B-1,B-2,B-4,B-5	Repeat as in Overlays 1 and 2, using added sets of marchers and crowds.
B-7	"Find the first person in the parade."
	"Where is the last person in the parade?"

Correlate Inquiry

Inquiries regarding the correlates of learning may be made within the context of both inductive inquiries and instructional objective inquiries. Using the Task Analysis Grid (Figure 2) as a question source, situations may be created to establish the degree to which the behaviors listed on the grid are intact. Table 4 integrates the instructional objectives inquiry (which is already based on the inductive inquiry) with the correlate inquiry.

SUMMARY

Adequate assessment for appropriate instructional planning requires bridging the gap between the diagnostic event and the development of instructional plans. Instructional assessment and planning must take into account the relationship between *what* is to be learned and *how* it is to be presented.

Task analysis is one technique for creating a closer match between assessment and instruction. This paper

TABLE 4
CORRELATE INQUIRY

Overlay 1

Correlate Behaviors	Instructional Objectives	Situations
Visual Disc.	A-2	Provide children with cutouts of both cloud formations. Have children match them to projected images.
Auditory Disc.	A-9,A-14,A-15	Using elicited words from inductive inquiry, develop word pairs and question children as to their likenesses and differences as the words are repeated aloud. Vary questions to elicit sameness or difference based on initial and final sounds.
Divergence	A-51	Provide the children with an opportunity to express as many ideas as possible for "how the elephant got there."

Overlay 2

Correlate Behaviors	Instructional Objectives	Situations
Visual Memory	A-42	After showing Overlay 2, remove it and ask children to tell what is missing.
Tracing	A-42	Project Overlay 2 on the chalkboard, and have different children trace around objects with chalk.
Visual Disc. Symbolic-Conv. Pattern Building	A-3,B-1,B-2 B-4,B-5	Provide children with cutouts of objects projected in Overlay 2 (two buildings, elephant, boy, four trees, two clouds). Have children match them to the projection. Ask children to sort objects by type. Count the number of objects in each group. Question children about which group has "more," "the same," and/or "fewer" objects.
Drawing	A-51	Project Overlay 2 on chalkboard. Have children draw responses as to how the elephant "got there."

Overlay 3

Correlate Behaviors	Instructional Objectives	Situations
Visual Disc. Visual Seq. Visual Memory Memory-Conv. Extended Sp.	A-42,A-45	Project each overlay in sequence. Allow enough exposure time for each child to view the image. Remove the transparency and ask children to tell the story.
Visual Clos.	B-2	Project Overlay 3 on chalkboard. Have children draw windows on building at top-left until there are equal sets of windows on each face of building.

reviewed procedures for developing task analysis of measures of correlates of learning by presenting a Task Analysis Grid. In addition, it is shown that instructional objectives can be used to analyze the subject matter structures of reading and mathematics.

Finally, the relationship between correlate analysis and instructional objective analysis was demonstrated, through the use of inductive questioning procedures as they applied to a given piece of instructional material. This resulted in the formulation of a series of inquiries useful for assessing and planning instruction. Overall, the more nearly assessment approximates instructional events, the more effective that assessment will be as an aid to planning those events.

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CLASSROOM FORUM

Edited by Melinda Young
Special Education Specialist
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DeKalb County, Georgia

I am interested in taking my elementary gifted students on trips of several hundred miles. Of course, this would involve overnight lodging and other considerations. I am sure I would encounter opposition from the administration. How would I go about planning such an endeavor?

Extended field trips for elementary-age students are gaining in popularity throughout the nation. Teachers of gifted, as well as regular classroom teachers, have discovered that "extended field trips," "relocated classrooms," or "classrooms without walls" are exciting, rewarding and realistic experiences for students.

Initial opposition to such a proposal can be expected. However, parents, other teachers and administrators probably will become supportive of your plans if they are shown that important details have received careful consideration. Some educators have contended that organization is the key to good teaching; organization is certainly the key to an enjoyable trip *and* the secret behind parental and administrative support. Plan to submit a written proposal to your administrators several months before the proposed trip. The proposal should reflect your careful consideration and should include specific information covering the following areas:

Destination. Are you and/or your students interested in historical or natural history, space exploration, Indians, the Civil War? Decide first.

Purpose and Objectives. Goals will influence the destination, too. Are you interested in your students becoming more aware of their historical heritage; gaining an appreciation for nature's ecological balance; or following a group or individual schedule; getting along with peers without parents near at hand; or being responsible for individual belongings. Be specific.

Pre and Post Activities. Correlating activities must be an integral part of your curriculum several weeks before and after your trip. Some areas to be visited will provide materials and/or suggestions. Use local resources, too. An important element of pre-travel would include careful review with students of policies concerning study, meals, travel, conduct, chaperones and security; a packing list; housing arrangements; daily schedule; and money management.

Inclusive Dates. Some states permit students to be counted present when on educational trips; others have established limits of days outside the classroom. Attendance allowance is a major concern of administrators, as well as many parents and students. If state regulations limit your days to two, use a weekend and/or teacher workdays. A five-day trip with two travel days and three study days provides a workable plan.

Participants. When considering participants, remember that nine-year-olds travel well, too. Perhaps one grade level in a school could plan a trip together. Or perhaps the gifted students and their teachers from several schools could form a trip team. Several teachers working together will lighten the load; however, one person should be designated the final authority. Some parents will be eager to accompany their children, but more than a ratio of 9 or 10:1 leaves too many idle.

Transportation. Transportation will be the greatest expense. School buses are not comfortable on cross-country trips, and probably would not be available during the week. Charter bus companies which do regular interstate and intrastate trips are cooperative and have bonded, responsible drivers. Night travel is not recommended since students and adults need enough rest to keep a receptive frame of mind.

Lodging and Food. Lodging is the second greatest expense. Chain motels noted for low rates should be contacted. Some areas to be visited have motels adjacent to their property and will make this information available to you. Food is a large expense but not a major problem. Most students are happiest with an all-American meal of hamburgers, hot dogs, etc.! Clean plates and balanced meals may be overlooked, but encourage students to eat fruit daily and to limit intake of sweets. With advance notice, some restaurants would prepare sack or box meals. Provide a cooler on each bus for milk or soft drinks. Bus drivers usually know locations of clusters of fast food restaurants.

Cost. Cost is a major concern. Transportation, lodging, food and educational fees should be included in a set amount, with every person being responsible for his own expenses. Spending money should be an individual decision. Most school systems frown on fund-raising projects unless the project is designed to benefit the entire school. When parents are given several months' notice and are given the option of paying a proportional amount monthly, the financial strain is lessened. Some individuals or civic clubs may offer full or partial scholarships.

Set up a bank account through your school or with a parent in charge. Some banks would give this service free-of-charge to school groups. Most large expenses, such as transportation, lodging and some food, may be paid by check after the trip. Travelers' checks, offered free for such purposes by some banks, are best for in-trip expenses. After all expenses are paid, offer each person his proportionate share of excess monies. Many parents will insist that any excess be retained for class enrichment expenses.

Daily Schedule. Include specific times and locations for each day's activities, including departure and arrival days as well as days devoted to touring. All participants, including teachers and chaperones, should follow the same schedule.

Keeping Parents Informed. Information concerning the schedule of activities; packing list; housing arrangements; policies for study, travel, conduct, security and meals; money management; chaperone responsibilities; phone committees; and cost should be sent to every parent. Meetings should be held to convey information to parents and trip chaperones.

Medical Information. A medical information sheet should be obtained from each participant. In case of an emergency, a hospital would need insurance information covering company, policy number and name of insured.

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These suggestions for trip organization should result in a proposal which would gain administrative and parental support. To gain student support simply mention one word—"trip!"

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ALERT

April 11-15, 1977
Council for Exceptional Children
International Convention
Atlanta, Georgia

May 8-10, 1977
Canadian Speech and Hearing Association
Empress Hotel
Victoria, British Columbia, Canada