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ABSTRACT

This handbook offers suggestions for teachers who have children with learning disabilities or mild mental retardation in their regular classrooms. A brief discussion is presented on practical issues regarding mainstreaming and on the potentials and future opportunities for retarded individuals. Procedures for preparing nonhandicapped children to accept a handicapped classmate are described. The teacher's obligations in working with special education teachers and parents in developing an individualized education program are pointed out. Specific class activities and games modified to encourage participation by slow learning and/or retarded children are described. Curriculum suggestions are also offered for older retarded children in the areas of mathematics, literature, reading and study skills, social studies, and written reports. Bibliographic information is included on readings for children, teachers, and parents. Supplementary educational resources are listed. (JD)

The Slow Learner and Retarded Child in the Regular Class

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American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO
Educational Issues Department

The AFT Teachers' Network for Education of the Handicapped is intended to facilitate regular education teachers' ability to work effectively with handicapped children in their classrooms. The Network is involved in inservice training and preparation and dissemination of resources to teachers to help accomplish this goal.

In conjunction with its dissemination efforts, the Network is publishing a series of pamphlets on various disabilities for teachers who work with handicapped children. These pamphlets provide practical information dyslexia, mental retardation, learning disabilities and emotional handicaps; hearing, visual, and orthopedic impairments; and special health problems, such as asthma and diabetes.

Carolyn Trice
Project Director

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Introduction

"...researchers and teachers have found that Down's Syndrome children, and other types of retarded children as well, can learn a great deal and will benefit from time spent with their non-disabled peers."

"What I like best about my new school," says Margaret, "is that it's near my house so I get to go to school with my friends."

For Margaret, who is disabled, going to school with her non-disabled peers is one example of educating special children in the "least restrictive environment" of the regular class or, in the vernacular of the day, evidence of "mainstreaming" in action. For Margaret's parents, who must balance their child's special needs with their realization that Margaret must learn to live in a non-disabled world, and for her teachers, who have begun to view Margaret's disability as a manageable difference rather than a classroom problem, mainstreaming has become more than a series of directives from the central office for a legislative mandate drafted by their state's law makers. The process for parents, teachers and students, both disabled and non-disabled, has become a consistent daily experience in living, working and learning.

"Sometimes mainstreaming works well, sometimes it doesn't," says one teacher who has taught many children with all sorts of handicaps in her regular classes for over five years. "I think it's because the law, as important as it is, cannot mandate attitude change; and putting an ideal like mainstreaming into daily practice is the real issue."

If this is true, it is important that educators, both special and regular, examine and reflect upon some basic ideas for making the mainstreaming process happen at the classroom, math group, playground, art class, study hall and reading corner level. And teachers need some introductory "how-to's" to initiate the process in the classroom and in the school.

This pamphlet is designed to help regular classroom teachers understand the practical issues regarding the mainstreaming process, as well as employ specific strategies that can make mainstreaming a successful experience in the regular class.

What's It Like to Be Retarded?

If you work with a mentally retarded child in your regular class, you can expect that your student is slow to learn at many academic, social and motor skills. Retarded means that a person's ability to learn new things is slower or "retarded" as compared with the abilities of most people.

"I am slow to learn but I can learn!" says Marcia, a Down's Syndrome retarded young woman who assists in a floral shop. Marcia reports that her employer was quite patient with her when teaching her the details of her new job and, "he realized that I might take longer to learn something but when I learn it, it sticks!"

Like many people who have Down's Syndrome (formerly called "mongoloidism", a term no longer used), Marcia "looks" retarded. Her eyes slant somewhat, and her teeth and tongue protrude more than they should. In the past people with Down's Syndrome were thought to be severely retarded and unable to learn even simple self-care skills. Now, however, researchers and teachers have found that Down's Syndrome children and other types of retarded children as well, can learn a great deal and will benefit from time spent with their non-disabled peers.

Classes for retarded children were often the first classes for special children organized by school districts. In your district this may also be the case. In the past students for these classes were selected on the basis of IQ score alone. Today, a combination of intelligence test scores and behavioral evaluations are used to place children in classes for the retarded and, interestingly enough, a test score that might suffice for placement in a special class in one state might indicate placement in a regular class in another.

It is important to understand that each retarded child is different. Each child has a special set of skills and the special education teacher should help you understand the particular learning style of the child with whom you will work.

In many phases of life other than school, most retarded people perform remarkably well. Retarded people hold jobs, drive, purchase clothes, food, and other necessities; maintain bank accounts, perform well at sports, have active social lives and marry. Since a mentally retarded child must learn to function in a non-disabled world, that child's participation (even for a small amount of time) in a regular classroom will facilitate inclusion into the group of functioning, working, voting and tax-paying public.

Preparing Your Children for a Handicapped Classmate

"WHAT'S IT LIKE TO BE RETARDED?"

"Number Surprise!"

Objective:
To show children how it feels to be retarded and how retarded people learn.

Materials:
Five index cards (3 x 5) for each student
Students arranged in pairs

Procedure:

1. Distribute the cards to the students and tell them that they will have a chance to write in a special way.
2. Begin together by having the children place the index card at their foreheads.
3. Keeping the card on the forehead, direct the children to quickly write the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.
4. When all the children have finished, have them look at their work and share it with their partners.
5. The children will be surprised that many of their numbers came out "upside down and backwards." Listen for their reactions. You'll hear things like, "Wow! I thought I was doing it right!" and "It sure is funny to have it come out like this!!!"
6. Tell the children that their feelings and reactions will help them understand how retarded people feel when their learning is slower than others. Sometimes a retarded person will try as hard as possible but it won't come out right.
7. Now allow the children to work in pairs to try to help each other learn to write the numbers while keeping the cards at their foreheads. Allow them to guide their partner's hands, to draw in the air, to fold the cards for spacing, etc. Anything goes as long as the children work together.
8. Tell them that each time they think of a helpful strategy they must try it out on one of the extra cards.
9. At the end of ten minutes working time, ask the children if any of them improved and what they and their partners did to foster that improvement. Have three or four children share with the class.

Discussion:
Have the children react to the following questions:

1. What was hardest about this activity?
2. What made it easier?
3. Did you ever feel like giving up? Why and when?
4. Did you and your partner improve? Why did you think you did?
5. Did you work out any plan that made this number writing easier? What did you do?

Based on the answers and reactions of the children to the above questions, tell the children that people who work with retarded children often try to help them in this way. When someone is slow to learn, it often helps to break a task into smaller, easier steps so that the retarded person can master the task in manageable pieces. Certainly, retarded children don't learn how to write numbers on cards at their foreheads! But we did this activity today so that you would get a feeling about what being retarded feels like and how frustrated a retarded person might become when doing something that should be easy, but seems so hard to do. If you and your partner were successful at this kind of number writing, it probably was because you broke the activity into tiny steps. You may have worked on one letter at a time, or on spacing, or on reversing. And when you solved one problem, you moved on to another. You can see that when you took it one step at a time, it was easier to do. If you work with a person who is retarded, remember that if the person is not doing something well it's not because the retarded person is "stupid" or "crazy." It may be that the activity needs to be broken down into smaller steps so that the retarded person can master them one at a time.

Following this activity, you may want to read Grollman's *More Time to Grow* or Hunt's *The Diary of Nigel Hunt* with your class. Both books show how retarded people learn and "Nigel Hunt" shows children that retarded people are often thoughtful, reflective, and quite talented, too.

These are listed respectively under "Books for Children" and "Books for Teachers and Parents" in the "Resources" section of this pamphlet.

"When someone is slow to learn, it often helps to break a task into smaller, easier steps so that the retarded person can master the task in manageable pieces."

In Your Classroom— A Place to Begin

GETTING READY

When you know that a mentally retarded child will join your class, gather information regarding the child's current special education setting. If the child attends a special school or special class, invite a teacher or parent to visit your class to talk to your children. Ask your visitor to describe retardation in terms that your children can

"Since it is both the right and the responsibility of the regular class teacher to participate in the planning for mainstreaming of the handicapped child into the class, you should be given ample time to prepare for the arrival of your new student."

understand and ask that your colleague emphasize that retarded people are not "weird" or "crazy" and that the term means "slow to learn." Be sure your children are informed about all the things that retarded people can do (i.e., maintenance work, drive, cafeteria work, clerical work, florists' assistants, etc.) and that words like "dummy" and "reetard" can really hurt a retarded person's feelings.

If possible, arrange for your new student to visit your class in a small group of students from the special school or special class. Plan a special event such as a movie or an outing.

Encourage your visitors to tour the classroom, select a seat, or receive a partner. Activities that will ease the transition from the smaller special setting to the larger regular class are especially helpful.

Since it is both the right and the responsibility of the regular class teacher to participate in the planning process for the mainstreaming of any handicapped child into the regular class, you should be given ample time to prepare for the arrival of your new student. When you receive the child's name, take time to contact the special education teacher. If possible, arrange to observe the child in the special setting. Watch the child use a variety of materials and participate in small group and independent activities. Ask about the Placement Committee Meeting and whether the Individualized Education Program (IEP) has been revised or updated for the child. Since a regular class teacher is permitted and encouraged to participate in this sort of educational planning, especially when placement in the "least restrictive environment" of the regular class is being discussed, you should be included in this important meeting.

Share books and other teaching materials with the special education teacher and ask for help to adapt them for your mainstreamed child. If your new student learns well auditorally, have the special education teacher help you put important class work on audio cassettes. If the child is a more visual learner, charts, graphs, and pictures will be of particular help.

Often it is the special education teacher who makes these intial overtures to the regular class teacher in preparation for the mainstream setting. Sometimes, however, these preparations are not made and regular class teachers should be aware that they are entitled to help and are more than qualified to initiate this important first step in the process.

CLASSROOM MODIFICATIONS

Since each slow learning and/or retarded child is different, the following suggestions fall into two categories. First, modifications of class lessons are included so that teachers can begin to examine adapting lessons to the varying ability levels of disabled and non-disabled children. Second, specific suggestions for older children in specific content areas will help teachers of older elementary children.

DEMYSTIFYING THE METRIC SYSTEM FOR EVERYONE...INCLUDING THE HANDICAPPED CHILD IN THE REGULAR CLASS

A Process Lesson

Pieces of scrap wood, string, magic markers and a little bit of space can provide the regular class teacher with a means for introducing the concept and teaching the use of the metric system to mixed groups of handicapped and normal children.

Materials

For a class of 25 children (divided into five groups of five children each) the following materials are necessary:

- Five lengths of wood. Pieces of 2 x 4 thin board available from lumber yard scrap piles work well. These pieces should be of varying lengths.
- a ball of string
- magic markers
- paper and pencils for each group
- five small plastic combs
- five meter sticks

Setting the Scene

Darken the room, light some candles and gather the children into a circle for the following short story.

"Just like in Star Wars, we have been transported to a brand new planet. It is far away and we are millions of light years away from Earth and all the things we know there. The land is different, it's purple and orange, and the sky is very strange, too. It's silver and red. The things that grow here all look different, too. There are no trees and flowers or grass as we know them. Instead, there are small, round, spiny bushes growing all around. These bushes are pink and black." (Continue to describe differences.)

"But all of you are now on this new planet and you have been summoned by the Leader to work for him. Each one of you has been chosen to work because you are one of the brightest and smartest of the earthlings on the new planet, and you have been selected for a very special task. On this planet, there are no measuring devices. There are no feet or inches or yards. No way to measure anything. You are now part of a committee that will develop a brand new way to measure. We will let each group make a new measuring stick and a brand new system. Each group will share their system and we will decide if we will adopt the system for our planet."

Distribute one piece of board to each group and explain that each child must work with the group to figure out a new way to measure with this stick.

Tell the children, "We can't call this a yard stick. We have to come up with a brand new name because we have no idea how long a yard is."

Tell the children that each group must come up with a brand new ruler, made from the stick, and that this new ruler must be able to measure the height of two members of the group and the length of the plastic comb. Brainstorm with the group what they will need to do (i.e., devise large and small divisions of their sticks). Since each group will design a new way to measure, they must name the stick and all of the small divisions that they make on it.

One group of children made the following divisions:

The Flim—Flam System

One flim flam:	The whole stick
One flim:	one half of the stick (2 flims equal the flim flam)
One flam:	one quarter of the stick (2 flams equal one flim)
One floy:	one eighth of the stick (2 floys equal one flam)

Developing Individual Standards of Measure

Divide the class into five groups of five children each and give each group one piece of wood and one plastic comb. (You can use a ring or a button with older children so that the divisions will be smaller). Direct the children to design a brand new ruler that will measure a person's height as well as the length of the comb.

This activity will demonstrate to the children that standards of measure are arbitrary and that a standard can be created by anyone—even by people just like themselves. Circulate among the groups and notice whether each group has divided the stick into both larger and smaller units. You might ask the following questions as you move among the children:

- Can you measure your height with your stick?
- How about the comb (or the ring or the button)? Do you have a unit small enough to do that?
- Have you named each unit?
- Have you marked each unit on the stick?

You may find that the children have marked only one of each unit on the stick. Ask if such markings will permit their stick to function as a ruler. If not, what can be done? Guide the children to divide the stick evenly. They will need to use either the string or paper to measure each unit and mark it off on their sticks.

Direct each group to choose a secretary to record each unit of measure and to write a table of equivalents on the chalkboard or on a large sheet of newsprint. Ask each group to keep a record of each item they measured and each person's height.

Sharing the Standards and Comparing Them to the Metric System

Gather the children into a circle again and have one member of each group give the height of each child and the length of the small combs in their new system. Expect lots of laughter as each system sounds strange and unusual to the group. Explain that just as they devised their own systems, someone just like them (Gabriel Mouton in 1670) came up with a standard somewhat like the metric system as a way to measure.

Later, people in the 1700's came up with a stick for measuring; but they didn't call it the "Flim Flam stick," they called it the meter stick. Show the meter stick to the group. Explain each division by comparing them with the divisions that the children developed themselves. For example:

- This is a meter. It's just like a flim flam.
- Here's the centimeter. It is like the _____ that one of our groups made up.

Provide each group with a meter stick and ask them to measure their heights and the length of the comb with it. Group sharing will emphasize that the meter system is less complicated than their own and that it is more convenient when everyone uses the same system. Remind them of their own systems and ask how it would be if Virginia used "glugs" while California used "flim flams." Explain that this uniformity is the reason why the United States is converting to the metric system. Right now it is like the United States using "glugs" while much of the rest of the world is using "flim flams."

Permitting children to devise their own standards and to compare them with the metric system allows students to perceive the new system in a less frightening light; and both disabled and non-disabled children can work together in this activity. Everyone can devise a system and use it—regardless of ability level.

"GET OUT OF THE SWAMP"

A game that children with different ability levels can play together

When teachers consider individualized instructional programs for children, especially handicapped children who have been integrated into the regular classroom, a major concern is the balancing of wide ranges of ability levels within groups. It is crucial that teachers, both regular and special, consider the modifications of classroom activities and materials so that children with different or lower levels of ability are not always separated from the mainstream of their classroom group. The design of individualized programs for special children necessitates the adaptation of teaching materials and techniques so that teachers can work successfully with children whose skills vary greatly from the norm in the regular class.

The modified "mainstreamed" classroom learning activity is most successful when it includes the following:

- it crosses ability lines; that is, children of different ability levels can use them together
- it provides non-threatening practice in basic skill areas
- it allows the development of cooperative relationships a chance to grow for the regular and the mainstreamed students

"Get Out of the Swamp"

"Get Out of the Swamp" is a board game that can be played by children of varying ability levels.

"It is crucial that teachers...consider the modifications of classroom activities and materials so that children with lower ability levels are not always separated from the mainstream of the classroom."

"Because this game permits children of different ability levels to work together, the skill cards must be designed to meet the needs of each player."

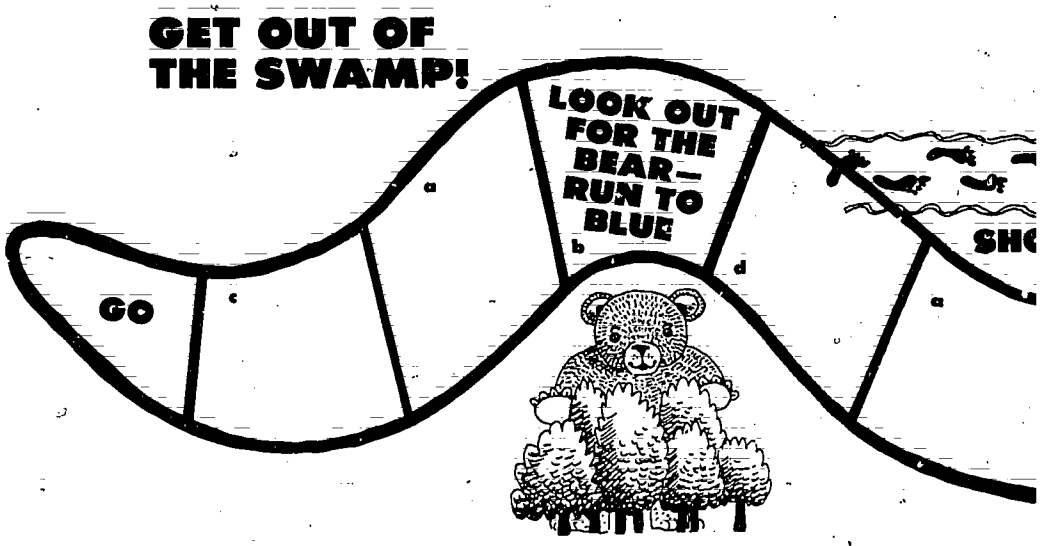
The materials needed to play the game include:

- a game board—The board should be constructed on oak tag or heavy cardboard (24 x 36 inches) to replicate the model shown in figure 1.
- space markers—These could be bottle tops covered with construction paper or any material made by the children themselves.
- skill cards—One set is needed for each player. The cards in each set are color coded to correspond to the colors on the game board.

Because this game permits children of different ability levels to work together, the skill cards must be designed to meet the needs of each player. Assume, for example, that a teacher would like four children to practice recognizing long and short vowel sounds, and assume further that each of these children knows some or all of the vowel sounds.

One child (player 1) may be working on the recognition of "long a" words, while another (player 2) must practice discriminating between the long vowel sounds. One child (player 3) may need extra work on short sounds, while another (player 4) has mastered both long and short vowels but requires practice discriminating between the two sound groups. The players would then use the sets of skill cards shown in Figure 2, with each card a different color to match the different colors on the game board.

Because each set of skill cards is color coded to match the colored spaces on the game board, each player selects a colored card from the pack, pronounces the word, and then moves to the cor-



FIC

PLAYER 1	PLAYER 2	PLAYER 3	PLAYER 4
a blame	**c** slime	**b** top	**d** tap
b slate	**b** dome	**d** mat	**a** tape
c grade	**a** grape	**c** that	**b** slim
d make	**d** flute	**a** tub	**c** slime

FIGURE 2

responding colored space on the board.

For example, player 1 selects a skill card, "blame." The card is blue so player 1 moves to the first blue space on the game board. Player 2 selects "slime." "Slime" is written on a purple card so player 2 moves to the next purple space on the "Swamp" game board.

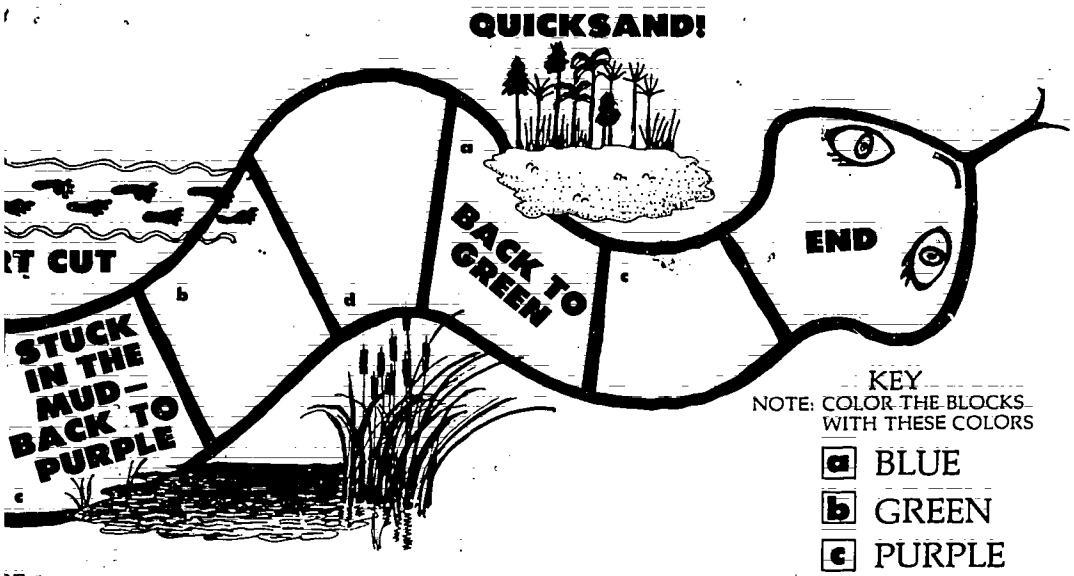
Meeting Individual Needs

The package of skill cards can be varied to meet the individual needs of the children in the class. As long as the cards are color coded to match the spaces on the game board, only the cards need to be changed; the game board, with all of its pictures and drawings, can be used throughout the year.

In addition, children of different abilities who are practicing different skills can play "Get Out of the Swamp" together. Assume that four children, two working on math skills and two working on language skills, are playing the same game. Their skill cards would look something like the examples shown in Figure 3. The players, after selecting a card from their individual packs, would say or spell the word or solve the math problem, and then move to the corresponding colored space. The system of color coding permits such diversity at the game board.

"Get Out of the Swamp" can be modified for use by older children. The hazards can be made more sophisticated, the swamp snake game board made longer, and the skill cards made more complicated. Thus children whose skill levels vary greatly can participate in the positive social experience of playing a game together.

"...children whose skill level vary greatly can participate in the positive social experience of playing a game together."



KEY
NOTE: COLOR THE BLOCKS WITH THESE COLORS

- a BLUE
- b GREEN
- c PURPLE
- d ORANGE

RE 1

PLAYER 1	PLAYER 2	PLAYER 3	PLAYER 4
a 7+4=□	c 2x4=□	b plate	a tap tape
b 4+7=□	b 4x3=□	c plan	c slim slime
c 8+3=□	a 6x6=□	a plaster	b Sam same

FIGURE 3

"'Swamp' provides a setting for the development of positive social relationships between handicapped and non-handicapped children who, as a result of skill and ability differences, have not shared social and academic learning experiences."

Since this game is designed for classroom use with minimal teacher direction, the teacher can assign children as game consultants, impartial observers, or umpires to assist, when necessary, in the flow of the game.

A child who is doing individual reading or working on a free time project may be assigned to sit or work near the group of children playing "Swamp." It is only necessary that the child named game "consultant" know all the words or the problems that appear on the cards. Then if a child has a problem discriminating between "tape" and "tap," the game "consultant" is asked for help in pronouncing the words correctly. The consultant says the words for the player, the player then pronounces the words and moves to the corresponding colored square without losing a turn or moving back, and play is resumed.

It is helpful if the teacher plays "Swamp" with groups of children and that the teacher uses the game consultant procedure with the children on a few occasions. In this way the children will be familiar with the checking procedure when they are playing the game alone.

Developing Positive Interpersonal Relationships

"Get Out of the Swamp" is a self-directing, individualized game that permits any child with any skill level to work alongside the normal child in the regular classroom. The system of color coding assures that the child who knows the most is not necessarily the winner of the game and the colored skill cards permit children to move without using dice or spinners—devices that can get lost, thrown, or create unnecessary confusion. But most importantly, "Swamp" provides a skill-based setting for the development of positive social relationships between handicapped and normal children--children who, as a result of skill and ability differences, have not shared social and academic learning experiences.

SOME CURRICULUM SUGGESTIONS FOR OLDER RETARDED STUDENTS

(adapted from "The In-Service Consultor", by Dr. Sandra Boland, Greely, Colorado, Vol. 3, No. 3)

In Literature

- Make tape recordings of stories used in class so that some of the students can read along. One teacher had the drama club make tapes of mystery stories and poetry complete with sound effects, and later used them with handicapped learners in mixed groups of normal students in literature classes.
- Pair students for classroom reading assignments. Put an average reader with a poorer reader and rotate the pairs often.
- Have an excellent reader or a student aide from the upper grades read directions and complicated passages aloud to small groups and have the students follow along in their texts.
- Use films or filmstrips as an introduction to classics or novels. Review the plot briefly with the slower students before reading the novel and point out key situations for them to watch for as they read.
- For students with more severe reading problems, borrow "Talking Books for the Blind" from your local association for the blind. These materials are now available for students with severe visual perception problems, as well as for visually impaired students.
- Allow poorer readers to prepare projects for younger students. One high school English teacher encouraged a group of students, which included two learning disabled students, to prepare an independent reading unit for a local fourth grade class. The students did extensive research, compiled book lists and created a classroom display.
- Utilize outside organizations, (i.e., The Big Brothers, senior citizen groups or community volunteers) to read and review reading assignments with slower students.

In Math

Many slower or learning disabled students fear math problems. In many cases they lack the organizational skills necessary to attack the new material. The following suggestions may be useful:

- Don't feel you must assign fewer problems. Instead, assign the problems in smaller clusters, (i.e., have row 5 do the even numbered problems, etc.)
- Take a few seconds to draw dotted lines on dittoed work sheets then have the students fold the paper along the lines so that they are working on one half or one quarter of the problems at a time. Cutting down on the visual stimuli often helps students complete the entire task.

Have a student helper prepare a math worksheet with wider spacing and fewer problems per page.

- Allow the students to work the problem out, write it down, and then use a calculator to check the work. If the student didn't get the problem right, he can ask a specially designated student for help.
- When giving an assignment or a sheet of problems, ask the student to write at the top of the paper *before* beginning to work how many problems can be done correctly. Let the student work them and discuss with the student whether the goal was met. Gradually proceed to a greater number of problems as each goal is met.
- When working story problems, have the student underline key words and phrases. Then encourage the student to determine what type of problem it is. Do some practice activities by having the student determine on a sheet of problems whether he is to add, subtract, multiply, or divide. When the student is confident as to how to proceed, then the computations can be done.
- Put up a chart of "helpful hints for word problems." For example, "what is the total number of..." means add, "how many more than..." means subtract, etc.

● If a sheet of problems contain a variety of operations, emphasize the difference by underlining or circling first all of the multiplication problems, etc. Gradually fade out the clues.

● Set up a system or checklist on how to attack a math problem. Post a chart for students to refer to which contains specific steps for solving that type of problem. Keep the language on the chart simple and seat the disabled students near the chart.

● One teacher who worked with older students with severe math difficulties created an "adult" number line for the students to use. He decorated the oak tag with race track symbols and had the students move a small magazine picture of a race car along the number line. In this way he was able to teach addition and subtraction of positive and negative numbers.

In Reading and Study Skills

● Spend a few moments introducing the new vocabulary words necessary to understand any assignment. Go over dictionary meanings and add pictures to words and display them so that students can refer to them when in doubt.

● Create a question box so that students can review words periodically. One teacher kept a colorful "Job Jar" in her class and allowed students to choose an activity for enrichment. For example, when the class was studying about verbs, "Job Jar" selections contained selections such as "Lift four books in one hand," or "Find three magazine pictures of people doing a sport. Write a sentence about what each person in the picture is doing. Underline the verb."

● Using the Fry Readability Index, determine the reading level of your text. If the material is too high for some of your students you must make some adaptations if they are to be successful in your class. Assign portions of assignments to pairs of students or ask the reading specialist in your school or district to gather materials of a lower level for you. Don't expect a student to read and comprehend something above his reading level.

● Guide your students reading with meaningful questions. If questions appear at the end of a chapter, break the questions into groups and ask them following two or three paragraphs of reading. Often when a slower student waits until the end of a long chapter to analyze what's been read, the student becomes confused or doesn't remember back to the beginning. Interspersing questions throughout the chapter or reading assignment can solve this problem.

● Ask students to take a sheet or paper and write down everything that's on their minds. Take only a few minutes to do the writing, then have the student put the paper away and begin on independent work. Often this activity shows students how to clear their minds for concentrated effort.

● Provide an outline for students in reading assignments. Note key points and have students initial spaces on the outline to show they've found the point designated on the outline.

● Use free moments to allow students to listen to selections of popular music. Select intelligible songs and provide students with sheets of the words. These sheets can contain lyrics in poetry format and the students can read along as they listen to the music. One teacher used a song a day at the end of the period. The students often had lively discussions about meanings of words to songs.

For Reports

● Allow students to select the form of reporting that is most comfortable for them. Permit them to choose from oral reports, written reports, charts and written or visual displays. When students have chosen a format, provide clear guidelines to be followed for each selection.

● Allow students to report to small study groups and have fellow group members rate the reports with a teacher-designed checklist. Review the checklists and present the comprehensive ones to the entire class as a demonstration for further small group work.

● Let students work in small groups to discuss topics. Have students select a reporter to share information with the teacher.

● Require a brief written outline with oral reports. This method helps the student organize his thoughts and gives the teacher an indication whether the student is prepared to share his work orally.

● Allow students to submit variations of the written report. One teacher had students compose a series of captioned illustrations as an adaptation of the written report.

In Social Studies

● Obtain a variety of books on the various topics covered in a particular unit. Include a wide range, from adult to child-oriented texts and literature selections on an individual reading table. Allow students to supplement material in the texts with books of particular personal interest and appropriate skill level.

● Utilize films and filmstrips about different areas, countries, etc., in unusual ways. Select frames to show without the sound accompaniment and have the students look for common facts. One teacher used a filmstrip on climate to have the children notice roofs, plant life, mode of dress, and then guess where the action was taking place.

● Extend social sciences to the community. Relate history to older members of the community who have had first hand experience with local history. One teacher uses senior citizens all year round to describe events, wars, and places from a personal perspective. The senior citizens give large and small group presentations and work with slower students on an individual basis.

● Make social sciences as real as possible for your students. Ask local museums and libraries to prepare special mini-exhibits for your class. One teacher requested that the local museum help him with a mini-exhibit on the old west. Together they

"Ask the reading specialist in your school or district to gather materials at a lower level for you."

"Working with younger children allows slower students to use less difficult reading material in an interesting and helpful fashion."

assembled art work and artifacts from museum collections and private collections in the community.

- Have students prepare mini-history lessons for young children. Small groups of students can create maps, story collections, and small shows depicting historical events. Working with younger children allows slower students to use less difficult reading material in an interesting and helpful fashion.

In General

- Use pictures often on direction sheets. If the students must use tools or implements of any kind, have pictures of these items next to the appropriate step on the direction sheet.
- Color coding is useful when working with tools and implements in home and industrial arts. One teacher uses tape of different colors on the handles of tools. In written directions, pictures of the tools appear along with the appropriate color. In this way the students have an extra cue for finding and using the appropriate tool.
- Ask an elementary teacher to lend you a book from the Rebus reading series. This series employs pictures in sentences and gradually phases out the use of this clue. Naturally, the reading material will be too simple, but the format of Rebus can be adapted to direction sheets and worksheets for older children.
- Prepare a small card for the slower students that can be used as an alternative to hand raising when asking for help. Sometimes disabled children are reluctant or embarrassed to ask for help before the entire class. A small card with the words "I need a little help" printed on it can be an unobtrusive way for the handicapped student to request the necessary help.
- Use learning centers or activity tables to initiate a unit of instruction. Allow students to work at activities before you begin formal presentations. Observe the choices students make and chat informally with students about the reasons behind their individual choices. In this way you can discern the level of interest and skill before introducing textbook work.
- Try to avoid "true-false" tests. They emphasize nuances in language that are very confusing to students with reading difficulties.
- Allow students to design evaluations with you. Permit a combination of oral and written work to serve as the test. Design clear and consistent guidelines for both formats and stick to them. Students appreciate consistent and exacting teachers, and handicapped children don't appreciate teachers who let them get by with too little work.
- *Ask for help.* No one expects the regular class teacher to go it all alone when a handicapped child is placed in the classrgom. See the specialist for suggestions. If the student receives resource services, ask the special education teacher to share successful strategies with you and, when possible, borrow some materials for use in your classroom.

Of Tensions and Telethons

Carpenters, dentists, chefs, librarians, plumbers, lab technicians, teachers—for the most part we grew up in an environment which did not include disabled people. With the exception of those of us who had the good fortune to have a disabled sibling, parent, cousin, or niece, most of us have had few consistent encounters with disabled people.

As recently as ten years ago many disabled children went to separate schools, rode separate school buses, went to different camps. Public transportation was inaccessible to most disabled adults so many of them were not part of the work force or the social scene. As a result, many people including teachers, felt a certain degree of discomfort or tension when the ice was finally broken and disabled people gradually became an obvious part of our lives.

As teachers, it is important to recognize these fears and to understand that our feelings are natural ones. And the more we live alongside our disabled neighbors, work with our disabled colleagues, and teach our disabled students, the more confortable we will become.

"It's the telethon mentality that gets in the way," says Annette Lauber, a regular class teacher in the Raleigh, North Carolina public schools. Annette has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair and often discusses the issue of mainstreaming with her colleagues in her school. "We've seen too much of charming disabled children, usually referred to as 'helpless cripples' and most often paraded across a stage while a weeping star begs the audience for money," says Lauber. "As a result, the general public thinks of disabled people in very dependent unrealistic terms."

Lauber contends that her ability to function as a wage earning, tax paying, competent adult has as much to do with her early mainstreaming experiences as with her own perseverance. "I went to regular public schools because my parents believed that I must learn to live in the non-disabled world," Lauber recalls. "Children stared, I invited their questions. Teachers modified materials for me and my fifth grade class was moved to the first floor of the school rather than up the flight of steps, to the second. But most importantly, non-disabled kids learned a valuable lesson by observing me. They learned that a person can do something in a different way and still do it just as well. When disabled children work and play alongside non-disabled kids, the benefit is great to both groups."

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Adkins, Jan. *Symbols: A Silent Language*, Walker, New York: 1978. (5-12 years)

Anders, Rebecca. *A Look at Mental Retardation*, Lerner Publications, Minneapolis, Minnesota: 1976. (5-10 years)

Baldwin, Anne N. *A Little Time*. Viking Press, New York: 1978. (8-12 years)

Bridges, T. *All Together Now*. Alfred E. Knopf, New York: 1979. (12 years and up)

Brightman, Alan. *Like Me*. Little, Brown and Co., Boston: 1976. (5-12 years)

Byars, Betsy. *Summer of the Swans*, Viking Press, New York: 1970. (9-12 years)

Canning, Claire. *The Gift of Martha*, available from Resource Development, The Children's Hospital Medical Center, 300 Longwood Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02115. (8-12 years)

Carpelan, Bo. *Bow Island*, Delacorte, New York: 1971. (12 years and up)

Carper, L. Dean. *A Cry in the Wind*, Herald Publishing House, Independence, Missouri: 1973. (12 years and up)

Crane, Carolyn. *A Girl Like Tracey, David McKay Co., New York: 1966. (12 years and up)*

Christopher, Matthew. *Long Shot for Paul*, Little, Brown and Co., Boston: 1966. (9-12 years)

Cleaver, Vera and Bill. *Me Too*. J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia: 1974. (12 years and up)

Dickenson, Peter. *Heartsease*, Little, Brown and Co., Boston: 1969. (12 years and up)

Faber, Nancy. *Cathy's Secret Kingdom*, Lippincott, Philadelphia: 1963. (12 years and up)

Fassler, Joan. *One Little Girl*. Behavioral Publications, Inc., New York: 1969. (5-8 years).

Gardner, Richard A. *A Child's Book About Brain Injury*, New York Association for Brain Injured Children, 305 Broadway, New York, New York 10007. (10-12 years)

Grollman, Sharon Hya. *More Time to Grow*, Beacon Press, Boston: 1977. (6-10 years)

Klein, Gerda. *The Blue Rose*, Lawrence Hill and Co., Inc., Wesport, Connecticut: 1974. (10-12 years)

Little, Jean. *Take Wing*, Little, Brown and Co., Boston: 1968. (12 years and up)

Myller, Rolf. *Symbols*, Antheneum, New York: 1978. (5-12 years)

Ominsky, Elaine. *John O.: A Special Boy*, Prentice-Hall, Inc. New Jersey: 1977. (5-8 years)

Reynolds, Pamela. *A Different Kind of Sister*, Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co., New York: 1968. (10-12 years)

Sobol, Harriet Langsam. *My Brother Steven is Retarded*, Macmillan Co., New York: 1977. (10-12 years)

Stein, Sara Bonnett. *About Handicaps*, Walker and Co., New York: 1974. (5-12 years)

BOOKS FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

Blatt, Burton, *Revolt of the Idiots*, Exceptional Press, Glen Ridge, New Jersey: 1976.

Blatt, Burton and Fred Kaplan, *Christmas in Purgatory: A Photographic Essay on Mental Retardation*, Allyn and Bacon, Boston: 1969.

Bookbinder, Susan, *Mainstreaming: What Every Child Needs to Know About Disabilities*, Exceptional Parent Press, Boston: 1978. (Contains information on retardation.)

Brown, Helene, *Yesterday's Child*, M. Evans and Company, Inc., New York: 1976.

Cleary, Margaret, *Please Know Me As I Am*, Exceptional Parent Press, Boston, Massachussets: 1975.

Craig, Eleanor, *P.S. You're Not Listening*, Richard W. Baron, New York: 1972.

Greenfield, Josh, *A Place for Noah*, Holt, Rinehart, Winston, New York: 1978.

Hunt, Douglas, *The World of Nigel Hunt: The Diary of a Mongoloid Youth*, Garnett Publications, New York: 1967.

Johnson, Vicki M., *A Step by Step Learning Guide for Older Retarded Children*, Syracuse University Press, Syracuse, New York: 1977.

Kamien, Janet, *What if You Couldn't...? A Book About Special Needs*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York: 1979.

Lane, Harlan, *The Wild Boy of Aveyron*, Harvard Press, Boston: 1976.

Mercer, Jane, *Labeling the Mentally Retarded*. University of California Press, Berkeley, California: 1973.

Mullins, June and Suzanne Wolfe, *Special People Behind the Eight Ball*, Mapex Associates, Johnstown, Pennsylvania: 1975. An annotated bibliography of literature classified by handicapping condition.

Nelson, Roberta, *Creating Community Acceptance for Handicapped People*, Charles C. Thomas, Springfield, Illinois: 1978.

Noland, Robert L., ed., *Counseling Parents of the Mentally Retarded: A Sourcebook*, Charles C. Thomas, Springfield, Illinois: 1978.

Ross, Ruth Ellen, *Handicapped People in Society*, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont: 1977. A curriculum for non disabled children. (Available from Silver-Burdett in Fall, 1979.)

Sasne, Michael, *Handbook of Adapted Physical Equipment and Its Use*, Charles Thomas, Springfield, Illinois: 1973.

RESOURCES

The following resources are available from the organizations listed below.

National Association for Retarded Citizens
2709 Avenue E East
P.O. Box 6109
Arlington, TX 76011
10-4—*Facts on Mental Retardation*
10-26—*Toward an Interdependent Life*
30-18—*Monitoring the Right to Education*
30-20—*Helping the Mentally Retarded Infants to Learn*
45-7—*The Fullest Life*

Joseph P. Kennedy Foundation
1701 K Street, NW, Suite 203
Washington, DC 20006
—*A Brief Guide to Special Olympics Sports*
—*A New Kind of Joy*

Public Affairs Pamphlets
381 Park Avenue South
New York, NY 10016
349—*The Retarded Child Gets Ready for School*
405—*Helping the Slow Learner*
210-A—*New Hope for the Retarded Child*
288—*How Retarded Children Can Be Helped*

National Foundation—March of Dimes
Box 2000
White Plains, NY 10602
0174—*Down's Syndrome*

President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped
Washington, DC 20210
—*A Place of Our Own*
—*Look Who's Minding the Store*
—*Hello World*

THE KIDS ON THE BLOCK

The Kids on the Block are a troupe of disabled and non-disabled puppets designed to teach children in regular classes what it's like to be handicapped. The classroom teaching kit contains six child size puppets (Mandy is deaf, Renaldo is blind, Mark has cerebral palsy, Ellen Jane is retarded, and Brenda and Melody are non-disabled), scripts on tape cassettes, an extensive teacher's guide of classroom activities and other teaching materials. Developed by Barbara Aiello. For information write:
The Kids on the Block
3509 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007