DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 102 113 SP 008 893

AUTHOR Graham, Delores P.
TITLE A Modular Approach; The Culturally Disadvantaged Youth.
PUB DATE 71
NOTE 59p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$3.32 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Curriculum Guides; *Disadvantaged Youth; Performance Based Teacher Education; *Teacher Education; Teacher Interns

ABSTRACT

GRADES OR AGES: Teacher interns. SUBJECT MATTER: Teaching culturally disadvantaged youth. ORGANIZATION AND PHYSICAL APPEARANCE: The seven course topics are listed, as well as an introduction, the course prerequisite, course requirements, and a list of basic textbooks. The guide includes eight instructional modules. OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES: Operational and performance objectives are listed for each module. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS: Lists of books, films, and tapes are included in each module. Writings by the author (reading requirements) are included in the appendix. STUDENT ASSESSMENT: No provision indicated. OPTIONS: Space is left for options, but none are listed. (PB)

A MODULAR APPROACH

THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED YOUTH

Urban Education Series
Delores P. Graham

THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED YOUTH

Delores P. Graham
Associate Professor of Education
University of Hartford
1971

TO THE STUDENT

This course will be offered on a contractual basis (competency - based). You will find the objectives stated in terms of specific behaviors and competencies that must be demonstrated in the classroom and in written form. You must be familiar with the requirements for successful completion of the course and proceed to meet them in the manner which is most compatible with your learning style (using the alternatives suggested or any others that you prefer) and at a pace with which you feel comfortable. *However, all requirements must be completed by the end of the semester (15 weeks). Whenever you feel that you have mastered the objectives, you should make arrangements with the instructor to demonstrate the same.

A pre-test may be administered and any student who can successfully complete <u>all</u> or <u>any portion</u> of it, may be exempted from the same.

The other two course requirements found on page 2 must be met, however, by all students.

It is suggested that you read this syllabus carefully. The instructor will be available to answer questions which you may have.

I. Course Pre-requisite

Willingness to participate in all facets of the modules.

II. Course Requirements

1. The student must demonstrate proficiency in all Performance Objectives stated in the syllabus in response to a written examination.

2. The student must make at least five (5) home visits to pupils whom he teaches and prepare a brief written account of each visit. It is preferred that these visits be in the homes of five different pupils.

3. The student (intern) must prove his competency by planning with his team members and demonstrating (in the presence of his peers and the instructor) the ability to utilize knowledge of the culture, learning style, importance of the self-concept, appropriate learning materials and teaching techniques through teaching a lesson to pupils in his subject matter area. The student must receive a rating of eight (8) or above from each of his team members and the instructor.

It is the student's responsibility to schedule the planning session as well as the actual classroom presentation. The instructor should receive at least a week's notice of the final presentation.

III. Basic Textbooks

1. Johnson, Kenneth R., Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged, SRA, 1970.

2. Stone, James and Schneider, Frederick, Teaching in the Inner-City, Col. III, Thomas Crowell Co., 1970.

COURSE TOPICS

1. Profile of the Disadvantaged

2. Environment of the Disadvantaged

3. The Inner-City Classroom

4. Educational Deficits of the Disadvantaged

5. Learning Process and the Disadvantaged

6. Language Development and the Disadvantaged

7. Discipline in the Inner-City Classroom

INSTRUCTIONAL MODULE #1

Operational Objective

The purpose of this module is to acquaint the student (teacher) with characteristics generally attributed to children from a poverty culture.

Performance Objective

The student must be able to list seventeen (17) characteristics found in professional literature which are believed to portray a profile of most children from a poverty culture.

Instructional Alternatives

1. Read:
   a) Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged by Kenneth R. Johnson, SRA, 1970. Ch.1-4.
   b) Educating the Culturally Disadvantaged Child by Crow and Smythe, David McKay, Ch.1
   c) Education in Depressed Areas by Harry Passow (Ed.), Columbia University Press, 1966. p.68-97
   d) The Disadvantaged: Challenge to Education by Pantini and Weinstein, Harper & Row, 1968. Ch.1.
   e) "Who Are the Deprived Children?" by Charles Glatt, Elementary School Journal, Vol.65, #8, May, 1965, p.405-413.
   f) The Culturally Deprived Child by Frank Riessman, Harper & Row, 1962.
   g) "The Culturally Deprived Child" by Jean Grambs, Child & Family, Vol.4, Spring, 1965, p.365-370.

2. See: Films (16 mm) by appointment (3 weeks notice - Films must be ordered)

   a) "Children Without"

   b) "Portrait of an Inner-City Child: Tommy Knight"

   c) "The Cities and the Poor"

   d) "Diary of a Harlem Family"

3. See: Filmstrip and Record

   a) "Orientation to Edison School", SRA Simulation Laboratory

4. Schedule Small Group Discussion for:

   a) Suggested Readings

   b) Films

   c) Filmstrip

5. Student Options

INSTRUCTIONAL MODULE #2

Operational Objective

The purpose of this module is to emphasize the importance of the self-concept in the ducation of children in general, and economically disadvantaged children, in particular.

Performance Objective

The student will define and explain the significance of the self-concept in the educative process and indentify at least seven (7) things that a teacher can do to enhance the self-concept of economically disadvantaged children.

Instructional Alternatives

1. Read:
   a) Negro Self-Concept by Kvaraceus et al, McGraw-Hill, 1965.
   b) Educating the Culturally Disadvantaged Child by Crow & Smythe, David McKay, p.21-26.
   c) "Self-Concept and the Education Process" by D. Graham (see Appendix)
   d) In Search of Self by A. Jersild, Columbia University Press, 1952
   e) Education in Depressed Areas, Harry Passow (Ed.) Teachers College Press, 1966. p.101-135.
   f. "Minority Youth: Who Am I?" by Delores P. Graham (See Appendix)

2. Hear:

   "Haley Tape"

3. See: Films (16 mm) (3 weeks notice - Films must be ordered)

   a) "Color Us Black"

   b) "New Mood"

   c) "Our Country, Too"

   d) "Real Self"

4. Schedule Small Group Discussion for:

   a) Readings

   b) "Haley Tape"

   c) Films

5. Student Options

INSTRUCTIONAL MODULE #3

Operational Objective

The purpose of this module is to familiarize the student with debilitating forces in the environment of economically disadvantaged children which make traditional educational programs ineffective.

Performance Objective

The student will be able to contrast the environment of economically disadvantaged children with that of their more advantaged counterparts.

Instructional Alternatives

1. Read: a) Perspectives in the Education of Disadvantaged Children by Milly Cowles, International Textbook co., 1969, Parts I and II

   b) Manchild in the Promised Land by Claude Brown, New American Library, 1966.

   c) Autobiography of Malcolm X by Alex Haley, Grove Press, 1966.

   d) Notes of a Native Son by James Baldwin, Beacon Press, 1955.

   e) Dark Ghetto by Kenneth Clark, Harper & Row, 1965, Ch.1,2,3.

2. See: Films (16 mm) (3 weeks advance notice - Films must be ordered)

   a) "Children Without"

   b) "Portrait of an Inner-City"

   c) "Lay My Burden Down"

   d) "Losing Just the Same"

3. Schedule Small Group Discussion for:

    a) Readings

    b) Films

4. Student Options

INSTRUCTIONAL MODULE #4

Operational Objective

This module is designed to focus on the importance of the teacher in the education of children from economically disadvantaged areas and to emphasize the need for "special" skills and competencies in order for the teacher to experience success.

Performance Objective

The student will identify eleven (11) competencies and attitudes which will enhance the chances for teacher success in an inner-city classroom.

Instructional Alternatives

1. Read:
   a) The Inner-City Classroom: Teacher Behaviors, by Kimball Wiles (Ed.), Charles E. Merrill, 1966.
   b) Teaching in the Slum School by Robert Strom, Charles E. Merrill, 1965.
   c) On the Outskirts of Hope by Helaine S. Dawson, McGraw-Hill, 1968, Ch.1-7
   d) Teaching in the Inner-City Stone & Schneider (Ed.), Crowell Co., 1970, Ch.11, 18, 19, 20, 21, 27.
   e) Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged by Kenneth R. Johnson, SRA, 1970, Ch.5
   f) Dark Ghetto by Kenneth Clark, Harper Torchbook, 1967, Ch.6
   g) "What Kind of Teacher for the Culturally Deprived?" by John Diabol & Robert Hanson, Elementary School Journal, January, 1967, p.218-223.

h) The Way It Spozed to Be by James Herndon, Simon & Schuster, 1968.

i) White Teacher in a Black School, by Robert Kendall, Regnery, 1964.

j) 36 Children by Herbert Kohl, New American Library, 1967.

k) Death at an Early Age by J. Kozol, Bantam Ed., 1967.

l) "Teacher Expectations for the Disadvantaged" by Rosenthal & Jacobson, Scientific America, April, 1968.

m) Teachers for our Big City Schools by Harry Rivlin, ADL

n) Educating the Culturally Disadvantaged Child by Crow and David McKay, 1966, Ch.4.

2. See: Filmstrip

a) "Teaching the Disadvantaged", NEA

3. Hear:

"Grier Tape" -

4. See: Films (3 weeks advance notice - Films must be ordered)

a) "The Way It Is"

b) "Hear Us, O Lord!"

c) "A Second Chance"

5. Schedule Small Group Discussion For:

a) Readings

b) Filmstrip

INSTRUCTIONAL MODULE #5

Operational Objective

This module is designed to acquaint the student with the educational strengths as well as the educational weaknesses of economically disadvantaged children.

Performance Objectives

1. The student will list eleven (11) educational strengths and seven (7) educational weaknesses of educationally disadvantaged children.
2. Based on the strengths listed, the student will plan and outline a lesson which capitalizes on one or more of the strengths.

Instructional Alternatives

1. Read:
   a) Teaching in the Inner City by Stone and Schneider (Ed.), Crowell Co., 1970, Ch.13.
   b) On the Outskirts of Hope by Helaine Dawson, McGraw-Hill, 1968, Appendixes
   c) "The Culturally Deprived Child: A New View" by Frank Riessman, Programs for the Educationally Disadvantaged, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Education, Bulletin 1963, #17, Washington, D. C.
   d) Educating the Culturally Disadvantaged Child by Crow and Smythe, David McKay, 1966, Ch.5

INSTRUCTIONAL MODULE #6

Operational Objective

The purpose of this module is to familiarize the student with those learning styles which have been found to be common to many children from a poverty culture.

Performance Objective

The student will be able to identify seven (7) styles of learning commonly found in the literature which refer to children of a poverty culture.

Instructional Alternatives

1. Read: a) "Self-Concept and Learning Characteristics of the Disadvantaged" by Delores P. Graham

   b) The Culturally Deprived Child by Frank Riessman, Harper & Row, 1962.

   c) Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged by Kenneth Johnson, SRA, 1970, Ch.2

   d) Educating the Culturally Disadvantaged Child by Crow and Smythe, David McKay, 1966, Ch.3

2. Hear Tape with Filmstrip:

   "Improving the Instruction of Culturally Different Learners", NEA

3. See Films: (3 weeks advance notice - Films must be ordered

   a) "The Way It Is"

   b) "A Second Chance"

4. See Filmstrip and Record

"Teaching the Disadvantaged" NEA

5. Student Options

INSTRUCTIONAL MODULE #7

Operational Objective

The purpose of this module is to aid the student in searching for an approach to working with children who do not have command of standard English.

Performance Objective

The student will outline an approach for teaching standard English to children who do not speak standard English.

Instructional Alternatives

1. Read:
   a) Language Programs for the Disadvantaged, Report of National Council of Teachers of English, 1965.
   b) Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged by Kenneth R. Johnson, SRA, 1970, Ch.6-7.
   c) Teaching in the Inner City by Stone and Schneider (Eds.), Crowell, 1970, ch.28
   d) Perspectives in the Education of Disadvantaged Children by Cowles, International Textbook co., 1969, Ch.9
   e) "Language Development for the Disadvantaged" by Delores P. Graham (See Appendix)

2. Hear Tape:

   "Johnson Tape"

3. Student Options

INSTRUCTIONAL MODULE #8

Operational Objective

This module is designed to aid the student in formulating a philosophy of classroom discipline which will be positive and will aid in minimizing the kinds of situations which are generally considered negative.

Performance Objective

The student will outline a classroom procedure which includes eleven (11) things that a teacher can do to minimize an atmosphere in which learning can not take place.

Instructional Alternatives

1. Read: a) "Discipline in the Inner-City Classroom" by Delores P. Graham (See Appendix)

   b) "Changing the Game from 'Get the Teacher' to Learn'", Transaction, 1969, p.20-

   c) "Frequently Mentioned Concerns of Inner-City Teachers" by Delores P. Graham (See Appendix)

2. See: Films

   SRA Inner-City Simulation Laboratory

3. Schedule small group discussions for films from SRA Simulation Laboratory.

4. Schedule Role Play situations from SRA Simulation Laboratory

5. Student Options

APPENDIX

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Educational Leadership, Vol. 22, #7, May, 1965. (Entire Issue)

2. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Educational Leadership, Vol. 24, #7, April, 1967. (Entire Issue)

3. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Educational Leadership, Vol. 25, #1, Oct., 1967. (Entire Issue)

4. Bettelheim, Bruno, Teaching the Disadvantaged, NEA Journal, Vol., 54 #6, p. 8-12, Sept., 1965.

5. Biber, Barbara, Young Deprived Children and Their Educational Needs, Assoc. for Childhood Education, Washington, D.C., 1967.

6. Bloom, Benjamin, Davis, Allison, and Hess, Robert, Compensatory Education for Cultural Deprivation, New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1965.

7. Davis, Allison, Social-Class Influences Upon Learning, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1960.

8. Day, David, "Educating the Disadvantaged: A Beginning," Ed. Leadership, Vol. 25, #2, Nov., 1967, p. 132-135.

9. Fantini, Mario, and Weinstein, Gerald, The Disadvantaged: Challenge to Education, N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1968.

10. Fisher, R.J., "Who Is the Lower-Class Child?" Journal of Educational Sociology, Vol. 34, March, 1961, p. 309-311.

11. Fusco, Gene C., School - Home Partnership in Depressed Urban Neighborhoods, Washington: U.S. Office of Education, 1964.

12. Glatt, Charles A., "Who are the Deprived Children?" Elementary School School Journal, Vol. 65, #8, May, 1965, p. 407-413.

13. Grambs, Jean, "The Culturally Deprived Child," Child and Family, Vol. 4, Spring, 1965, p. 365-370.

14. Groff, Patrick, "Culturally Deprived Children: Opinions of Teachers on the Views of Riessman," Excep. Child., Oct., 1964, p. 67-77.

15. Herndon, James, The Way It Spozed to Be., New York: Simon and Schuster.

16. Krugman, M., "Culturally Deprived Child in School," NEA Journal, April, 1961, p. 23-24.

17. Krugman, J.I., Cultural Deprivation and Child Development, High Points, N.Y. City Board of Education, Bulletin 38, Nov. 1956.

18. Kvaraceus, William et al., Negro Self-Concept, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965.

19. McIntyre, John P., "Education for the Culturally Different," National Elementary Prin., Feb., 1966.

20. Olsen, J., "The Verbal Ability of the Culturally Different," Reading Teacher, Vol. 18, April 1965, p. 552-556.

21. Passow, A. Harry (Ed.), Education in Depressed Areas, New York: Teachers College Press, 1966.

22. Rich, J.M., "How Social Class Values Affect Teacher-Pupil Relations," Journal of Ed. Sociology, Vol. 33, May, 1960, p. 355-359.

23. Riessman, Frank, The Culturally Deprived Child, New York: Harper & Row, 1962.

24. Rivlin, Harry N., Teachers for Our Big City Schools, New York: Anti-Defamation League of B'Nai B'Rith, 1965.

25. Strom, Robert D. (Ed.), The Inner-City Classroom: Teacher Behaviors, Columbus, Ohio, Merrill Pub., 1966.

26. Strom, Robert D., Teaching in the Slum School, Columbus, Ohio, Merrill Pub., 1965.

27. Wolfe, D.P., "Curriculum Adaptations for the Culturally Deprived," Journal Negro Ed., Vol. 31, #2, Spring, 1962.

28. Wright, Betty A., Educating for Diversity, John Day Co, 1965.

THE DISADVANTAGED CHILD

Delores P. Graham

The disadvantaged child has probably been described more thoroughly within recent years than any other child. Teachers of the inner-city now state that they need no more descriptions of the child, but rather some suggestions for how to effectively teach him. An adequate description of this child will make it clear that there are no paneceas that will eradicate the frustrations of teachers, teacher-aides, or any other educators in these classrooms. You as a teacher-aide must know and understand the problems that these children have in order to help them more fully.

One thing is certain, the traditional school program is inadequate. It is based upon assumptions which are not valid for this child. Unless our programs are altered or rebuilt, based on the experiences and needs of the children for whom they are intended, inner-city schools will continue to be staffed by persons who want "out" at the earliest opportunity.

Let us examine briefly some of the false assumptions.

1. It is assumed that a child entering school will have heard in his home and community and will have mastered, to a degree, standard English. This is not true of the disadvantaged child and when he meets adults in the school, he finds that he is confronted with what seems to be a foreign language. Due to his poor verbal skills, this child is often mistakenly labeled mentally retarded. The teacher, teacher-aide, and child cannot communicate effectively due to the severe vocabulary limitation of the child.

2. It is assumed that the child lives in a home where books, newspapers, magazines, etc., are common-place, and he hears world events discussed, sees members of his family read, and has been read the customary nursery rhymes and stories. Many of these children have little of the above in their homes and have had none of the intellectual experiences which we deem necessary to develop an appreciation for the educational experiences of the school.

3. It is assumed that the child frequently participates in conversation with adult members of the family. These children live in homes where the stresses and anxieties of every-day life are so great that adults are preoccupied with providing the bare necessities, and "have no time for discussing what happened in school today." The child learns that he has nothing to say that is important enough to command anyone's attention. He soon surrenders in his attempts to converse with adults. Educators must understand that this child needs to learn that what he has to say is indeed important. This can happen only if the child is encouraged to participate in classroom discussions and if his comments are given appropriate attention.

4. It is assumed that the child has learned to respect authority and property. The experiences which too many of these children and their families have had with authority figures have caused them to view authority with suspicion and distrust. All adults in the school represent authority to the child and his initial reaction is that of suspicion and distrust. The ultimate relationship which will exist between child and adult will depend upon the adult. The child will say, "show me," "prove it to me." The teacher, teacher-aide, principal and all other authority figures must understand that there is nothing personal involved in this. The child is simply responding as he has learned to respond, and his behavior can change if certain elements are present in the school environment. This topic will be described further in another part of this chapter.

5. It is assumed that the child comes to school after a night of adequate sleep followed by wholesome nourishment. Noisy, crowded living conditions and disruptive activities in the neighborhood often prevent many of these children from getting adequate sleep. They are often tired and irritable in school and do not know why. In many homes, due to working parents or negligence, no one prepares breakfast for the children. They must fend for themselves or have no breakfast.

6. It is assumed that the child lives in a stable family structure. Our teaching materials depict a family headed by a father and mother. Most of these children live with one parent or no parents at all. In most cases the family is female-dominated with the father unknown or absent for various reasons. Children frequently are left with grandparents, foster parents or other relatives due to death, illness, or desertion. The family life depicted in teaching materials is completely foreign to the world of these children, and many of them have never known a kind adult.

7. It is assumed that the child possesses an image of himself which allows him to function positively. Because of the importance of the self-concept in the learning process, we shall devote more attention to this topic.

IMPORTANCE OF THE SELF-CONCEPT

It is generally agreed that in order to teach a child, one must understand the child. All candidates for teaching careers are required to take courses in child psychology as a part of the formal preparation program. Teachers in the inner-city schools will attest to the fact that those college courses did not adequately describe the child whom they meet in the classroom.

This child has become a major concern of educators throughout the country. Many approaches have been suggested in an effort to meet his needs. There are differences of opinion on some approaches, but in one area there seems to be a consensus of agreement: In order to effectively educate this child we must somehow provide an environment in which his self-concept can be improved. The self-concept is used here to describe the process of developing and maintaining identity which takes place in every human life.

The advocates of the self-concept theory state that: "Whatever it is that impels an individual to act or not to act, a significant role is played in this determination by what the person thinks about himself. He may be able to tell us something about his view of himself, or he may be able to tell us very little. What he tells us may be what he really thinks, or it may be a selective version for a particular public.....Or he may be completely unaware of what his true feelings about himself are. The person acts (however) and can only act in terms of what he thinks about himself in a given situation....."[1]

---

[1]Grambs, Jean D., "The self-Concept: Basis for Re-education of Negro Youth," Negro Self-Concept, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965, p. 11.

While there is a danger of equating certain ethnic groups with specific social problems, it is important to face the fact that a disproportionately large number of disadvantaged students who are performing well below grade level are members of ethnic minority groups. There are many reasons why this is so, but one major reason is that many of these children have learned to dislike themselves.

The outlook of the minority group student is often a reflection of how he perceives society's perception of himself. To him society appears unconcerned. A sense of exclusion is perhaps his greatest obstacle to successful adjustment. It frustrates the growth of civic responsibility and generates indifference and hopelessness. Too many encounters with society continually tell him that he is disliked and inferior. Evaluating himself by the way others react to him, he may be unwilling to express his opinion of himself honestly, but he can act only in terms of his own opinion of himself.

In order to effect any lasting behavioral change on the part of these students, educators (professional and paraprofessional) in urban school systems must make a major effort to help unsuccessful students, particularly those who are members of minority groups, to improve their self-concepts.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SELF-CONCEPT

The Home

As soon as a child becomes aware of himself, he begins to search for answers to questions like: Who am I? What am I like? How do I fit into the world? He learns who he is, and what he is like, and what other people think of people like him mainly by observing how other people react to him.

A child's first contact with the outside world is with his parents or guardians. He begins very early to get clues to his self-worth from them. A child who is shown that he is loved, wanted, respected as a person in his own right, begins to see himself as a worthwhile person and consequently forms a self-concept which is mainly positive. If, on the other hand, his parents do not show that they love him, or want him, or have any interest in him as a person in his own right, he begins to form a self-image which is mainly negative.

The most constant element in the environment of the disadvantaged is poverty. Most youngsters who grow up in depressed areas are exposed very early in life to the stresses of economic insufficiency and family disruption. The home life reported in many case studies is one of constant bickering and fighting. As has been stated earlier, children are often left with grandparents, other relatives, or foster parents because of death, illness, or desertion. They learn to fend for themselves very early - to look after themselves when the parents have to be out of the house, to amuse themselves, and to set their schedules of eating and sleeping.

Human nature, to the disadvantaged, is often seen as essentially bad, destructive, and immoral. Children are thought of as inherently bad because that is the nature of things. Consequently, in the identity development of children they are constantly exposed to such labeling by their parents. In this way they learn their culture's conception of being in the world, a conception that emphasizes inherent evil in a chaotic, hostile, destructive world. One can see that these youngsters have few experiences with stability, warmth, and attention.

It would be very difficult indeed for a positive self-concept to emerge from this type of home environment.

The Neighborhood

Additional clues to self-worth are provided when the child ventures outside the home. As he meets other adults: policemen, storekeepers, and other "powerful" people, he is told through countless messages what they think of people like him. The disadvantaged child learns that he has few resources to call upon to protect himself or his rights. He feels looked down upon and scapegoated. Any contact with others carries the constant threat of slights, insults, or indifference. All of this is compounded, of course, if the youngster happens to be a member of an ethnic minority group.

The School

The school is second only to the home as an institution which determines the growing child's concept of himself. School life is very heavily invested with success and failure, pride and shame. All of the teacher's relationships with pupils, his feelings toward them, his judgments passed on to them, the ways in which reward and punishment, praise and blame are meted, have a tremendous bearing on the self-images formed. While the school cannot be blamed entirely for negative images formed, in far too many instances it has served to reinforce negative images which have begun their formation earlier. If we expect to get desirable behavior from these youngsters, we must reverse this trend. The school should be an effective instrument for positive change; behavioral change is the business of the school.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE SELF-CONCEPT

Like all attitudes, one's attitude toward himself can be "unlearned" or replaced. Since a positive self-image is necessary if a child is to profit from school, the value of efforts made in this direction is obvious. This is the logical starting place for any program of action to improve the education of the disadvantaged.

The Role of the Teacher

The foremost quality needed by any teacher, but especially a teacher of disadvantaged children, is respect for his pupils. While this may sound like a platitude, it is, nevertheless, one with which we must come to grips. As educators we must be willing to search ourselves and analyze our biases, stereotypes, and prejudices. Unless we can personally deal with the area of prejudices, we cannot hope to effect any appreciable amount of change. This is not a simple thing to deal with, and there is the tendency to deny the existence of prejudices on our parts when we think of the disadvantaged child. Having grown up in middle-class, it would be a miracle indeed if we did not harbor prejudices based on race and class. This is as true of middle-class non-whites as of white educators.

If a child senses that he has a chance for success, he is motivated to try, and the respect of his teacher can give him that sense. True respect manifests itself through persistent confidence in the child's ability to learn. We must be certain that we do not truly believe that this child is innately inferior. It goes without saying that if we are convinced that a child cannot learn, we teach in such a way that he will not learn, and following the self-fulfilling prophecy, he does not learn. What the teacher expects and does not expect of a student will ultimately determine his performance level.

Models

Educators have long been aware of the fact that models are basic to the educative process. The teacher and teacher-aide are in a unique position to become effective models and an inspiration since it is with them that the child has the most constant contact. Teachers of the disadvantaged must be willing and capable of serving as desirable models. One cannot be a model, however, unless he is a person with whom the child can identify. In order for this identification to take place the child must respect his teacher and teacher-aide. Respect for the pupil is the prerequisite for pupil respect for the school personnel. Adults must be willing to say in essence, "Do as I do," remembering that all children learn much more by what they see than by what they hear.

Stewart[2] has suggested the following as specific things which a teacher or teacher-aide can do to build positive self-concepts.

1. Learn each child's name and the correct pronunciation as soon as possible.
2. Treat each child courteously. Say "please," "thank you," etc.
3. Record the pupil's birthdays for the month on the board.
4. Send cards and have the class send cards on birthdays or when there is illness or misfortune.
5. Reserve space on the bulletin board for each child to place his best work of the week.
6. Give praise for jobs well done inside and outside the school.
7. Use role-playing frequently to get verbalization of frustrations as well as accomplishments.

---

[2]Stewart, Charles E., "Human Interaction: A Source of Affective Learnings," Educational Leadership, April, 1965, p. 491.

The school program should also render the much needed service of bringing students into contact with desirable models from their own particular ethnic group. In order to believe that one can be successful in a given area, one needs to see that others like himself have been successful in that area. People who can show that school achievement "pays off" should be located and invited to speak to classes and assemblies. Pictures of others could be continuously on display. Persons of exceptional accomplishments should be included for students of exceptional ability to emulate, but it is possible that they may not be as useful a guide to the average youngster as those individuals not too different from themselves who have risen one or two rungs on the economic ladders. Therefore, some models should be sought among those working in skilled trades, business offices, government, and other less glamorous occupations. The teacher-aide most certainly can be a positive model, especially if she has come from a background similar to the children's environment.

Teaching Materials

Teaching materials have been shown to exert a strong impact on a child's perception of himself. The image that a person has of himself depends in part on what is taught and in part on how it is taught. A child who is a member of a minority group needs continued opportunities to see himself and his ethnic group in a realistically positive light. Our teaching materials have traditionally given all children a distorted view of the society in which they live. Allport[3] asks:

---

[3]Allport, Gordon, The Nature of Prejudice, Reading, Mass., Addison-Wesley Pub., 1956, p. 142.

"What would happen to your own personality if you heard it said or implied over and over again that you were lazy, a simple child of nature, expected to steal and had inferior blood? Suppose this opinion were forced upon you by the majority of your fellow citizens. And suppose nothing you could do would change this opinion?"

Reading materials and visual aids should take into account the backgrounds of the children who will use them. Special attention to the history, culture, and contributions of these groups can foster self-respect, mutual-respect, and a sense of identification with the school. In order to be meaningful, this attention must be an on-going part of the regular curriculum, not something to which attention is given one week of the school year.

School Curriculum

"The modern public school often bases its efforts on assumptions which are not valid for all children. The values of the teacher, content of the programs, and the very purpose of the schooling may be appropriate for middle-class children but not for disadvantaged children. If schools insist on standards or programs that the child regards as unrelated to his life or that doom him to an unending succession of failures, he is likely to leave at the first opportunity."[4]

Opportunities for successful experiences must be found for the disadvantaged child within the school setting. This child has a history of school failure and he eventually stops trying. Success for him may require change to teaching methods, techniques, and materials which are consistent with his world and his style of

---

[4]Educational Policies Commission, Education and the Disadvantaged American, NEA, 1962, p. 12.

learning, but a preponderance of successful experiences is absolutely essential for the formation of positive self-concepts.

Learning Style

It would be a mistake to assume that all disadvantaged children will show the same learning pattern. It would be a mistake to assume that all poor children have one learning style and that all middle-class children have another. Individual differences still exist and children respond to methods and materials differently. However, our past experiences have shown that most disadvantaged children do not respond to the traditional techniques and materials which are used in classrooms, and in general will display certain learning characteristics.

Riessman[5] has pioneered in the identification of learning characteristics of the disadvantaged. Those who have worked in inner-city classrooms generally agree that the following are descriptive of most inner-city children:

1. Slow in Getting Involved in Learning Situation

   This slowness must not be considered stupidity. When interest is aroused and the child understands what he is expected to do, he can work intensely for long periods of time. He prefers an atmosphere which is unhurried and non-threatening.

2. Externally Oriented

   This child tends to look outside for the causes of his problems and also to seek outside stimulation for his inner development. He is not internally motivated for learning, but will respond to external motivation.

3. Inarticulate in Formal Language

   When required to communicate in formal language, this child often becomes non-verbal. He possesses a very "colorful" language and will communicate if not made to feel that his verbal skills are totally unacceptable.

---

[5]Riessman, Frank, The Culturally Deprived, New York: Harper and Row, 1962.

4. Experiences Difficulty in Accepting Deferred Goals

Learning situations which demonstrate an immediate relationship between school and his life are generally accepted eagerly.

5. Physical and Visual Rather than Oral

This child finds it difficult to concentrate for long periods of time in a strictly verbal situation. Best results are obtained when something physical is done in connection with the idea to be grasped. Frequent use of audio-visual aids are recommended due to severe reading handicaps.

6. Person-Oriented

Materials are needed which focus on people, not generalizations.

7. Inductive Rather than Deductive

A great many concrete experiences are needed before generalizations can be made.

8. Responsive to Praise

Fear of failure is a major obstacle to learning for this child. He has experienced a succession of school failures. His efforts must be appreciated and sincere praise given whenever possible.

9. Responsive to Games Format

The surest way to involve this child is to make activity into a game. This can set the stage for learning and discussion on a higher, more abstract level. The child enjoys the challenge of a game and feels that he has a chance for success.

10. Responsive to Realistic Materials

Instructional materials which depict realism are favorably received.

Citizenship Education

While in theory school is the training ground for responsible participation in our democratic society, many schools do not in fact afford sufficient opportunities for students to get practice in the democratic processes. In far too many instances schools are autocratically operated and students do not feel that

they belong. It might be wise to consider this in the search for explanations regarding the damage done by students to school buildings, materials, etc. There is a great need for more activities to which pupils can contribute, through which they can earn the respect of others, and in which they can improve their performance. This is the essence of ego-enhancement.

From the point of view of citizenship education, it is even more important to note that a close relationship exists between attitudes toward self and attitudes toward others. Persons who tend to think well of themselves tend to think well of others, while those who disapprove of themselves disapprove of others. "As one respects oneself so can one respect others...If there is a valid and real attitude toward the self, that attitude will manifest itself as valid and real toward others. It is not as ye judge so shall ye be judged, but as you judge yourself so shall you judge others."[6]

Conclusion

All educators, teachers, teacher-aides, administrators, etc., have an obligation to help the disadvantaged as well as the advantaged child to fill a desirable place in the American society. Basically, this means that the self-concept of the child must be altered so that he desires and believes that he is capable of achieving a level of educational competence that will make it possible for him to compete successfully in this modern technological society. He must discard his feelings of inferiority and acquire feelings of confidence in self and pride in his

---

[6]Sullivan, H.S., Conceptions of Modern Psychiatry, The William Alanson White Psychiatric Foundation, 1947.

ethnic group. He must be aided in the development of realistic aspirations and the personality traits necessary for implementing these aspirations.

We challenge teachers, aides, and all school personnel to help each child reach toward his fullest development.

Self-Concept and the Educative Process

Delores P. Graham

The self-concept may be defined as a "composite of thoughts and feelings which constitute a person's awareness of his individual existence, his conception of who and what he is."* It is believed that the way a person thinks of himself determines the general intent and direction of his behavior. In other words, a person who thinks negatively of himself will behave in self-defeating ways, even though he may choose a variety of behavior patterns in the process.

The search for identity is an attempt to answer such questions as: Who am I? What am I like as a person? How do I fit into the world? We learn who we are and what we are like, largely, by observing how other people react to us.

A healthy self-regard is not only a goal of education, but also a prerequisite to learning. It is as necessary for the middle and upper-class child as for the slum child. However, because of the high incidence of seriously damaged egos in the ghetto, improvement of the self-concept becomes a prime target for educational programs for children who live or have lived there.

The school is second only to the one in the formation of self-concepts. School life is very heavily vested with success and failure, pride and shame. All of the teachers' relationships with pupils: his feelings towards them, his judgments passed on to them, the ways in which reward and punishment, praise and blame are meted, have a tremendous bearing on the self-concepts formed.

Since a positive self-image is necessary for a child to profit from

*Jersild, A. -- In Search of Self. p.9.

school, it appears logical that this is the starting point for an effective educational program.

The following are offered as suggestions (to be adapted to grade level) for improving the self-concept.

1. Learn each child's name and the correct pronunciation as soon as possible.

2. Treat each child courteously. Say "please", "thank you", etc.

3. Send cards and have the class send letters or cards on birthdays or when there is illness or a misfortune.

4. Reserve space on the bulletin board for each child to display his best work of the week.

5. Give praise for jobs well done inside and outside the school.

6. Use role-playing frequently to elicit verbalization of frustrations as well as accomplishments.

7. Build success for each child into the schools program. Try to ensure at least one successful experience for each child each day.

Some additional activities may include such things as:

1. <u>The use of mirrors</u>

   a. Tell child to look at yourself. What do you see? What would you like to be?

2. <u>Using the camera in the classroom</u>

   a. Taking pictures of individuals and class as a whole. Catch children in different acts in the room. Cameras are exciting to use on a field trip. Develop pictures - mount them in books with an image - how they looked or acted.

3. <u>The sharing box</u>

   a. This can be a large box from the supermarket.
   b. Toys or books - placed in the box to share during free time.
   c. Tag names on each toy - also a basis for oral language - have them tell why they brought these to school.

      Example: Fred put a ball in the box today. Use 3 x 5 cards. Put first names on cards. Pick a name card out of the box. See who will be first today.

4. Birthday charts

   a. Record birthdays - put yours up there, too. This helps with teacher-pupil rapport.

   b. Activities-Select a favorite poem or something special for that particular child on his special day.
   Let class make birthday cards and present them to the child at the end of the day.

   Be sure to include July and August birthdays in the month of June.

5. Welcome back system day

   a. Each child select a buddy - when a child is absent, the buddy goes to visit and finds out why he is absent - also, the buddy can tell the child who is absent what is expected when he returns to school.

   Example: The class may be going on a field trip or will see special movies. The buddy reports to the teacher if absence is due to illness. The class can send a get well card or just a drawing if they cannot write. Collect leaves - draw hands - draw and caption "Get Well" from Mary's hands.

6. Making calendars of all different shapes

   a. Weekly or monthly calendars.
   Birthdays of children and Columbus' birthday.
   Puerto Rican Holiday calendar (Jan. 3rd is known as King's Day)
   Jan. 11th School Holiday
   Negro History Calendar
   Great Inventions of the Italians
   South American Holidays - Peoples of the Islands.
   Great Inventions of the Negroes.

7. One page simple autobiography

   a. Do a sentence in a scrapbook and bind it. Children get a chance to know about each other. Write it in September. Go back in March and compare. If possible, have a picture to accompany each autobiography.

8. The child of the week

   a. Each week of the school year, select a child of the week. Use name cards or alphabets for selecting. He displays the bulletin board. The display will tell the class about himself. Encourage a member of his family to come in that week to see the child's display. If you can't get a parent in, ask in an older brother or sister in school for a visit, or invite his last year's teacher to come in for a few minutes to praise him. Here is his chance to shine-to raise his self image.

9. <u>The hall of fame</u>

   a. Involve school and community.
   Have people come back who were raised in the neighborhood who went out and made good.
   Negro History Hall of Fame
   Musicians Hall of Fame

10. Have a ½ hour released time during the day at which time your children may choose to do something of particular interest to them.
   This gives you a chance to observe their actions and behavior patterns. Also the children need this release.

All of the suggested activities are designed to say to the pupil: you are an important person -- a respected person.

A person acts, and can only act, in terms of the view that he holds of himself.

Delores P. Graham

Let us deal with who am I? How does anyone of us determine his identity? Psychologists say that as soon as we are aware of our existence we begin looking for answers to the questions: Whom am I? What am I like? How do I fit into the world? We learn who we are; we get clues by observing how other people react to us. Our first contact with the outside world comes through members of the family.

A child who is shown that he is loved, wanted, respected as a person in his own right, begins to view himself as lovable, respectable, worthwhile. In other words, he begins to see himself in a positive light. On the other hand, a child who is not shown love, attention, respect, begins to see himself in a negative fashion. He believes that there is something wrong with him.

The economically disadvantaged youth is a case in point: According to the research this child most often begins his identity formation in an environment in which there is too little of everything: food, clothing, shelter, love, attention, affection, security. The most constant element in his environment is not enough - poverty.

He frequently lives with one parent, or no parent. He may be sent to live with a grandmother, aunt, uncle, cousin, or a foster parent. Studies abound with cases of this child who lives in a home where there is constant bickering or fighting, illness, desertion, or his being blamed for the condition of the parents.

He may be left alone much of the time. He learns very early to fend for himself -- to set his own schedule for eating and sleeping. This child learns through his experiences that he is not very worthwhile: not deserving of the physical, emotional, psychological comforts of his more advantaged counterpart.

When the child ventures outside the home, he gets additional clues to his self-worth from other people whom he meets. --- other children, storekeepers, policement, etc. They tell him in many, many ways what they think of people like him.

Let us get to the black minority group child. Perhaps the single most important event in his life is the recognition of his black-ness with all the implications of that fact. The realization may come as a mild awareness that is taken in stride, or it may come as a rude shock that results in trauma; but whatever the circumstances a new understanding of the self influences that the child's every thought and emotion from that day forth. He sees the world and himself through different eyes, from a different perspective.

He learns very early that the desirable, the admirable, the acceptable is white. He is told in many, many, many ways that people like him are not very important, they never have been, and never will be. He learns that Black means: dark, soiled, dirty, dismal, gloomy, threatening, sullen, evil, wicked (Webster's School Dictionary). Everything negative.

This child knows this by age 3. Studies show that black children show a preference for white at that young age. He has already begun to reject his body image.

What about the effect of the Black Movement?? We will get to that later. We can say here, though, that 300 years of being told that black is ugly cannot be erased in 3 - 5 years by telling oneself that black is beautiful.

Our black child then enters school and he gets more clues to his self-worth. It has been shown that school is second only to the home in the formation of self-concept. School is heavily vested with success and failure, reward and punishment. The black economically disadvantaged child enters a school which was never charged with the responsibility of educating him, which, until very recently did not admit his existence. This child experiences failure from day one.

Here is an institution which demands what he cannot produce. He has not had the experiences which the traditional school requires in order to be successful.

Again, he is told that he is not worthwhile. He cannot learn. He is bad because he cannot sit still and pay attention to long periods of verbal learning. He cannot speak the acceptable language. He does not know how to use scissors. He does not know the names of objects -- all of which he should know!

This child stays in school and experiences one succession of failures after another. As soon as he can legally do so, he leaves, dominated by feelings of:

1. Failure -- He feels that he always has been and always will be a failure. He remembers the childhood fights in which he was the loser, the jobs that he tried to get and failed, the attempts to participate in school sports and failed, etc., etc., etc. He sees his parents as failures -- the jobs they hold, the home they live in.

2. Hopelessness -- He sees no way out. The educational system has failed to provide him with marketable skills.

3. Alienation -- Nothing belongs to him. He does not belong to the larger society. What has he to lose?

4. Victimized -- He sees himself as being placed in the capacity of second-class citizenship -- Scapegoated -- Taken advantage of.

A person acts in accordance with the concept that he holds of self. As Grier and Cobbs state in Black Rage:

A life is an eternity and throughout all that eternity a black child has breathed the foul air of cruelty. He has grown up to find that his spirit was crushed before he knew that there was need of it. His ambitions, even in their forming showed him to have set his hand against his own. This is the desolation of black life in America.

Is it any wonder that black youth are enraged? Let me hasten to add that this is also true of black adults. Anyone who allows himself to believe that the black revolution is restricted to youth is deceived!

Nevertheless, a few years ago a man who called himself Malcolm X, after a life of poverty, crime, and finally a spiritual awakening, walked the streets of this nation and dared to lift his head and assert his black manhood. A few years later, Willie Ricks and Stokeley Carmichael dared to coin the expression " Black Power " in the state of Mississippi, and still later, a group of young blacks in Oakland, California, dared to arm themselves and patrol the streets (for the liberation of black people), calling themselves Black Panthers. This brought on what we now refer to as the Black Revolution. The black child who grew up under the adverse conditions mentioned earlier, as well as other black youth (All black people are bound together by their blackness) began looking at themselves and their world in a different light.

1. Black youth today are determined not to suffer the indignities that their parents suffered without striking back. (assertion of manhood: Do we respect those who allow themselves to be brutalized without striking back?)
2. The young blacks are determined to change the connotations of the word black. (Hence, the Black is Beautiful slogan). This does not mean that white = ugly.
3. Black youth are insisting that the contributions of black Americans

be given their rightful place in the history of this country. (Every other group has need for heroes, why not blacks?)

4. Blacks are demanding that black children be prepared in our schools with marketable skills, or their teachers be held accountable. (Isn't this what white parents do?)
5. Black youth are demanding that the education they receive be relevant to their lives. (They believe that they will forever live in a black community. They want to develop that community.
6. Black youth are insisting upon more black people in positions traditionally held by white only. (Whites have been taught by whites. Blacks need models, too.)
7. Black youths are insisting that whites no longer have the option on whether or not we have an integrated society. Separatism. This is no different from what it has been.

One can argue with any or all of these points, but the fact remains that this is the way it is!
All of this is being done in the search for identity!!
Where do we go from here? Who knows??

For white America to understand the life of the black, it must recognize that so much time has passed and so little has changed. The overriding experience of the black American has been grief and sorrow and no one can change that fact.

Things will not change, until black Americans can truly realise the American dream. This means an equal opportunity to a good education, decent jobs, decent housing. (In that order)

Black Youth: Who Am I??

If I may speak for black youth - I would answer: At this point, I am not quite sure. I am developing a new-found pride, but I am angry, bitter, confused, frustrated.

I have all of the anxieties, problems, uncertainties of any other youth searching for identity, but I have the added problems that come from being black in a society which says that the price of admission is to be white.

I may not know who I am, but I know what I want:

The following quotation from the April, 1969, issue of Social Education sums it up well:

What Does Black Youth Want Today?

...Black youth wants just as every young person would want. To have equal opportunities just as anyone else. To have better homes, schools, and better things all around. To get out of the slums and to have better communities. To be recognized just as white people because they are the same and no more different than the color of their skin. So why can't they be treated the same? All they want is a chance to prove themselves. Nothing more than their equal rights.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE DISADVANTAGED

Delores P. Graham

The traditional school program is based upon certain assumptions. Some of these assumptions, which are not valid for many children who live in our core cities have implications for language development.

1. We assume that a child entering school will have heard in his home and community, and will have mastered, to a degree, standard English.

2. We assume that the child participates in conversation with adult members of his family.

3. We assume that the child lives in a home where books, magazines, and newspapers are common-place, and he hears world events discussed, sees members of his family read, and has been read the customary nursery rhymes and stories.

4. We assume that the child possesses an image of himself that allows him to function positively.

INSTRAD:

We find a child in the ghetto school who is inarticulate in formal language, but who will communicate if not made to feel that his verbal skills are totally unacceptable.

2. The disadvantaged youngster frequently lacks the sense of auditory discrimination -- the ability to distinguish very subtle differences in sound -- the noise level in a household in which a half dozen people are living in two rooms tends to be so high that the child is forced not to listen.

3. This child has not had the experience of having adults correct his pronunciation. In fact, his pronunciation is his impression of what he has heard from adults around him. He has not had the subtle nuances of sound distinguished for him. "b" as opposed to "p", for example.

4. The phonic system which he has heard and learned to speak is quite different from the system of the language which the teacher speaks and which the reading books use.

5. This child has a short attention span and experiences great difficulty in following the teacher's directions, because he comes from a home where adults speak in short sentences. When they give orders to the child, it is usually in monosyllables - "get this", "bring that". The child has never been obliged to listen to several lengthy sentences consecutively.

6. This non-verbal home also means that the child has a limited perception of the world about him. He does not know that objects have names or that the same object may have several names.

What are we going to do: Continue to attempt to ignore the inconsistencies or develop a realisitic program for overcoming the deficits???

There is no doubt about the fact that this child needs to learn standard English, but we maintain that this should be done without destroying the social dialect that the child knows or making him feel that it is totally unacceptable. If we do not first encourage the child to use his own language in its full range, we may diminish his desire to use language in school altogether.

We should like to propose a linguistic approach to language development for the disadvantaged which is based upon three general principles. (NCTE)

1. Children should be permitted to operate in the dialect of their community at the lower levels of elementary school, and direct instruction in the use of standard English should be begun no earlier than the intermediate grades.

2. Oral language should receive great stress in language instruction at <u>all</u> levels of education.

3. At all levels of instruction, the language program for the disadvantaged should include appropriate imaginative literature chosen and presented with these students in mind.

HOW DO WE IMPLEMENT THESE PRINCIPLES???

I

In our program, children at the pre-school and kindergarten levels would have experiences in which they would talk as much as possible, using their own living, oral language.

This is not meant to imply that children not be exposed to standard English or that classroom personnel speak the local dialect. It means that actual instruction in English is more appropriate and effective after children have experienced listening to and understanding English from TV, radio, and especially, the teacher. There should be <u>planned</u> attention to oral practice, to communicating ideas aloud, and to <u>planned</u> experiences in listening. (Saturate child with standard English, but permit him to use his dialect.)

II

In the Primary Grades:

A great many <u>listening</u> experiences should be introduced which pupils can <u>imitate</u>. These may be taped, short, little skits repeated in the local dialect and in standard English, with attention focused on <u>differences</u>. (Children will not distinguish differences unless they are pointed out.)

III

Intermediate Grades:

Children should be introduced to a barrage of language in different dialects. Emphasis again should be focused upon <u>imitation</u> and upon playing out short skits, drama, and creative dramatics. Children should be encouraged to write their own skits and use puppets for acting out.

We are suggesting that at no time during elementary school should we indicate that there is anything wrong with the child's dialect. There would be no comparisons or criticism.

But the time does come when we must face the pupils with the facts of social distinctions. Before they can see the value of learning standard English, pupils must understand the social consequences the world will exact of them if they cannot handle the established dialect.

We suggest that this be done in grades 5, 6, or 7. Teachers must be chosen carefully for this. Ones with thom the pupils can identify -- Want to emulate -- Ones who have no snobbish attitudes about language. These teachers would explain the sociological truth to students. "Although the language you and your friends use is perfectly good language, and we have used it in this class, it is not the only way of speaking English. Textbooks are printed in only one kind of dialect. The speaker in the assembly last week was using the same kind of standard dialect you hear on TV and radio. Unless you can use this standard dialect as well as the one you speak -- you will not be able to get certain kinds of jobs. That is the way it is."

Then from grade 5 or 6 to 12, we concentrate on eliminating, as far as possible, use of social class dialect in school. The aim during these years would be to help young people acquire this second language they need.

There should be much oral reading -- by the teacher, through tapes, records, and TV, and by pupils. Drill tapes and language laboratories should be used extensively to develop ear training. These would be alternated with dramatics, literature, discussion and writing.

This program is not being offered as a panacea for the problems faced in language development of the disadvantaged. It is simply being suggested as <u>an</u> approach.

In Conclusion:

If disadvantaged pupils do not learn a second kind of dialect, standard English, they will be forever prevented from access to economic opportunity and social acceptance. We can learn to grant full dignity to the child and to the language spoken in his home. At the same time, we must help him to acquire the established standard language so that he can operate in society as fully as he may wish.

DISCIPLINE IN THE INNER-CITY CLASSROOM

Delores P. Graham

The aspect of teaching in the inner-city school which is most disturbing to teachers, teacher-aides, and prospective teachers is discipline. Many teachers and would-be teachers believe that they will be required to spend most of their time dealing with disciplinary situations. The literature attests to the fact that many teachers in inner-city schools think of themselves not as professional educators, but as monitors --- acting in a capacity of maintaining control. This is indeed unfortunate, but it may be very true, depending upon the individual involved.

If we define discipline as the climate in which learning takes place, then it becomes obvious that discipline is a necessary part of any teaching situation, but it should under no condition constitute the major part. Indeed, all teachers are concerned with discipline. What, then, is the difference between discipline in an inner-city school and discipline in a suburban school? Perhaps the major difference lies in the expectations of the school in lieu of the differing experiences which these two groups of children bring to school.

The suburban child comes to school expecting to learn the traditional things which our schools teach. He has been prepared by his home to expect the teacher to help him learn. Furthermore, he has been exposed to experiences in the home which equip him to deal with the demands of the school. His behavior, for the most part, is consistent with the demands made upon him.

On the other hand, the urban or inner-city child simply comes to school. He has attained five or six chronological years and the law states that he must

attend school. He has had no preparation for what he will be expected to do, but he has been admonished to "be good." What does it mean to "be good?" What constitutes good in his neighborhood is certainly not what constitutes good in school. He has not been taught that acceptable school behavior is not the behavior which he has grown up around or the behavior which he has acquired in his environment.

The inner-city child finds that the classroom is a strange environment. He sees and hears very little which is meaningful to him. Even the language of the teacher and teacher-aide is foreign. But he is expected to assume the ways of a strange culture and learn in the process. When this does not take place, he is punished in varying ways.

We are suggesting that urban schools have to deal with discipline to a greater degree than suburban schools because urban schools make unrealistic demands upon their children. Are we saying that certain standards of behavior should not be demanded in urban schools? Most emphatically not! We are saying, however, that we must be aware of the cultural differences and be governed accordingly. We must be familiar with the child's cultural milieu and, therefore, not be shocked or horrified at certain modes of behavior or take such drastic measures at every infraction of our rules. We cannot condone unacceptable behavior, but we can learn to deal with it realistically while working to bring about change.

The inner-city child has lived with physical aggression. Bravery, fearlessness, toughness, defying authority, etc., have formed the basis for his prestige in the world as he knows it, and he will exhibit this type of behavior in the class-

room more frequently than a suburban child. While this behavior cannot be approved, it will not be altered simply by a referral to the principal's office. If behavioral change does not result from certain measures taken, then it appears that these measures are ineffective. Effective methods must be found for dealing with aggression in each classroom.

In most instances, this child has been forced by his environment to grow up faster than his suburban counterpart. Having had to fend for himself since early childhood, he often acts like an adult in many ways. It is not unusual to find nine or ten-year olds who smoke, or even six or seven-year olds who use very "colorful" language. Due to crowded living conditions, this child may have seen and/or experienced things which are not familiar to his middle-class peers.

Discipline problems are often created by the very people who must later deal with them. By their manner of speaking and working with these youngsters, teachers may create situations which cause them difficulty. Why is it that in so many inner-city schools, most office referrals come from the same teacher? Can it be logically assumed that year after year these teachers get all of the problem children in the school? This seems rather doubtful. It appears that something wrong is taking place inside those classrooms. This is not to indicate that teachers are deliberately or knowingly creating these situations. We rather suspect that in desperation and frustration teachers are grasping for methods of coping with a situation for which they are totally unprepared. These teachers are as disadvantaged in this area as the children whom they are trying to teach.

We have emphasized the importance of knowing the culture of the child. This child has been studied and described in the literature by practically everyone in education, sociology, psychology, etc. Teachers state that the child had been adequately described. Few, however, take these studies, descriptions, and prescriptions into consideration inside the walls of the classroom. How easily and quickly we forget what we know about the child once we are confronted with him. Most teachers have difficulty in making their behavior compatible with what is known about the child.

Minimizing Discipline Problems

From our discussion to this point it should be clear that our objective in the classroom is seeking methods of diminishing discipline problems and emphasizing a positive approach in working with the inner-city child.

The following suggestions are offered as guidelines:

1. The first days and weeks of school are extremely important in setting the tone for the entire year. It is during this period that procedures for such things as pencil-sharpening, line passing, getting materials, etc., are established. Consistency of action on these procedures will determine who controls the classroom. It may be necessary to review acceptable behavior patterns repeatedly during this period, but this must be done. Once the procedure has been established, the classroom can operate in an orderly fashion.

2. Careful, thorough planning is a must! Every minute of the day must be carefully and meaningfully planned. Most problems arise when children are idle. Sometimes this idleness will be due to assignments which are frustrating because they are too difficult. At other times assignments may be too brief or too easy. Care should be taken to assure situations that are not too difficult nor too easy. Thought should be given to meaningful activity to be used as follow-up for those students who complete assignments before the remainder of the class. If individualized instruction is the order of the day, then this does not pose a problem.

3. Establish only a few rules at first. Consistency of action is very important, and it is very difficult to enforce a great number of rules fairly and consistently. Never "promise" anything which you cannot or will not enforce.

If this happens, children soon learn that you do not mean what you say, and they will pay no attention to your "promises."

4. Make the classroom program interesting and meaningful. Utilize what is known about the learning style of these children as well as methods and materials to which they are responsive. Many discipline problems are the result of activities in the classroom which children consider meaningless. Avoid using academic work for punishment.

5. Build success for pupils into the program. Success in school is something which most of these children have had too little of. Successful pupils are rarely major discipline problems. Learn to recognize and provide for individual differences among pupils. Try to insure at least one successful experience for each pupil each day.

6. Present the children with a model of desirable behavior. Do not demand anything of them which you are unwilling to do. Children learn by example. Politeness, fairness, honesty should begin with the adult(s) in the classroom.

7. Remember what it is like to be a student. Some classroom activities invite activity and talking. Do not expect perfect quiet at all times.

8. Use a calm, dignified manner. Noise is a constant element in the environment of these children, and they have developed the skill of "tuning it out." Yelling and screaming by the classroom teacher or teacher-aide is a most ineffective method of discipline. When the voice must be raised, be certain that it is meaningful to the children. This can be true only if used infrequently.

9. Avoid making an issue of everything. Try to avoid "seeing" and "hearing" everything. One cannot possibly deal successfully with every incident in the classroom. Learn to differentiate between important and unimportant incidents.

10. Avoid backing children against an immovable wall. Remember that peer group relations are much more important to these children than their relationship with adults. Avoid forcing them into situations where they have to choose between you, the adult, and saving face before their peers. They will invariably save face no matter what the consequences.

11. Show concern for the children and their problems. It is obvious that one must know and understand the children with whom he is working before concern can be shown. There must be a knowledge of the home and neighborhood as well as the children themselves. These youngsters are extremely sensitive and perceptive of people around them, so concern must be genuine.

12. Try to avoid losing your temper. Under no condition should the classroom adult allow himself to stand before the group and bicker with a child. The