

THE SLOW LEARNER IN GRADES
THREE, FOUR AND FIVE

by

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This study of the slow learner in grades three, four and five is dedicated to this group of children in the schools of Montana, in hopes that it will help to bring about a more successful, happy and rewarding school experience for them.

KJS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine what classroom teachers' opinions and attitudes were in teaching slow learning children and what they say are the organizational methods they used to teach these children in the regular classrooms in grades three, four and five.

Procedures

The procedure of this study involved the use of a survey questionnaire sent to one-hundred twenty-five teachers of grades three, four and five in twenty-seven elementary schools in ten separate districts in Montana. The writer also reviewed related literature on the subject of the slow learner in the classroom.

Conclusions

1. One hundred percent of the schools reporting have some type of planned program of instruction for slow learners.
2. There is considerable concern on the part of teachers in regards to administrative practices used in assignment of pupils to classrooms and the instructional methods they say are being used in classrooms for the slow learners.
3. A combination of heterogeneous and homogeneous groups for home room assignments and heterogeneous grouping for science, social studies, art, music and P. E. seemed to be preferred by the classroom teachers surveyed.
4. Homogeneous grouping by general reading skills and ability plus individualized instruction was favored by the majority of the teachers surveyed for reading, language arts and math, especially for slow learners.
5. Slow learners and poor readers posed the biggest challenge in teaching but most teachers responding seemed to prefer teaching average or accelerated groups of pupils.
6. Wider use of audio-visual materials, more teacher helpers, more time for individualized instruction and a more varied and realistic curriculum were all ways respondents felt slow learners could receive greater benefits from school experiences.
7. According to related literature reviewed, slow learner's discipline problems related closely to their academic success, emotional status and teacher acceptance.
8. Competition, if properly planned and supervised, can be beneficial for slow learners according to the teachers surveyed.
9. Related literature and responding teachers indicated a need for more specially trained teachers for teaching of slow learners.

There appears to be no one "best" method of instruction and/or method of evaluation of progress for slow learners. Most teachers favored a variety of approaches to these tasks. There was evidence of a need for more planning for both the instructional program and evaluation of progress procedures used for the slow learners.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The problem of administrative practices used in the assignment of pupils to classrooms and the instructional methods being used in the classrooms for the slow learners in grades three, four and five has long been the object of much concern to many administrators and teachers in the public schools of our state.

A variety of methods of assignment of pupils to classrooms are being used in our public schools. Each method used seems to meet the needs and/or requirements of that particular school to some degree. The various types of grouping being used in making these classroom assignments do not seem to be fully meeting the academic and social needs of the slow learners in our schools. There are strengths and weaknesses in each type of classroom and/or specific class assignment.

In mass production of education for all children, the slow learner cannot be ignored because he doesn't "keep pace" with the rest of the children in his room. The concern, responsibility, and duty of our schools are to give full consideration to the educational potential of all individual children in any given classroom. Academic and social adjustment failures need not, and should not, be products of any classroom where individual differences of pupils are completely understood and teaching procedures used are implemented accordingly.

Slow learners are not necessarily retarded mentally. Some of these slow students are not successful in academic achievement due to emotional upsets, socio-economic backgrounds, cultural deprivation, or other determining

factors. Slow learners often vary in their degrees of success in academic achievement from subject to subject. These variances in achievement levels, from subject to subject, for slow learners increases concern for their success and suggests a need for more individualized instruction for these pupils in any given classroom.

The investigator plans to survey the organizational and teaching practices currently being used in our public schools, in grades three, four and five, for that group of pupils here classified as slow learners. . . . those whose I. Q. 's fall within the range of 75 and 95. This will be accomplished through the use of questionnaires for the classroom teachers.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to determine what classroom teachers' opinions and attitudes were in teaching slow learning children and what they say are the organizational methods they used to teach these children in the regular classrooms in grades three, four and five.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The procedures that follow were proposed as a means for accomplishing the goals of the study. The investigator would send out questionnaires to the classroom teachers, of the grades included in this study, of a cross-section selection of schools in the state of Montana, including both large and small school systems in this selection. The schools to which questionnaires were to be sent include the following: Southside, Westside, Irle, North Star and Eastside,

Glasgow, Montana; Sunnyside, Lincoln McKinley and Devlin, Havre, Montana; Central Elementary, Whitefish, Montana; Winans, East Side, Lincoln, Washington and North Side, Livingston, Montana; Rossiter, Broadwater and Smith Elementary, Helena, Montana; Miles Avenue, Billings, Montana; Manhattan Elementary, Manhattan, Montana; Belgrade Elementary, Belgrade, Montana; Rocky Boy Elementary, Rocky Boy Indian Reservation, Box Elder, Montana; and Emerson, Irving, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Whittier and Willson, Bozeman, Montana.

LIMITATIONS

The study was limited to a cross-section sampling of elementary schools in the state of Montana. Both large and small school systems were included in the sampling to give a better cross-section of responses to the questions included in the questionnaires for the classroom teachers of grades three, four and five of the selected schools.

The review of literature was limited to reference material available in the Montana State University library, Bozeman, Montana.

It was assumed that in the evolving varieties of procedures used in the making of assignments of pupils to the individual classrooms and in the methods used in the teaching of the pupils in the various classrooms of this study, there could be biased opinions and attitudes expressed by some of the classroom teachers surveyed, should they not be in agreement with assignment procedures presently being used. It was also assumed that much of the information gleaned would, of necessity, be subjective since little statistical data had been recorded on this topic.

Only third, fourth and fifth grade pupils were to be surveyed for this study, with emphasis on the slow learning pupil as this is the group of pupils for which the writer has the most concern, and it is the group with which he is most familiar with in regards to academic, social and emotional problems or difficulties.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The most successful methods of properly teaching the slow learners in our classrooms merit careful consideration and study. The information gathered through making this study would be valuable as resource material for classroom teachers, guidance personnel, and school administrators for possible inservice training (group or individual use) in an elementary school. Understandings of methods and techniques useful in teaching slow learners in the classroom were essential to carrying out improved techniques for classroom instruction for these pupils; they would also be used as guidelines in the study itself. First hand knowledge of the teachers of several elementary schools would enable the investigator to facilitate a study of, and it was hoped, implement some improvement in the procedures and the techniques presently being used in the teaching of the slow learners in the elementary schools in District 7, Bozeman, Montana and perhaps neighboring schools as well.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Types of Assignments:

Interest Unit. . . . is the type of teaching where pupils and teachers plan jointly in the selection of a topic and for the studying of this selected topic. This topic for study will then be related to all other assignments for other classes. Ex: "Community Living, " will be developed through math, language, science, social studies, reading and other assignments all tying in with the development of the chosen topic for study.

Project Activity Unit. . . . has assignments and/or projects developed from text book materials or other outside related materials. Ex: Study of Montana history in social studies by making maps, models, dioramas, writing reports, etc.

Text Book Teaching. . . . is where all or most of the assignments are made strictly from text books. Little or no outside enrichment types of assignments are used other than those mentioned in the text book.

Grouping Assignments:

Heterogeneous Grouping, as referred to in this study, will mean grouping of pupils with varied levels of academic achievement and ability into one classroom or group within a classroom based on their general reading competence or understanding, as measured by various tests and/or teacher evaluations.

Homogeneous Grouping, as referred to in this study, will mean ability grouping of pupils assigned to a given classroom or a group within a classroom

on the basis of competence or understanding in reading, as measured by various tests and/or teacher evaluations.

Pupil Classifications:

Accelerated Readers. . . . those reading well above their grade level and having successfully mastered the reading skills necessary to read very fluently, to comprehend what he reads better than most pupils in his grade and to read at a rate which is comparable to or well above that of most of the pupils in his room or his grade.

Average Readers. . . . those reading at their grade level and having successfully mastered the reading skills necessary to read fluently, to comprehend most of what is read and to read at a rate comparable to most pupils in his class or his grade.

Poor Readers. . . . those who are reading at least one year below their grade level and/or those who have not successfully mastered the reading skills necessary to read fluently, to comprehend what he has read and to read at a rate comparable to most pupils in his class or his grade.

Slow Learners. . . . as referred to in this study, will mean those pupils whose I. Q. 's fall within the range from 75 through 95. Those pupils in this group who have difficulty in meeting success in academic, social and/or emotional situations in his class or his grade.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A gigantic step has been made from the Dame Schools of colonial days to the single teacher-instructed and self-contained classrooms or departmentalized classrooms of today. The trend in education continues to be toward the education of the "whole child," which suggests that teaching be directed to the specific needs of all children in our schools.

Terman (21), as a result of his survey on revisions of the Stanford-Binet intelligence test, advocated a differentiated course of study to allow each child to progress at a rate normal to the individual child, whether the rate be rapid or slow. A need to free some children from frustration of failure and others from the boredom of understimulation was detected as a result of his study. The remedy suggested was to measure out work for each child in proportion to his measured mental ability. Terman expressed a sincere interest in the extremes at either end of "the curve" and the need to meet the individual differences of the slow learners and the excellerated students while still meeting the needs of the average students in the classroom.

The issues which emerged as a result of Terman's study were reviewed for their adequacy in meeting the individual differences of children in regards to successful approaches to learning, teaching and curriculum development. The issues were: How much material should these pupils be expected to master each day? How much material should be presented? For how many should the material be prepared? These questions seem to point out a need to consolidate concepts of what special education involves and to free us from the

restrictions of thinking chiefly in terms of a graded, lock-step school organization which demands equal academic achievement and success from slow learners as well as all others within any given classroom.

Frazier (10), in an article written for the Elementary School Journal, lists three phrases to exemplify the recent changes in thinking toward classification of areas for individual differences: "Learning is multidimensional, learning is limitless, and learning is personal". He further feels that when the individual is psychologically and methodically free to do so, he frequently chooses to learn much more than he has to. The role of educators is not so much of one of laying out the amount to be learned but rather is one of arranging for learners to make use of whatever they can that promises to help them make increasing sense out of their worlds.

Each learner is uniquely himself, whether his intelligence quotient is 98, 140 or 75; and if we wish to do our best for any one learner, we must deal with him as a person.

A program based on current thinking could be described as striving to support the learner in his purposes by helping him remain or become open to new experiences and by making available to him possibilities for ever richer, broader and deeper learnings. The search for sense and satisfaction is carried on within, but not limited by, a framework of possibilities, with the teacher assuming responsibility for guiding the learner toward increasing proficiency and maturity. Frazier (10), stated that the emphasis for such a program as the one mentioned here goes to richness of resources for learning, within any framework; to the quality of the learning experience, rather than to anything that can be quantified in terms of content or measured in terms of time; and to

the individual learner, who is expected to learn some things in common with others but to learn other things that perhaps only he can or needs or wants to learn. Rather than being content "to personalize our references to the talented and retarded, but to treat other pupils as a faceless mass," we believe in "giving all our pupils adequate attention and comparable encouragement". If we genuinely understand what we mean to do, then we can do it.

Karch and Eastbrook (14), in their book entitled Teaching Techniques, suggest that students should not be judged on past grades, performances, or reputations. It is the job they do in class that should be judged as accurately as possible. The good instructor will rate students' present performance and not be influenced by their past record, whether it is good or bad.

Karch and Eastbrook (14) present an interesting concept in their statement that "provisions of individual differences are fundamental to good teaching" and that projects taught in any class should make allowances for slow, average and fast students. All members of a class never have equal ability, nor do they all work at the same pace. Teachers should plan projects that challenge the ability of every student in their class.

Moustakas (19), in a study of slow-learning children of two public schools in Birmingham, Michigan, and one each in Highland Park and Ferndale, Michigan, states that:

.....extreme care must be taken to find the needs of children in interpersonal relationships, even to the extent of ignoring unfavorable reactions at times, to develop a sense of security, belonging and self-satisfaction in achievement, academic or personal.

Cawley (5), in his research study comments on the large number of slow-learner children who leave school prior to the completion of high school

and the large number of bright, average and slow learners who fail to make a satisfactory adjustment to the school environment. His study was designed to investigate inter-group comparisons among the expressed attitudes of teachers and bright, average and slow-learner children on such variables as adequacy-inadequacy, acceptance-rejection and interaction-withdrawal as they occur in peer-individual and authority-oriented situations. The "School-Picture-Story" test was administered to 90 teachers and 432 school children, who were distributed equally by sex, grade-level and ability-level. The test consisted of 15 pictures, five depicting peer-oriented situations, five authority-oriented situations and five individually-oriented situations. Each picture was accompanied by six statements. The subject was asked to check the statement which he felt was most representative of the feelings of the child in the picture. Considerable variation existed in the expressed attitudes of the teachers toward children of various ability levels. The tendencies were for teachers to express positive attitudes toward the bright and average children and negative attitudes toward slow-learner children. Boys at the fifth grade level tended to express attitudes of teachers toward them. Bright and slow-learner ninth-grade boys tended to express attitudes about themselves which were similar to the expressed attitudes of the teachers towards them. Bright and average girls, at the fifth-grade level, expressed attitudes about themselves which were more in disagreement with the teachers' attitudes toward them than did bright and average girls at the ninth-grade level. Slow-learner girls, at both grade levels, expressed attitudes about themselves which were in contradiction to the expressed attitudes of teachers toward them. Inter-group comparisons among the expressed attitudes of children, at the fifth-grade level, indicated a reasonably high degree of

similarity among the various ability groups. This tendency was not as consistently maintained at the ninth-grade level. The relationships between expressed attitudes of boys of comparable ability levels at the fifth and ninth-grade levels were not significant. Bright girls, however, displayed a high degree of similarity in their expressed attitudes. When sex comparisons were made, a greater degree of similarity existed among the fifth-grade learners than among the children in other ability groups. The boys seemed to change a great deal, while the girls remained relatively stable in their expressed attitudes.

Although expressed attitudes of both teacher and fifth- and ninth-grade pupils were expressed, the research study reported did express some points of interest relative to the study of the writer. The points of interest to the writer included those pertaining to teacher-pupil expressed attitudes and the relationships of one to the other. Cawley (5) expressed the idea that the attitudes of teachers towards pupils are often considered factors which effect pupil attitudes toward learning experiences in both academic and social situations. Further, the idea was brought out that an understanding of pupil attitudes, as well as their academic abilities, was essential to proper application of teaching methods in teaching pupils according to their individual differences and specific needs.

Cauble (4) expressed his concern over the effects of anxiety of intermediate grade children and its effects on academic achievement in his research study at Southern Illinois University in 1964. His problem was that in recent years there had been increasing pressures to improve education at all levels. More subjects were finding their way into the curriculum while the school day and year, organization of knowledge, teaching methods and materials and school

organization remained relatively consistent. He felt that additional pressures on pupils, and particularly slow learning pupils, had resulted in increased anxieties among them, which in turn had effected their academic achievement.

The purposes of Caubles' (4) study were to determine the relationships between a child's level of anxiety and his ability to perform the tasks required in upper primary and intermediate grades, to identify those factors in the lives of children which were related to level of anxiety and to compare methods of determining a child's level anxiety. The two schools he selected for the study had pupils of contrasting home and school environments. Six classes of fourth, fifth and sixth grades from each of two schools were chosen for the sample. The Iowa Test of Basic Skills, the California Test of Personality, the California Short-Form Test of Mental Maturity and the Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale (CMAS) were used along with the Warner's Index of Status Characteristics test. Specially prepared evaluative devices were two sociometric questions and a very short "Guess Who" instrument for peer group identification of pupils exhibiting anxiety-indicative or anxiety-free behavior. The children of the study were grouped on the basis of the CMAS into three anxiety levels with approximately equal numbers in each level.

Cauble (4) reported ten conclusions from the study:

1. In several groups, highly anxious children were less capable at complex tasks than low or moderate-anxious children.
2. On all aspects of personality adjustment, low-anxious children were significantly best of the three anxiety levels.
3. There was a tendency for high-anxious children to have lower intelligence quotients.
4. In some groups, high-anxious children had significantly lower parental socio-economic level ratings.

5. Self-concept, contrary to expectations and previous findings, did not differ significantly among the three anxiety levels.
6. Teachers and pupils agree significantly as to the presence and/or absence of anxiety indicative characteristics in children in the classroom. However, the children having anxiety-indicative behavior may or may not report feelings of anxiety.
7. Highly anxious children with high intelligence were no more able to perform complex tasks than highly-anxious children with more 'normal' intelligence.
8. High anxiety was more often associated with poor scores of pupils from the better homes than from pupils from the poorer homes.
9. The interfering relationship of high anxiety exhibited a definite increase as grade level increased.
10. High anxiety was more often accompanied by poor performance with boys than with girls.

Ross (20) made a case study designed to develop case descriptions of twenty intermediate grade students of average or above average intelligence and who were two or more years below their mental grade level in arithmetic achievement as measured by a standardized arithmetic test. The study was conducted at the University of Oregon in 1962. Individual and group data were collected during the course of the study to identify areas in need of more thorough examination utilizing controlled factor design.

Individual cases of the study showed the following generalizations:

1. Arithmetic underachievement did not become apparent until the fourth grade.
2. Subjects tended to be from home environments which provided little intellectual stimulation.
3. Subjects characteristically were withdrawn and defeated in their attitude toward school.
4. Subjects were underachieving in school subjects other than arithmetic also.

5. Subjects had a number of anomalies.
6. Arithmetic underachievement appeared to be related to multiple, rather than single factors.

Results of the study conducted by Ross (20) have indicated a need for further research of methods used in teaching slow learning pupils according to their individual differences. The writer's awareness of this need has prompted him to continue such a study, but with special emphasis being placed on the slow-learners in grades three, four and five. The varied causes for underachievement illustrated in the study related in particular to the writer's study in that the findings reinforced present concern for methods of instruction being used for all slow learners, not only mentally retarded pupils, but underachieving slow learners as well. The various factors effecting the achievement levels of the pupils of the study were important in that they further emphasize the need for teachers to become more familiar with pupil backgrounds and psychological factors in making preparations to teach the "whole child" according to his individual differences and specific needs.

According to Hagerman (11), approximately 15 percent of the children in the regular classroom rank as dull normal with I. Q. 's ranging from 80 to 90. The experiences they meet and the care they receive in the classroom have much to do with whether they become delinquents or successful and adjusted persons. Hagerman conducted the study while serving in the capacity of a supervising teacher in the Lincoln Consolidated Training School, Michigan State Normal College. He says:

The slow-learning child is entitled to as much sympathy and understanding as the normal and superior children. The slow learner must be helped to develop his own personal integrity and individuality as well as an adequate degree of conformity to group living. He needs to be helped to

adjust constructively and successfully to his real life situation which will tend to be in adult life as it is in the classroom. Rarely will he be able to meet competition successfully.

Hagerman contends that the slow-learning child must find constructive solutions to the problems he meets in school in order to avoid regression and maladjustment, and that normal and superior children must show a healthy respect for the rights of the slow-learning child as an individual. He also states that the slow-learning child develops more slowly than the normal or superior child because his interests will vary and will not include as wide a range as those of other children in his classroom. Slow-learning children show most interest in constructive and active classroom activities. Word meanings and vocabulary development will come more slowly and are achieved best through actual experiences. Slow-learning children do not detect or correct their own errors as quickly as the normal child and need more guidance in understanding their mistakes so that they can profit from their experiences, according to Hagerman.

Project activity units have proven very successful in the teaching of slow-learning children as these units seem to meet the needs of such children and still allow optimum growth for the normal and superior children. Successful project activities make a classroom alive and interesting to children and are made successful mainly by the interest of the children. In the project activity units the slow-learner can be an active participant in the activities of the classroom and acquire a feeling of success along with the others in his class. These are the goals which are of concern to the writer in considering his study of teaching methods being used to teach the slow learner in grades three, four and five. The writer feels that Hagerman's study has given much good background

material to be considered in the carrying out of the writer's study.

According to Bruce (2):

.....unless a formal, fixed assignment recitation scheme interferes, the pupils will be found working at different levels on the same subject within any specified class. This being the result of individual differences in abilities of the pupils within the groups. To adequately take care of these variances it will be necessary to take into consideration the social and scientific changes in the world also in adjusting and planning a curriculum for these children.

Although no specified population was cited in Bruce's book, he contends that physical development and mental development effect academic achievement and that this is another factor in consideration of stress on the teaching according to the individual differences and needs of the pupils.

The study by Bruce (2) illustrated further the need for classroom teachers to be aware of individual differences in the classroom and to be aware of these teaching needs in academic achievement as well as in the social needs of the slow learners in all classes. The writer has a like concern for these slow learners in the groups for his study.

Fantini (9) concludes that little had been done to help make school interesting and challenging for slow learners in the majority of the elementary schools in Pennsylvania prior to 1959. The slow learners had been taught the same subject matter and from the same books as the average and accelerated pupils, but at a slower rate. Teachers, administrators and pupil peer groups had labeled the slow learners as handicapped, retarded, specials and even stupid or dumb. Such "labels" had caused the slow learners to resent all their school associates, to become behavior problems, to lose interest in all academic achievement and to become isolates on the playground.

As a result of Fantini's (9) comments on the conditions of the elementary schools in Pennsylvania, some of the schools became concerned over the needs of the slow learners in their classrooms and developed some well organized and well supervised teacher-pupil interest units. Much improvement in academic achievement, better social relations and happier pupils resulted from the use of the interest unit type of teaching practices. The slow learners learned because learning had become exciting for them. No feelings of inferiority had been associated with the program, for each child had experienced success.

The writer feels that Fantini (9) has some very good comments for consideration in the teaching of the slow learner in grades three, four and five. It is hoped that some such similar results may be achieved in the study area of the writer in relationship to the teaching techniques used for the slow learners in his area of the state.

According to the publishers of Encyclopedia Britanica (8):

The development of methods for measuring intelligence and attainments has been of major importance in breaking down the notion that all children of the same age could be taught at the same rate. Alfred Binet's device for expressing intellectual development in mental age units, and the analogous formulation of reading, arithmetical and other 'ages' showed that brighter children in a given age group may well be two or more years advanced beyond the average group, and the duller ones (excluding the mentally defective) two years below.

It was shown also that this range widens with the increasing age of the children as they progress from grade to grade.

Hamilton and Rehwoldt (12) ask the question: "Have we sufficient knowledge that justifies collecting children of similar characteristics into one classroom for their education?" Their contention is that grouping on the basis of similarities cannot be justified and that such practice needs to be re-examined.

The point of view that denies grouping on the basis of similarities is that we learn from those who are different as well as from those who are more mature, or by having responsibilities for those who are less mature than we are.

Thelen (22), in his article on "Matching Teachers and Pupils" refers to teachability grouping. This type of grouping was explained as a class made up of select students for each teacher like those who, in the teacher's opinion, had been most successful in his classrooms in the past. . . . had been what they called "teachable".

The writer has observed that most teachers and administrators realize, at least to some extent, that some pupils perform better with certain teachers than with others. In fact it is common practice in some schools, toward the end of a school year, for groups of teachers to sit down to figure out which students should be assigned to certain teachers. Frequently, school counselors and administrators make similar recommendations. Many parents try hard to get their children with certain teachers.

Surprisingly enough, although most school personnel recognize that inter-personal relationship between child and teacher is at the heart of the learning situation, most systems used for grouping children overlook this factor completely, according to Thelen.

The teacher tried to get materials presented to pupils in a variety of ways and prepared much better for his classes in a teachable class; his teaching was more flexible; he was more permissive with respect to disruptive behavior, Thelen claims in his study. He further states that:

Since no two students are identical, no two will have identical experiences. Different teachers will affect different students with varying

degrees of impact. Thus every teacher is a more effective teacher for some students than for others. What we call 'teachability' results from a quality of the relationship between child and teacher.

Combs (6), in his article "Fostering Self-Direction," tells us that schools which do not produce self-directed citizens have failed everyone. . . . the student, the profession and the society they are designed to serve.

The goal of education in the modern world, according to Combs, must be the production of increasing uniqueness. This cannot be achieved in autocratic atmospheres where all decisions are made by the teachers and administration while the students are reduced to passive followers of the established patterns. Combs asks, "How can we produce students who are more self-directed?" In answer to this he lists four essential phases to the program:

- 1) We need to believe that it is important.
- 2) A need for trust in the human organism.
- 3) An experimental attitude, in teachers as well as students.
- 4) The provision of opportunities for self-direction.

Education must be seen, not as providing right answers, but as confrontation with problems; not imaginary play problems either, but real ones in which decisions count.

The question which must be honestly faced by all engaged in the education process is as follows, according to Combs:

Does the phrase 'the slow learner' contribute anything to the better education of these youths. . . . or does it excuse us from trying?

Developing a program for "slow learners" depends on our willingness to study them, to find out who they are as individuals. This requires a complete shift from our usual focus:

First, our study must be of the individual as he is. . . not as he differs from a norm group which we value. Second, we must change our orientation from one of prediction to one of diagnosis in the basic meaning of thorough knowledge. The real task of the school is to explore for and

with each child to discover what his potentiality is.

Combs claims that the teacher of the slow learner must become a provocative adventurer who sees the goal of the educational process as opening up new possibilities for each youth. Our thinking about the slow learner is too much bound up with our concern about ourselves and too little associated with our concern for teaching. The slow learners, as indicated by the author of this article, do not differ as significantly as we like to think in terms of their skills.

In his summary, Combs indicates that there is reason to question the whole concept of the slow learner; these youngsters demonstrate in other areas competencies similar to those we attempt to encourage. Perhaps the "slowness" lies in the teaching process rather than in the learner, was Combs' closing statement.

In our attempts to meet the needs of these slow learners it is very essential, according to Mahan (17), that we set realistic goals and practice personalized teaching. This demands of the teacher, he says, that he or she use information about a child for understanding, not for labeling; it calls for an analysis of the pupil along dimensions frequently overlooked. Learning, to be meaningful and acceptable to these slow learners as well as other students, as the author stated, must be of such a nature that it can relate to them.

The wide range of problems and suggestions discussed in the materials reviewed for this study have given the writer much insight into the needs for improvement of the teaching practices being used for slow learners in the classrooms of our elementary schools. Terman (21) reported results of improvements of intelligence tests used for measuring academic achievement potential; Frazier (10) reported on the changes in the thinking of educators on the various

areas of learning and how learning is often effected by pressures other than those produced in the classroom; Karch and Eastbrook (14) felt that children should be rated and judged on present performances and behavior patterns rather than on past records; Moustakas (19) stated that more concern should be given to the inter-personal relationships of the children in our schools; Cawley (5) expressed concern over the dropouts of our schools and the backgrounds leading up to such action on the part of the pupils; Cauble's (4) study pertained to the pressures which were put on students as a result of the increasing curriculum requirements causing anxiety factors detrimental to satisfactory learning for our school populations; Ross (20) surveyed the needs of an intermediate grade class in relationship to academic achievement in arithmetic as effected by socio-economic problems, variances in abilities and other factors which might prove detrimental to the success of pupils in any area of the school program; Hagerman (11) felt a need for more understanding and more complete acceptance of the slow learners in the classroom; Bruce (2) felt that teacher-pupil planned units would aid in solving many of the problems of teaching according to the individual differences of the pupils in the classrooms; the Encyclopedia Britanica (8) article reviewed expressed concern over grouping practices being used in our schools to meet the individual needs of all pupils in a given group; Hamilton and Rehwold (12) made further reference to grouping of pupils in schools according to needs without sufficient background knowledge on the pupils' prior to establishment of groups; Thelen (22) refers to "teachability grouping" as a possible solution to some of the teacher-pupil problems. . . matching pupil's needs and temperment to those of the teacher; Combs (6) tells us that self-direction is

essential to success not only for students but for the profession, and the society which these students are being trained to serve; and Mahan (17) writes that the slow learner, if properly challenged and taught, is often no different than any other student in the room...meaningful instruction of an imaginative nature will produce excellent results with them as it does for most pupils in any "up-and-coming classroom".

The writer concurs with the recommendations of the surveys and personal articles reviewed for this study. However, the writer found that a number of the articles reviewed for this study quoted no specific population used in arriving at the authors' conclusions. There were many excellent suggestions and recommendations given. In view of the lack of statistical data, the writer feels that there is a real need for some concrete evidence to be acquired through research to substantiate the methods recommended for aiding slow learners to achieve academically and emotionally in the classrooms of our schools.

CHAPTER III

TREATMENT OF DATA

The original plan to send questionnaires to the classroom teachers of grades three, four and five in twenty-eight elementary schools in ten separate school districts in Montana was carried out.

Questionnaires were sent to the classroom teachers of grades three, four and five in the following schools: Southside, Eastside, Westside, North Star and Irle, Glasgow, Montana; Sunnyside, Lincoln McKinley and Devlin, Havre, Montana; Central Elementary, Whitefish, Montana; Winans, East Side, North Side, Lincoln and Washington, Livingston, Montana; Rossiter, Broadwater and Smith Elementary, Helena, Montana; Miles Avenue, Billings, Montana; Irving, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Whittier, Emerson and Willson, Bozeman, Montana; Rocky Boy Elementary, Box Elder, Montana; Manhattan Elementary, Manhattan, Montana; and Belgrade Elementary, Belgrade, Montana.

Questionnaires for classroom teachers were used with the hope that new and more practical methods, materials, techniques and/or procedures might be revealed which could be used, in addition to those now commonly in use, to improve instructional methods and assignment procedures for the slow learners. It was hoped that these findings might result in developing happier, better adjusted, more academically successful and more socially acceptable slow learners in our schools.

INTRODUCTORY

The classroom teachers of these reporting schools represent one large district with twenty-three elementary schools; several medium sized districts (one with seven elementary schools, two with six elementary schools and two with five elementary schools), and several small districts (three with two elementary schools and four with only one elementary school).

All schools to whom questionnaires were sent responded, but only seventy-seven percent of the teachers receiving questionnaires responded.

Tabulating and evaluating the results of the questionnaires revealed that they fell into five separate categories as follows: assignment procedures, evaluative procedures, instructional aids, instructional methods and general practices and procedures. These five categories were used to tabulate the questionnaires.

ASSIGNMENT PROCEDURES

In assignment procedures used by the various schools, two major types were most common, homogeneous grouping and heterogeneous grouping. Of the ninety-seven classroom teachers responding, fifty-nine indicated that their pupils had been assigned homogeneously to their classrooms. Twelve of the fifty-nine indicated that this assignment was for all classes while forty-seven stated that this type of assignment was for only part of the day and for specific classes. Homogeneously grouped classes, as indicated by these teachers, were fifty-nine in reading, fifteen in language arts blocks, fourteen in mathematics,

five in music, four in P. E., one in social studies, one in science and one slow class. Thirty-eight of the ninety-seven teachers responding indicated that their pupils had been assigned heterogeneously to the classrooms. Twenty-two of these thirty-eight indicated this type of assignment was for the full day while sixteen were using it for only a part of the day and for specific classes. Heterogeneously assigned classes included sixteen in science, eleven in P. E., ten in mathematics, six in reading, four in language, three in spelling and one each in penmanship, phonics and French. Table 1, page 26, gives the recap on these various types of classroom assignments.

The grade levels using the homogeneously grouped and the heterogeneously grouped types of classroom assignment as shown in Table 1 varied from one grade in a school to several grades in a school and from first through sixth grade.

Assignments on the basis of names only, specific discipline problems, personality clash with teacher, social grouping, attempt to avoid being in the same room with a relative, teacher's requests and pupils needing help from a specific teacher were also indicated by some of the teachers in the schools surveyed.

Teachers' preferences for grouping within their own classrooms for instructional purposes were varied. Sixty-four of those sampled said they grouped homogeneously within their classrooms for some or all of their classes. Ten grouped this way for the full day and for all classes while fifty-four so grouped for only a part of the day and for only a part of their classes. Of the sixty-four who grouped homogeneously, fifty-four used this grouping for specific

TABLE 1. HOW PUPILS HAD BEEN ASSIGNED TO THE CLASSROOMS OF THE NINETY-SEVEN CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Type of classroom assignment	Number of teachers	For a full day - all classes	For a part of a day - specific classes	Specific classes	Number of classes
Homogeneous	59	12	47	Reading Lang. Arts block Math Music P. E. Soc. Stu. Science Slow Class	59 15 14 5 4 1 1 1
Heterogeneous	38	22	16	Science P. E. Math Reading Language Spelling Penmanship Phonics French	16 11 10 6 4 3 1 1 1

classes as follows: fifty-four in reading, twenty-five in mathematics, nineteen in language arts, five in music, four in P. E., three in penmanship and one each in social studies and phonics, as shown in Table 2, page 27. Of the ninety-seven teachers responding thirty-three said they used heterogeneous grouping in their classrooms for some or all of their classes. Of these thirty-three teachers only three used heterogeneous grouping for the full day and for all

classes while thirty said they so grouped for only a part of the day and for specific classes. The specific classes indicated in this category included thirty in science, twenty-eight in social studies, eighteen in mathematics, fourteen in art, twelve each in language and spelling, ten each in reading, music and P. E. and four in phonics.

TABLE 2. HOW NINETY-SEVEN CLASSROOM TEACHERS SAID THEY GROUPED PUPILS FOR INSTRUCTION WITHIN THEIR OWN CLASSROOMS

Type of grouping used	Number of teachers	So grouped for full day (all classes)	So grouped for part of day (some classes)	Specific classes	Number of classes
Homogeneous	64	10	54	Reading Math Lang. Arts Music P. E. Penmanship Soc. Stu. Phonics	54 25 19 5 4 3 1 1
Heterogeneous	33	3	30	Science Soc. Stu. Math Art Language Spelling Reading Music P. E. Phonics	30 28 18 14 12 12 10 10 10 4

Forty-three of the respondents favored a combination of both homogeneous and heterogeneous assignments for classroom instruction. Nine teachers did not like a combination type of assignment for their classrooms, while forty-five failed to indicate any preference on this particular portion of the question.

Ninety-seven classroom teachers responded in the following manner to the question of, "What type of student assignment (on the basis of reading skills and ability) best describes the pupils presently in your classroom?" ; Seventeen teachers indicated slow students, twenty-one average students, sixteen fast students and thirty-eight indicated mixed groups.

Methods of classroom instruction used by the ninety-seven respondents as shown in Table 3, page 29, included eighty-six who gave individual help; seventy-five who gave more time for completion of work; sixty-nine who used easier assignments; sixty-eight who used shorter assignments and fifty-eight who used different materials and different assignments. Other instructional aids used included five each who used visual aids and field trips; four who used individuals as teacher aides; one who taught spelling on two levels; and one each who used reading machines, verbal completion of problems and skill books.

TABLE 3. METHODS AND AIDS USED FOR CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION BY
NINETY-SEVEN TEACHERS IN TEACHING SLOW LEARNERS

Methods and aids used for classroom instruction	Number of teacher responses
Given more individual help	86
Given more time to complete work	75
Easier assignments	69
Shorter assignments	68
Different assignments used different materials	58
Other instructional aids used:	
Visual aids	5
Field trips	5
Individuals as teacher aides	4
Spelling on two levels	1
Reading machines	1
Verbal completion of problems	1
Skill books	1

Teachers' opinions on what they considered to be an ideal class load for both homogeneous and heterogeneous classrooms varied considerably. Teachers who had their classes grouped homogeneously, on the basis of general reading skills and ability, felt the ideal class load would be from eight to fifteen pupils for a group of slow learners, from fifteen to twenty-five for an average group and from twenty-five to thirty for the top group of students. Classes heterogeneously grouped, on the basis of general reading skills and ability, should be smaller in general than those homogeneously grouped, ranging in recommended

class loads of from six to twenty-five pupils, according to the responding teachers. The majority of teachers preferred classes of about twenty pupils but none preferred class loads of over twenty-five pupils.

Slow learners should be assigned to separate classrooms according to forty-nine of the ninety-seven respondents. Forty-eight indicated that slow learners should not be so grouped.

Most satisfactory results in teaching slow learners was indicated by the ninety-seven respondents as shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4. MOST SATISFACTORY GROUPING ASSIGNMENTS FOR SLOW LEARNERS AS REPORTED BY CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Type of grouping assignment	Number of teachers	Felt best for slow learners by responding teachers
Homogeneous	97	40
Heterogeneous	97	11
A combination assignment	97	46

Slightly over two-thirds of the classroom teachers of this study, seventy-four to twenty-three, say that homogeneous grouping does not have an adverse effect on the slow learners status and/or acceptance within the classroom or school. Forty-seven teachers indicated that the poor readers are the biggest challenge in teaching while fourteen felt the same way about an average group and thirty-six indicated this to be true for the accelerated group.

Of the ninety-seven teachers responding twenty-two felt they could do

their best teaching with the poor readers, forty-five indicated the average readers and thirty thought they did their best with the accelerated readers. These responses tend to pose the question of whether or not we are placing teachers in the assignments where they can be most effective with pupils, particularly those with the slow learners.

INSTRUCTIONAL AIDS

Special aids to classroom teachers seemed to be lacking to some degree as indicated by the replies of the respondents. Of the ninety-seven teachers, only thirty-one used individuals as teacher aides, thirteen did team teaching and thirty-five had remedial reading classes. Other helpers indicated were two speech therapists, two student teachers, an office secretary, a learning specialist, a music teacher and a psychometrist. No aids of any type were used by ten of the classroom teachers responding. Table 5 shows the usage of aids in the schools of this study.

TABLE 5. SPECIAL AIDS USED BY THE NINETY-SEVEN CLASSROOM TEACHERS SAMPLED

Type of aids used	Number of teachers
Remedial reading classes	35
Individuals used as teacher aides	31
Team teaching	13
Speech therapist	2
Student teachers	2
Office secretary	1
Learning specialist	1
Music teacher	1
Psychometrist	1

A survey of the audio-visual materials and equipment used was included in this study. Teachers were asked to indicate the extent of usage in their classrooms of the specific items listed on the questionnaire under four major headings; extensively, occasionally, seldom and never, and in this order. The responses for overhead projector usage were 22, 51, 11 and 13 respectively; for the tape recorder 11, 46, 24 and 16; listening stations for tapes, records, etc., 8, 27, 14 and 48; filmstrip projector 30, 53, 8 and 6; special high interest-low vocabulary books 43, 41, 3 and 10; and movie projector 38, 47, 4 and 8. Table 6 shows the recap of the above tabulations.

TABLE 6. AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT USED IN CLASSROOMS AS RATED BY THE NINETY-SEVEN TEACHERS SAMPLED

Type of A. V. material or equipment used	Used Extensively	Used Occasionally	Seldom Used	Never Used
Overhead projector	22	51	11	13
Tape recorder	11	46	24	16
Listening stations for tapes, records, etc.	8	27	14	48
Filmstrip projector	30	53	8	6
Movie projector	38	47	4	8
Special high interest-low vocabulary books	43	41	3	10

Other items of audio-visual materials or equipment used in the classrooms of the respondents, but not tabulated as to frequency of use, included flannel boards, phonics charts, chemistry lab, flash cards, EDL projector, word games, T.V.

viewer, illustration, puzzles, pictures, tachist-o-scope and individual teacher made aids.

The teachers were asked to rate the audio-visual materials and equipment as to their preference in use for classroom instruction. Ranking them in preference of use from first choice through sixth choice resulted in the following tabulations which are also shown on Table 7. Overhead projector preferences rankings from first through sixth choice were 29, 18, 17, 14, 11 and 8; tape recorder 7, 15, 21, 25, 17 and 12; listening stations 8, 19, 11, 14, 15 and 30; filmstrip projector 8, 20, 20, 13, 25 and 11; movie projector 10, 8, 18, 21, 18 and 22; and special books 35, 17, 10, 10, 11 and 14.

TABLE 7. RANKING OF PREFERENCES FOR USE OF A. V. AIDS IN CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION BY THE NINETY-SEVEN TEACHERS RESPONDING

Type of A. V. aid used	Rank in preference of use					
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
Overhead projector	29	18	17	14	11	8
Tape recorder	7	15	21	25	17	12
Listening stations	8	19	11	14	15	30
Filmstrip projector	8	20	20	13	25	11
Movie projector	10	8	18	21	18	22
Special books	35	17	10	10	11	14

The tabulation of preferences of teachers for use of various A. V. aids as shown in Table 7 might be of some real interest to school system A. V. personnel and others who are wondering about the frequency of use of some of their A. V. supplies and materials.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

Special instruction procedures and/or methods for the instruction of slow learners were used extensively in some form in the schools of this study. Special classes for the slow learner in special subject areas were reported by fifty-five teachers. Special subject areas mentioned were fifty special reading classes, sixteen in mathematics, five in spelling and one each in P. E., music and language. Forty-six had remedial reading classes with sixteen having special mathematics classes as reported in Table 8.

TABLE 8. SPECIAL CLASSES USED FOR SLOW LEARNERS IN SPECIAL SUBJECT AREAS AS REPORTED BY NINETY-SEVEN CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Type of special class	Number of classes
Reading classes (not remedial)	50
Remedial reading	46
Mathematics	16
Spelling	5
Physical Education	1
Music	1
Language	1

Eighty-six of the respondents indicated their use of special individualized help periods for the slow learners such as those in Table 8. Thirty of these were for a part of each day while fifty-six of them were only when time permitted.

Programmed learning materials and other special materials were used by thirty-one of the responding teachers. Such materials as The Language Master, Ginn's Self Help Activities, Word Games, Reading Lab, Craig Reader, Imperial Reading Program, Reading and Thinking Skills, Listen and Think Program and Sullivan Programmed Reading were used in the classrooms of this study. Tabulations made on frequency of response for use of these items were only one listing for each. Listening Tapes were listed in two instances, EDL Reading Machine by three, Gates-Pearson Reading Exercises by four, Reader's Digest Skill Builders by two and SRA by twenty. Table 9 shows these teacher uses of programmed and other materials more clearly.

TABLE 9. PROGRAMMED LEARNING AND OTHER MATERIALS USED FOR SLOW LEARNERS AS REPORTED BY NINETY-SEVEN CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Type of materials	Number of classrooms
SRA Reading Lab	20
Gates-Pearson Reading Exercises	4
EDL Reading Machine	3
Reader's Digest Skill Builders	2
Listening Tapes	2
The Language Master	1
Ginn's Self Help Activities	1
Word Games	1
Reading Lab	1
Craig Reader	1
Imperial Reading Program	1
Reading and Thinking Skills	1
Listen and Think Program	1
Sullivan Programmed Reading Program	1

One teacher wrote a comment on the questionnaire stating, "Special programmed reading materials are fine, but teacher made materials for the specific needs of the individual child works best for the slow learners".

Other special classes used for slow learners were listed by classroom teachers in addition to the use of special teaching materials as listed in Table 9 and the special classes listed in Table 8. These included two Title I programs, one transition room, one special education class, one class in speech therapy and one where the classroom teacher sent her slow learners to another room for special helps.

In the ranking of subjects according to the teacher's opinion concerning the degree of difficulty for slow learners, the majority of the responses indicated that reading was most difficult, followed by phonics and then spelling. Mathematics and written language were considered about equal in difficulty with oral language ranking closely in predicted degree of difficulty with science and social studies. Physical education and art were considered to be easiest to master or the classes in which slow learners are generally most successful of the regular classes of the curriculum. Table 10, page 37, shows the complete recap of this ranking of subjects in the regular curriculum, as ranked by the responding teachers.

TABLE 10. RANKING OF SUBJECTS OF REGULAR CURRICULUM ON PREDICTED DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY FOR SLOW LEARNERS BY NINETY-SEVEN CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Type of subject	Ranking in predicted degree of difficulty									
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
Reading	62	24	6	3	1	0	1	0	0	0
Phonics	36	28	19	7	6	0	1	0	0	0
Mathematics	4	8	18	20	19	11	9	8	0	0
Physical Education	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	10	30	51
Art	0	0	0	0	0	3	6	16	44	28
Science	3	0	3	8	9	17	25	17	5	10
Spelling	2	16	27	19	12	9	4	8	0	0
Social Studies	0	4	10	7	10	19	15	19	8	5
Oral Language	0	3	9	8	16	15	14	19	10	3
Written Language	0	17	17	25	19	7	12	0	0	0

The wide range of predictions by classroom teachers concerning the difficulty of various classes for slow learners gives impetus to the importance placed on learning to read well, as shown in Table 10.

The instructional methods which teachers say are most effective in teaching slow learners in the classroom were ranked according to teachers' preferences. More than one particular method of teaching was much preferred by them for regular classroom instruction. Interest units were the most popular single method of instruction for the classroom, followed by individualized instruction and project activity units. Instruction including programmed learning and text book centered instruction ranked next in order. Other types of instruction listed as seventh in rank included a wide variety of ideas, procedures and

materials. Teacher made or teacher directed instruction was mentioned most often by the responders as a preference here. Other materials or procedures listed were pictures, word games, resource books, research, flash cards, flannel boards, records, tapes, individual outside reading, dramatization, individual interest materials, buddy system, Taba Tasks I, II and III, committee reports, Special Education Title I project and ideas and materials that come out as a lesson is being taught (usually brought out by children or by unexpected developments from the class--spontaneous responses). Table 11 shows the numerical ranking of teachers' preferences of instructional methods and/or materials as indicated by the samplings of the study.

TABLE 11. NUMERICAL RANKING FROM ONE THROUGH SEVEN OF PREFERENCES OF INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND/OR MATERIALS FOR SLOW LEARNERS AS RATED BY NINETY-SEVEN CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Type of instructional methods and/or materials used	Ranking in order of teacher preferences						
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th
Text book centered instruction	2	9	14	19	21	26	6
Project activity	4	16	20	22	24	11	0
Interest units	33	18	19	12	9	6	0
Individual instruction	11	23	22	18	14	9	0
Any combination of two or more of the above methods and/or materials	45	14	13	9	9	7	0
Other types of instruction	0	0	0	6	3	9	79

One teacher commented on the wide gap between what should be done and what can be done in the classroom due to school policies, regimentation, reluctance to change and the lack of proper materials in the classrooms. This was in response to the question on the questionnaire pertaining to instructional methods and/or materials used in the classrooms as shown in Table 11.

Some of the recommended combinations which classroom teachers said would work best for instruction of slow learners included fourteen for interest units with project activities; fifteen for individualized instruction along with the text book; nine for just individualized instruction; seven for text book and project activities; seven for interest units and programmed materials; six for prepared programmed materials with project activities; five for interest units combined with project activities and individual instruction; and one for individual instruction and Title I program. All of these recommended combinations of instructional methods and/or materials are shown in Table 12.

TABLE 12. CLASSROOM TEACHER PREFERENCES OF INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND/OR MATERIALS FOR USE IN CLASSROOMS FOR SLOW LEARNERS

Type of instructional method and/or material used for slow learners	Number of teacher preferences
Individualized instruction along with text book	15
Interest units with project activities	14
Individualized instruction only	9
Text book with project activity materials	7
Interest unit method with programmed materials	7
Project activities method and prepared program materials	6
Interest units and project activity method combined with individual instruction	5
Individual instruction and Title I program	1

EVALUATIVE PROCEDURES

It would seem that one of the major concerns of all personnel working with slow learners is the problem of how to properly evaluate progress and daily performance. In response to the question of, "Is the same grading and/or evaluative criteria used for the slow learner as for other pupils in your classroom and/or your school?" fifty-four of the ninety-seven responders said yes and forty-three said no. Other evaluative methods and/or considerations listed as being used by the respondents included the following: improvement and attitude; use of "below grade level," progress and standards; personal achievement; effort considered; teacher's evaluation; extra materials-extra points; more leniency; partial assignments; industriousness; variety of approaches and then graded on responses; and an asterisk on report card indicated grade pupil received on this level. Table 13 shows the responses of the evaluative methods and/or considerations used in considering progress and performance of slow learners in the classrooms of the respondents.

TABLE 13. METHODS AND/OR CONSIDERATIONS USED BY RESPONDENTS IN EVALUATION OF PROGRESS AND PERFORMANCE OF SLOW LEARNERS

1. Improvement of attitude	7. Effort considered
2. Use of "below grade level"	8. Teacher's evaluation
3. Progress and standards	9. More leniency
4. Personal achievement	10. Partial assignments
5. Extra materials--extra points	11. Industriousness
6. An asterisk on report card indicates grade pupil received on his level	12. Variety of approaches and then grade on responses

Respondents had varied opinions on whether or not slow learners were more of a discipline problem in the classroom and/or school than other pupils. Fifty-one teachers felt that slow learners were more of a discipline problem than other students for one or more reasons. Some of the reasons given for this were as follows: thirty-seven teachers said the work was too hard; forty-five, are seeking recognition; twenty-nine, emotionally unstable; eight, others make fun of him; seven, short attention span; four, immaturity; three, apathy; two each for frustration, laziness, lack of teacher time and listless attitude; and one each for discouragement, lack of imagination, lack of pride, poor first grade experience, not enough work at his level and poor motivation.

Responding classroom teachers generally felt that competition is a stimulating factor for slow learners in the classroom. Table 14 gives the listings of preferences given by these ninety-seven classroom teachers on the types of competition they felt is best for the slow learners.

TABLE 14. RANKING OF PREFERENCES OF THE NINETY-SEVEN CLASSROOM TEACHERS RESPONDING ON WHAT ARE THE BEST TYPES OF COMPETITION FOR SLOW LEARNERS IN THE CLASSROOM

Type of competition ranked by classroom teachers as best for slow learners	Number of Teachers		
	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
That from pupils in rooms homogeneously grouped?	37	38	22
That from pupils in rooms heterogeneously grouped?	18	19	60
That from pupils in rooms which are a combination of the two previous types?	42	40	15

One of the greatest concerns teachers have is the grade placement of slow learners at the end of a school term. The question is whether to retain, promote, or place the pupil for his classroom assignment for the next term. How to evaluate the pupils' achievement for placement may be accomplished in a variety of ways, some of which were tabulated from the questionnaires of the respondents, with results as shown in Table 15.

TABLE 15. EVALUATIVE CRITERIA USED BY THE NINETY-SEVEN CLASS-ROOM TEACHERS SAMPLED FOR PLACEMENT OF SLOW LEARNERS FOR THE NEXT TERM'S CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENT

Type of evaluative criteria used	Number of Teachers	
	Yes	No
On basis of academic achievement in comparison with all other members of his class and/or grade?	9	88
Be satisfied with less than average academic achievement and promote him?	10	87
Retain him at least one year in first five grades to attempt to bring him up to academic achievement standards for his age and/or grade level?	50	47
Evaluate the promotion policy for each pupil on an individual basis?	76	21

In addition to the evaluative criteria in Table 15, the classroom teachers sampled suggested additional means of evaluation as listed in Table 16.

TABLE 16. OTHER EVALUATIVE CRITERIA SUGGESTED FOR USE BY THE NINETY-SEVEN RESPONDENTS FOR SLOW LEARNERS IN THE MAKING OF DECISIONS FOR PLACEMENT FOR NEXT SCHOOL TERM

Other evaluative criteria suggested	Number of teachers
Parent-teacher conferences	14
Move up or back at any time of year	5
Dependent on number of times retained	5
On basis of age	4
Special handicaps	4
Psychologist's recommendation	1
Testing with tests other than regular ones	1
Personal policy	1
Achievement tests	1

The evaluative criteria shown in Tables 15 and 16 give a good cross section of the possible ways of evaluating the work of the slow learners, but the evaluation for promotion on the basis of individual performance seems to be the one most preferred by classroom teachers, of all the alternatives listed.

GENERAL PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

Respondents agreed very decisively with all but four of the twelve characteristics for slow learners as listed on the questionnaire and in Table 17.

TABLE 17. CHARACTERISTICS OF SLOW LEARNERS AS EVALUATED BY THE NINETY-SEVEN RESPONDING CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Characteristics of slow learner	Number of teachers	
	Yes	No
1. Needs to acquire a motive for studying?	87	10
2. Lacks a favorable environment for study?	48	49
3. Is in good physical condition?	43	54
4. Lacks ability to concentrate while studying?	95	2
5. Fails to plan well and follow a schedule?	87	10
6. Has no definite time or place for study at home?	62	35
7. Fails to complete assignments on time?	83	14
8. Needs to be more careful and more accurate with his written work?	84	13
9. Fails to review previous assignments regularly?	87	10
10. Doesn't ask for help when work is not understood?	62	35
11. Fails to pay proper attention to assignments and/or directions when given orally?	89	8
12. Wastes valuable study time during school day?	89	8

Only fourteen of the responding classroom teachers of this study felt there was any stigma attached to slow learners in the classroom or school because of the type of grouping presently being used as shown in Table 18, page 45.

Eighty-three stated there was no stigma attached from such assignments. Of the fourteen respondents who gave positive responses only two felt it was very detrimental, nine said somewhat detrimental and five felt it of no serious consequence.

TABLE 18. OPINIONS OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS ON STIGMA ATTACHMENTS RESULTING FOR SLOW LEARNERS ON BASIS OF TYPES OF CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS USED

Opinions on stigma attachments for slow learners	Teachers' responses		Very detrimental		Somewhat detrimental		Of no consequence	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Stigma attachment resulting from type of classroom assignment	14	83	2	12	9	5	5	9

Three types of grouping assignments were ranked in order from one to three, indicating teacher preferences of the responding teachers for use with slow learners and the least apt to attach a stigma to the pupil. Table 19, page 46, shows these tabulations.

TABLE 19. GROUPING ASSIGNMENTS LEAST APT TO ATTACH A STIGMA TO SLOW LEARNERS ACCORDING TO OPINIONS OF NINETY-SEVEN CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Type of grouping assignment used	Preferences of Teachers		
	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
1. Homogeneous grouping	20	31	46
2. Heterogeneous grouping	23	27	47
3. A combination of 1 and 2 above	54	39	4

Social acceptance has been of some concern for teachers of slow learners. Of those sampled for this study, eighteen of them felt that social acceptance by peers was a problem while seventy-nine felt it was no problem for the slow learners. The use of sociograms as aids in solving social acceptance problems of slow learners was favored by forty-one teachers, but fifty-six of those responding indicated that sociograms were not of much help in solving these social problems.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has been concerned with the opinions and attitudes of classroom teachers and what they say are the organizational patterns and instructional methods used to teach slow learning children in grades three, four and five in the elementary schools of Montana.

The writer has attempted to find out which types of classroom assignments and instructional methods teachers think have seemed most successful for the slow learner in a sampling of classrooms in grades three, four and five.

SUMMARY

A review of literature on the topic of teaching slow learners revealed that there is nation-wide concern and interest in improving the quality of existing practices and procedures for teaching slow learners in our elementary schools. Much has been done to improve the academic and social status of these children in our classrooms; much still needs to be done. In seeking information on present programs being offered for slow learners, the writer, after reviewing much of the related literature, conducted a survey of one-hundred twenty-five classroom teachers in twenty-seven elementary schools of ten separate districts in the state of Montana.

The return of questionnaires indicated that all of the schools reporting had some type of a planned program for teaching slow learners in their classrooms. Homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping by general reading skills

and ability, plus a combination of the two types of assignments were the ones most frequently reported as being used, with variations, to fit the expressed needs of the individual school or classroom. Homogeneous grouping was the most common, with many variations, for a part of the day and for specific classes. A ratio of approximately three to two (59 to 38 respondents), was revealed as the predominant method used of homogeneously grouped classrooms over heterogeneously grouped classrooms.

Classroom teachers responding were much in favor of homogeneous groups over heterogeneous groups for instructional purposes for specific classes. The ratio here was about 2 to 1 (64 to 33) for homogeneous grouping. These same teachers, however, favored such grouping for only a part of the day and basically for reading, math and language arts. They preferred heterogeneous groups, generally, for other classes. . . . science, social studies, art and P. E.

In reporting the special considerations used for the instruction of slow learners individual help and more time to complete their work were preferred most often. Easier assignments, shorter assignments and using different materials on their level were also recommended by a majority of the respondents.

Recommendations for class loads varied, but most teachers felt they could handle larger groups of homogeneously grouped pupils than they could heterogeneously grouped pupils.

There was no preference established on whether slow learners should or should not be in separate classrooms as the teachers reporting were equally divided on this.

It was clear from the responses received that teachers do not favor heterogeneous grouping for slow learners. They indicated a combination grouping as being best. This was followed closely by their preference of homogeneous grouping for slow learners. Over two-thirds of the teachers reporting felt that homogeneous grouping did not have an adverse effect on slow learners' status and/or acceptance within the classroom or school.

Slow learners and poor readers seemed to pose the biggest problem for teachers but most teachers preferred teaching average and accelerated groups.

Teachers are given different kinds of assistance and help. The ones mentioned most often by the respondents were remedial reading classes taught by other teachers, individual teacher helpers and team teaching.

In reporting of audio-visual aids used in the classrooms, movie projectors, film-strip projectors and overhead projectors were most popular and most consistently in use.

Special high interest-low vocabulary books were highly recommended for use with slow learners by the responding teachers.

Nearly all reporting teachers indicated special individual help periods were the most successful of any teaching practice for slow learners. However, their concern was for a lack of time to carry this through each day. Special reading classes were the next most important phase of instruction for these pupils.

Of the programmed learning materials mentioned, the SRA Reading Lab was considered most helpful and most widely used for slow learners.

Most teachers felt that reading was the most difficult subject for slow

learners followed by phonics, math, spelling and oral language. The easier courses were considered to be P. E., art, oral language, science and social studies. In the teaching of these subjects the teachers favored a variety of approaches but interest units and individual instruction were the preferred approaches.

No consistency was found in the ways in which schools evaluate progress and successful achievement for slow learners.

Slightly over half of the teachers felt that slow learners were more of a discipline problem in the classroom than other pupils. Numerous reasons were listed for this. Seeking recognition, work too hard and being emotionally unstable were the main reasons listed.

Competition for slow learners in the classroom was thought to be beneficial by the majority of classroom teachers. Competition from pupils in rooms which are both homogeneously and heterogeneously grouped was preferred by most teachers. That from pupils in rooms homogeneously grouped was considered next best while the competition from pupils in heterogeneously grouped rooms was said to be the least beneficial.

Promotion criteria for slow learners on an individual basis seemed to be most favored by the classroom teachers reporting. This was followed by a preference of retention for at least one year in the first five grades to attempt to bring the pupil up in academic achievement prior to promotion.

Only fourteen of the ninety-seven teachers responding felt there was any stigma attached to slow learners because of their classroom assignment practices.

Social acceptance of slow learners by their peers was not a problem

in the responding schools, nor did the majority of these teachers feel that socio-grams were of much help to them in finding any solutions to this problem.

CONCLUSIONS

Based upon the review of related literature and the questionnaires from classroom teachers the following conclusions and recommendations are made:

1. There was wide concern, both nationwide and in Montana, on how to meet the needs of the slow learners most successfully in our schools.
2. There was no one best method of grouping assignment of pupils to classrooms, however, a combination assignment of homogeneous and heterogeneous groupings seemed to be the most preferred method.
3. Homogeneous grouping was favored by most of the respondents for best results with slow learners in reading and language arts classes.
4. Teachers were not fully satisfied with present instructional methods and grouping practices used for slow learners in our schools, however, they were trying many varied approaches to solve this problem.
5. Most teachers felt that individualized instruction was the most successful of the teaching practices for slow learners. . . . provisions for individual differences were fundamental to good teaching.
6. Teachers felt they could do more to help all pupils if their class loads were held down to about twenty-five pupils for regular classes and to about twenty pupils or less for slow learners, thus permitting more time for individual help with pupils.

7. Respondents felt a great need for more individuals as teacher aides to do routine and supervision types of duties in order to give classroom teachers more time for teaching and individualized help for slow learning pupils.

8. Audio-visual aids were increasing in classroom use, but still were not used extensively or to their fullest potential in many classrooms.

9. There was little consistency in evaluation practices and promotion policies used for slow learners in our schools.

10. Discipline problems among slow learners were more frequent than among typical pupils.

11. The related literature indicated and teachers pointed out the importance of not expecting the same level of achievement for all pupils. Challenge them but do not demand more of them than they are capable of achieving.

12. Literature cited, as well as teachers responding, stressed the importance of accepting each learner as being uniquely himself, and dealing with him as an individual.

13. Good teacher-pupil rapport seemed essential for the best teaching and learning atmosphere for slow learners.

14. Related literature revealed that additional pressures on pupils, and particularly slow learning pupils, had resulted in increased anxieties among them, which in turn had effected their academic achievement.

15. Slow learning pupils showed most interest in constructive and active classroom activities. . . . interest units and project activity units.

16. Social needs of slow learners were as vital to their success as meeting of academic needs.

17. In making classroom assignments it seemed as important to match the teacher to her pupils as it did to match the pupils to the teacher.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We know that learning proceeds according to individual differences, and it follows logically that teaching must take these differences into account. It is curious and disconcerting, therefore, that while we embrace verbally the fact that individual differences exist and should be provided for, we overlook or disregard the important differences among individuals.

In completion of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. To strive for more consistency in evaluation of pupil progress and/or performance of slow learners by classroom teachers.
2. To strive to make all classes alive, interesting and challenging through thorough advanced planning as brought out in related literature.
3. To attempt to use more teacher-principal and teacher-teacher planning for classroom assignment practices and/or grouping techniques. This could possibly help in the attainment of a more mutual understanding of the goals necessary for more successful achievement for slow learners.
4. To provide more persons as teacher-aides for routine classroom duties and extra duties such as recess and noon supervision, bus duty and lunch-room duty. This could give classroom teachers more release time for actual preparation for teaching, planning for classes and individualized instruction time for slow learners.
5. To provide special reading teachers for each building, a speech

therapist and a guidance counselor for every two buildings or for approximately every five-hundred pupils in the primary and intermediate grades.

6. To start identification and treatment of learning difficulties as soon as possible. . . . even as early as in kindergarten, to decrease problems for slow learners and others in upper-primary and intermediate grades.

7. To strive for more realistic evaluation of actual teaching practices and/or procedures used in the classrooms of all pupils, and especially those for the slow learners.

8. To permit teachers to try a variety of approaches to teaching slow learners and evaluate the results objectively. . . . if it works, use it.

9. Attempt to keep class loads small for those working with slow learners as was recommended by respondents and in the related literature.

10. To encourage more teachers to use audio-visual materials and equipment as these methods seemed to work especially well for slow learners.

11. To encourage more teacher-pupil planning to foster more interest, enthusiasm and meaningful learning for all pupils, but especially for the slow learners as was brought out in the review of related literature.

12. To make an effort to teach pupils according to their individual needs. The most unequal thing that happens in our schools is that unequals are treated as equals. Accept a child for what he is and many problems of discipline and social acceptance may disappear.

13. To attempt to give recognition to teachers as well as to pupils for jobs well done. . . . nothing succeeds like success and recognition of this fact by others.

14. To foster a spirit of experimentation and creativity by administrators in cooperation with their classroom teachers. They should establish the climate of excitement, of change and challenge for the classroom teachers to follow.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

1322 South Willson
Bozeman, Montana 59715
April 29, 1968

Dear Colleague:

I am in the process of making a study of the problems of slow learners in the classroom for grades three, four and five of a sampling of Montana elementary schools, as partial fulfillment of the requirements for my Masters of Education degree.

This study is being conducted in an effort to find the strengths and the weaknesses of our present curriculum and teaching practices in regard to the slow learning pupils in our Montana schools. It is my sincere hope that the results of this study will help us to come up with some truly concrete plans and/or suggestions for a more effective and realistic curriculum for these particular pupils.

Attached is a questionnaire which I hope you will be able to find time to complete and return to me within the next two weeks. A self-addressed stamped envelope is enclosed for this purpose. All responses will be regarded as confidential, since this study is not to compare the teaching practices of individual teachers, individual schools or their philosophy of education. The study is conducted in an effort to get an overall picture of this problem in our classrooms and schools in general.

I would appreciate any comments you care to make regarding this study. Your assistance as an experienced educator would add greatly to the results of this study. Should you want a copy of this study upon its completion, I'd be most happy to send a copy to your school if you will just indicate this when you return the completed questionnaire.

Thank you for your kind participation in furnishing data for this study.

Sincerely,

/s/ Kenneth J. Swenson

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APPENDIX B

This questionnaire on slow learning pupils is for teachers of pupils in grades three, four and five. Slow-learners, for this study, are considered to be those pupils with I. Q's. ranging from 75 through 95.

IDENTIFICATION: City: _____ School: _____ Grade: _____

1. What is the enrollment in your school for the following grades?
Grade three _____ Grade four _____ Grade five _____
2. What is the present enrollment in your classroom? _____
3. Which of the following methods of assignment of pupils to classrooms is used by your school?
 - A. Homogeneous grouping by general reading skill or ability?

Yes _____ No _____

 - (1) For all classes? Yes _____ No _____
 - (2) For some classes? Yes _____ No _____
 - (a) If yes, for which classes? _____

 - (b) If yes, for which grades? _____

 - B. Heterogeneous grouping by general reading skill or ability?

Yes _____ No _____

 - (1) For all classes? Yes _____ No _____
 - (2) For some classes? Yes _____ No _____
 - (a) If yes, for which classes? _____

 - (b) If yes, for which grades? _____

 - C. Other methods of assignment to classrooms than those mentioned above, if any?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please describe briefly. _____

4. Which type of grouping do you do in your classroom?
 - A. Homogeneous grouping by general reading skill or ability?

Yes _____ No _____

 - (1) For a full day? Yes _____ No _____

- (2) For a part of a day? Yes _____ No _____
(3) For specific classes? Yes _____ No _____
(4) If for specific classes, for which ones? _____

B. Heterogeneous grouping by general reading skill or ability?

- Yes _____ No _____
(1) For a full day? Yes _____ No _____
(2) For a part of a day? Yes _____ No _____
(3) For specific classes? Yes _____ No _____
(4) If for specific classes, for which ones? _____

C. A combination of A and B above? Yes _____ No _____

5. Which of the following types of student assignment best describes those in your present classroom?

- A. Slow students on the basis of reading skills or ability? _____
B. Average students on the basis of reading skills or ability? _____
C. Fast students on the basis of reading skills or ability? _____
D. A mixed group on the basis of reading skills or ability? _____
E. Other type of assignment? _____

Please explain briefly if this one is applicable. _____

6. Which of the following do you have in your classroom and/or your school?

- A. Teacher aids? Yes _____ No _____
B. Team teaching? Yes _____ No _____
C. Remedial reading classes? Yes _____ No _____
D. Other helpers? (Please list, if any.) _____

7. Which of the items listed below (A, B, C, D, E) are those used for slow learners in your school?

A. Special classes for the slow learner in specific curriculum areas?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, in what curriculum areas? _____

B. Remedial reading classes? Yes _____ No _____

C. Special classes in mathematics? Yes _____ No _____

D. Special individualized periods for special help in areas where definite special help is needed?

Yes _____ No _____

(1) Part of every day? Yes _____ No _____

(2) When time permits? Yes _____ No _____

E. Programmed learning materials? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please indicate name of, or publisher of, the materials used here. _____

F. Other special classes used, if any? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please explain briefly. _____

8. Is the same grading and/or evaluative criteria used for the slow learner as for the other pupils in your classroom and/or your school?

Yes _____ No _____

If no, what evaluative criteria do you use for the slow learner?

9. Which of the following types of special considerations are used for slow learners in your school, if any?

A. Shorter assignments? Yes _____ No _____

B. Easier assignments? Yes _____ No _____

C. Given more time to complete work? Yes _____ No _____

D. Given more individualized help with the assignments? Yes _____ No _____

E. Different assignments in which different materials are used?

Yes _____ No _____

F. Other variations used, if any?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please explain briefly. _____

10. Which of the following aids do you use in your classroom?

A. Overhead projector?

Extensively _____ Occasionally _____ Seldom _____ Never _____

B. Tape recorder with or without earphones for both recording and listening?

Extensively _____ Occasionally _____ Seldom _____ Never _____

C. Listening stations for tapes, records, programmed learning materials, etc.?

Extensively _____ Occasionally _____ Seldom _____ Never _____

D. Filmstrip projector?

Extensively _____ Occasionally _____ Seldom _____ Never _____

E. Movie projector?

Extensively _____ Occasionally _____ Seldom _____ Never _____

F. Special high interest, low vocabulary books?

Extensively _____ Occasionally _____ Seldom _____ Never _____

G. Other items? (Please list) _____

Extensively _____ Occasionally _____ Seldom _____ Never _____

11. Please rank items listed in question 10 in order of your preference for use in teaching slow learners?

_____ Overhead projector

_____ Tape recorder

_____ Listening stations

_____ Filmstrip projector

_____ Movie projector

_____ Special books

12. What would you, as a classroom teacher, consider an ideal classroom load for most effective teaching in the following types of rooms?

A. Homogeneous room grouped by general reading skill or ability?

Number of pupils? _____

B. Heterogeneous room grouped by general reading skill or ability?

Number of pupils? _____

13. Do you feel that slow learners should be assigned to a separate classroom? Yes _____ No _____

14. Please place a number after each of the following subjects which will represent in rank order the difficulty which you consider typical of most slow learners in your classroom.

Phonics _____

Reading _____

Mathematics _____

Physical Education _____

Art _____

Science _____

Spelling _____

Social Studies _____

Language (Oral) _____

Language (Written) _____

Not any particular one _____

15. Do you find slow learners to be more of a discipline problem generally than the other pupils in your classroom and/or your school?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, to which of the following do you attribute this?

Work is too hard?

Yes _____ No _____

Is seeking recognition?

Yes _____ No _____

Is emotionally unstable?

Yes _____ No _____

Others make fun of him?

Yes _____ No _____

Other reason?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please list them. _____

16. Do you feel that the following are characteristic of the slow learners in your classroom and/or slow learners in general?

- | | | | | | |
|----|---|-----|------|----|------|
| A. | Needs to acquire a motive for studying? | Yes | ____ | No | ____ |
| B. | Lacks a favorable environment for study? | Yes | ____ | No | ____ |
| C. | Is in good physical condition? | Yes | ____ | No | ____ |
| D. | Lacks ability to concentrate while studying? | Yes | ____ | No | ____ |
| E. | Fails to plan well and follow schedule? | Yes | ____ | No | ____ |
| F. | Has no definite time or place for study at home? | Yes | ____ | No | ____ |
| G. | Fails to complete assignments on time? | Yes | ____ | No | ____ |
| H. | Needs to be more careful and more accurate with his written work? | Yes | ____ | No | ____ |
| I. | Fails to review previous assignments regularly? | Yes | ____ | No | ____ |
| J. | Doesn't ask for help when work is not understood? | Yes | ____ | No | ____ |
| K. | Fails to pay proper attention to assignments and/or directions when given orally? | Yes | ____ | No | ____ |
| L. | Wastes valuable study time during school day? | Yes | ____ | No | ____ |

17. Is there a stigma attached to slow learners in your classroom and/or your school because of the type of grouping presently being used?

Yes ____ No ____

18. If your answer to question 17 was yes, do you feel that the effects on the individual pupil are:

- | | | | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|-----|------|----|------|
| A. | Very detrimental? | Yes | ____ | No | ____ |
| B. | Somewhat detrimental? | Yes | ____ | No | ____ |
| C. | Not of serious consequence? | Yes | ____ | No | ____ |

19. In rank order from one to three, which of the following types of grouping do you feel is least apt to attach a stigma to the slow learner in the classroom?

- | | |
|-------|---|
| _____ | Homogeneous grouping by general reading skill or ability? |
| _____ | Heterogeneous grouping by general reading skill or ability? |
| _____ | A combination of <u>A</u> and <u>B</u> above? |

20. Does social acceptance by peers seem to be a problem of the slow learners in your school?

Yes ____ No ____

21. Do you feel that a carefully administrated sociogram could aid you in solving the social acceptance problems of the slow learner in your classroom?
Yes _____ No _____
22. Do you feel that real competition from other students is beneficial to the slow learner?
Yes _____ No _____
23. In order of preference, which of the following types of competition do you feel is best for a slow learner?
_____ That from pupils in a room homogenously grouped by general reading skill or ability?
_____ That from pupils in a room heterogeneously grouped by general reading skill or ability?
_____ That from pupils in a room which is a combination of the two types of groupings listed above?
24. Which type of grouping, in the items A B C, has the most satisfactory results for slow learners?
A. Homogeneous grouping by general reading skill or ability?
Yes _____ No _____
B. Heterogenous grouping by general reading skill or ability?
Yes _____ No _____
C. A combination of A and B? Yes _____ No _____
25. Do you think homogeneous grouping by general reading skill seems to have an adverse effect on the slow learner's status and/or acceptance?
Yes _____ No _____
26. Which group of children do you feel presents the most challenge in teaching to a classroom teacher?
Accelerated readers? _____ Average readers? _____ Poor readers? _____
27. With which of the following types of grouping in reading for children do you feel that you can do your best teaching?
Accelerated readers? _____ Average readers? _____ Poor readers? _____
28. If any, which of the following are used in your school to evaluate performance of slow learners as a criteria for advancement from one level to another?
A. On the basis of strictly academic achievement in comparison with all other members of his class and/or grade?
Yes _____ No _____

- B. Be satisfied with less than average academic achievement and promote him each year regardless, hoping that he will gain enough knowledge along the way to get by. . . social promotion?

Yes _____ No _____

- C. A combination of A and B in making your decision to pass him to the next level?

Yes _____ No _____

- D. Retain him at least once in the first five grades to attempt to bring him up to academic achievement standards for this age and/or grade group?

Yes _____ No _____

- E. Evaluate the promotion policy for each pupil on an individual basis, as each child is an individual in himself and has different potentials?

Yes _____ No _____

- F. Other criteria for advancement used in your school?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please describe briefly. _____

29. Which of the following methods of teaching do you find to be most effective? In rank order, please number the following from 1 to 7.

_____ Regular "text book" types of assignments.

_____ Project activity units based on text book materials.

_____ Interest unit type of teaching for the class as a whole, using much outside material, resources, field trips, etc., in addition to the text.

_____ Individualized instruction for the slow learner.

_____ Prepared programmed types of instruction which can be used on an individual basis.

_____ A combination of two or more of the above methods.

Which combination do you think best? _____

_____ Other types of instruction. Please list. _____

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