BEHAVIOR OF CHILDREN WHO LEARN SLOWLY INCLUDING SUGGESTED
CLASSROOM ADJUSTMENTS TO MEET THEIR ACADEMIC NEEDS

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BEHAVIOR OF CHILDREN WHO LEARN SLOWLY INCLUDING SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ADJUSTMENTS TO MEET THEIR ACADEMIC NEEDS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Society was built upon the foundation of the uniqueness of the individual. The obligation of the schools was to recognize and care for the academic needs of all children. This enabled each child to face a rapidly changing world. Teachers were needed who recognized the differences in ability, intelligence, interests, and the worth of each individual, and who made provisions for these differences in their classrooms. This increased focus of attention on individual differences called the writer's attention to the group of children in many classrooms who were found at the lower end of the class in achievement. These children generally were indifferent to school, resentment was, at times, obvious in their faces, and they were sometimes larger than their classmates because of previous retention. These children were found in many classrooms because of practical reasons. Generally there were no special classes provided for these children, so the regular classroom was the only place to put them. Some day these children would become the adult citizens of the states and the nation, they would vote, pay taxes, hold jobs (or get aid), and raise families. The writer felt that it was both worthwhile and profitable to make a special study of these children who learned slowly
to investigate ways teachers could care for their academic needs to increase the possibility of academic success.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. In recent years there was an increased focus of attention on changing educational practices and provisions. Since there was still much to know about providing optimum learning situations for children who learned slowly, it was indicated that an investigation into the behavior of these children and classroom procedures that teachers had discovered worked best with them would be of interest and value.

Purpose of the study. It was the purpose of this study to: (1) investigate the behavior of children who learned slowly, (2) discover what teachers believed to be the best for slow-learners in the classroom, since many times no special classes were provided for them, (3) determine whether educators had evidence that higher levels of learning would be reached if they were segregated from the average and rapid learners, (4) ascertain whether teachers, through experience, had discovered that it was better to provide a wide variety of subjects for the slow-learner or strive for better mastery of the three R's, and (5) suggest classroom practices that gave evidence of helping slow-
learning children experience success.

II. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

Information for this study was secured through library research. Trends and current practices for instruction of slow-learners at the elementary level were revealed through a review of books and periodicals.

Twenty-four elementary teachers in the Webster City Community Schools were asked to assist in this study. A questionnaire and a checklist, set up by the writer and approved by Drake University professors, were sent to the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade teachers in Webster City, Iowa with the permission of the superintendent of schools. Twenty-two teachers returned completed checklists and questionnaires.

III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Slow-learner. A child who is a slow-learner is below average in measured mental ability, but not so far below as to be classed with the mentally retarded. He has an approximate seventy-five to ninety intelligence quotient range.¹

Fast-learner. For this study the term fast-learner included those students who were average or above in measured mental ability with an intelligence quotient of more than ninety.

IV. PROCEDURES OF INVESTIGATION

Trends and current practices for instruction of slow-learners at the elementary level were secured through library research. Materials were organized in the second chapter showing: (1) behavior of children who learned slowly, and (2) classroom practices and provisions that helped slow-learning children achieve some measure of academic success.

Two specific areas were investigated through a checklist and questionnaire. These areas were: (1) behavior of slow-learners at elementary level in the Webster City Community Schools in Webster City, Iowa, and (2) classroom practices and provisions that elementary teachers in Webster City Schools had, through actual classroom practice, used to help these children experience academic success. These data were presented in the third chapter.

Chapter IV consisted of a summary of the investigation and the conclusions arrived at from this study.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Recent years have brought an increased focus of attention on changing educational practices and provisions. Educators were becoming more aware of the uniqueness of every individual. Increased attention was being given to the children in every regular classroom who were at the lower end of the class in achievement. Teachers weren't always favorably impressed with the behavior of these children and this could, unfortunately, result in merely tolerating them. If teachers were better informed on the behavior of these children and school practices which contributed to this behavior, classroom adjustments could be made that would help them develop better attitudes toward school.

Educators were of the opinion that there was a very close connection between the way slow-learners behaved and the amount of success that they experienced in their classrooms. Their behavior did not seem to be a part of their psychological make-up. If this was true, then it seemed imperative that teachers use classroom procedures that helped these children experience success instead of continual failure in the learning tasks.

The writer felt that it was both worthwhile and profitable to make a special study of the behavior of slow-
learning children and to investigate ways that teachers cared for their academic needs.

I. BEHAVIOR OF SLOW-LEARNERS

Featherstone, in relating various studies made on the personalities and adjustments of slow-learners, said there was a wide belief that, as a group, slow-learners were not as well adjusted and had personalities that were less favorable when compared to average and bright children, but there was very little conclusive evidence to support such beliefs. Studies had been made using devices such as the Maller Personality Sketches comparing the adjustment of groups of slow-learners with bright groups. According to these studies, the slow-learner was a little less well-adjusted than the normal. The bright student was a little better adjusted than the normal. These results were small but significant.¹

In another detailed study slow-learners were compared with bright students on the basis of some forty attributes. Statistically there were some significant differences in favor of the slow-learner. These were in the areas of self-distrust, physical timidity, dependence, and

deference. Some of the attributes in favor of the bright groups were in the areas of ability to make friends, leadership, rivalry concentration, being able to initiate social activity, zest, sympathy for friends, dominance, self-confidence, creativity, curiosity, courage, self-defense, and playfulness. In only a few attributes were there any great differences, and in many there were no differences. Those with no differences included cooperation, bluffing, selfishness, obedience, kindliness, physical aggression, generosity, antagonism to authority, and protectiveness. Slow-learners did not do as well in any personality characteristics that were associated with, or dependent upon, intellectual ability like achievement, creativity, dominance, and curiosity. In matters such as kindliness, selfishness, and obedience, the slow-learner was able to achieve a satisfactory degree of goodness.¹

Behaviorally, according to Johnson, slow-learners had not made much of an impression upon educators. They were considered to be lazy, inattentive, truant, and discipline problems. In a study made of adolescents who created problems in their school and community, it was discovered that the drop-outs, school failures, discipline problems, and delinquent adolescents included slow-learners and non-

¹Tbid., pp. 5-6.
achievers. Behavior of this kind was not a part of their psychological make-up, but the result of continual failure and frustration in their vain attempts to succeed in areas that had value and were important to them. Because they could not achieve the type of behavior that they really desired, they developed wrong behavior as a substitution or compensation.¹

The prevailing idea that every slow-learner was a potential delinquent was not true, according to Featherstone. It was that opportunities and stimuli that brought about delinquency were more prevalent in the environment of the slow-learner. The community they lived in with low incomes, poor housing, lack of a place to play, poor home management, and often poor schools helped develop delinquency. These things were particularly true in the larger cities. The environment that a slow-learner lived in frequently adapted itself to unacceptable behavior.²

Another well-known educator, Witty, stated that repeated failure in school had brought on compensatory mechanisms such as withdrawal, aggression, indifference, lack of self-confidence, or a resorting to minor illness.

²Featherstone, op. cit., p. 10.
in order to receive attention or avoid regular school attendance.¹

Teachers needed to look upon behavior objectively, to understand that immature behavior for a child of a given age was a sign of some kind of arrested development. When the causes were removed, the children usually proceeded to catch up to their natural maturity level because that was the way normal growth worked. Emotional maturity was the result of many factors. One of these was faith in one's ability to meet the demands of life. Faith and fear both resulted from experience. These were either repeated failures or repeated successes in meeting situations which arose. There were some instances where removing the causes did not bring about a change.²

III. CLASSROOM ADJUSTMENTS FOR SLOW-LEARNERS

One group often neglected in schools was made up mainly of slow-learning children. In many schools these children constituted from fifteen to eighteen per cent of the class. Current emphasis was very strong on the superior and gifted, but the extent to which the slow-learners

were recognized and challenged in the classrooms needed to be examined.¹

Teachers of slow-learning children needed to be equal to or better than the teachers of the average and above average. It was important for them to understand slow-learners and their limitations and accept each one as he was. There needed to be a desire on the part of the teachers to really want to teach these children, and to want to accept them as a real challenge. It took much better planning and teaching to challenge and stimulate slow-learners than it did to inspire brighter children.²

Slow-learners were quick to feel whether they were being treated as individuals or just tolerated. It was important that teachers who planned to work with these children liked their work and liked these children as individuals. Unless teachers had a deep understanding and constructive sympathy for them, they were not encouraged to work with slow-learning children.³

Slow-learners were bright enough to know they were not bright. They did not have the blank areas so apparent

¹Witty, op. cit., 331.
²Johnson, op. cit., p. 120.
³Mary Placid, "Teaching Slow-Learners in Biology," Iowa Science Teachers' Journal, II (April, 1965), 76.
in many mentally retarded children, but were aware of the circumstances that surrounded them, and that it was impossible for them to succeed in highly competitive situations. The school often provided the slow-learners with many experiences of failure so that they disliked tests, new situations which presented another area of failure, teachers who demanded absolute standards, administrative procedures that allowed for no flexibility, and subjects that depended upon an accumulation of skills.¹

These children could learn, but they did so at a slower rate because their potential for learning was below average. Often their learning would have less depth and understanding and retention power was limited. There was a possibility that mental functioning might be in the retarded range.²

According to Barbe, teachers spent more time than could ever be effective trying to make a child who learned more slowly meet mythical grade levels or national norms in achievement. Conscientious teachers were devoting great amounts of time trying to make something out of the slow-learners that their capabilities would never allow them to

²Ibid.
be. Heavier academic demands were continually placed upon these children, and these demands put the slow-learners in an even more vulnerable position.\(^1\)

These children were aware of their limitations as well as limitations of other slow-learners. Most of them repeated one grade at the primary level with some measure of success the second time. They occasionally repeated another grade at the upper elementary or junior high level. Slow-learners were less successful the second time. As they found the demands of the school increasing, their tolerance for anything that had to do with school was decreasing.\(^2\)

In school situations of an academic and competitive nature they were not continuing in school past the earliest drop-out stage. If the school made no impossible demands of them, they occasionally made a contribution far beyond what was expected of these children.\(^3\)

It was really better that these children made a good social adjustment than school adjustment. They compensated to some degree by being liked in social situations.\(^4\)

Featherstone stated that the most satisfactory and reliable method of identifying the slow-learner was an individual intelligence test. This proved to be a time consuming thing and it was not always possible to find a

\(^1\)Ibid. \(^2\)Ibid. \(^3\)Ibid. \(^4\)Ibid.
qualified person to administer them. There were some other things a teacher could do such as studying the age-grade status of the pupils. Being older than the majority of the pupils in the class was possible evidence of a slow-learner. Rate of progress in school was checked because not all pupils were the same age when they started school. If the child appeared to be older than the majority in the class, cumulative folders were checked to see whether this pupil started at a later age.1

Age-grade progress status was not enough. Each teacher made a list of the pupils in his group, arranging them in order from the oldest down to the youngest. Then the teacher determined how much overage a child was by finding the difference between the pupil's age and the normal age for the grade or half-grade. If the pupil started to school late, then the teacher needed to use his own judgment as to the possibility that the pupil was a slow-learner. This judgment could be passed on apparent present achievement or results of standardization tests or an intelligence test. The record for every pupil suspected of being a slow-learner was to be transferred to a separate sheet. To this was added any other evidence that could be gleaned from other sources.2

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2 Ibid.
Cumulative records of overage pupils were examined. Teachers' standards for marking from year to year differed widely, but at least a comparison could be made to furnish additional evidence. Had the pupil's attainments been consistently poor throughout the school years? If so, the child was probably a slow-learner. If the child only experienced occasional slumps, he was probably not a slow-learner. If the present attainment was not good, perhaps earlier slumps were in operation again.\(^1\)

In achievement tests, consistently low scores in arithmetic reasoning and reading comprehension were significant in helping identify slow-learners.\(^2\)

Pupils who were more than a year older than the majority of the class, who had definitely made retarded progress, whose records showed consistently poor quality work were possibly slow-learners. When a school program was modified, these children were to receive the first consideration.\(^3\)

Eyesight and hearing tests were given to these children. If there was difficulty, the school was to make provision for something to be done about this handicap. The child was placed in a more favorable place in the schoolroom to aid him in seeing and/or hearing. Other aspects

\(^1\text{Ibid.} \quad ^2\text{Ibid.} \quad ^3\text{Ibid., pp. 15-16.}\)
of poor health were considered. Malnutrition and hunger could be responsible for backwardness. The home was studied for possible tension and conflict. Poverty, ignorance, parents that were maladjusted, lack of parental control were all possible causes for trouble at school. Maybe the child had an environment that the school could do nothing about, but if the school could do something about it, it did.¹

The decision that a child was a slow-learner was always made with reluctance. Teachers who had a good background of practical experience and who knew their pupils well did not hesitate to put considerable reliance on their own judgment.²

Featherstone said that after slow-learners had been identified there were four questions that needed to be answered about them before planning their academic program. These questions were: (1) whether to group them separately; (2) whether to grade them; (3) how to organize their work; and (4) how to handle their promotion.³

In grouping them separately, it was not possible to organize a group of slow-learners that would be homogeneous in more than a few respects. There were advantages to homogeneity beyond that of age when this could be achieved.⁴

¹Ibid. ²Ibid., p. 18. ³Ibid., p. 22. ⁴Ibid., p. 23.
Just separating them without reconstructing the curriculum helped the slow-learners very little. Neither did leaving them in mixed groups ease their burden. This only led to feelings of inadequacy, inferiority and sometimes antisocial attitudes unless the school was set up to meet a wide range of needs and abilities. No matter how it was arranged, there were advantages and disadvantages to separating them or leaving them in mixed groups. Featherstone recommended that each school decide what worked best for their circumstances.¹

If schools wished to keep some concept of grade, they applied the term loosely or accepted the complications that come from wanting every child to conform to a single pattern. It seemed advisable to preserve reasonable homogeneity of age in pupil groups. This could be carried on if slow-learners were grouped separately or not. The best all-around index of development, need, interest, and readiness for group activity was age.²

If pupils were grouped by age rather than grade, promotion disappeared. It became necessary to regroup from time to time. Pupils became more variable as they got older, and regrouping was done when the necessity arose and not at certain specific intervals. Just because a certain student

¹Ibid. ²Ibid., p. 30.
was at home with one group at seven did not mean that he
would still be at home with the same group at eleven. Yet
reasonable stability and permanence in the group life of
slow-learners seemed desirable.¹

Experience seemed to show that keeping children in
the elementary grades after they were thirteen or fourteen
created problems. They, also, created problems when thir-
teen and fourteen year-old children came to secondary school
and still could not read, at least up to seventh grade level.
When elementary schools did the best job they possibly could,
they did not need to make any apologies for slow-learners.²

Slow-learners were encouraged to participate in
assemblies, newspapers, safety patrol, intramural games and
sports as well as other children. This participation was
in line with their interest and ability.³ It was easy for
the schools to neglect them in these areas and even restrict
them. Maybe their participation in a certain activity was
not good for the activity, but the activity was surely good
for the slow-learner.⁴

Witty stated that the most important single factor
in determining the success of efforts with the slow-learners
was the teacher. The main responsibility of the teacher

¹Ibid., pp. 31-32.
²Ibid.
³Ibid., p. 33.
⁴Ibid., p. 37.
was to provide a classroom atmosphere in which success, security, understanding, mutual respect, and opportunity to attain worthy educational goals were all pervading. As the teacher observed in the slow-learners, noticeable gains in self-confidence, self-respect, general mental health as well as academic attainment, there was a great deal of satisfaction experienced by the teacher.\(^1\)

What happened during a child's school years affected his entire life. Each school year was a year of growth that added to or detracted from the stature of the person. School years built stability and poise, health and energy, knowledge and wisdom, friendliness and interest in people, or tore all of these things down.\(^2\)

For the slow-learner it was hard to achieve the four main purposes of education. Unless his education was suited to his ability and limitations, he could not reach self-realization. He could not experience good human relationships with discouragement and failure. These, in turn, generated a lowered sense of civic responsibility. In a world full of competition with an over-supply of manpower, economic efficiency was often denied the slow-learner.\(^3\)

\(^1\)Witty, \textit{op. cit.}, 335.

\(^2\)Baxter, Lewis, Cross, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 89-90.

Certain information and knowledge were needed by American children to help them cope successfully with life. They needed to understand the social and physical world in which they lived, and they needed to gain control of skills which were the tools to further learning and good living. In degrees which varied with native ability and opportunities, all needed to read, write, and use numbers; all needed to think clearly; all needed to be able to meet situations with the best intelligence.  

According to Johnson, slow-learners generally came from low socio-economic, sub-cultural homes of the community. Their families belonged to the lower class and their value system was frequently different from the rest of the community. Because of this, the teachers of the slow-learners had to attempt to prepare these children for effective participation in a total society. The entire program for these children had to be built around what they brought to school. The physical science, natural science, social science, and hygiene program differed to quite an extent from what was planned for children with a different background.

In the days before individual differences were

1 Baxter, Lewis, Cross, op. cit., p. 98.
recognized, slow-learners frequently finished their upper elementary schooling as failures. That was an unfortunate way to end school days, but it was not known where the education of slow-learners should end, and very little was being done about it. Just what courses should be taught the slow-learner was not settled. Should a slow-learner be allowed a wide choice of subjects? Materials that were suited to these children needed to be written in simpler terms to enable them to understand the content. People who wrote textbooks for slow-learning children needed to start taking their work more seriously so they could do the very best job possible. Progress had been made, but there was still much to be done.\(^1\)

Slow-learners did not make steady progress in learning because of failure to comprehend materials to the fullest extent. By the time they reached the upper elementary grades, standardized tests showed their status to be a year or more below grade standard. They were lacking in self-confidence, self-reliance and independence because of inability to compete successfully with others. Insecurities and anxieties produced a growing recognition that they were inferior as they advanced in school. Experiences in the first grade sometimes developed attitudes that led these

\(^1\)Baker, op. cit., p. 251.
children to develop grave doubts about their competence and acceptability. It was the responsibility of the schools to help children overcome these handicaps.¹

Johnson favored some type of homogeneous grouping. Grouping was supposed to help teachers achieve the objectives of education effectively, efficiently, and economically. Grouping was to be done in terms of the total educational characteristics, development, and needs of each child attending school. Slow-learners were to be provided with specific materials at their own level of learning ability. This type of grouping was not according to intelligence quotient or achievement range, but entire development, anticipated rate of growth, probable potential, social and cultural background and what a child's future might possibly be.²

Some educators rebelled against this type of grouping because it brought to mind the days of "opportunity rooms." These rooms were the dumping grounds for children who were not wanted by the teachers in the regular classrooms. These rooms lacked a planned curriculum that would suit the needs and abilities of the children and often the teachers were poor. These teachers were frequently the ones not wanted

¹Witty, op. cit., 331.
in regular classrooms. Such grouping was of no value.¹

Strang said that slow-learners were not a homogeneous group. Among those who scored seventy to ninety on the Stanford-Binet or Wechsler intelligence tests, there were individual differences in the rate of learning, reading ability, interests, emotional stability, motivation, and home influences. The teacher needed to provide the best possible learning opportunities for each child and take note of the progress made regardless of intelligence test score. Observing a child daily helped the teacher gain insight into a child's interests, motivation, and home conditions that could possibly have helped or interfered with learning.²

According to Strang a disputed question was whether to put the children who learned more slowly into special classes or leave them in the regular classroom. There were advantages to both. If they were in special classes, it was easier for the teacher because of smaller numbers, more special material and equipment, and less responsibility for meeting the needs of a wide range of abilities and interests. In special classes the slow-learner had more self-confidence and self-esteem. He was not constantly reminded of brighter

¹Ibid.
Kirk and Johnson said that for educational purposes slow-learners did not belong in special classes for mentally handicapped. They belonged in the regular classroom, but instruction had to be adapted to meet their needs. These children were at the lower end of the average range in ability to master academic subjects, so were to be kept in the regular classroom with the average and bright children. They could acquire subject matter, but with more difficulty than the average child. Teachers modified their instruction to adapt it to the capabilities of slow-learning children.

If a slow-learner was in a regular class he might be stimulated to work harder to keep up with some of the more able learners. It removed the stigma of being in a special class.

In a regular class the teacher needed to be concerned with the attitude of other children toward the slow-learner. He did not want sympathy because that only made him more inferior. He did want respect, and if the teacher treated the slow-learner with courtesy and consideration,

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1Ibid., 338.


3Strang, loc. cit.
she encouraged other children to have similar attitudes toward them. Teaching slow-learners required that the teacher understood them and had faith in them as a person. Respect for their good qualities, approval of each successful step they took, finding and making use of the trigger that released their efforts to learn was necessary.¹

Referring to classroom adjustment for the slow-learner, Kirk and Johnson said:

He is not mentally handicapped in the sense that he requires a special class and a different curriculum. He is the child that requires special organization within a class. To the school administrator, the slow-learner, constituting a larger proportion than the mentally handicapped, becomes a problem of adapting instruction within the regular classroom rather than a special organizational program, such as a special class for the mentally handicapped.²

A developmental program, according to one authority, seemed desirable. This type of program recognized the value of continuous systematic instruction, utilization of interests, fulfillment of developmental needs, and the relationship of experience in reading to other types of worthwhile activity. This helped bring about a steady growth of reading skills and facilitated the attainment of basic human satisfactions.³

¹Ibid., 340.
³Witty, op. cit., 334.
Approaching reading through a concern for a need was the most appropriate way for the slow-learner. His needs were so often blocked and denied. Rehabilitation would often be dependent upon the extent to which the need of self-respect and self-esteem could be satisfied.\(^1\)

The slow-learners need for assistance in reading was usually great and persistent. Reading ability needed to be evaluated with utmost care. Use of standardized oral and silent reading tests determined the child's attainment. Later on they were used again to estimate gains. It seemed helpful to use data from diagnostic tests. An investigation was made into the nature and amount of the child's reading in books and other sources. It was important to make a study of the child's reading in different types of material. This helped the teacher offer the child materials to read that were of appropriate difficulty and suitability.\(^2\)

One aim of the developmental type of program was to help slow-learners become independent in using the library and other resources. This helped satisfy interests and fulfilled varied and changing needs.\(^3\)

Johnson said the slow-learner's academic program of the upper elementary or intermediate grades needed to be a

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\(^1\)Ibid., 333. \(^2\)Ibid., 332. \(^3\)Ibid., 334.
continuation of the program instituted in the primary grades.\(^1\)

The unit of experience was found to be very effective with children who learned slowly. The purpose of these units was to provide children with real-life situations in which they found it necessary to apply skills learned. This being true, units must be included that would be concerned with any and every activity that an individual might participate in. This was not possible because of a constantly changing society and economy. The real purpose of an experience unit was to provide meaning and value or purpose to learning.\(^2\)

When a normal child learned a skill or a concept, he usually received sufficient intellectual development with time to understand the implication in relation to application. This level of intelligence was never reached with slow-learners.\(^3\)

Brighter children, Johnson stated, were ready to profit from initial reading instruction at six years and three months, but slow-learners did not achieve this degree of mental maturity until six years and eleven months of age to eight years and four months of age. By the age of sixteen

\(^1\)Johnson, op. cit., p. 143. \(^2\)Ibid., pp. 143-46. \(^3\)Ibid., p. 153.
years, slow-learners had achieved a mental age from twelve years to fourteen years and five months. Their potential reading ability was from sixth grade and fourth month to grade nine.¹

This meant that slow-learners were an older age when they were ready for initial reading experiences. They learned and acquired reading skills at a lower rate and final achievement was at a lower level. These children would never catch up with brighter children in reading skills or mental maturity.²

The readiness period needed to be extended for slow-learners, and the actual teaching of reading needed to be delayed. The extent of the delay depended upon the individual child.³

Slow-learners were ready for formal and specific reading instruction at about the age of seven years and three months to eight years and eight months. Reading readiness tests proved valuable in determining the readiness level of a child. Readiness areas in which a child was deficient were pointed out by the test.⁴

Formal reading instruction needed to be provided for slow-learners through junior high school. This was for the

¹Ibid., pp. 194-95. ²Ibid. ³Ibid. ⁴Ibid., pp. 201-02.
purpose of improving that skill. Slow-learners continued to develop intellectually throughout this time.¹

Dolch stated that merely covering the ground in academic materials more slowly was not the way to adapt instruction to slow-learners. If this was done, then teachers were just assuming that these children had the same interests and abilities as faster learners.²

The slow-learner was more concrete-minded. In arithmetic he needed to see illustrations and be shown again and again. He needed to do things over and over, so that he could show the meaning himself.³

The concrete illustrations that teachers gave needed to be such that they could understand. The children were asked to give concrete illustrations. It was only by actually knowing what the child knew and never losing sight of this that a teacher could give concrete illustrations.⁴

It was important that pictures be taught to slow-learners. In geography, they could be asked to find things in pictures.⁵

It was expected that these children be taken to see

¹Ibid., p. 209.


³Ibid., p. 193. ⁴Ibid., p. 195. ⁵Ibid., p. 196.
the things that were talked about. This gave them a mental picture they could retain. It was recommended that things be brought into the classroom that they could see and handle.¹

Handwork seemed necessary for slow-learners. This they did in the primary grades, but fourth, fifth, and sixth graders, who were still eager to explore, touched only books. Verbal work failed to hold the slow-learners’ attention and interest. Use of handwork controlled interest longer.² Every classroom was encouraged to have a work corner equipped with things such as a work bench, coping saws, plywood, and paints. This enabled the slow-learner to make concrete things.³

All schoolwork was expected to have practical appeal to these children. Slow-learners worked only for things immediately practical, so it was important for them to be able to see the immediate practical value of all the work done. To the child anything that was fun seemed valuable or practical, so teachers needed to see that schoolwork for slow-learning children proved fun as far as this was possible. There were two reasons for making it fun. They learned more that way and wanted to go ahead learning more on their own. They needed to know just how they could use everything

¹Ibid., p. 197. ²Ibid., p. 198. ³Ibid., p. 199.
learned in school. Teachers needed to know what they wanted to do in the future and how the things they were asked to learn would help them.\(^1\)

It was important to cultivate within all children the habit of inquiring why things were as they were. Thinking had a high value in life.\(^2\) With slow-learners, simpler interests had to be cultivated and other interests developed which were based on the simpler ones. These children had to keep close to, or continually go back to, the original interests. Growing up was a development of new interests derived from simple original ones.\(^3\)

Teachers capitalized on any special abilities these children had. It seemed imperative to remember that no one person was poor in everything or good in everything. In doing this, teachers had the opportunity to help these children build self-respect and acceptance by other children.\(^4\)

Dolch said that one of the big problems of slow-learners was reading. They lacked the background of other children when they started school and, therefore, were not ready to read. Their perception was undeveloped and their attention immature. They lacked a language background which

\(^1\)Ibid., pp. 200-01. \(^2\)Ibid., p. 202. \(^3\)Ibid., p. 206. \(^4\)Ibid.
was a hindrance to them in learning sight words. All this caused them to fall further behind.¹

Slow-learners were deprived of reading practice because supplementary books were too difficult for them. These children needed books a grade or two below the level of their class. They failed to learn phonics as rapidly as fast-learners. Teachers sometimes passed over the principles of phonics quickly because the rest of the class was catching on rapidly. If teachers worked on one phonic principle with these slow-learning children for some length of time, some learning would take place.²

Dolch contended that the special attention given to slow-learners resulted in general improvement in society. No longer were big boys found in the primary rooms and prevention of juvenile delinquency hung largely on the hold that schools had on the slow-learners. There was a decrease in the group of adult citizens that had been antagonized and made to feel inferior in school.³

Slow-learners might have been able to achieve self-respect in athletics, but there was a danger that they might use this as a compensation for self-respect elsewhere. Mechanical ability was a very fine aid in getting learning

¹Ibid., p. 203. ²Ibid., p. 204. ³Ibid., pp. 215-16.
in many directions. When slow-learners had special social ability there was a danger of them leading the group away from the teacher and schoolwork into harmful activities. If they had special artistic abilities they were encouraged to use drawing in illustrating notebooks and compositions.¹

According to Dolch, handwriting and spelling carried little weight in the matter of promotion. In geography slow-learners did what they could, but they were not held back because of this. In arithmetic, teachers were to be concerned over the combinations but not the higher processes. In reading it was important to know whether the next teacher would teach the reading each child needed.²

In a discussion of promotion, Dolch mentioned three types. In subject matter promotion, the slow-learner was promoted when he had completed the work of a grade and had passed a test over it. This resulted in slow-learners being retained over and over again. In social promotion the child was promoted every year to keep him in his age group. The assumption was that social adjustment was more important than anything else. This caused reading disabilities to pile up in the upper grades. It even resulted in non-readers reaching upper grades and even high school. Learning sometimes slowed down because there was no need

for teacher or pupils to worry. In adjustment promotion it was a matter of what was best for the individual child. It might have been from the angle of social adjustment as children tended to play with their mental age group. What was best for the child's future was taken into consideration. Perhaps a new teacher was needed, the brothers and sisters had to be taken into account, where the child was in reading needed to be considered, and whether the parents would take it out on a child. All of these things had to be weighed with care in social promotion.¹

Morrison and Perry concluded that it was unreasonable to assume that children who were indifferent, humiliated or discouraged would be likely to do better if they had to repeat a school year. It was important to keep a child with his own age group in order to avoid harmful effects on his personality and educational progress. One of the basic human drives was for status in the group. Through no fault of their own, non-promoted overage children seemed to be deprived of status. They failed to receive recognition from the teachers for academic achievement and lost status with their peers because they were older than the majority in their class.²

¹Ibid., p. 213.
To summarize, it should be remembered that the organizational pattern of a school was not an end in itself. Through its overall design the main purpose of the school was to foster the maximum development of every child. Any school's organization was good only to the degree that it provided an adequate instructional program for all children.¹

"The thesis remains," wrote Fleming, "that the school's primary responsibility is to create a situation in which every boy and every girl is known, respected, and helped to achieve his maximum potential."²

Fleming, also, very adequately stated:

There is a storehouse of help available in the traditions of the past which, if used wisely, if understood, if communicated, give marked direction to our continuing quest for fundamental improvement, for quality education, and for intelligent change in the organization and administration of schools as well as for changes in the techniques of teaching. Such qualities have emerged from a combination of research and experience. They have stood the test of time; they are based on the premise that continuing research is essential if our efforts for continuing school improvement are to be realized. That is to say, we cannot disregard the best that we know about teaching-learning operation merely because a new automated device has emerged.³

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³Ibid.
CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The following data were compiled from the checklist and questionnaire that were sent to twenty-four fourth, fifth, and sixth grade teachers in the Webster City Community Schools in Webster City, Iowa in March, 1966. The purpose of the checklist and questionnaire was to investigate the behavior of slow-learning children in the Webster City Community Schools and to obtain information about classroom practices and procedures that Webster City elementary teachers had found to be effective in helping slow-learning children experience academic success.

Twenty-four teachers were asked to assist in this study. Twenty-two teachers returned their completed checklist and questionnaire.

I. BEHAVIOR OF SLOW-LEARNERS

Table I shows data with regard to neighborhoods and families of slow-learners. Nine questions were asked which were related to the income of families, housing areas where they lived, education of their parents and the interest they showed in school, home management, types of parental control, and relation of environment and juvenile delinquency.

A little more than one-half of the elementary teachers
TABLE I

TEACHERS' VIEWS ON PARENTS, HOUSING, INCOME, HOME MANAGEMENT, EDUCATION OF PARENTS, PARENTAL CONTROL, AND DELINQUENCY IN ENVIRONMENT OF SLOW-LEARNER, WEBSTER CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, 1965-1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do slow-learners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. come from low income families?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. live in poorer housing areas?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. have parents that are as well-educated as parents of normal and brighter children?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. have parents that are interested in school?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. come from homes in which there is evidence of poor management?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. come from homes in which there is lack of parental control?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. come from homes in which there is too much parental control?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. become juvenile delinquents?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. live in an environment that readily adapts itself to unacceptable behavior?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: This table should be read as follows: The number below the column marked "1" above represents the number of teachers who answered the question with "always," "2" is used to represent "usually," "3" represents "sometimes," and "4" is used to represent "never."
said that slow-learners usually came from low income families, while the rest said that sometimes they came from low income families.

One-half of the teachers stated that they usually came from the poorer housing areas, and the other one-half said that sometimes they did.

All of the teachers but one were of the opinion that the parents of slow-learners were sometimes as well-educated as parents of brighter children.

Only a small number of teachers were of the opinion that the parents of slow-learners were usually interested in school, while the majority of teachers stated that sometimes they were interested.

Over one-half of the teachers replied that there was sometimes evidence of poor management in the homes of slow-learners. The rest of the teachers said that there was usually evidence of this.

Fewer teachers were of the opinion that there was usually lack of parental control in the homes of slow-learners, while most of them answered that this was sometimes the case.

Most of the teachers agreed that there was sometimes evidence of too much parental control. All of the teachers but one replied that sometimes they became juvenile delinquents.
All of the teachers but four agreed that slow-learners sometimes lived in an environment that readily adapted itself to unacceptable behavior. One teacher did not answer this question.

Table II presents data with regard to slow-learners in the classroom. Eight questions were asked concerning their age in comparison to the rest of the class, their attitude toward school, quality of schoolwork they did, and information on past retentions.

Only one respondent said that slow-learners were never older than was normal for their grade. Most of the teachers were of the opinion that they usually were older than was normal for their grade.

Most of the teachers said there was evidence that slow-learners sometimes started school at a later age than the rest of their school group. A few teachers wrote in the word "rarely" as the answer they wanted to give.

A little less than one-half of the teachers were of the opinion that slow-learners were usually retained during their earlier school years, while a little more than one-half of the teachers said that sometimes they were retained during this time.

A large number of the teachers said that sometimes slow-learners were indifferent to everything about school. A very small number expressed the opinion that they were never
TABLE II

TEACHERS' VIEWS ON SLOW-LEARNERS' AGE IN COMPARISON TO REST OF CLASS, ATTITUDE TOWARD SCHOOL, QUALITY OF SCHOOLWORK, AND RETENTION, WEBSTER CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, 1965-1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are slow-learners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. overage for their grade level?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. children who started school at a later age than the rest of their school group?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. children who have been retained during their earlier school years?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. indifferent to everything about school?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. easily discouraged with school-work?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. children who experienced repeated failure in their school-work?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. slow in all tasks of an academic nature?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. consistently poor in school-work throughout their school years?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: This table should be read using the same directions as given for Table I, page 36.
indifferent, and one said they were usually indifferent.

Only a few teachers reported that sometimes they were easily discouraged with schoolwork, while most of them were of the opinion that they usually were. One teacher said they were always easily discouraged.

A large number of the respondents said they usually experienced repeated failure in schoolwork, while a small number reported that this was sometimes true.

Slow-learners were usually slow in all tasks of an academic nature according to a majority of the teachers, and only a few were of the opinion that sometimes this was true.

The opinion was expressed by many teachers that slow-learners usually were consistently poor in schoolwork throughout their school years. Only a small number expressed that this was sometimes true.

Teachers' attitudes toward study habits, special abilities, and suggested reasons for being slow-learners were revealed in Table III. They were asked to express views on whether slow-learners questioned purpose of school tasks, were cautious, used power of thinking, jumped to conclusions, possessed special abilities, and reasons for being slow-learners.

Most of the teachers replied that slow-learners sometimes questioned the purpose of academic tasks. No
### TABLE III

**TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD STUDY HABITS, SPECIAL ABILITIES, AND SUGGESTED REASONS FOR BEING SLOW-LEARNERS, WEBSTER CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, 1965-1966**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do slow-learning children</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. question the purpose of academic tasks?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. proceed with caution and think ahead when undertaking academic tasks?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. jump to conclusions before thinking of other possibilities?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. show evidence of being highly creative children?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. seem curious about the world around them?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. have a vivid imagination?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. show evidence of mechanical ability?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. show evidence of artistic ability?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. possess athletic ability?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. learn slowly because there is a lack of mental capacity for rapid learning?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. learn slowly because they are lazy?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. spend much of the time in school daydreaming?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE III (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>m. have a long attention span?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. show evidence of withdrawing from reality?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: This table should be read using the same directions as given for Table I, page 36.

Teachers were of the opinion that they always questioned the purpose of academic tasks or that they never raised any questions.

Only a few teachers were of the opinion that slow-learners never proceeded with caution and thought ahead. Most of them stated that sometimes they did. One teacher wrote in the word "rarely."

Some of the teachers said they sometimes jumped to conclusions, but most of them were of the opinion that they usually jumped to conclusions.

By far the largest majority of the teachers agreed that sometimes there was evidence of slow-learners being highly creative children. Only one felt that they never were highly creative.

A very small number of teachers said they were never curious about the world around them. A few replied that
there usually was evidence of curiosity in slow-learning children, but the largest number of teachers said there sometimes was evidence of this.

A few teachers said that slow-learners never had a vivid imagination, while a large majority said that sometimes they did. Several teachers stated that they usually had a vivid imagination.

The majority of teachers were in agreement that sometimes there was evidence of mechanical ability and only a very small number expressed the opinion that there was usually evidence of this.

The majority of the respondents said that there was sometimes evidence of artistic and athletic ability in slow-learners.

A little less than one-half of the teachers were of the opinion that slow-learners sometimes learned slowly because of a lack of mental capacity for fast learning. A little more than one-half said this was usually true.

Except for one teacher, there was agreement that slow-learners were sometimes lazy.

A large number of teachers said that sometimes slow-learners spent much of their school time daydreaming.

Slow-learners never had a long attention span according to the majority of teachers.

Most of the teachers were in agreement that slow-
learners sometimes showed evidence of withdrawing from reality.

Table IV presents data on the social adjustment of slow-learners. Teachers were asked questions in regard to leadership qualities, selection of companions, ability to make friends, whether they dominated others, had confidence in themselves, cooperated on playground and in school, had feelings for others, and could rise up in self-defense.

A very small number of teachers were of the opinion that slow-learners never emerged as leaders. An equally small number were of the opinion that they usually did. The majority said they sometimes did.

The largest number of teachers reported that sometimes slow-learners used good judgment in their selection of companions. One teacher answered this question with "rarely."

Many of the teachers reported that they sometimes made friends easily. One teacher answered this question with the word "rarely."

Most of the teachers reported that they sometimes dominated other children. This question was answered with the word "rarely" by one teacher.

Only one teacher stated that slow-learners were always easily led by groups or individuals with poor habits. Most of them were of the opinion that this was sometimes
TABLE IV

VIEWS ON SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT OF SLOW-LEARNERS IN THE CLASSROOM AND ON THE PLAYGROUND, WEBSTER CITY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, 1965-1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do slow-learners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. emerge as leaders?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. use good judgment in their selection of companions?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. make friends easily?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. dominate other children?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. become easily led by groups or individuals with poor habits?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. have the respect of classmates?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. have confidence in themselves?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. display signs of courage?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. cooperate well on the playground?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. cooperate well in the classroom?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. have sympathy for others?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. display the trait of generosity?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. display kindness to others?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. display signs of antagonism to authority?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. rise up in self-defense when their rights have been violated?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: This table should be read using the same directions as given for Table I, page 36.
the case.

A very small number of teachers reported that slow-learners never had the respect of their classmates, while an equally small number said they usually did. Most of them were of the opinion that they sometimes did.

The majority of teachers stated that sometimes slow-learners had confidence in themselves. There were some that were of the opinion that they never did.

Most of the teachers replied that in their observations of slow-learning children they sometimes displayed signs of courage. Only a small number were of the opinion that these children had no courage whatsoever.

One-half of the teachers said they sometimes cooperated well on the playground, while the other one-half said they usually did. A little more than one-half of the teachers stated that they sometimes cooperated in the classroom. A little less than one-half expressed that they usually were cooperative children in the classroom.

A little more than one-half of the teachers were of the opinion that they sometimes had sympathy for others, while the rest stated that there was usually evidence of sympathy.

Over one-half of the teachers reported that the trait of generosity was usually in evidence. The rest were of the opinion that this trait was sometimes in evidence.
Most of the teachers stated that they sometimes showed kindness to others. Some said that from their observations they usually did.

The majority of respondents said that they sometimes displayed signs of antagonism to authority.

The largest number of teachers were of the opinion that slow-learning children rose up in self-defense when their rights had been violated.

II. CLASSROOM PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

The data with regard to whether it was possible to make necessary adjustments for slow-learners in the classroom is shown in Table V. Fifteen teachers said they were able to make necessary adjustments, six said they made some adjustments, and one could not make the necessary adjustments for slow-learners.

TABLE V

THE POSSIBILITY OF MAKING NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS FOR SLOW-LEARNERS IN THE CLASSROOM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table VI shows that twenty-one teachers used grouping in some areas of instruction. Only one teacher reported
grouping in all instructional areas.

TABLE VI
NUMBER OF TEACHERS WHO GROUPED
FOR INSTRUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In all areas</th>
<th>In some areas</th>
<th>In no areas</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twenty-one teachers reported grouping for instruction in reading, seventeen reported grouping in mathematics, fifteen practiced grouping in language classes, to a degree, while one reported flexible grouping in all areas when the needs of the students would be best met by grouping to develop a more meaningful understanding of a skill or concept.

Nineteen teachers favored grouping for reading instruction. One favored grouping in reading if there were not too many groups. One did not favor grouping at all.

Reasons given for grouping for reading instruction were surprisingly similar. They included the following:

1. Slow-learners succeeded if they were reading at a level which enabled them to understand the material.

2. It was easier to teach reading skills and easier for children to learn when they were grouped according
to their reading ability.

3. Children who were asked to read material that they did not understand became frustrated and discouraged.

4. Slower readers learned skills more gradually and with more repetition.

5. Grouping allowed for differences in ability since in a given group there was often a wide range of reading ability.

6. Flexible grouping was important giving students an opportunity to recognize achievement.

7. Too many reading groups resulted in inadequate time for instruction for every group. Two groups should be the maximum with four or more groups definitely being too many.

8. Grouping was the best method of teaching and reaching the goals set up for taking care of individual differences.

9. Smaller groups were easier to work with and it was possible to meet the needs of each individual better.

Table VII shows criteria teachers used in setting up their reading groups. Some of the teachers preferred to use one criterion while others favored using several criteria. The teachers revealed that achievement range and tests over
basal readers were the most widely used criteria. One teacher used observation of needs.

**TABLE VII**

**CRITERIA USED IN SETTING UP READING GROUPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Number of teachers who used it in grouping</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Intelligence quotient</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Achievement range</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Results from basic skills</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Tests over basal readers</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teachers were asked to comment on the suggestion that grouping should be done by taking into account what the entire child is, could be, and what his future may be. Various comments were received about this suggestion. There was significant agreement among the teachers that this suggestion had merit, but it was easier to talk about than to carry out. One teacher said that it was fine theoretically, but it was a type of segregation. One thought teachers were taking a great deal in their own hands when they passed judgment on a child's future and classified him accordingly. The suggestion was made that a child's future was what he was. We could only teach a child for what he was, and thus his future would be decided. Another commented that it
might be possible to forget the creative child who was academically weak. It was pointed out that it might be difficult to carry out the suggestion if you had students with ability who did not want to work or other students who did want to work, but had no ability. This was a fine suggestion, according to one teacher, but no children should be denied a broad background of experiences. Children who became discouraged in a low group might be equally as discouraged trying to perform at a level higher than their ability permitted. One teacher was of the opinion that this was the only way to group. Two children with the same reading ability reacted to being placed in a low reading group in different ways. They needed to be placed where they would do their best work. It was mentioned that this was a fine step toward diagnostic evaluation. If groups were flexible, children would be permitted to move from one group to another according to their accomplishments. The psychological effect of being placed in a different group would be considered. One teacher stressed the importance of remembering that slow-learning could be psychological rather than intellectual. Some famous people were classed as slow-learners in their childhood.

The elementary teachers were asked to list the things they had found to be effective in helping slow-learners read. The list included the following:
1. Grouping was important, but groups were kept small to enable each child to receive more individual attention.

2. Children worked at a level suited to their ability.

3. Reading workbook pages were frequently done together in class.

4. Slow-learners were given ample opportunity to express themselves orally in class discussions.

5. Much repetition was used, especially in phonics and vocabulary work.

6. Teachers prepared worksheets in the areas where they were having difficulty with skills.

7. Slow-learners were given the opportunity to do much oral reading.

8. They were very definitely allowed to progress at their own speed.

9. The kinesthetic approach was used.

10. They were permitted to work together to help each other.

11. Concrete learning materials were used whenever possible.

12. Many games were used to drill in the skills areas.

13. Dramatization was done extensively.

14. Slow-learners were praised when accomplishments deserved it.
15. They were often read to with the hope of encouraging them to read more.

16. Tape recorders were used so they could listen to themselves read.

17. Reading materials were provided with high level interest, but low level vocabulary.

18. Slow-learners participated in all extra activities even though their contribution was trivial.

19. A great deal of work was done with structuring words.

20. There was continual building on their past experiences and motivation to acquire new experiences.

21. Basal reader was used plus other readers to increase interest.

22. Slow-learners were given an uninterrupted free reading period every day.

Data with regard to whether slow-learners liked to read is presented in Table VIII. The majority of the teachers felt that some of their slow-learners liked to read. Only one said that none of them liked to read.

Numerous ways were given as effective in getting slow-learners to read. They were supplied with high interest but low reading level books. They were encouraged to read in areas of their interest and to keep track of the number of books read. One teacher required them to read a
minimum number of books each year. Another encouraged children to set up their own personal card file of books read. Setting aside some time each day for free reading was helpful. Several classes belonged to the Arrow Book Club. When teachers read parts of good books to slow-learners, they were encouraged to finish them. Children helped each other select books to read. Setting aside specific times just to talk about books helped develop an interest in books.

**TABLE VIII**

ATTITUDE OF SLOW-LEARNERS TOWARD READING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All like to read</th>
<th>Some like to read</th>
<th>None like to read</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table IX shows data concerning amount of independent reading slow-learners did for themselves. The majority of teachers said that sometimes they read independently. Nine said they did not do a great deal of independent reading and one felt they did much independent reading.

Twelve teachers said they did have effective procedures for stimulating slow-learners to do more independent reading, six said they did not know of any effective procedures, and the remainder did not answer this question.
In listing the procedures that some of the teachers had found effective, one said that slow-learners were never excused from reading a required number of books. A chart was kept in the classroom which showed the number of books each child had read. Slow-learners appeared to be afraid of large books and small print. Small books with large print or books containing short stories were more enticing to slow-learning children. A reading chart accompanied each unit in reading in one classroom. Another teacher said that credit was given for book reports, while giving book reviews was a method of selling good books. Favorite stories shared with the rest of the class stimulated slow-learners to read. When children were ready to share their story, they placed the card out of their own personal library file on the teacher's desk. In one classroom the children were required to give six book reports every nine weeks. A star on a chart in the classroom represented every book read. One teacher stated that there was no set effective
procedure to get slow-learners to read. What worked with one child did not always work with another.

The teachers all agreed that skills including the use of the dictionary, reference materials, index, tables of contents, and how to interpret maps, graphs, and charts should all be taught to slow-learning children. One teacher did add that it depended, somewhat, on how slow they were, but all should have some.

Special provisions that were made in teaching use of the dictionary included the following:

1. Practice in alphabetizing was considered important accompanied by speed contests in finding words in the dictionary.

2. Planned dictionary games in which they worked with other children helped develop a pride in the ability to use the dictionary.

3. They were given practice in using guide words and learned to select the correct meaning for words in a given context.

4. Adherence to instructions in teachers' reading manuals helped teach the use of pronunciation key, fitting meanings into sentences, and finding words by using guide words.

5. Special exercises on the use of the dictionary were given to slow-learning children in their reading.
and language classes.

6. "Dictionary Day" one day each week was used to give children individual attention in the use of the dictionary.

One teacher mentioned that in the light of her observations, slow-learners were more apt to get out the dictionary and make use of it than those who learned more rapidly.

Special provisions used in helping slow-learners achieve the use of reference materials included:

1. Required reports in various subjects, but the teacher helped locate the reference books and the information.

2. Continual use of reference material as repetition was good.

3. Required use of reference materials at the child's interest level.

4. Most frequent use of reference materials in social studies, health, science, and language.

5. Units in reading books were frequently good sources for report topics.

6. Games were effective in teaching the use of the atlas, encyclopedias, maps, and globes.

The following provisions were made to help the slow-leaner achieve some skill in the use of the index:

1. It was necessary to use the index over and over
again to maintain some efficiency in the use of the index.

2. Questions related to other chapters in textbooks helped slow-learners use an index.

3. Small groups were formed in which children worked together using an index to find answers to questions.

4. Pupils had to prepare reports using the index to help them locate information.

5. Filmstrips were available to teach this skill.

6. Slow-learners were asked to find given topics in an index. After giving the page number where the information on this topic was found, they were asked to read the information to prove that they had really found it.

7. Pupils were helped to realize that an index was the key to find information wanted in textbooks and reference materials.

Teaching the use of the table of contents was carried on in many subject areas. The following helped to achieve this skill:

1. New units of work were introduced by referring to the table of contents.

2. Sometimes it was taught as the need arose to discover what a book or a chapter contained.
3. Children were required to take special notice of sub-topics under chapter or unit headings.

4. The table of contents was used to preview a textbook.

Reading and interpreting maps, graphs, and symbols was taught in social studies, by using the Weekly Reader, and by using the daily newspaper. Maps and charts were made using the children's own experiences and from information that they had gathered. After this they were introduced to the reading of graphs, maps, and charts from books. Teacher-constructed worksheets on graph reading and map usage were effective. Maps were constantly referred to in social studies classes. One teacher taught them to figure distances on a map that did not become too involved. Slow-learners were taught to interpret map symbols. Several teachers stressed that slow-learners needed much repetition in learning to use maps, graphs, and charts effectively.

From their own personal experience, seventeen teachers were of the opinion that slow-learners do not learn phonics easily. One teacher said that phonics came easily to slow-learners. Three added that sometimes they learned it easily, two stated that many times they did, and two said they usually did.

The teachers that said phonics was not easy for the slow-learner suggested various methods they had found helpful.
They included the following:

1. They needed much drill, repetition, and had to learn to listen carefully.

2. Phonics material needed to be taught slowly day after day.

3. Careful attention was given to the skills taught in reading classes.

4. First the teacher worked with the children after which they were expected to do some work independently.

5. It helped to write out spelling words phonetically whenever possible.

6. Words were said over and over again to draw pupils' attention to them.

7. Rhymes and silly jingles were made with words.

8. Three things to keep in mind when working with slow-learners was enunciation, scope, and sequence.

9. Trouble with phonics was often an individual problem, and it was important to give much individual help.

Twenty teachers said they made provision in the classroom for all children to share experiences of various kinds. Two said there was no special provision made for all of the children in their classrooms.

Those who did make provision for all children to share did this in different ways. All children were allowed
to participate in a newstime each morning or a special time was set aside some time during each day when news could be relayed to classmates. Class projects and class meetings were open to all children. Creative writing, illustrating, and committee work were open to all. In reading and language classes children shared ideas and personal experiences as they would fit the story or lesson. Field trips were taken with a follow-up discussion in which all children were invited to participate. Others discussed movies and filmstrips after they were shown. Discussion of summer experiences, hobbies, book reviews, and reports were ways children shared experiences. In some classes no definite time was set aside, but children who had something to share were never denied the privilege if it was related to the topic at hand. In the afternoon before dismissal, one class evaluated the work of the day and at this time group experiences were shared.

Seven teachers said they had some effective procedures to promote development of speech and language in slow-learning children while eleven said they did not. Four did not reply to this question.

One teacher reported that personal chats were very helpful. Enunciation was stressed in this classroom at all times, and the entire class worked on pronunciation. In another class the teacher helped slow-learners prepare
reports and stories to give to the class. This helped create self-confidence. The tape recorder was a helpful device for children to hear themselves talk and the entire class worked on speech correction. Children were encouraged to tell of their experiences. This helped make them feel that what they had to say was important. Slow-learners were not hurried when they had something to say. Other teachers reported effective use of current events, oral reading in groups, language games, the pledge of allegiance to the flag, listening games, poems, choral speaking, and newstime.

Procedures effective in helping slow-learners increase their vocabulary included:

1. Use of vocabulary words in good sentences.
2. Vocabulary increased when slow-learners were given many opportunities to speak before a group.
3. In reading classes, children were called upon to give the definition of a vocabulary word and others were asked to respond by giving the word.
4. The teacher very specifically pointed out new words.
5. Spelling workbooks contained fine suggestions.
6. Games, puzzles, and teacher prepared worksheets with much drill was effective.
7. One class made vocabulary lists for each subject area.
8. They were given practice in substituting one word for another word with nearly the same meaning.

9. Sentences or creative stories were made using spelling words.

10. One class prepared charts with new words having children take turns acting in the capacity of the teacher.

11. Describing words were used and children's imaginations.

12. One class learned to spell and use one new and rather difficult word every other day.

Sentence length and general expression were improved by starting with a simple sentence and adding one word at a time to give a more vivid picture. It was very helpful to add descriptive words and to change the order of the words in the sentences. When children learned to pick out the subject of a sentence, their sentence structure usually improved. Short sentences were combined and practice in writing complete sentences was given daily. The ladder technique of expanding on the subject and the verb was used. They practiced answering the questions what, where, when, how and who. One veteran teacher reminded that, after all, one should not expect too much of slow-learners. The pupils in this teacher's class wrote short sentences and then added colorful adjectives and verbs.
Teachers did not expect as much of slow-learners in written communication as of the more rapid learners, but they were expected to be able to express an idea. It depended on their experiences and their desire to share. When they were given a lesson in creative writing, they contributed fewer sentences. In one class they wrote complete sentences on small cards. These cards were arranged in the proper order to make up a paragraph. Then the complete paragraph was written. In some instances they were given the same assignment as the rest of the class, but the teacher was satisfied with a poorer quality work from the slow-learners. It was considered important for them to be able to express ideas in logical order. Correct capitalization and punctuation were considered essential. They were expected to be able to write a short letter in good form. Continual expansion and improvement were expected but at a slower rate. One elementary teacher summed it up by expecting the best of each child, but never comparing that child with other children. Another said it was necessary for slow-learners to learn that there was a written form of communication.

Provisions made for slow-learners in spelling were not too varied. Sometimes they were given words of a lower grade level, and at other times shortened lists of words at their own grade level. One classroom employed a contract
method in which the slow-learners were required to learn a
given number of words of their own choice from the regular
list. In another classroom they were given words at their
reading level if more than a grade and a half below their
grade level in reading. Slow-learners were allowed more
mistakes on their daily papers and tests than fast-learning
children. They were given individual help in pronunciation
and syllabication. One teacher used more oral spelling with
slow-learners. The majority of the elementary teachers
favored a lower level program for slow-learners.

Data with regard to grouping in mathematics in the
elementary grades is shown in Table X. Nine teachers
grouped in mathematics while eight said they grouped some-
what. Four definitely did not group and one teacher did
not reply.

| TABLE X |
| GROUPING IN MATHEMATICS IN THE |
| ELEMENTARY CLASSROOMS |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those that did group used the following procedures
in their mathematics classes:
1. Moved more slowly through the same text with much oral review and repetition.

2. Used a workbook one year below grade level with slow-learners. Diagnostic tests were given at intervals to determine areas where special help was needed. When new material was presented, entire class participated. Slow-learners could frequently perform if the new skill was not based on one they had not mastered.

3. Slow-learners were placed in groups which drilled on basics and did not dwell on discovering patterns and underlying estimations and understandings.

4. At the beginning of the school year they were placed in an area where they could work comfortably.

5. Extra practice was given to slow-learners in needed concepts. While reteaching to some, others discovered new ideas from extra lessons provided. At times only a single child needed help at a lower level.

6. Grouping was based on capabilities, basic concepts, understandings and effective procedures.

7. In one classroom, previous grades were considered, results of basic skills and the speed at which students worked determined the group they were placed
in. The same text was used, but they were not all working at the same place in the book.

8. One teacher grouped according to achievement with the fast-learners being expected to cover more work.

9. Mathematics groups were kept flexible because concepts were learned by individual students at various times.

10. In another classroom, the class started out as one group at the beginning of the year. When the majority had learned a new step, the children that still had trouble were placed in a group that went back to where the new step was first introduced. They were expected to continue working with their former group, also. In this way they participated in two mathematics classes a day. (Writer's comment: No mention was made of the amount of written work expected of the slow-learners.)

Eleven teachers said that the regular classroom was the best place to teach children who learned slowly. One said it all depended on the child. Nine teachers stated that this was not the best place to teach slow-learners. One made no reply to this question.

They were then asked to give reasons for their reply.
Those that answered the question with "yes" gave reasons that were similar. In the regular classroom, they learned to compete with life as it really existed. Looking at it from the social standpoint, they were exposed to more life-like situations. From the academic standpoint, they did learn from fast-learners. Even sharing experiences with other children was good for the slow-learners. Fast-learners stimulated slow-learners.

Those that answered the question with "no," also, gave very similar reasons. If slow-learners were not found in the regular classrooms, it would mean less planning on the part of the teacher. The children would not constantly fail at levels beyond their reach. The regular classroom did not provide enough time for extra drill and help that slow-learning children needed. The fast-learners were robbed of the time that should have been spent teaching them. In the future, these will become the nation's leaders. If slow-learners were separated from the fast-learners, they could learn at their own speed without failure and frustration plaguing them.

Several teachers stressed that it depended upon how slow the child was. The very slow-learner was better off if not in the regular classroom. He needed much more individual attention and was not capable of working independently. They were very much aware of their position in a
regular classroom.

When teachers were asked if slow-learners would benefit more from learning instruction received in special rooms, their answers were both for and against.

When slow-learners were in special rooms the teaching was geared to them with possibility of more remedial work. In a special room they were aware of many others like themselves, and in such a room they could "shine" on occasion. They had the help and time slow-learners needed to learn what they could. There was less feeling of failure and frustration on their part. The instructor in such a room had a limited enrollment and more opportunity to help each individual slow-learner achieve.

Those who were not so favorably inclined to special rooms said it might be all right in some areas. Perhaps slow-learners should be in a special room when learning some special skills. As they mastered the skills, they returned to the regular classroom. One teacher said they gained more in the skills areas when they associated with the better peer group. If they were in a special room all of the time, wrong attitudes could be developed. Adults were never grouped. Slow-learners needed to learn to adjust to all and to realize that no two individuals possessed the same abilities. The important thing to remember was to give these children the opportunity to feel the reward of
success.

Table XI shows the attitude of elementary teachers toward various practices used in promoting slow-learners. Eighteen teachers favored a developmental type of promotion. Five favored occasional retention of slow-learners with two teachers stating that this should be done in the lower grades. One favored an ungraded method of promotion, but did not go on to explain the method.

**TABLE XI**

**PREFERRED PRACTICES IN PROMOTING SLOW-LEARNERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bases for promotion</th>
<th>Number of teachers who favored each basis for promotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Social promotion</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Promoting on condition</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Occasional retention of slow-learners</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Developmental promotion (grouping based on total development of the individual—physical, social, intellectual, and academic development)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ungraded plan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** Two teachers favored two bases for promotion; occasional retention of slow-learners in lower grades and developmental promotion in the upper elementary grades.
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In recent years there was an increased focus of attention on changing educational practices and provisions. Since there was still much to know about providing optimum learning situations for children who learned slowly, this indicated that an investigation into the behavior of these children and classroom procedures that teachers have discovered worked best with them would be important.

Trends and current practices for instruction of slow-leaners at the elementary level were secured through library research. Materials were organized in the second chapter showing: (1) behavior of children who learned slowly, and (2) classroom practices and provisions that had shown evidence of helping slow-learning children achieve some measure of academic success.

Two specific areas were investigated through a checklist and questionnaire. These areas were: (1) behavior of slow-leaners in the Webster City Community Schools at elementary level, and (2) classroom practices and provisions that teachers in the Webster City Community Schools had, through actual classroom practice, used to help these children experience academic success. These data were presented in the third chapter.
Chapter four consisted of the summary of the investigation and the conclusions arrived at from this study.

I. SUMMARY

Studies revealed that there was little conclusive evidence that slow-learners were not as well-adjusted and had less favorable personalities than fast-learners. In many aspects of behavior they were able to achieve a satisfactory degree of goodness. Slow-learners were not potential delinquents, but home and neighborhood environments were frequently contributing factors to delinquency. Wrong behavior was not a part of their psychological makeup, but often the result of frustration and continual failure. Removing the cause of wrong behavior, whether at home, or at school, or in the neighborhood, sometimes resulted in a more desirable behavior.

Slow-learning children needed teachers that were equal to or better than teachers of children who learned faster. Teachers and students were to treat them as individuals. The degree of respect the teachers had for them determined the way other students treated them. Schools were expected to provide them with experiences that would make it possible for them to encounter some measure of academic success. Slow-learners were capable of learning but at a slower rate than fast-learners. It was important for
these children to make satisfactory social adjustments. This helped them compensate for what they lacked in academic adjustments.

If teachers were not sure whether a child was a slow-learner, there were some reliable methods that helped with the process of identifying. After schools had identified the slow-learners, it was their responsibility to set up a definite program for these children. It was imperative that slow-learners participate in extra activities, because this was good for them.

The things that happened to slow-learners during the years they spent in school affected their entire life. If the school provided opportunities for these children to succeed, they could make contributions beyond what was expected of them.

Slow-learners were ready for initial reading instruction eight months to two years and one month later than fast-learners. Slow-learners were more concrete minded. They learned faster when the teacher used many concrete illustrations in their classes. Handwork was necessary for slow-learners. All schoolwork needed to have practical appeal, and it was necessary for them to be able to see just how it could help them in life.

Handwriting and spelling carried very little weight in the matter of promoting slow-learners. In mathematics,
it was essential that they learned their combinations. In reading, each teacher was to provide for the needs of every individual child.

The main purpose of any school was to help each child develop to his highest potential. It was up to each school to decide how they would do this. Methods that were used included homogeneous grouping, putting them in special classes, or keeping them in the regular classroom. A developmental approach or the unit-of-experience approach could be used. Regardless of what the school offered, it was a good school only to the degree that it provided a satisfactory instructional program for all children.

II. CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions reached were based upon the library research done by the writer and the assistance given by the elementary teachers in Webster City Community Schools when they filled out the checklist and questionnaire sent to them.

Wrong behavior in slow-learners was often the result of their environment, and continual failure and frustration in academic work in school. It was essential that the school provide them with opportunities to succeed in academic areas.

Slow-learners needed good teachers. It was important
that they liked these children and enjoyed working with them.

Slow-learners were capable of learning, but they did so at a slower rate than fast-learners. They were in need of more individual help and more time to do their work.

It was impossible for teachers to make something out of slow-learners that their capabilities would not allow them to be. These children had definite limitations and they could not succeed beyond that.

It was important for them to make a good social adjustment. This helped them compensate for what they lacked in making a satisfactory academic adjustment.

After slow-learners had been identified, it was the school's responsibility to provide a suitable program for them. It was built around the background of experiences that they brought to school with them.

Slow-learners needed more textbooks of high interest but low reading level. In order to speed up their learning, teachers needed to use as many concrete methods of instruction as possible. They were given schoolwork that had immediate value to them.

Teachers made sure that slow-learners learned their combinations in mathematics, but were not so concerned about learning of the higher processes.

Phonics was not beyond slow-learning children. They could grasp it when it was taught slowly. Therefore, it
was essential to include phonics in the slow-learners' program.

Slow-learners experienced some measure of success from one retention during the elementary years. A second retention during this same period of time was not desirable, since research had indicated that a second retention was less successful.

It was the school's responsibility to provide a satisfactory instructional program for all children. Any school that failed to do this could not be classed as a good school.

This study provided, for the writer, a better insight into the problems that confront children who learn slowly. It developed a respect for them as individuals, and a deeper determination to make better provisions for their needs in the classroom. The school's role in providing a program that helped slow-learners succeed in academic tasks was exposed in a new light.
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Webster City, Iowa

In recent years there has been an increased focus of attention on changing educational practices and provisions. There is still much to know about providing optimum learning situations for children who learn slowly. This makes desirable an investigation into the behavior of these children and classroom practices and procedures that elementary teachers in the Webster City Community Schools have found to be effective with these children.

Enclosed is a checklist investigating behavior of slow-learning children in the elementary grades of the Webster City Community Schools. The questionnaire will be helpful in ascertaining practices and provisions that teachers in the elementary schools in Webster City have found to be effective in working with slow-learners in the classroom.

It would be very much appreciated if you would take a little time from your busy schedule to fill in the enclosed form. Mention will be made of the group of elementary teachers in Webster City who assisted in this study in a field report entitled "Behavior of Children Who Learn Slowly Including Suggested Classroom Adjustments to Meet Their Academic Needs." The information taken from the checklist and questionnaire will be used in fulfilling the requirements of Chapter III in the field report.

A stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience. It is requested that you return the completed form at the earliest time possible.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Edna H. Don'tje
GENERAL BEHAVIOR


Check (✓) the one that applies.

1. Do slow-learners
   a. Come from low income families?
   b. Live in the poorer housing areas?
   c. Have parents that are as well-educated as parents of normal and brighter children?
   d. Have parents that are interested in school?
   e. Come from homes in which there is evidence of poor management?
   f. Come from homes in which there is lack of parental control?
   g. Come from homes in which there is too much parental control?
   h. Become juvenile delinquents?
   i. Live in an environment that readily adapts itself to unacceptable behavior?

2. Are slow-learners
   a. Average for their grade level?
   b. Children who started school at a later age than the rest of their school group?
   c. Children who have been retained during their earlier school years?
   d. Indifferent to everything about school?
   e. Easily discouraged with school-work?
   f. Children who experience repeated failure in their schoolwork?
   g. Slow in all tasks of an academic nature?
   h. Consistently poor in schoolwork throughout their school years?

3. Do slow-learning children
   a. Question the purpose of academic tasks?
   b. Proceed with caution and think ahead when undertaking academic tasks?
c. jump to conclusions before thinking of other possibilities?

d. show evidence of being highly creative children?

e. seem curious about the world around them?

f. have a vivid imagination?

g. show evidence of mechanical ability?

h. show evidence of artistic ability?

i. possess athletic ability?

j. learn slowly because there is a lack of mental capacity for rapid learning?

k. learn slowly because they are lazy?

l. spend much of the time in school daydreaming?

m. have a long attention span?

n. show evidence of withdrawing from reality?

4. Do slow-learners
   a. emerge as leaders?

   b. use good judgment in their selection of companions?

   c. make friends easily?

   d. dominate other children?

   e. become easily led by groups or individuals with poor habits?

   f. have the respect of classmates?

   g. have confidence in themselves?

   h. display signs of courage?

   i. cooperate well on the playground?

   j. cooperate well in the classroom?

   k. have sympathy for others?

   l. display the trait of generosity?

   m. display kindness to others?

   n. display signs of antagonism to authority?

   o. rise up in self-defense when their rights have been violated?
1. Do you find it possible to make the necessary adjustments for slow-learners in your classroom? Yes No Somewhat

2. Do you group for instruction? In all areas In some areas In no area

3. If you group only in some areas of instruction, what are these areas?

4. Do you favor grouping for reading instruction? Yes No Why?

5. What criteria do you prefer to use in grouping for reading instruction? intelligence quotient achievement range results from basic skills tests over basal readers

   What do you think of the suggestion that grouping should be done by taking into account what the entire child is, could be, and what his future may be? Comment on this.

6. What provision do you make for slow-learners in reading? List some of the things you have found, through experience, to be effective in helping them?

7. Do the children in your classroom who learn slowly like to read? All like to read Some like to read None like to read

8. List any effective procedures that you use to get slow-learners who do not like to read to do more reading.
8. (cont.)

9. Do slow-learners do a great deal of independent reading? Yes _____ No _____ Sometimes _____

10. Do you have any effective procedures that you use to stimulate slow-learning children to do more independent reading? Yes _____ No _____
    If so, list them ________

11. Do you believe that the skills, including the use of the dictionary, reference materials, indexes, tables of contents, and how to read and interpret maps, graphs and charts should conscientiously be taught to slow-learners? Yes _____ No _____
    What special provision do you make in helping them achieve:
    use of the dictionary? ________
    reference materials? ________
    indexes? ________
    tables of contents? ________
    reading and interpreting graphs, maps, and charts? ________
12. Do slow-learners learn phonics easily? Yes____
No____
If not, what methods have you discovered to be effective in helping them overcome this handicap?

13. Is provision made in your classroom for all children to share experiences of various kinds? Yes____
No____
Explain____

14. Have you some effective procedures that help promote development of speech and language in slow-learning children? Yes____
No____
If so, please explain____

15. What procedures do you find useful in helping slow-learners increase their vocabulary?

16. What techniques, if any, have you found helpful in helping these children improve sentence length and general expression?

17. How much do you expect of slow-learners in written communication?

18. What provision do you make for slow-learners in spelling?
19. Do you group in mathematics? Yes____ No____
   Somewhat____
   If you do use some form of grouping, please explain what criteria you use and the classroom procedures used.

20. Do you feel that the regular classroom is the best place to teach children who learn slowly? Yes____ No____
   If so, explain why____

21. Do you feel that slow-learners would benefit more from the learning instruction they would receive in special rooms? (Grouping would be based on academic success.)
   Comment____

22. What basis should be used in promoting slow-learners?
   a. social promotion____
   b. promoting on condition____
   c. occasional retention of slow-learners____
   d. developmental promotion (grouping based on total development of the individual-----physical, emotional, social, intellectual and academic development____
   e. if you favor none of the above, please explain the method you would prefer____