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THE DISADVANTAGED CHILD AND THE LANGUAGE ARTS.
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A REPORT OF THE MICHIGAN STATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE FOR LANGUAGE ARTS, THIS BULLETIN DISCUSSES THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED CHILD AND IDENTIFIES HIS LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES, LISTS MINIMUM TASKS AND REALISTIC OBJECTIVES FOR TEACHERS OF THIS GROUP, AND DESCRIBES SOME TECHNIQUES DEVELOPED BY THE GREAT CITIES PROJECT SCHOOLS AND SOME CURRENT PRACTICES IN MICHIGAN LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAMS. ON THE BASIS OF THIS INFORMATION THE COMMITTEE MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS TO BOTH LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS AND TO TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS, AND OUTLINES RELEVANT NEEDED RESEARCH. (EF)

State of Michigan
Department of Public Instruction

THE DISADVANTAGED CHILD AND THE LANGUAGE ARTS

Report Prepared by

State Curriculum Committee for Language Arts

1964

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The DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
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Lansing 2, Michigan

FOREWORD

The result of the work of the State Committee on Language Arts Education comes at an appropriate time, when education is receiving increasing attention and emphasis at all levels - local, state and federal. A problem of concern to educators and citizens at the present time is the provision of adequate and appropriate materials and teaching methods for students with special and unique needs.

One such group is those students who are described as being culturally deprived. Because of their unique needs and because of the fundamental importance of proficiency in the language arts as this relates to their effective functioning as productive, well-adjusted citizens, the Committee has identified some characteristics of the problem and made recommendations for dealing with these. In addition, these guidelines contain a summary of promising practices in language arts programs for culturally deprived students as these programs have been developed in various communities in the state.

I am sure that schools, in light of their concern for providing more effective programs of education for culturally deprived youth, will find this bulletin of interest and of significant value in their planning.

I would like to commend the members of the Committee for the excellent work they have done in preparing this valuable publication and to recommend that schools give their attention to the suggestions made herein.

Lynn M. Bartlett

Lynn M. Bartlett
State Superintendent

P R E F A C E

The Language Arts Curriculum Committee of the Michigan Cooperative Curriculum Program, sponsored by the Department of Public Instruction, has spent a year in the preparation of this bulletin. It is the sincere conviction of the committee members who worked on the bulletin that language arts teachers in the state need help in teaching students variously described as disadvantaged, deprived, underprivileged, etc. The term itself troubled the Committee for months. The terms used in this bulletin are those in current use generally, and the Committee hopes they are not condescending. For a time the Committee did not agree on a definition and description of the population which went beyond their characteristics in schools. A relatively small number of individuals provided the actual wording of the chapters that follow. The chapters were reviewed by the committee. However, the bulletin may not reflect in detail the views of all members of the committee listed below.

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The Disadvantaged Child and the Language Arts

Definition and Description of the Population

By 1970 one child in every two in the great cities of America will be a disadvantaged child. Such children have also been called "educationally limited", "educationally handicapped", "underprivileged", "economically impoverished", and "culturally deprived".

The educational inadequacies of the disadvantaged child have their roots in social problems. Some of these are prejudice, discrimination, segregation, inadequate school financing, pressures to conform to social "norms", migration of rural families to the cities, the flight of white middle-class families to suburbs and rigid curricula which do not realistically face and meet children's needs, thereby contributing to the number of "drop-outs", juvenile delinquency, unemployment and more broken homes. The child who grows up in a depressed urban area will live in an environment where crime, alcoholism, drug addiction, poverty, illiteracy and disease abound. The depressed area population tends to be a stratified group of predominantly unskilled or semi-skilled workers, largely in-migrant, who have moved to the city from a rural region. The ethnic and racial composition tends to be primarily from the so-called minority groups - southern Negro, Puerto Rican, Appalachian White, American Indian, Mexican and Cuban.[1]

Although large numbers of these children are concentrated in the great cities, youngsters who are culturally deprived can be found in rural, suburban and urban areas all over the nation. Wherever heavy industry is located or isolated communities exist or people live in poverty, one may expect to encounter

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[1] Passow, A. Harry, Editor, Education in Depressed Areas. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1963, page 1.

some children who are educationally limited.

Disadvantaged children live in a physically and socially limited world. They seldom travel far from home. They usually know few people, finding their social contacts among their relatives or a very small group of neighbors and friends. On the whole, they take little part in organized society as conscious members.

Apathy and a low level of aspiration are common characteristics of many of these youngsters who see no hope for the future. With a limited idea of "tomorrow", immediate goals, frequently in the form of material possessions, are more significant than longer-term and perhaps more abstract goals.

Although these children may admit the value of education, they often dislike school. Most of them are relatively slow in performing intellectual tasks. They lack auditory, test-taking and reading abilities.[1] They frequently are victims of poor health and improper diet. Sometimes they are children of transient populations or their families move about a city often.[2]

In the area of language, the disadvantaged child is impaled upon the prongs of a two-forked dilemma. First, he suffers from severe experiential deprivation. Because he goes nowhere and sees, hears and feels very little that pertains to the routines or materials of the average school, he often finds the curriculum to be meaningless and not relevant to his life's arena. Readers which feature white, middle-class children frolicking about in suburbia with their toys and sharing many activities with their hard-working parents depict an existence which is far removed from what he

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[1] United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Programs for the Educationally Disadvantaged. Washington, D. C., Office of Education, 1962, pp. 4-7.

[2] Frank Riessman. The Culturally Deprived Child. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962, page 5.

knows. His home life is not rich in the sharing of ideas. Family life, even if loving and warm, does not involve discussions of abstract ideas such as politics, art and religion. There are few books and magazines, perhaps not even a daily paper.

Some teachers are able to make the child understand that his feelings about the life he sees, whether it be outside the saloons, or the welfare worker coming to call or the fights in the streets, are worthy of expression. But even when the disadvantaged child finds he has experiences to talk or write about he encounters a second major problem. The example of many years of poor language models and standards in the home and community provides the child with a heritage of limited vocabulary, poor articulation and enunciation, a lack of social skills and a tendency to utilize obscenity, slang, and his fists to express himself. He does not discuss or argue - he swears and fights. If he happens to live in an environment where unemployment is a way of life and school seems to lead to nothing, he rejects the goals the teacher sets for him as not being pertinent to anything he cares about. This sum total of experiential deprivation, poor family and community language patterns and meaningless curriculum combine to make the teaching of the standard language arts program a frustrating ordeal for both the teacher and the child.

The young deprived child with language disabilities is easy to identify. Instead of using peoples' names and specific nouns and verbs to refer to things and actions around him, he may point with his finger or use his body to describe things. Generally, from first grade until he leaves school, he is not skillful in the use of his native language in speaking, in reading, in writing, and in the mastery of language conventions in grammar and punctuation. Specifically, he may speak a dialect other than Standard English; his vocabulary is impoverished and he expresses himself with less variety than is desirable; he is a poor reader, not only in pronunciation of words but in word attack skills and in comprehension. After years of education, he writes badly, not having mastered relatively simple

mechanical conventions like punctuation, spelling of common words or the capitalization of names. He makes many errors in sentence form, frequently not recognizing what a sentence is grammatically, seldom recognizing more complex skills like subordination. In discussions of literature, he often misses obvious information like what happened to whom in a simple plot. He has great difficulty in generalizing from the concrete and specific to the general and abstract. He is narrow minded in his choices of literature. He usually does not like poetry or literature written long ago. He may express his rejection of the teacher and the course in many ways, most frequently by refusal to bring the necessary materials to class for work, by chronic absence, and by refusal to do commonplace assignments.

If he is dull, and some of these students are, teaching can do little to compensate for the unkindness of nature other than to teach him what he can learn at the rate he can learn it. If his general environment has been so deprived that his total development and experience are affected, schools are again terribly handicapped. They may take him to the library or the museum but they cannot change the home environment and make his family life into one of enrichment and cultural brilliance. Somehow, the schools must define reasonable goals for these students, change materials and methods to teach them, assist the general society in its attempts to help them, and believe that schools are a chief source of enlightenment and opportunity.

The last point is of great import. Whatever has been wrong with education in America thus far, it has not been that its vision was limited. The environment of most Americans has been underprivileged if we look deeply enough into history. When Michigan was cleared and settled, and out of every two square miles a parcel of land was reserved for a schoolhouse, most of the farmers and settlers were underprivileged by current definition. They did not take daily newspapers. Many were illiterate. Culture in a frontier state was hardly refined or delicate. Books were expensive and uncommon. As late as 1910, a man could

read law with an already licensed practitioner and prepare for his exams and become licensed himself. College graduates were rare. Every town did not have a twelve-grade high school. Young men and women could become school teachers by successful passage of the eighth grade County Examination and teach without a day's training beyond intermediate school. We are a half-century beyond those days and still cannot report that thirty percent of our population are college graduates. Teachers now must not lose sight of that history. They cannot identify absolutely the students whose backgrounds have really deprived them of the power to grow intellectually. Students may exhibit all the characteristics described here, but that knowledge should not lead to two dangerous assumptions: One, that they are the inevitable victims of their environments; and two, that schools must surrender their belief that they are educable. It is possible that American Schools have never really tried to educate all their people before and for the first time must do so. To do that successfully not only will tax the intelligence and resources of teachers for decades to come, but must involve the resource of the total community. Nevertheless, education should continue to be viewed by those who are its products and its guardians as the chief source of enlightenment, still. Projects and curricula must be organized and experimented with for an entire generation before answers may be ready. But all such changes and the recommendations here are based on the assumption that schools can militate against deprivation.

Chapter II

Minimal Tasks and Realistic Objectives

In order to function as a member of American democratic society, a person needs mastery of a few minimal tasks requiring skill in the arts of listening, speaking, reading, and - to a very limited extent - writing. Mere performance of these tasks by those leaving school does not constitute achievement of the English teacher's objectives. However, the ability to perform them should not be taken for granted nor neglected in favor of the traditional higher aspirations for the particular group of pupils defined in Chapter I.

The minimum list contains more demands for listening and speaking than for reading and writing. In fact, the Committee listed 59 tasks involving listening alone, and the speech list contains almost as many. By contrast, the reading list includes only eleven items; and the writing, merely five. To indicate the Committee's thinking, these two brief lists are included here.

Reading

1. To read the lead paragraphs of any news story published in his local newspaper
2. To read large ads in large type for products and services he regularly uses
3. To read election notices and ballots
4. To read applicable short-form income tax notices; federal, state, and local
5. To read labels on food packages, and instructions for preparing and serving foods
6. To read "poison" labels and other similar warnings
7. To read traffic signs and route markers

8. To read posted notices, directions, and other single line signs

9. To read common meters and gauges

10. To read instructions on mechanical or electrical equipment - pushbuttons, etc.

11. To read series of numbers, as in licenses, identification cards, etc.

12. To read job application forms.

The Committee has in mind that the material to be read will include symbols, pictorial and otherwise, in addition to words. In connection with the above list, the Committee calls attention to "An Essential Vocabulary", as defined by Corlett T. Wilson in The Reading Teacher, 17 (November, 1963), 94-96. Wilson presents a minimum list of words and phrases most often found in essential reading material, as for example, "adults only", or "yield right of way".

Writing

1. To identify himself by signature

2. To fill in applicable income tax forms; federal, state, and local

3. To label sources of danger, such as "poison", "keep out", etc.

4. To request help in an emergency

5. To reproduce written copy, such as names, addresses, telephone numbers

What, then, are realistic language arts objectives for the students defined in Chapter I? The Committee concurs in the following:

The program should help all students develop the ability to attend to the spoken word, to follow simple

directions and instructions, and to participate in that part of the culture of the community that depends upon oral communication. The first of these objectives is truly a minimum. The second is comparatively undefined - "open-ended". With this group of pupils, the language arts teacher should adjust his objectives upward as far as is practicable.

The program should help all students develop the ability to express their thoughts orally: to ask and answer questions, to explain clearly, to defend a point of view, and to persuade others. Although these objectives are close to a minimum, they suggest the direction in which a teacher should move in working with all students, both in the cultural main stream and outside it. The strictly informative functions of speech are necessary for all citizens. The persuasive functions, while desirable and almost universally used, may be subordinated to non-linguistic techniques of persuasion. Beyond the persuasive functions lie the artistic and expressive functions, to which the language arts teacher will want to aspire whenever it is practicable to do so.

The program should develop in each student the ability to read those materials which he daily confronts, and to extend the range of his reading. It should seek to develop in every student the ability to express his ideas in meaningful written English. To this end the teacher needs to help the student develop either a legible manuscript style or the ability to use the typewriter.

Insofar as possible, the language arts program should seek to develop the ability to evaluate critically the typical uses of the communications media dependent upon language wholly or in part. Students need to recognize and make allowances for the effects of commercial sponsorship, personal or political bias, and common propaganda techniques.

Finally, the language arts program should stimulate an awareness of and an appreciation for the possibilities for use of the written word in leisure time

pursuits. This does not mean forcing every pupil to "appreciate the classics". It does suggest permitting each child to learn of the many kinds of recreational possibilities in reading which go beyond the demands of practical life.

The Language Arts Committee reminds teachers that the tasks mentioned here are minimal; that the objectives set forth are intended to be realistic. For optimal performance, the goals are much higher. The great bulk of the professional literature, including most course guides and syllabi, is devoted to these higher goals.

Chapter III

Techniques For Improving English Skills Of Culturally Different Youth

The English programs for culturally different youth in six large cities have been described in the United States Office of Education Bulletin 1964, No. 5, #OE-30012. Representatives from Detroit, Chicago, Houston, New York, Philadelphia, and St. Louis have commented on those features of special programs that seemed to be effective. Those "successful" techniques or practices are mentioned briefly in the following paragraphs so that other school systems with similar problems might learn where and how to begin. Interested faculties will, of course, refer to the complete reports for details of the various programs.

Not all the suggestions were the results of valid research. As they were tried in these several cities, they seemed to produce good results. They will continue to be tried, expanded and evaluated. They need to be. Out of such broad experimentation and evaluation should come findings of incredible value - tested recipes for changing behavior in the area of language arts!

The three most outstanding changes made in all the school programs were (1) additional staff, (2) proper orientation of the staff, and (3) selection and/or preparation of material better suited to the needs and cultural background of the student body.

Additional teachers made possible a reduction in teacher load. Classes were reduced to 20, 15-18, and even 10-15. Teachers were able to "get to know" the students and to work with them frequently on an individual basis. Additional staff meant more than teachers. The schools added guidance counselors, visiting teachers, psychologists, school-community coordinators, school nurses, social workers, language arts consultants, and lay help as teacher assistants and club leaders. As though by common agreement, the directors of these programs felt that the task of improving the

communication skills of culturally different youth would require additional personnel.

But just the addition of more of the same thing was not the answer. More of the same traditional teaching would not help. The total faculty, old and new members, required special orientation. First, there eyes had to be opened to the nature of the raw material. What are culturally different pupils like? What are the characteristics of the group, the home and the community? What kind of a community produces these pupils? Second, in their orientation period, teachers had to take a new look at their real objectives. Just what did these pupils need? Where were they going scholastically and economically? What did they need in order to get there? Third, the teachers needed the "know-how" to bring the raw material and their newly described objectives together. They took a new look at the role of success experiences in improving motivation, aspiration and achievement. Part of this orientation involved the instilling of enthusiasm for and the dedication to a very important job.

The selection and preparation of more suitable materials were considered a "must" in each of the cities. Commercially prepared materials were carefully reviewed and screened in an effort to find developmental and enriching learning activities that took into consideration the cultural background of the pupils. The shocking dearth of such materials made it necessary for several school systems to prepare their own - most of it in the area of the communication skills.

The efforts toward upgrading scholastic achievement of this segment of the student body were, to a great extent, localized in the language arts area. Expanded remedial reading programs, reading clinics, and language arts laboratories became an important part of each project. Project directors and consultants felt that to get along better in school, a child must have competence in reading. He must learn how to get information from the printed page. Paperbacks and linguistics became a part of the English curriculum.

The small remedial reading classes, tutoring service and individual counseling, given in addition to the regular language arts or English classes, produced favorable results.

English departments placed greater stress on oral competence and listening skills. Studies of the future needs of these students indicated that they would be living in an oral world getting most of their information from radio and TV. It is important for them to know how to use it. Furthermore, some research in language arts suggests that careful oral preparation leads to improved and easier written expression.

Pupils and teachers took trips to business and industry, civic and community organizations, even camping trips. These new experiences were stimulating and interest provoking; but more important, these trips provided a common shared experience. Pupils who generally seemed verbally deprived, on returning from one of these trips, bubbled with enthusiasm in talking about what they had seen and done. Here is an interesting area for further research: Are these pupils limited in the area of experience or verbalization? How dependent is one on the other? Have most of them had many and varied experiences, individually, and now need shared and group experiences?

Tied in closely with the proper orientation of teachers was the carefully planned orientation and involvement of the community. It seemed obvious that one of the first steps toward improvement must be the involvement of the family and community life. Great Cities Projects spent time and energy on pre-school groups, mothers' clubs meeting for morning coffee, late afternoon discussion groups, adult evening classes and reading rooms. The school had to enlist and win the parents' permissive and favorable attitude toward the objectives of the project, i.e., the best possible education for the boys and girls in the school community.

Another aspect of the Great Cities Projects was a willingness to try new patterns in curriculum and

class organization. The schools tried team-teaching, block-time and core programs, teachers working in "family" teams, homogeneous groupings, and non-graded units. Most of these operated with varying degrees of success. Few of them were subjected to careful and controlled evaluation. One cannot say that the new pattern, the new technique, the new materials, the well-oriented and increased faculty, the smaller class, or the improved relationship with the community produced the good results. Reports from the several cities indicate that the combination of many activities, this many-pronged approach, is helping the culturally deprived child.

An itemized list of Great Cities Project activities taken from descriptions of programs in six cities (Detroit, Chicago, Houston, New York, Philadelphia, and St. Louis) follows:

The figures in the right-hand column indicate the number of times each item was mentioned. The failure to mention an item does not necessarily mean that the technique was not tried.

Increased staff: additional teachers ----------6
guidance counselors, visiting teachers
school-community coordinators
psychologist, school nurse, social worker
language arts consultant, language lab. teacher
use of lay help, teacher assistants, club leaders ----------2
individual counseling ----------1

Smaller classes (10-15, 15-18, classes of 20)-------5
reduction in teacher load
reduction in number of subjects per pupil -------1
homogeneous groupings ----------1

Orientation of teachers, workshops ----------6
in-service program, demonstration teaching
identify objectives ----------1
dedicated teachers, enthusiasm, attention to individual differences ----------1
more "on-the-job" training

Remedial reading program ----------6
tutoring service ----------1

Remedial reading clinic ----------5
summer remedial program ----------2

Emphasis on language arts (2 periods per day) ------5
more functional approach
language arts laboratory ----------2
linguistics approach to reading and language arts ----------3
basic readers - controlled vocabulary ----------2
teach English as second language ----------2
emphasis on more oral language ----------2
more phonics ----------2
book fairs - "Books for the Bookless" ----------1

Preparation of more suitable teaching materials-----6
adapted to cultural background
curriculum guides
new report cards based on levels in reading and mathematics ----------1
emphasis on success experiences ----------2

Selection of more appropriate materials ----------4
paperbacks, guidance films

Field trips to business and industry ----------5
community resources
cooperation of public library ----------2
camping experiences ----------1

Involve parents and the community ----------4
study characteristics of school, home and community ----------1

New patterns in organization
team-teaching, block-time and core ----------4
non-graded primary unit ----------4
pre-school training (kindergarten and reading readiness) ----------2
testing program, continuous evaluation ----------1

Chapter IV

Current Michigan Practices in the Language Arts Program for the Culturally Disadvantaged

A questionnaire was sent to one hundred Michigan school districts varying in size and geographic location. The questionnaire was designed to identify districts which have planned programs for the culturally disadvantaged and to learn what curriculum practices and techniques are most widely-used to service the needs of this segment of the school population.

Sixty districts responded to the questionnaire -- fifty-two elementary, forty-six junior high, and forty-four high schools. Information from the returned questionnaires is summarized as follows: a tabulation showing the frequency of usage in regard to items mentioned concerning certain techniques; comments made by staff members of the school districts; a list of current practices or trends; and a bibliography of publications prepared by Michigan school systems.

According to the questionnaires twenty elementary schools, nineteen junior high schools, and twenty-four senior high schools have planned programs for the culturally disadvantaged.

TECHNIQUES USED TO IMPROVE LANGUAGE SKILLS OF CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

	Elementary	Junior High	Senior High	Total	
*Increased staff:					
Guidance counselors	7	9	10	26	
Visiting Teachers	17	6	4	27	
Language Arts consultant	6	3	3	12	
Language Lab. teacher	5	4	7	16	
Lay help	1	1	1	3	
Teacher assistants	1	1	2	4	
Psychologist	10	4	4	18	
Social Worker	3	4	4	11	
School Nurse	11	3	3	17	
Others	10	9	8	27	
*In-service help for teachers	33	25	25	83	
*Lower teacher-pupil ratio	23	27	27	77	
*Emphasis on Language Arts (2 periods per day	24	19	6	49	
More functional approach	19	26	21	66	
Language Arts laboratory	5	9	7	21	
Linguistic approach	5	5	9	19	
Basic readers	27	14	13	54	
More oral language	21	20	17	58	
More phonics	19	10	3	32	
English as a second language	1	2	2	5	
*Remedial reading programs	29	28	22	79)	Total
Remedial reading clinic	6	9	4	19)	
Summer remedial program	26	16	18	60)	158
Preparation of more suitable teaching materials	17	15	11	43	
Adapted to cultural background	12	8	7	27	
Curriculum guides	11	12	11	34	
*Selection of more appropriate materials	27	30	31	88	
*Increased cultural experiences	12	10	8	30)	Total
Trips to business, industry, cultural centers, etc.	23	17	10	50)	80
Involvement of parents and community	24	17	11	52	
Team-teaching	9	4	7	20	
Non-grade primary unit	15	--	--	15	
*Homogeneous ability grouping	11	29	26	66	
Reduction in number of subjects per pupil	3	9	10	22	
*More individual counseling	11	25	27	63	
Tutoring Service	3	5	5	13	
Pre-school experiences for children	16	--	--	16	
*Increased library services	27	21	20	68	

*This indicates the techniques in areas of greatest emphases according to the questionnaires in the elementary, junior high, and senior high school.

Comments from Returned Questionnaires

Some of the comments that were made by Michigan educators, in answering the questionnaire, have been quoted below to indicate how they are attempting to meet the needs of the culturally disadvantaged and the problems with which they are faced.

"More appropriate textbooks need to be printed aimed at raising the level of self-concept for all minority groups. Too few companies and authors are concerned with this matter."

"We are in the third year of pre-school experiences for culturally deprived, involving parents and children for 8 weeks. Local college personnel aid with child development aspect. Also in third year of under-achiever program in intermediate grades. This, too, involves parents and lay volunteers. Experimenting with primary cycle to help overcome individual difference problems. Have added reading consultant on the basis of one to five elementary schools for next year."

"At the elementary level, we have had several special teachers of reading assigned on half-day basis to elementary schools. These people work under the direction of a man who heads the Special Services in the central office, and with them are included helping teachers, visiting teachers, speech correctionists, psychometrists, etc.."

"Special Activities: Areas that need immediate improvements; 1. Attendance and Tardiness. 2. Improvement of self-image and importance. Action taken: To encourage children to be on time and to attend school every day, we are giving certificates each month for perfect records. If a child is sick during this time, they may still receive a certificate if they bring a note signed by their parents. To improve self-image: When we have the awards assembly, we also have a speaker that comes in at this time to speak to the children. These speakers are provided for us by the Urban League. These speakers come from various walks of life. Many of them are Negro men who are

successful in a profession or business. By having these people speak to the children, we hope to instill within them the idea that there are opportunities for improvement if a person is prepared for them."

"A language arts laboratory was given to us by a local manufacturing company. We have purchased special "listening" records. Several teachers are having individualized reading programs and find them highly satisfactory. Much is done with group composition."

"Pre-school is a separate project with its own staff and also an elementary speech improvement program."

"In curriculum some of the following changes have been or are about to be made:

1. Trial use of ungraded primary block in four elementary schools,
2. Team-teaching in reading in two elementary schools,
3. Experimental use of new materials in programmed learning in one first grade,
4. Experimental use of the Detroit developed multi-racial readers in some classrooms with many Negro students."

"We have ability grouping in our English classes in grades 7-12. These classes are kept small (20) so that as much individual attention as possible can be given to these people. We are trying to build up the supply of materials that we have available for these people. The biggest problem we have is locating the high-interest low reading level material that is adequate for these people."

"Emphasis on language arts -- more functional approach: 'General English' classes. A three week workshop has been scheduled for this summer. Selected teachers of 'Modified' classes in the junior high schools will prepare a curriculum guide for city-wide use."

"Emphasis on Language arts -- more functional

approach -- core-type program 6th grade half-day -- language arts and social studies."

"At the high school level, we have two remedial English classes. The materials in all the remedial classes are varied -- SRA laboratories, etc.. We have a class in senior English for the employment-bound in which we use a reading workbook by Nila Banton Smith and also use mass media materials. At this time we are working for a better program to benefit our deprived youngsters."

"Our English program is part of an overall program for slow learners, known as Practical Training Program. Within the program, there are a number of students that could be called 'culturally deprived' children. In carrying out the above English program, we have added some features that are not particularly unique, but do add to improving the program. 1. Use of magazines in class, 2. Much of the material used in class is prepared by the teacher, 3. Workbooks and prepared materials instead of textbooks, 4. The library has added many high-interest, low reading level books for P.T.P. students, 5. Reading of books and stories is done for enjoyment as opposed to analysis, 6. A great amount of time is spent on writing skills needed for job obtainment, and 7. Teachers are encouraged to spend a great amount of time in individualized instruction."

"Preparation of more suitable teaching materials. Our teachers have devised many of their own aids because of a lack of published material."

"Primary unit--continuous progress. This is being expanded next year to include more schools. Considering pre-school experiences for children."

Publications

Several school districts that were included in this survey have published materials that indicate their planning for the culturally disadvantaged.

Alpena -- "Helping the Slow Learner", Alpena High School, 1962

Ann Arbor -- "English R. A Curriculum Guide for Eighth and Ninth Grade." Ann Arbor: Ann Arbor Public Schools, 1962

Ohlson, Glenn A. and others. "An Evaluation of Reading Improvement Classes in Seven Elementary Ann Arbor Public Schools. A Research Report, 1962-1963."

Detroit -- "English S Communication Skills", Department of Language Education, Detroit Public Schools, 1963

Whipple, Gertrude. "Appraisal of the City Schools Reading Program", November, 1963

Flint -- "The Personalized Curriculum Program" - Flint: Flint Community Schools, 1964

"A Proposal for an Elementary Program to Help Make a Better Tomorrow for the Urban Child", 1964

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OBSERVATIONS AND CONCERNS IN MICHIGAN, IDENTIFIED BY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Greater use of and need for special persons such as guidance counselors, visiting teachers, psychologists, language arts consultants, language laboratory teachers, school nurses, social workers, and, if possible, lay worker teacher assistants.

2. Stress on coordinating programs at elementary, junior high, and senior high levels.
   a. Much evaluation of all language arts program.
   b. Inclusion of culturally disadvantaged group in these revisions of programs.

3. Reorganization of facilities and staff to provide for special needs.

4. Directing high school language arts programs toward employment.

5. Interest in research, experimentation, and publications.

6. Increase in in-service orientation help for teachers.

7. Effort to differentiate the program of culturally deprived from the remedial or corrective programs.

8. Greater emphasis on identifying characteristics and needs.

9. Reading classes at junior and senior high levels.

10. Lower pupil-teacher ratio.

11. Stress on preventive programs.

12. Use of language laboratory as a technique.

13. Use of multi-level materials.

14. Careful selection of textbooks.

15. Recognition of need for increasing cultural advantages and experiences.

16. Increase in number of libraries in elementary schools.

17. Re-examination of pupil failure.

18. Need to involve parents and community.

19. Awareness of problem at pre-school level.

SUMMARY OF MICHIGAN'S PROGRAMS FOR CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

Although some of the educators contacted by this questionnaire found it difficult to accept the term culturally deprived, culturally limited, or culturally disadvantaged in identifying children in their communities, there was general recognition of the problem of meeting the needs of this group of students. Many administrators questioned whether they have an adequate language arts program for the culturally deprived segment of their school population. There was sincere interest on the part of many educators to design a program to service the needs of boys and girls. One of the keys to the success of this program must be motivation of the student. The improvement of attitude and self-image of those included in the program for culturally disadvantaged is very important. The variations from community to community in the type of language arts program now being followed reflect the local needs of the community and local leadership. More high schools than elementary or junior high schools identified their programs as being for the culturally deprived.

It is apparent from the responses to the questionnaire that some schools are beginning to grapple with a problem, the dimensions of which are only partly realized, but which schools must resolve if they are to provide every prospective citizen with that kind of education which will enable him to lead a useful life.

Chapter V

Recommendations to Administrative Bodies of Local School Systems and to Teacher Education Institutions

The significance of this report is the identification for language arts teachers and administrators, of a large segment of the public school population which can profit from revision of the curriculum. The Committee recommends to the administrative bodies of local school systems the following procedures:

1. To introduce in-service programs for teachers to acquaint them with the problems and the challenges involved in teaching students with culturally deprived backgrounds and to help them make their instruction more effective.

2. To reduce class size in schools that draw students from culturally deprived homes in order to provide more time and opportunity for the teachers to give individual help when needed.

3. To include instruction in reading at all levels; elementary, junior and senior high school.

4. To initiate a program of conferences with parents.
   a. To provide some adult education for parents who have missed or failed to take advantage of educational opportunities during earlier years.
   b. To provide opportunities for discussion of problems of education and child training.

5. To make available to teachers and students instructional materials that are designed to facilitate the learning.

Further, the committee recommends to institutions for teacher education the following procedures:

1. To require of prospective teachers a background in sociology that will acquaint them with the structure of society and the problems involved in

dealing with students with different cultural backgrounds.

2. To require of prospective teachers at both the elementary and secondary levels a knowledge of the teaching of reading since a large percentage of the problems of culturally deprived students have their origin in reading failure.

3. To require of prospective teachers an understanding of the learner as well as the subject matter of English.

Teacher Preparation

The Committee's belief is that universities and colleges engaged in teacher-training have given too little attention to the problems of the culturally deprived. Special programs are known to exist only at Detroit's Mercy College and New York's Hunter College. These programs are described in Strength Through Reappraisal (A.A.C.T.E., Sixteenth Yearbook 1963).

In general, authorities seem to concur that successful teachers for the culturally deprived students are characterized by their attitude toward their work and students. In addition to being willing to work with this group of students, such teachers have the conviction that these boys and girls can be helped to achieve success in the area of English. They believe, too, that this work is extremely significant and valuable to our culture.

The usual academic background of both breadth and depth in the understanding of literature and language should be supplemented by certain other qualities. Candidates need preparation in sociology and psychology, with particular emphasis on the societal problems that produce this kind of young person. Prospective teachers should also have adequate training in the techniques of reading and oral English. They need to be, also, conversant with books for both the elementary school child as well as the adolescent. Finally, they are apt to be efficient, valuable

teachers to the degree that they are trained to utilize research data, objective test scores, and instructional techniques specifically designed for the type of boy and girl in the deprived group.

Before entering the classroom in a professional role, teachers should have some laboratory experiences in the kind of situations they are apt to meet as teachers. Hunter College in New York and Mercy College in Detroit do provide such experiences. This training should be done under the supervision of those who have taught culturally deprived students. The teachers of the culturally different need patience, insight into human problems, an ability to adapt to changing classroom situations, and a willingness to establish realistic and individual goals for students.

Finally, universities and school systems need to provide continuing education for the teachers of the culturally deprived. Those planning programs for teachers need to establish in-service seminars, practicums, academic and professional courses, and summer institutes with the purpose of strengthening both programs for and the teachers of these children.

Chapter VI

Needed Research in Language Arts

There must be as much research conducted in the different phases of the language arts as in almost any other area of the curriculum. Nevertheless, the results of this research indicate that there is still much that we don't know about the teaching of listening, speaking, reading and writing. In expanding their programs for the culturally deprived student, school systems might well conduct research on one or more of the following questions.

(1) Does cultural deprivation have a measurable effect on reading readiness?

(2) Does one system of reading instruction succeed better than others with culturally deprived pupils? If so, what system is it?

(3) Is there a measurable difference in the size of vocabulary of culturally deprived pupils in contrast to the total school population? How is the vocabulary deficiency of a particular child best determined?

(4) Does the content of readers have a measurable effect on the attitudes and values of a culturally deprived child?

(5) Can the effects of home, peer group, and classroom on the speech patterns of culturally deprived pupils be separated? If so, what are these effects?

(6) Does class size make a measurable difference in the effectiveness of teaching of reading, literature, composition, etc., to disadvantaged children?

(7) Can the school drop-out be predicted on the basis of poor reading performance in the elementary school?

Summary

The foregoing report has identified a segment of the population, set forth lists of minimum tasks and realistic objectives for teachers of this group, and described some techniques developed in the Great Cities Project schools and some current Michigan practices. On the basis of this information the Language Arts Committee has made recommendations both to local school systems and to institutions of teacher education, and has listed some relevant needed research. A bibliography is appended. Further steps to meet the challenge of educating the disadvantaged child, in language arts as well as in other subjects, need to be taken by local school districts.

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