

FOCUS ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

CREATIVE TEACHING AND THE SYSTEMS APPROACH

The SOME System Approach: A Paradigm For Educational Instruction
and Remediation By the Special Class Teacher

By Alfred L. Lazar¹

During the past decade, special educators have been concerned with ways of modifying the organization of the special class for the mentally retarded in order to cope with individual differences which manifest themselves in this particular group of handicapped children and youth. This strong desire for change has been encouraged by the harsh impact provided on the basis of results from numerous efficacy studies.

A first step in designing an instructional program is the specification of its purposes and the objectives to be achieved. The results of these efficacy studies are well known and tend to suggest somewhat consistently that mentally retarded students make as much or more academic progress in the regular grades as they do in special education classes. A critical review and discussion of this issue can be found in the works of Kirk (1964), Dunn (1968), and Guskin and Spicker (1968). Thus, it appears that some of the initial purposes and objectives for special classes based upon assumed gain in academic achievement and socio-emotional growth have not been sustained to the degree that might have been desired. In most, if not all, of these studies, three significant factors are lacking in detailed information that might help explain some of the results received. First, what made the special class teacher special besides the official labeling process such as a credential or the operational definition of the investigators? We know very little about the teacher variable in terms of motivation, training, or expectancy.

Second, to what degree was individualized instruction used based upon the unique need of each child rather than the unit approach? This might be stated in another way, and that would be to ask if the curriculum was content-centered versus child-centered. In the view and opinion of this writer, the focus was on content.

Finally, the third factor would be to ask how representative of a program is a class as a unit of measurement. The point that needs to be made clear is that any future

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study should test the efficacy of an entire special education program, ranging from primary level through high school. Thus, we would have a measure based upon the educational life cycle of the mentally retarded with the terminal objective and goal of adjustment as an adult member in society. It is true that there have been follow-up studies of mentally retarded individuals that were in special classes and programs, but we know nothing of the treatment program that was offered by these classes. Nor do we know anything about the teacher variable. To be more specific, what system of instruction did these teachers use with their pupils?

FRACTIONAL PRACTICES VERSUS A SYSTEMS APPROACH

Special education requires more than a tinkering job with the numerous fractional practices that are advocated by innovators as illustrated in many different commercial catalogs of materials for instruction designated especially for the mentally retarded. During the past decade this writer has been astonished by the number of books and articles telling about such activities as arts and crafts for the mentally retarded, music for the mentally retarded, and other aspects of teaching that could be used in special classes, but no specific discussion or relationship established between what is advocated and mental retardation per se. Even more disturbing has been the zeal that special class teachers have demonstrated in attempting to use these kinds of materials and fractional practices in their classes. One can appreciate their desire to improve the effectiveness of their instruc-

tional program, but they must display caution toward using materials and methods with only assumed or limited support for the validity that needs to be gained through rigorous field testing.

One basic assumption underlying the development and use of these fractional practices is that human behavior may be successfully separated, as it were, into specific entities, units, or functions, these being essentially independent and capable of being individually identified and evaluated. Advocates of these emerging fractional approaches appear to be working as if this assumption were fully demonstrated, and an operational viability. (Bateman, 1964; Lindsley, 1965; Mann and Phillips, 1967). Basically, these fractional practices are based on materials with specific educational ends, i.e. visual perceptual training, assessment procedures or devices, methods for writing educational objectives, and so forth. The central thesis of this article is that these fractional practices could be more effectively used by the special class teacher if they were made part of a unified systems approach used by the teacher. If a systems approach is to be used, the teacher becomes an important variable, and in the opinion of this writer, the locus of control for the learning situation.

A critical review of select literature concerning the area of mental retardation reveals that very little research has been directed toward understanding the role and influence of the special class teacher variable. Blatt (1966) reported that a survey of the literature between 1959 and 1965 concerned with the preparation of special education personnel disclosed no experimental studies and few investigations of any kind that could be classified as systematic research. Yet, the past several years have shown there is a growing interest in the teacher expectancy phenomenon that has generated interest and some research on the influence of teacher expectations and pupil performance. Gozali (1969) provides an excellent discussion of this matter for the interested reader.

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CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT WITH THE MENTALLY RETARDED

A brief review of several writers on the subject of curriculum development for the mentally retarded might be in order to establish justification about the adequacy of curriculum guides that are being used in many special class programs. Thorsell (1961) concluded after an evaluation of numerous curriculum guides that they resulted in teaching practices that were indicative of hap-

hazard selection of unit topics, many of which had been taken from the regular class sources, whereas others were greatly outdated unit topics that had been abstracted from other guides written for use with the mentally retarded. Finally, it was stated that still other guides represented short experience activities which were isolated between a sequence of formal subject matter presentation.

The frequent charge that many curriculum guides for the mentally retarded are "watered down traditional school guides" is supported by the study of Simches and Bohn (1963). They examined over 250 curriculum guides for the mentally retarded from which they reported a serious lack of scope and sequence of content units. They concluded that the special class curriculum is in reality "not distinctive," but only a watered-down version of the regular school curriculum. This writer found the same criticisms after reviewing over 125 curriculum guides for the mentally retarded, many of which were located in the United States Office of Education Instructional Materials Center at the University of Southern California. In addition, it was observed that many of the guides were cut-and-paste jobs which tended to modify the Illinois Curriculum Guide developed by Goldstein and Seigle (1958).

Meyen (1969) states the serious need for systematic and appropriate methods of assessing academic growth or the nature of the curriculum employed, on both a short and long term basis. He goes on to assert that

efforts and progress in this area are less than optimal, and warns that unless critical evaluation processes are applied to techniques, materials and methods, and organizational structure, there is danger that systems which may be ineffective can easily be perpetuated. One might extend this viewpoint and state that many ineffective special programs are being perpetuated because effective criteria for system evaluations are lacking, but that for the individual teacher, the basis for evaluation should be based upon how well the expected outcomes of the learning situation were achieved. This basic weakness might be eliminated or reduced if special class teachers employed a systems approach of identifying sequenced tasks to be achieved in behavioral terms so that they can be evaluated. This is illustrated in Figure 1 with the SOME System Teaching model.

It should be noted that there is a strong plea by many in the field of education per se to write behavioral objectives first. This is true if one desires to exercise the capability of those who have the power to eliminate individuals from a program if they do not meet exact specifications such as required in military or industrial training programs. In contrast, the public schools are charged with the responsibility to educate all children, which provides the teachers with a random sample of youngsters that must be given an education. In some respects, when the schools fail to meet the needs of older students we end up with the dropout phenomena because by law they may leave school. As indicated in

FIGURE 1
COMPARISON OF TWO BASIC TYPES OF TEACHING MODELS

A. Military—Industrial Model

Objectives	Entry Behavior of Student	Instructional Program	Evaluation
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B. The SOME System Teaching Model

Survey of S Variables:	Objectives:	Multi M Program Variables:	Evaluation:
Societal	Implicit	Modality	Performance
School	Explicit	Motivation	Self
Student	Immediate,	Methods	Cooperative
	Intermediate	Multi types in/of learning	Significant
	Long Range		others

the SOME System teaching model, the teacher must not prepare objectives until after she has made a critical survey of entry behavior variables of her students. Only after she has an understanding of their ranges of abilities, interests, and needs can she realistically determine a program for the mentally retarded in her class. The SOME System offers the special class teacher a model for individualizing the special class program.

Blackman (1967) states that effective modification of the classroom behavior of the mentally retarded depends on the development of a socio-relevant taxonomy of their psycho-educational characteristics. By psycho-educational is meant: (1) an analysis of the retarded child's profile of abilities and deficits in a wide range of psychological processes such as perception, learning, cognition, retention, transfer, attention, discrimination, and language development; and (2) a similar analysis of a student's profile in terms of his acquisition of educational skills, content, and concepts appropriate to his level of development. Many of the factors stressed by Blackman can be found in the flow chart of the SOME System in Figure 3.

Finally, Gallagher (1967) offers the most provocative question, "Is curriculum development for exceptional children too important to be left to the classroom teacher or, for that matter, to the special educator?" In lieu of a group of teachers preparing a local guide, he suggests a multi-disciplinary group writing the curriculum, which would include psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, and special educators. One would generally agree with Gallagher that the special class teacher needs help from significant others in the school setting as well as the academic community in planning and writing curriculum. Equally true, the special class teacher will need the same people to help in evaluation.

In a recent review of curriculum literature for the young mentally retarded, Fuchigami (1969) identifies four major sources of curriculum change that will influence special education: (1) changes in regular education curriculum, (2) compensatory education, (3) prescriptive education and (4) special education.

Guskin and Spicker (1968) in their comprehensive review of research relating to mental retardation conclude "a great gap in research is in the area of teacher behavior." They proceed to state, ". . . that perhaps special educators have been attending to curriculum development and to teaching techniques when they should have been working on teacher motivation and expectations."

A LOOK AT THE SPECIAL CLASS TEACHER

The remainder of this article has focus on the special class teacher. If curriculum is to be developed on sound learning theory principles, it is imperative to see what other environmental influences can affect the teacher-pupil learning situation. Figure 2 illustrates some select critical factors that influence the nature and degree of instructional effectiveness and pupil-teacher interaction during the learning situation. Eight factors are listed that need to be considered by the teacher in planning her curriculum and instructional program. They are outlined as follows:

1. *State Legislation and Educational Codes.* The teacher's program in terms of class size, length of school day, and fiscal support are just a few major factors established under this heading that need to be considered. The means and procedures for identification and placement of students in the special class are determined, along with teacher training and credential requirements.

2. *The Administrative Policies and Decisions.* These are related to much of what is stated in item 1, but in addition, where permissive law exists, the degree of program involvement can differ between districts. Thus the philosophy and policies will vary greatly in their teacher influence in terms of what can and cannot be done.

3. *Pupil's Self Concept.* How the significant others have viewed the student and reinforced his previous school behavior will to a great extent influence his present operational level. In some cases behavior modification might be required to bring about some basic changes. Thus, in some cases, change in attitude and the affective domain might be more important than content areas. It is not meant to imply an either/or situation, but one of priorities.

4. *Logistical Support for Class.* Here the teacher should not have to order all of her desired materials until after she has surveyed the specific needs of her students. See Figure 3. When teachers are forced because of administrative necessity to buy a year ahead those materials they might need, either of two things can happen. If the materials are inappropriate, they will not be used by the conscientious teacher, or the student will be made to fit the materials regardless of his needs.

5. *Community Attitudes and Support.* Both the welfare of the students and the teacher are affected here. In the case of positive attitudes and support, the teacher will have a positive self concept, whereas negative feedback can result in the loss of teacher interest and desire to build an effective class program. In terms of older children at the secondary level, work-experience programs must have strong community support if they are to be effective and realistic.

6. *Teacher Training and Expectancies.* Too often teachers have been trained in methods courses where they learn stereotyped ideas about the mentally retarded. Two of which this writer has heard are the instructor who uses the unit method, when asked what he would do if the child was in his room for more than one year replied, "Well, he can review the units because he needs them," or the instructor who told her class that mentally retarded have no need to learn "cursive writing."

7. *Family Support.* Here the teacher must secure family understanding and support for the program if there is to be no conflict between what the child does at home and how he functions in school. John Dewey had the correct viewpoint when he assumed that the learning situation must extend beyond the four walls of the classroom. The family can play a vital role for transfer of learning and providing secondary reinforcement for learning in support of the teachers role.

8. *Ancillary Support.* Here the role of the teacher will be influenced by what services are available to support her program, i.e. school nurse, speech therapist, teacher's aids, etc.

Actually these are interrelated as represented by the double line that makes a circle through the body of all eight factors. This list is far from conclusive, and other items might be added depending on one's frame of reference and unique learning situation.

WHY A SYSTEMS APPROACH?

It was mentioned earlier that special education has suffered from a series of fractional approaches which teachers tend to adopt with great zeal. Too often these limited and isolated approaches become ends unto themselves and all children are made to conform to them. The result is that some children progress, whereas others fail even in the special class. Figure 3 provides an overview of a flow chart that can be used by the teacher with only one student, or with a class if she follows only the various task involved. What is a system? Banathy (1968) defines a system as follows:

Systems can be defined as deliberately designed synthetic organisms, comprised of inter-related and interacting components which are employed to function in an integrated fashion to attain predetermined purposes.

FIGURE 2

SOME CRITICAL FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE NATURE AND THE DEGREE OF INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND PUPIL-TEACHER INTERACTION, DURING THE LEARNING SITUATION.

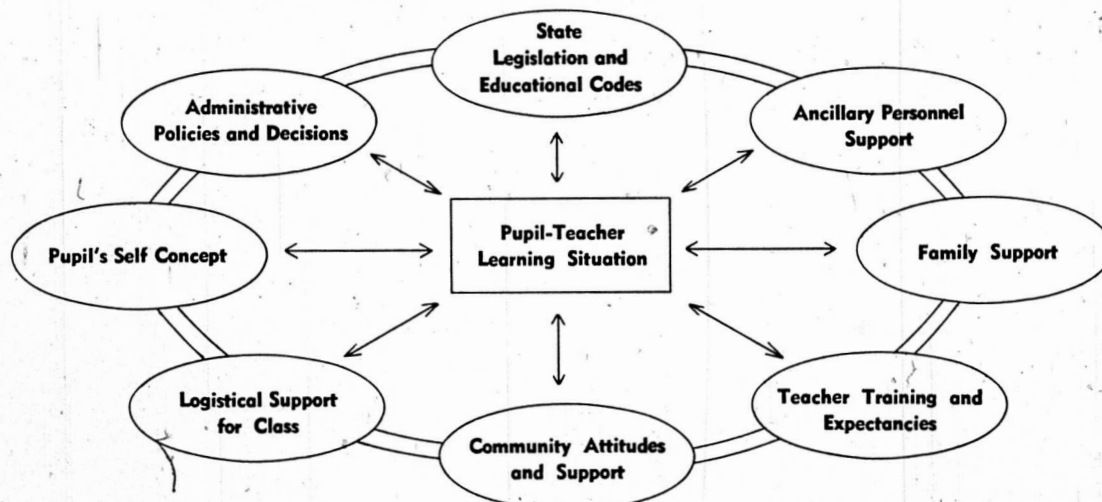
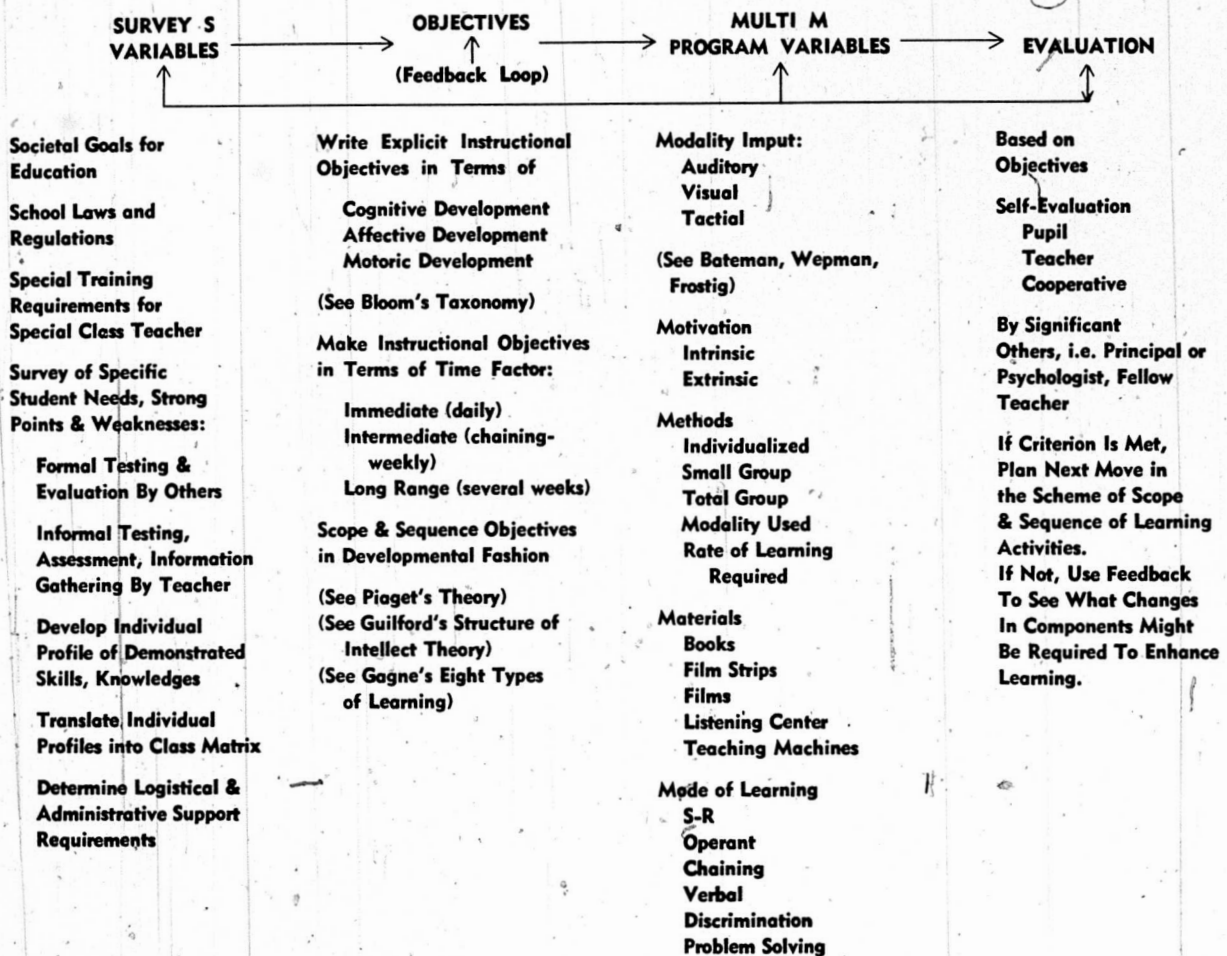


FIGURE 3

FLOW CHART OF SELECT "SOME" SYSTEM COMPONENTS REQUIRING TASK ANALYSIS ACTION UPON PART OF THE SPECIAL CLASS TEACHER.



A study of figure 3 will reveal that the SOME System is synthetic, and is comprised of four major sequenced components that use a feedback look. In addition, each major component is comprised of a variety of tasks that the teacher needs to achieve in a step-by-step manner. Thus, under the SOME System the teacher assumes a role as a manager of learning, in contrast to the traditional "teacher" role as one in charge of content learning. Management is operationally defined as the science of planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling human and material resources and their interaction in order to achieve a predetermined objective. Good management involves effective communication between the teacher, students, ancillary personnel, family, and involved com-

munity sources.

The SOME System is a logical sequence of activities that a teacher can use in planning her instructional program. It is started with a survey of what is designated as "S" variables. The societal, school laws and regulations, and special teacher training requirements are included only to demonstrate their indirect influence. The basic work is the diagnosis and assessment of student strengths and weaknesses. These can be determined through formal test results on such instruments as the ITPA or Binet, WISC, and others. The teacher might have many of her own informal methods of measuring for specific things regarding motor development, language development, reading skills, etc. The experienced

teacher can develop a series of taxonomies for use. Once an individual profile is made for each child based upon the variables and questions the teacher wants answered, these can be converted into a class matrix. The class matrix can be used to predict the range of variance in different kinds of abilities, selected groups for learning specific tasks, and knowing what logistical materials are required to back up any instructional program that will be designed. In addition, this data is used for planning highly individualized instruction. Sequencing and organizing objectives are key steps in the design of a program for individualized instruction. Much of the organization will be determined by a hierarchical nature of the objectives which must be expressed in behavioral terms. The objectives can be related to one of the three major areas—cognitive, affective, or motoric. In some instances these might be interrelated.

Lesson Plan versus Learning Plan becomes an issue under objectives. The traditional method has been for the teacher to prepare a lesson plan based on the traditional and historical influence of Herbart. This is basically an administrative plan for the principal, a substitute teacher, or to help the special class teacher determine logistical needs. In contrast, the Learning Plan contains specific daily objectives that will be the basis for all teacher-pupil effort. In the end it will be what can the student do, what has been the change in student behavior. In this case, we can say that learning is the function of the student's individual exploration and effort in the discovery of meaning.

The third major component includes the particular modality the student demonstrates for learning. This could have been obtained in formal assessment with the ITPA, Frostig, Wepman, or other instruments. The grouping of children for specific needs in modality training could be of great value, but just to group for the needs of the teacher becomes a very questionable teaching practice. Some of the factors that need to be considered in the use of materials are their appropriateness, mode of presentation, rate of learning required, the factors of economy in time and cost for both the pupil and teacher, and whether or not immediate feedback is provided to the student. One other factor is that the teacher should have some theoretical rationale in terms of certain principles of learning theory.

Finally, the fourth and final component deals with evaluation. The critical criteria is how well was the objective achieved, and did it satisfy the expected standards that were mutually set by the teacher and pupil.

In addition, pupils and teachers need to practice self-evaluation, which has many fine implications for improving the process of education per se. If the objective is completed to criterion, the next prescription is prepared; if not, one needs to check all the major components and the subcomponents under each to see where the trouble might have been. The notion that a teacher imparts and the pupils receive is still reflected in the conversation of many special class teachers; this is false, and also compounds the teachers' expectancies of what the student can do or not do. Evaluation would help guard against such stereotype notions.

Some might ask why the term "paradigm" in the title of the article. The SOME System is considered a paradigm, or model which provides the teacher with a unified and systematic way for developing curriculum. Gage (1963) points out that paradigms derive their usefulness from their generality. In this respect, the SOME System offers the special class teacher a simple and adaptable method for educational planning and remediation.

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range in what is considered relevant, but certain main trends can be perceived. The concerns seems to be for subject matter current to life as it is, not as it was; a teaching style that places value on the contributions of the learner, not merely his readiness to profit from what is given; an administrative structure which is flexible and sensitive to the views of those for whom it is designed to serve; and an overall emphasis on the individual not as a black or white student, rich or poor, smart or retarded, but as a person with dignity, feelings, and capabilities.

As educators respond, change is inevitable. The degree and consequence of such change are less predictable. It is reasonable to suggest, however, that what is being asked for could have been accommodated previously had educators themselves been a part of an active movement for relevancy.

What are the implications of this quest for change to the field of special education? To assume that these concerns do not overlap into the education of exceptional children is to be naive. We are already experiencing a challenge to the categorical approach of labeling exceptional children. Should another model for educating exceptional children gain in popularity, teacher training will also need to change. The practice of ability tracking is also in question; certainly this relates to the special class concept. What about the disadvantaged, many of whom function at the mildly mentally retarded level, or the high incidence of certain minority groups in special classes for the mentally retarded? Intelligence testing, historically a significant contributor to the selection of children for special education services, is no longer the tenable practice it once was.

Although new techniques and innovative practices warrant our investment, attention must also be given to the contemporary scene as it relates to prevailing concerns. To ignore these problems is to risk overlooking opportunities for leadership.

ISSUES & TRENDS

Education, along with society in general, is experiencing a call for re-examination of its traditions and commonly adhered to practices. No topic or practice is so sacred or basic to our society that it escapes the scrutiny of a concerned people. In terms of education, the call is not merely for equality, but for relevance. The variety of attitudes among the American people creates a wide

The Issues column is intended to serve as a forum for discussion of current concerns as they relate to programming for the mentally retarded and the emotionally disturbed. Persons wishing to contribute to this column are encouraged to do so. The statement should not exceed 800 words. Response to issues are also welcome. Both should be submitted to the editor.

TEACHER TRAINING INNOVATIONS

A NEW TRAINING MODEL FOR TEACHERS OF THE MENTALLY RETARDED

By R. F. Dickie and Wallace Hodge¹

The preparation of teachers of the mentally retarded at California State College for many years followed the traditional training pattern seen at many colleges and universities. The theoretical assumption underlying this traditional approach is that it is feasible and advisable to prepare teachers of the mentally retarded with across-the-board, K-12, teaching competence. Operationally, this approach usually includes single courses in the areas of curriculum, arts and crafts, and methodology, in which an attempt is made to identify the changing needs of the mentally retarded from ages five through twenty-one.

The recognition of the need for a new training model was precipitated by a number of factors. First, it became increasingly apparent that the traditional one-course approach seriously limited the depth of inquiry possible within any of the five levels of programs encountered in public school settings: pre-school, primary, intermediate, junior high and senior high. Second, research related to the learning characteristics of children suggested the need for different educational approaches at varying age levels. General education has recognized these differences and has attempted appropriate programming for many years. Third, the past few years have witnessed the large-scale emergence of a unique educational program for the adolescent retarded, the work-study experience. The competencies required of the work-study coordinator were identified as being sufficiently distinct to warrant differential teacher training.

Our task was to devise a training program that would effectively realize two major objectives: (1) to develop in all students an understanding of the broad aspects of

mental retardation; and (2) to expose students to divergent learning experiences related to the needs of the young or the adolescent retarded.

The first two years of the student's program is characterized by general studies providing a broad-based liberal education in the arts, sciences, and humanities.

During the second and continuing into the third year, the student is introduced to two essential core programs simultaneously. The general education core, taught outside the Special Education Department, develops basic understandings in classroom psychology and teaching competencies in tool subjects. The core in mental retardation introduces the student to the concept of exceptionality and develops basic competencies in curricula modification, diagnostic procedures, prescriptive teaching, and parent counseling.

The mental retardation core also provides the student with information necessary to make a decision vital to his professional development. Through a third year practicum experience and course content, the differential nature of elementary and secondary programs is stressed. The student is then required to declare an elementary or secondary major. From this point to the senior seminar, the programs are mutually exclusive.

Students who select the Elementary Major take course work appropriate to primary and intermediate special classes. The major courses specifically deal with content in terms of the needs of the young retarded including the trainable. The elementary methods course, in addition to providing the student with special class teaching technology, also emphasizes appropriate modification in the content of the supportive courses taught outside the Special Education Department.

Course content in the Secondary Curriculum relates specifically to the junior high and work-study programs. All teacher training experiences revolve around the need to prepare the adolescent retardate to assume his role as a producer in society. Courses, while structured on theoretical consideration, emphasize the hard realities of competitive employment for the retarded. Likewise, reality orientation is the approach in considering the physical and social aspects of domestic life. The supportive courses are designed to prepare the secondary major to deal more effectively with the problems of the disadvantaged, a major contributor to the population of special classes.

Elementary and Secondary Majors are involved in a one semester full-time teaching practicum. Elementary Majors select two of three possible practicum experiences

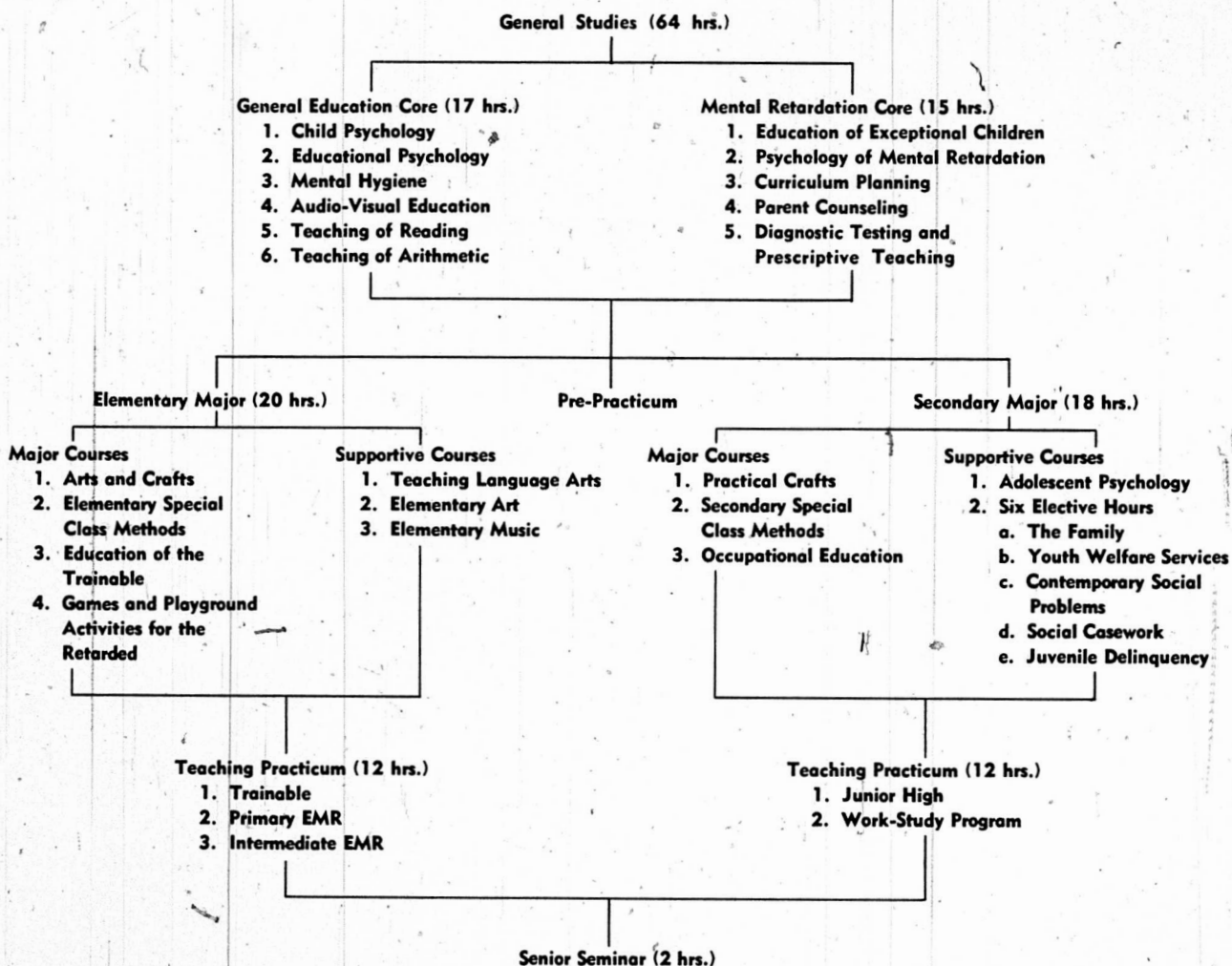
1. R. F. Dickie is Professor and Chairman of the Department of Special Education at California State College in Pennsylvania. Wallace Hodge is an Assistant Professor at the same institution.

depending upon their particular professional interest in teaching either trainable or educable children. Secondary Majors divide their practicum semester between junior high and work-study programs.

The culminating experience of the training program is a small group senior seminar which reunites Elemen-

tary and Secondary Majors. This seminar provides a forum for the exchange of experiences and ideas of those about to assume professional responsibilities. This final experience presents opportunities for challenging both theory and practice in the conducive atmosphere of a gradeless environment.

TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM IN MENTAL RETARDATION



RESOURCE MATERIALS

By Reuben Altman and Linda Smith¹

PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The Public Affairs Committee, a nonprofit organization founded in 1935, issues concise and interesting pamphlets to educate the American public on vital economic and social problems. These pamphlets provide information in such areas of concern as family life, child development, sex education, science, consumer education, race relations, and general guidance on physical and mental health. Submitted manuscripts are reviewed by panels of professionals having expertise in the appropriate fields.

From among the approximately 200 pamphlets currently available, teachers of emotionally disturbed children will be particularly interested in *The Shy Child*, *Toward Mental Health*, *School Failures and Dropouts*, *Your Child's Emotional Health*, and *Serious Mental Illness in Children*. Similarly, teachers of the mentally retarded would find helpful such pamphlets as *The Retarded Child Gets Ready for School*, *How Retarded Children Can Be Helped*, *New Hope for the Retarded Child*, and *New Careers: Real Jobs and Opportunity for the Disadvantaged*.

In addition to making publications available on an individual basis, the Public Affairs Committee offers alternative plans for securing their materials: special packets in designated interest areas varying from 16 to 54 pamphlets each or hard-cover compilations of selected pamphlets. In 1968, preparation of Spanish adaptations of several pamphlets began on an experimental basis. The Public Affairs Committee also produces films on health and mental health topics, each with an accompanying booklet.

Public Affairs Pamphlets sell for 25c each with special reduced rates for quantity orders. Subscriptions to the estimated 15 new titles to be published yearly are \$3.00, with a decreasing price scale offered for two and three

year subscriptions. The entire collection of Public Affairs Pamphlets currently in print including a subscription to the next fifteen issues is available for \$25.00. A catalog listing the complete selection of pamphlets and an order form may be requested free of charge from: Public Affairs Pamphlets; 381 Park Avenue South; New York, New York 10016.

LAURI ENTERPRISES

Lauri Enterprises is an educational publisher producing materials useful for children with intellectual deficits and/or emotional problems. While these teaching aids were designed for use in the regular classroom, the manufacturer reports that their "Play 'n Learn" materials have been found to have merit in the treatment and instruction of exceptional children. Available from the publisher is a listing of special educators who have displayed or provided testimony relevant to these materials.

The "Play 'n Learn" Series was created to stimulate the perceptual and manipulative skills prerequisite to the development of more advanced cognitive processes. These crepe foam rubber toys are amenable to exercises in form and color association, left-right orientation, alphabet recognition and recall, number identification, finger coordination, and other readiness skills. Materials geared to elementary grade levels can facilitate spelling, social studies, and mathematics including fractional relationships and time concepts. The consistent utilization of a structured puzzle-like format may prove particularly valuable with distractible children. Further, children manifesting visual impairments could possibly profit from Lauri's "Feel and Match" Series. Sets of assorted shapes are manipulated to provide training in discriminating differences in thickness, texture, width, and length.

An annotated brochure picturing individual items, each with a suggested chronological age range, can be obtained free of charge. Materials range in price from \$1.50 to \$10.50. Orders for materials or brochure requests should be directed to: Lauri Enterprises; Phillips-Avon, Maine, 04966.

WILSON SPORTING GOODS

For the development of physical abilities, perceptual-motor skills, and social competencies, a series of informa-

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tive booklets published by Wilson Sporting Goods may be of value. Physical Education instructors will find booklets designed to facilitate their athletic programs of particular interest. *Help Yourself to Good Baseball* includes fundamental instructions as well as a section on the care and maintenance of equipment. Similar materials are available for other sports including the relatively new game of Angle Ball. One pamphlet, prepared by a nationally known tennis professional, outlines a complete tennis program for both elementary and secondary schools. Exercises leading up to tennis skills and proficiency tests for beginning, intermediate, and advanced groups are suggested.

These informational materials are provided free as a courtesy of Wilson Sporting Goods and may be acquired by writing: Wilson Sporting Goods Company; Public Relations Department; 2233 West Street; River Grove, Illinois 60171.

WASHINGTON REPORT

THE NATIONAL CENTER ON EDUCATIONAL MEDIA AND MATERIALS FOR THE HANDICAPPED

A total of \$12,500,000 will fund a National Center on Educational Media and Materials for the Handicapped during fiscal year 1970. Congress has passed a bill authorizing the development of a centrally located facility to prepare and disseminate educational technology for the handicapped.

Summarizing S.1611, the Senate said that the National Center "will provide a comprehensive program of activities and services designed to develop, evaluate, coordinate, and facilitate the use of existing and new educational technology, instructional materials, and teaching methods in education programs for handicapped persons." The bill authorizes entrance into an agreement with a university to establish a center which would be

engaged in designing, developing, and adapting instructional media and materials for the handicapped. Another function would be to familiarize those involved in the education of the handicapped with the use of media and equipment.

The new center is envisioned as a link among the networks of Instructional Materials Centers, Regional Media Centers, Educational Research Information Centers, and other Bureau of Education for the Handicapped activities, such as: projects in language instruction, curriculum, and distribution of captioned films. Linked to all of these, it is seen to be a significant step in eliminating duplication of effort in preparing and disseminating media to handicapped children.

Although the original bill specified that the Media Center should "be located in the National Capital area," it was amended by the House of Representatives to provide for establishment of the center anywhere in the United States. However, the general opinion among officials of the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped is that Washington, D.C. is the logical site for the center.

While the appropriation for the first year is \$12,500,000, funding for subsequent years is as follows: \$15,000,000 for fiscal year 1971 and \$20,000,000 for fiscal year 1972 and each succeeding fiscal year.

Special Conference on Early Childhood Education, The Jung Hotel, New Orleans, Louisiana, December 9-13, 1969. Write for further information to The Council for Exceptional Children, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036.

The International Convention of The Council for Exceptional Children will be held at the Conrad Hilton Hotel, Chicago, Illinois, April 19-25, 1970.

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