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ABSTRACT

This report describes the nongraded program for instruction that was developed by faculty and administrators in the public elementary schools of Scarborough, Maine. The program was designed to provide parents with a choice of educational placement for their children. Sections of the report offer background information on the program and an overview of its assessment and reporting procedures. The program contains three levels: (1) primary, for 5- through 8-year-olds; (2) intermediate, for 8- through 11-year-olds; and (3) middle school, for 11- through 14-year-olds. The curriculum is theme-based, allowing interconnections between the subjects of reading, writing, mathematics, social studies, science, health, and art. Assessments of each child's learning and development are accomplished by a variety of means: teacher observations, individual reading and writing conferences, samples of the child's work, and ongoing checklists in the areas of literacy and mathematics. Several samples of student assessment and reporting forms, guidelines, and a rationale for the use of portfolios to document student progress in primary and intermediate grades, are included. (RH)

The Scarborough

K-8

Non-Graded Model

1991

Compliments of:

Non-Graded Program Teachers

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Non-Graded K-8

Program Background

SCARBOROUGH'S NON-GRADED PROGRAM
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The framework for developing children's capabilities in Scarborough's non-graded program is envisioned as three interlocking components which function within the child and between the child and the learning environment (Figure 1). One of the components represents the principles of cognitive development and the structure of thinking as revealed through the work of Jean Piaget. In conjunction with these understandings, the non-graded program teachers administer selected Piagetian tasks to assess the stages of the children's thinking. They also observe and question the children while they are engaged in learning experiences to monitor the children's levels of thinking. The teachers respond to the continuous cognitive data by adapting the curricula and planning learning activities which draw upon the children's capabilities and challenge them to progress to new levels of understanding. Active hands-on learning experiences and an interactive environment are provided in the classrooms and through learning experiences in the surrounding community.

The second component in the conceptual framework represents subject area knowledge and concepts, including literacy and numeracy concepts and skills sequences. Literacy and numeracy skills/concepts continua which present a multiple year sequence of core knowledge/skills have been designed by the non-graded teachers. Each continuum is organized sequentially and includes the designation of key skills that indicate, when accomplished, that a child is ready for success at the next educational phase (8-10 or 11-14 years). Each child's mathematics and literacy skills/concepts levels are assessed individually by the classroom teachers, then experiences to learn the next skills are designed. Learning accomplishments are noted on individual mathematics and literacy skills record-keeping forms.

In addition, central concepts which connect the science, social studies and health subject areas and provide the foundation for interconnected thinking have been identified and serve as organizing principles for planning the curriculum and assessing academic growth. The children learn the interconnecting concepts among the various subject areas via integrated theme studies and develop understandings of these central concepts as appropriate for their age levels (see following information pages). Activities are designed for the children to apply their accumulating skills/concepts in context to solve problems and produce documentation of their learning. For example, the children have planned and participated in the building of an 8 foot by 12 foot barn on school property. This experience involved mathematics applications via measurement, social studies via the town planning board and building permit processes, interconnections with studies associated with the farm theme, and numerous related reading and writing experiences.

The third component in the conceptual triad incorporates the areas of social-emotional, physical, and intellectual development as they relate both to the characteristics of the individual child and to the child's interactions with others and with learning experiences. Teachers provide diverse activities and interactions, and observe the children's development through the social and learning experiences in these areas. The teachers maintain anecdotal records of the key aspects of each child's growth in these areas over time, including references to their development of self-esteem, social awareness functioning, and physical development.

Scarborough Developmental Program Conceptual Framework

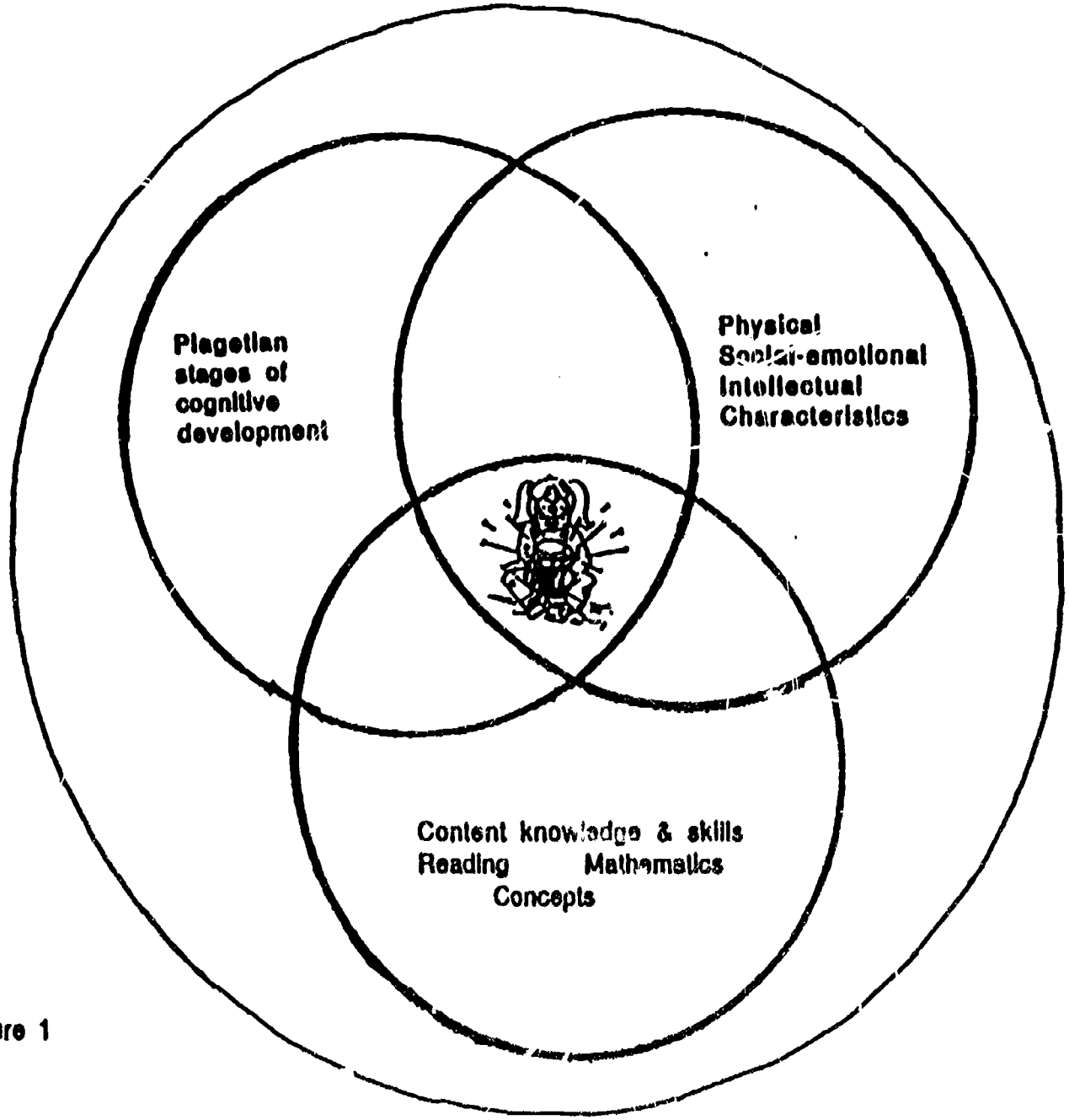


Figure 1

NON-GRADED PROGRAM - SCARBOROUGH, MAINE

General Aims

•To provide education program choice for parents and students within the Scarborough School System

•To provide a developmental education model for all members of the Scarborough School System and community.

•To provide a program which incorporates the students' active engagement in their own learning and develops their intrinsic motivation.

•To promote the development of individuals with higher level thinking capabilities, greater autonomy, and an appreciation of interdependence.

Educational Goals

•To provide a caring, developmentally-focused atmosphere sensitive to the needs and pace of development of each child.

•To provide an intellectually stimulating environment which allows each child to develop ownership for learning and strive for quality in each area of personal and intellectual growth.

•To provide learning content and experiences which allow each child to develop physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually in ways that provide a foundation for future learning by encouraging the appreciation of diverse ideas, setting of personal goals, pursuit of individual interests, learning how to make choices, and developing self-confidence as a learner.

•To provide learning experiences and interactions which allow each child to develop an inquiring mind, strategies for independent learning, knowledge of the interrelationships among the academic areas and the capabilities to use a range of thinking strategies to solve problems.

•To provide learning experiences that allow each child to acquire subject area knowledge, develop skills, and use language and mathematics effectively through a range of experiences in a broad curriculum.

•To provide the environment through which each child may form relationships and engage in collaborative learning with adults and other classmates.

•To provide experiences through which each child learns to function in a socially and morally appropriate manner.

Non-Graded Primary Program Background

In the early 1980's Scarborough parents requested education program options for their children. During 1985-86 Scarborough faculty and administrators developed and implemented a multiage primary program which has since expanded to three levels: GOLD Primary (ages 5-8), GOLD Intermediate (ages 8-11) and GOLD Middle School (ages 11-14). The provision of this program assures that Scarborough parents have a choice of education placement for their children in either the GOLD program or the previously established program organized by sequential K-12 grade levels.

The purpose of this resource is to give you information about one of those choices . . . Scarborough's ungraded program which is called GOLD. GOLD is the acronym for Grouping for Optimal Learning Development. The GOLD Program is based on the child development research of Jean Piaget. This philosophy recognizes that children progress through specific stages of learning development. Children learn in different ways in these different stages. Teachers constantly try to match learning materials, activities and expectations to each child's developmental level. The children's interactions with the materials and activities help them construct their knowledge and develop their understanding of their world.

People naturally learn from each other. In order to make use of this natural trait, the children are placed in a multiage setting. This is sometimes referred to as "family grouping".

The classroom environment is organized so that children have access to a variety of materials and can work cooperatively. Instruction by the teacher may be provided in large or small groups or individually. Children often share materials and work together at tables rather than at desks. Classrooms are active places and children move about as they select their materials and do their work.

The curriculum is theme-based, allowing interconnections among different subjects (reading, writing, math, social studies, science, health and art). For example, while studying the forest children may write letters to a Maine wood products company, exchange Maine products with a school in Arizona, work out the dimensions of a log cabin, and study the ages of trees by counting the rings.

Evidence of children's learning and accomplishments may take many forms. Hands on activities, like weighing and measuring, may be reported orally, illustrated, or described in writing. Brainstorming sessions may be recorded on charts or made into classroom books which are used as reference materials for the classroom. Writing is considered a process which may take days or weeks before a final product is completed. Frequently the children's works are displayed in the school rather than taken home.

Assessments of each child's learning and development are accomplished by a variety of means: teacher observations, individual reading and writing conferences, samples of the child's work, and ongoing checklists in the areas of literacy and mathematics. The teachers continually question and hold conversations with each child to understand and extend the child's thinking. Teachers observe, collect, and record information over time to reflect each child's growth in the physical, social-emotional, intellectual and academic areas. Assessments are shared with parents via quarterly checklists, parent-teacher conferences where a portfolio of each child's work is reviewed, and two narrative reports each school year.

Parents of children in the GOLD program choose

- a multiage setting for the child's social and learning development
- a three- or four-year learning phase which provides an extended period of time for a teacher to know and work with a child
- instruction that is interactive and cooperative
- a variety of learning experiences which are not reliant on workbooks and worksheets
- narrative reports and portfolio conferences that include examples of the child's work
- to view their children's learning as a series of activities that may or may not have daily written components

Non-Graded Curriculum Goals, Organization and Components

Goals

•To match learning experiences with students' developmental levels to support their physical, social-emotional and intellectual growth

•To provide processes for students to construct knowledge and to develop their cognitive abilities, enabling them to become autonomous learners, problem-solvers, and decision-makers

•To support students' development of skills and knowledge which lead to making connections among learning and applying skills/concepts in new situations

•To provide experiences through which students use their aesthetic talents in a variety of ways

•To provide opportunities for students to engage in and share learning in productive social and working groups.

•To provide opportunities for students to develop individual interests and capabilities

Organization

In the areas of mathematics and literacy (reading, writing, grammar, spelling) the curricula are guided by three-year sequences (5-7 years of age, 8-10 years, 11-14 years) of skills/concepts and the school system curricula. Each skills/concepts continuum is organized sequentially and includes the designation of key skills that indicate, when accomplished, that a student is ready to benefit from the full range of learning experiences available at the next educational phase. The students apply their mathematics and literacy skills and learn the curricula through a variety of individual, small and large group teacher directed lessons. Use of many learning materials provide active "hands-on" learning experiences. Each student's mathematics and literacy skills/concepts attainments are assessed individually by the classroom teachers. Learning accomplishments are noted on individual mathematics and literacy skills/concepts record-keeping forms, by reviewing examples of student work and by assessing class presentations.

In the academic subject areas (science, social studies, health) central concepts have been identified and serve as the organizing principles for the development of theme-based learning experiences. The school system curricula are grouped to provide integrated learning experiences. In addition to learning the subject area content associated with the various curricula, the students are provided with opportunities to form connections among the subject concepts and develop generalizable understandings that may be built upon during future studies. The full range of Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Processes (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation) are incorporated as appropriate to the subject matter and learning experiences.

The subject areas and the central concepts for each phase are provided on the following pages via descriptive information or charts.

Non-Graded Program

Assessment and Reporting

Scarborough Non-Graded Program
Assessment and Reporting Overview

Assessment

Assessment is an important component of any program and needs to be consistent with the goals and learning processes of that program. In Scarborough, there is a coordinated, comprehensive approach to assessment in the non-graded program. The assessment components provide a wide range of information about each child and that child's, social-emotional, physical and intellectual growth as well as cognitive and academic development.

The premises for Scarborough's assessment components are provided on the following page and the components are indicated on the following circle diagram labeled Assessment Components. The left inner circle indicates techniques to assess a child's stage of cognitive development and level of thinking within the framework developed by Jean Piaget. A range of tasks are presented periodically to each child, as indicated on the Individual Piagetian Summary. The teachers also use highly developed procedures for questioning each child about his/her work, as well as observing and recording data while the child is involved with various learning experiences.

The right inner circle represents assessment techniques that verify the development of a child's physical, social-emotional, and intellectual characteristics. It is recognized that the development of these characteristics, as well as the stages of cognitive development and levels of thinking, result from a combination of each child's growth as a unique individual and the child's interactions with experiences in the environment. The teacher's task is to recognize and verify each child's individual development. For example, it would be important to know that a child has highly developed fine motor skills, has the spatial capabilities to see how shapes fit together, or prefers to work with one other person rather than work with a group.

The left and right inner circles focus on the development of each child as an individual who demonstrates a range of personal characteristics and develops cognitively in relation both to his/her unique makeup and to his/her interactions with the surrounding environment and various learning experiences. To facilitate the teacher's data gathering process, a variety of anecdotal data gathering techniques and resources are used in addition to analyses of each student's work.

The bottom inner circle relates to the individual child's interactions with a sequence of child and adult determined learning content, including reading and literacy skills and subject area knowledge and concepts. To acquire assessment data about these areas of learning, the teacher engages in individual reading, writing and project conferences, uses skills checklists, and presents specific tasks to be accomplished. The teachers also observe each child at work and collect examples of each child's work for assessment of contents and change over time.

A correlary to the assessment components represented by the three inner circles is the accumulation and analyses of each child's work via a portfolio. The purposes and kinds of work collected are described later in this section. A portfolio of each child's work provides important primary source information about the child and involves the child both in the accumulation and analyses phases. Portions of the portfolio provide vital information for the teacher at the next level and may be collected over time to provide a comprehensive view of a child's school experience and learning development.

The teacher also may gather information about the child's interactions within the learning environment via techniques such as those indicated within the large encompassing circle. For example, checklists and tally sheets may provide frequency data while centers contracts may reveal preferences or patterns of self-selected activity. The Descriptive Review process is a format for teacher analysis of the child's relationship to the whole classroom and school. It was developed by the Prospect Center in Bennington, Vermont.

Periodic external assessments of the functioning of the program and the children's relationships to it are represented by several examples outside the large circle. Data from parents and children as well as statistical data are compiled to compare with the stated purposes of the program

Reporting

Reporting involves the process of systematically sharing the insights gained from the various assessments of the individual child's growth and development with the child's parents and others as appropriate. Parents are encouraged to observe their children in the school learning environment and to discuss their child's development at any time with the classroom teacher.

Numerous informal communications and examples of a child's accomplishments are provided for parents throughout the school year.

In addition, there are four formal system-wide reporting events each school year in Scarborough. The formal reporting components that accompany this program include use of quarterly cummulative, reporting forms relating to the child's intellectual, social-emotional, and physical characteristics (see example later in this section). Also, the first and third formal reporting events include scheduled parent-teacher conferences where each child's learning portfolio is reviewed and discussed. For the second and fourth formal reporting events, the teacher writes a narrative report to accompany the cummulative form. This anecdotal report includes additional intellectual, social-emotional and physical characteristics information, descriptions of the literacy and mathematics skills attained and to be introduced, and any additional literacy and mathematics information. The Learning Accomplishment Scale is used at the Intermediate and Middle School levels both for individual child and parent assessment conferences as well as for daily assessment conferences between teacher and child.

The provision of a coordinated, multi-faceted assessment and reporting procedure ensures that each child is recognized as an individual who is developing in a variety of significant ways that impact upon the child's overall growth as a person, a learner and a member of the school community.

DEVELOPMENTALLY-BASED ASSESSMENT PREMISES:

A.) All assessment components should relate directly to children's involvement with program and curricula goals

B.) Assessment should be integrated with the learning process

C.) Assessment components should be developed for the purposes of:
   1.) Allowing adults to "get to know" each child
   2.) Keeping track of children's growth over time
   3.) Providing children with a sense of their accomplishments
   4.) Providing process and product information for planning of further learning experiences
   5.) Analyzing the effects of various learning experiences and adapting program to child's needs
   6.) Providing information to report growth to parents and program effectiveness to community

D.) Assessment components should:
   1.) Have a clear purpose
   2.) Be comprehensive
   3.) Be related to students' level of development
   4.) Be positive for students
   5.) Involve the children
   6.) Be manageable for teachers (time, quantity, complexity)
   7.) Be easily understandable by different audiences (parents, next teachers, new school, etc.)

E.) The classroom teacher is the adult who is best able to gather and analyze data, and to make decisions based on those data to promote the child's continued development in school

F.) Reporting systems need to be compatible with the types of assessment used

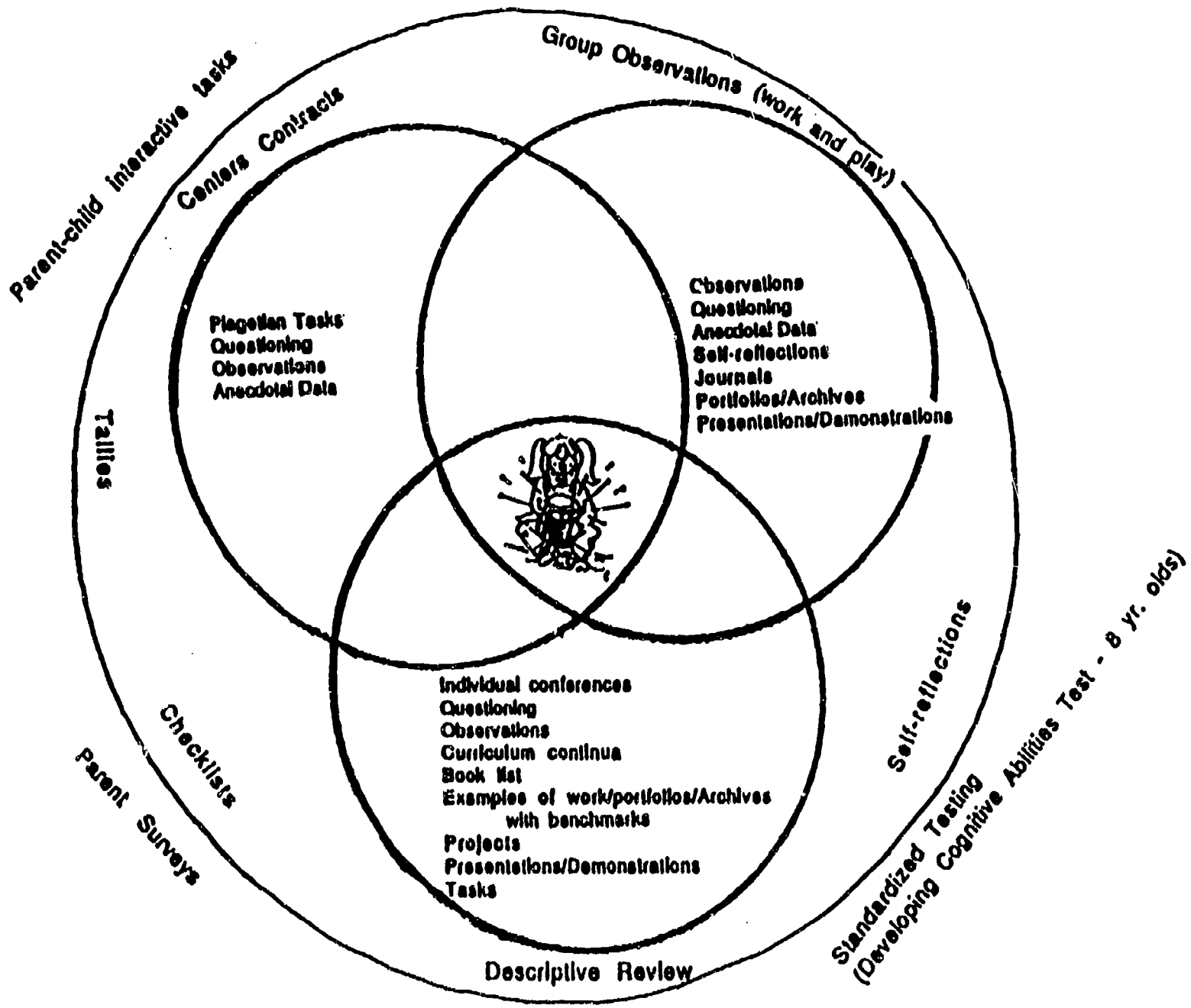
G.) Reporting to parents should include discussions between teacher and parents and examination of examples of child's work

H.) Assessment components will evolve over time as the program changes and the teachers perceive additional needs

I.) Primary source information (the child's work) makes it possible to see growth over time in meaningful contexts

J.) Knowledge of how children think is vital to understand their learning experiences

Assessments Components



Anecdotal data are compiled via:

notebooks

index cards

labels

video-tapes

audio-tapes

computer disks

clipboards with grids or forms for observational comments

checklists

student journals

student folders

anecdotal report for parents

INDIVIDUAL PIAGETIAN SUMMARY

Name _____ Teacher _____

Date of Birth _____

Person(s) Testing _____

	AGE OF TASK ACQUISITION	PIAGETIAN TASK	DATES TESTED INITIALS										
CLASSIFICATION	(5-7)	1 way Classification											
	(5-8)	2 way Classification											
	(8-10)	3 way Classification											
	(7-9)	Class Inclusion											
SERIATION	(5-7)	Simple Seriation											
	(5-7)	Double Seriation											
CONSERVATION	(5-7)	Conservation of Number											
	(5-7)	Conservation of Quantity Continuous											
	(5-7)	Conservation of Quantity Discontinuous											
	(7-9)	Conservation of Length											
	(9-10)	Conservation of Area											
	(9-11)												
	(11-14)	Conservation of Weight											
	(11-14)	Conservation of Volume											
FORMAL REASONING	(11-15)	Combinations											
	(11-14)	Proportions											
	(11-14)	Probability											

KEY:

☐ Not Tested

\+ Successful completion

Tr In Transition

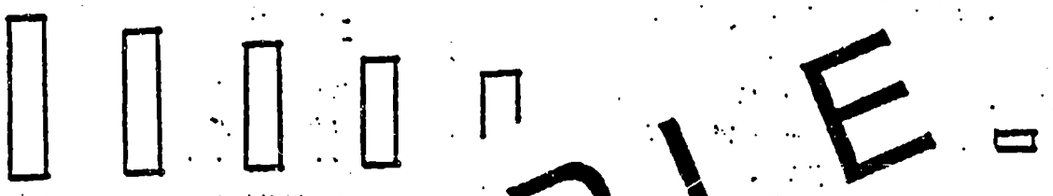
\- Unsuccessful completion

SERIATION
INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT

SIMPLE SERIATION

MATERIALS: 9 wooden rods of graduated lengths

PROCEDURE: "Will you please line up for me all of these wooden rods in a row, from the longest rod to the shortest rod?" (Interviewer uses hand to show general position of the row and to indicate sizes.) Mark child's booklet with child's answer, then transfer results to class list.

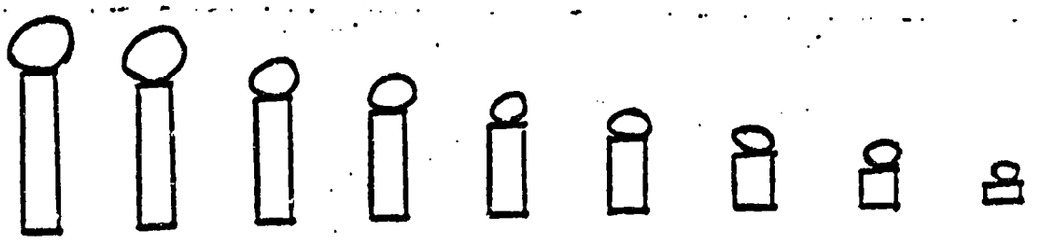


DOUBLE SERIATI

MATERIALS: 9 ...f graduated lengths and 9 laminated circles of ... sizes

PROCEDURE: "Now, let's pretend that these wooden rods are sticks and these circles are lollipops. Will you please give each stick a lollipop that best fits it so that the biggest stick has the biggest lollipop and so on to the smallest stick having the smallest lollipop?"

Record the child's response on the back of the simple seriation page in the child's booklet and record on class list.



Concept Definition*	Examples in Curriculum
Simple Seriation: The ability to order a set of objects along some relevant dimension such as size.	1. Sequencing events 2. Lining up from shortest to tallest. 3. Sequencing events in a story 4. Following a recipe. 5. Giving/folk[illegible] directions. 6. Left to righ[illegible] order. 7. What comes before? What comes after?
Double Seriation: The ability to order one set of objects according to some relevant dimension and to order a second set of objects along a relevant dimension in relation to that set of objects.	1. One-to-one correspondence. 2. Recognizing upper and lower case letters. 3. Letter/sound correspondence. 4. Matching s[illegible] writt[illegible] 5. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]inal position.
Simple Classific[illegible] to spontaneously [illegible] by one attribute a[illegible] shift to another a[illegible] [illegible] regroup the same objects.	[illegible] Finding "short e" & "long e" words in a list. 2. Listing words that start with a letter. 3. Giving a name to a group of objects - animals with a shell/animals without shells. 4. Comparing how two patterns are alike/different
Two-Way Classification: The ability to simultaneously coordinate two attributes of objects and to group objects by that coordination.	1. Finding long/short vowels. 2. Recognizing even/odd numbers. 3. Listing compound words that have "sea" in them. 4. Recognizing blends. 5. Recognizing contractions.

Teacher

Student's Name

GOLD PRIMARY MATH STUDENT RECORD

NUMERATION	0-10	25	50
Rote counts to			
Forms sets and names them to			
Matches equivalent sets			
Orders non-equivalent sets			
Reads numerals to			
Writes numerals to			
Distinguishes among "more", "less" "equal"			
Recognizes "odd" and "even"			
Counts backwards			
Counts by 2's			
Counts by 5's			
Counts by 10's			
Counts by 100's			
Recognizes "what comes before", "what comes after"			
Recognizes ordinal position			
	1's	10's	100's
Recognizes place value of			
Writes numerals using correct place value			
Counts by 10's			
Exchanges between columns			
FRACTIONS	1/2	1/4	1/3
Cuts whole/groups into parts; labels			
Recognizes symmetry			
Reads symbols			
Writes			

YEAR _____ TEACHER _____

STUDENT'S NAME _____

LITERACY SKILLS - GOLD PRIMARY AND INTERMEDIATE RECORD

Reading - Speaking - Listening

Inter	Prim	
		Pre-reading
	☐	Has oral language facility •
	☐	Shows an interest in books •
	☐	Listens to story and •
	☐	•
	☐	...ows book format, top-bottom, left-right. •
	☐	Recognizes that print tells a story •
	☐	Retells a story w/appropriate sequence •
		Initial
☐	☐	Memorizes story •
☐	☐	Develops sight vocabulary •
☐	☐	Uses decoding skills:
☐	☐	phonics •
☐	☐	configuration •

NAME_____

MONDAY 1	TUESDAY 2	WEDNESDAY 3	THURSDAY 4	FRIDAY 5

In LISTENING/READING I looked at

_____

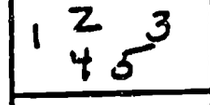
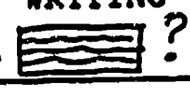
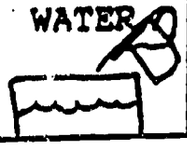
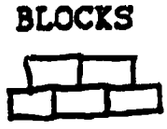
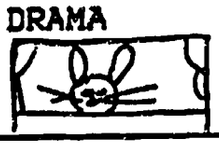
_____.

I wrote about _____

In my WRITING FOLDER.

I did HANDWRITING _____.

Then I worked at these centers.

*MATH 	*ART 	*SCIENCE 	*CREATIVE WRITING 	*STORY RETELLING 
WATER 	COMPUTER 	BLOCKS 	WOODWORKING 	DRAMA 

I_____

_____

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_____.

WORKING PORTFOLIO RATIONALE

GOLD teachers use portfolios of student work to document individual student progress and to share these portfolios with parents during conferences at the end of the first and third quarters of each year, as well as with students throughout their time in the GOLD program. Anecdotal reports will continue to serve as the documentation parents receive at the end of the second and fourth quarters. Exit portfolios are created with work selected each year from the working portfolios.

GOLD teachers believe that discussing student work during parent conference time is an improvement in the way in which we communicate with parents about their children's progress for the following reasons:

1. It is more consistent with an individualized, child-centered approach to education. Children's progress is measured through comparisons of current and prior work that child has done, not to a "median score" or "average performance" criterion.

2. Portfolios present "primary sources" for consideration by parents, teachers, and students. In this way, parents and students see the work itself, rather than solely the teacher's reactions to such work which is presented in checklists and anecdotal reports. Evaluations and assessments contained in checklists and reports can be supported by evidence in the portfolios.

3. Discussions around actual work educate all those involved - teachers, parents, and students - as each shares his/her reactions to the collection of work (including standards, criteria, personal observations of the student and his/her learning styles, etc.). Parents learn how to look at work within a developmental continuum and to see their child in the school context, teachers learn how students work at home and what family and student values are brought to bear on work, students learn to reflect on their own development as learners over time and to plan new projects that extend learnings in current work.

4. Discussing portfolios creates learning partnerships between parents, children, and teachers as autonomous investigators into learning. Each can offer suggestions for further development of a student's skills and interests at school and at home.

5. Portfolios give evidence of a child's use of skills in a meaningful context. It can lead to considerations of what that child's interests and understandings are, what that particular child finds meaningful, and how that child prefers to investigate problems and express thoughts to others (e.g.: learning style, preferred media). Discussion around portfolios can provide a richer picture of the whole child than teacher's written comments can give.

6. Teachers can use collections of student work for their own development of teaching practice through such processes as the Descriptive Review of a Child, Descriptive Review of Work, and Descriptive Review of a Medium.

The working portfolio is kept in the classroom and is meant to be a compilation of the child's growth over time. Some work may be sent home at the end of the quarter or at the end of the year. Some may accumulate for the length of time the child stays in the classroom. These decisions will be made as the faculty refines the portfolio process. While we experience this process first hand, some changes will certainly be made as we gain knowledge and experience. The following lists are suggestions of what will be considered for inclusion in a child's working portfolio:

Writing: journals, writing folders, weekend news, published books, computer stories, handwriting samples, shared writing, directed writing, notes, letters, thank you notes, science reactions, theme or subject-related journals (farm, math, etc.), labeling examples, spelling work, center record sheets, center recording sheets, lists.

Science, Social Studies, Health: observational drawings, sorting work and recordings, journals, center recording sheets, recipes, classification work, brainstorming lists, field experience records.

Art: drawings (observational, free, teacher directed, child choice), sewing, 3-D work, paintings, prints, self portraits, puppets, story boards and aprons, prints, weavings, cut and paste activities.

Math: center recording sheets, sorting, seriating, patterning tasks, graphs (individual, group, child generated, teacher directed), game boards, geoboard work, classifying, problem solving strategies.

Reading: book lists, word lists, literary passages, Marie Clay checklist, cloze packets, book reaction sheets, attitude inventory, word and letter recognition sheets, book projects, reports, poems, word families, word search, published books, tape of the child reading or re-telling a story, phonics work, a copy of a page of text the child reads comfortably.

NON-GRADED PRIMARY PORTFOLIO

The GOLD faculty at the primary level will keep information on students in three ways. The largest collection of the child's work will be kept in the classroom working portfolio. Excerpts from the portfolio will be shared with the child and her family at conference time. Some of the child's work will be kept to accumulate over the child's years with us, some may be sent home for family use. At the end of the each school year, specific records will be removed and placed in the child's cumulative folder. At the end of the child's term with us, whether she moves to the next phase in Scarborough, or when he moves to another town, specific works will be removed to the child's exiting portfolio, and sent with the child's cumulative folder to the next school.

The cumulative folder is kept in the school office and will contain the following:

- report cards
- standardized tests
- checklists
- Piaget tests and record sheet
- GOLD primary reporting process information for parents

The exiting portfolio will be taken from the working portfolio and combined with the cumulative folder contents. This exiting packet will include at least:

- a piece of art work or observational drawing
- a writing sample, one from each year
- a photocopy of a text page that the child is able to read successfully
- a list of books, charts, stories the child read during his or her last semester
- an example of involvement with mathematics

PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT
NON-GRADED INTERMEDIATE

The portfolio for GOLD Intermediate students serves several purposes. It provides evidence of achievement that can be documented in no other way, and should serve as a basis for evaluation of a student's work. All of the pieces that are included are marked either "D" for diagnostic purposes. "P" if it is to be used to demonstrate growth to parents, and "C" if it is used to discuss progress with students. Many pieces are appropriate for more than one purpose. The Intermediate Portfolio will include, but is not limited to the following separate pieces. (Additional student records are kept in the cumulative record folder.)

Formal Assessments

Piagetian Assessments are given to each child each spring. This provides evidence of the child's level of cognitive development. With this information, the teacher is able to match curriculum and expectations to the child's developmental level.

A reading attitude survey will be administered each fall to each child. This survey is adapted from Nancie Atwell's book In the Middle, a respected text on literacy acquisition. It reveals students' preconceptions, experience and attitudes that can affect their literacy acquisition.

Sentence dictation, administered in the spring and fall, reveals a student's ability in the simple mechanics of writing. This includes only the skills of writing such as spelling, and punctuation, not creativity or fluency. It is a quick but revealing record of achievement and growth from year to year.

Record-keeping (While many others forms of record keeping are used in the classroom, only those listed below are included in the portfolio.)

Literacy and math checklists are updated quarterly for each student. These date and document the mastery of skills in these areas.

Anecdotal reports will be provided in the second and fourth quarters. These notes are in lieu of parent conferences which will occur in the first and third quarters. During parent conferences, the portfolio is reviewed with each parent to demonstrate and explain the documented achievement revealed by the students' collected work.

Reading records are a list of books read by the student, and are updated quarterly. A photocopy of a page of a book that typifies the student's reading is made in the fall and the spring. This is included for those who are not familiar with the names of the books.

The face page of the report card (intellectual, social-emotional and physical development) are updated quarterly.

The social studies checklist is updated yearly to reflect components of the three-year curriculum cycle that a student has completed, including foreign language instruction.

The Metacognitive Strategies Index is used to reveal whether or not a student uses successful strategies for reading comprehension.

Examples of Student Work

Writing samples are collected from the beginning, middle and end of the year. Each piece is scored holistically to demonstrates attributes (see Learning Accomplishment Scale).

A holistically scored example of math problem-solving is included from the spring semester.

An example of a student's learning log, reflecting his or her understanding of the theme work is collected in the fall and spring to demonstrate organization, understanding of concept and presentation of a product.

An example of a research project is selected, including the planning, written work and student's self evaluation. (A holistic scale is available for this if it seems appropriate for the piece.)

Any piece of work that demonstrates a student's special creativity, initiative, organizational ability or leadership may be included, photocopied, photographed or taped. This is an opportunity to show ability that may not show up on other measures, and reveals a student's unique talents.

INTERMEDIATE PORTFOLIO CONTENTS

*_____ Sentence dictation, fall and spring, for checking mechanics and penmanship (D)

*_____ Reading record, listening books read with dates (DP)

*_____ Writing samples from the beginning, middle and end of the year (DP)

*_____ Piaget, spring only (D)

*_____ Literature checklist (DP)

*_____ Math checklist (DP)

*_____ Some kind of research project, including the planning sheet, the actual written part of a photocopy, and the student's evaluation, fall and spring (DP)

*_____ Social Studies checklist (R)

_____ Reading attitude survey from beginning of intermediate phase and end of intermediate phase (P)

_____ Metacognitive strategies index

*_____ Holistic scored math problem by spring

*_____ Something from learning logs by fall and spring reporting periods for science and social studies

_____ Evidence of individual creativity

*_____ Report cards (anecdotals twice a year)

D = diagnostic P = parent R = reference

* = all teachers will include this item

Student's Name _____ Identification Number _____ Teacher _____ Year _____

GOLD PRIMARY STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS REPORT FOR PARENTS

INTELLECTUAL

Reporting Periods

		1	2	3	4
1.	Observes	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	Investigates	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	Verbalizes thoughts (questions, describes)	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	Classifies	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.	Plans (organizes tasks & materials)	☐	☐	☐	☐
6.	Makes choices	☐	☐	☐	☐
7.	Exhibits creativity	☐	☐	☐	☐
8.	Utilizes patterns	☐	☐	☐	☐

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

	1			2			3			4		
	By Self	With Peers	W/Adults	By Self	With Peers	W/Adults	By Self	With Peers	W/Adults	By Self	With Peers	W/Adults
1. Is confident	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Approaches tasks positively	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Perseveres with tasks *	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Demonstrates self-control	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Shows respect	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Cooperates	■	☐	☐	■	☐	☐	■	☐	☐	■	☐	☐
7. Follows directions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Shows responsibility for actions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Cares for materials	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

*Indicates effort

PHYSICAL

	1	2	3	4
GROSS MOTOR				
Moves safely in classroom environment	☐	☐	☐	☐
Moves in coordinated manner	☐	☐	☐	☐
FINE MOTOR				
Manipulates small objects	☐	☐	☐	☐
Holds crayons and pencils appropriately	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cuts appropriately with scissors	☐	☐	☐	☐

Days absent ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Tardy ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Key: ☐ Not evident ☒ Beginning ☒ Demonstrates in independent work

Student's Name _____ Identification Number _____ Teacher _____ Year _____

Gold Intermediate Student Characteristics Report For Parents

EFFORT

(Strives for quality; is consistently on task.)

Reporting Period

1.

2.

3.

4.

INTELLECTUAL

Reporting Periods

	1	2	3	4
Observes	☐	☐	☐	☐
Investigates	☐	☐	☐	☐
Verbalizes thoughts (questions, describes)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Classifies	☐	☐	☐	☐
Plans (organizes tasks & materials)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Makes appropriate choices	☐	☐	☐	☐
Exhibits creativity	☐	☐	☐	☐
Internalizes concepts	☐	☐	☐	☐

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

	1			2			3			4		
	By Self	With Peers	With Adults	By Self	With Peers	With Adults	By Self	With Peers	With Adults	By Self	With Peers	With Adults
Is confident	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Exhibits positive attitude	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Demonstrates self-control	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Shows respect	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cooperates	■	☐	☐	■	☐	☐	■	☐	☐	■	☐	☐
Follows directions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Shows responsibility for actions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Perseveres to task conclusion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cares for materials	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

PHYSICAL

	1	2	3	4
GROSS MOTOR				
Moves safely in classroom environment	☐	☐	☐	☐
Moves in coordinated manner	☐	☐	☐	☐
FINE MOTOR				
Manipulates small objects	☐	☐	☐	☐
Holds pencils appropriately	☐	☐	☐	☐

Absent

KEY: ☐ Not Evident ▨ In Process ☒ Demonstrates in independent work

Student's Name _____ Teacher's Name _____ Date _____

Anecdotal Report for Parents

Intellectual, Social-Emotional, Physical:

Literacy Skills

Strengths

To Be Introduced or Strengthened

Mathematics Skills

Strengths

To Be Introduced or Strengthened

Social-Emotional Anecdotal Data

(Referred to for social-emotional portion of anecdotal reporting form)

Engages in Solitary, Observer, Parallel, Associative, or Cooperative Play

Forms friendships

Understand how individuals relate to others, groups

Participates in various groups for specific purposes

Is aware of the feelings, interests, needs and diversity of others

Forms trusting, productive, relationships with adults

Assessment Outcomes

The information below has been derived from a variety of formative and summative forms of assessement used during the initial five years of the non-graded program. Over time these outcomes and additional insights will be accumulated to provide a "picture" of the characteristics of non-graded education.

Teachers' Observations of Non-Graded Students' Characteristics

Non-graded students demonstrated the following attitudes: high level of cooperative team behavior, work well with others, are self motived, initiate and attend to task until completion, take ownership for whole classroom, exhibit confidence, are tolerant of others, exhibit positive self-esteem.

Non-graded learners demonstrated the following behaviors: risk takers, good problem solvers, apply a variety of decision-making strategies, take responsibility for learning, learn from one another, flexible, learn in various environments, produce fluent expressions through writing, have internalized how to learn, show interest in and enjoyment of reading, highly developed verbal/communication skills.

Parents' Observations of Non-Graded Students' Characteristics

Parents reported that their children displayed: high levels of confidence and self-esteem, excitement about learning, use of thinking and questioning strategies at home, analyze situations and make connections from learning to real life situations, work in co-operative groups, read and write enthusiastically at home.

Child/Parent Survey and Task Data

Via an assessment instrument designed by the school department, parents in both the graded and non-graded primary phase programs answered questions related to their perceptions, and recorded their children's responses to questions and tasks requiring child and parent interaction. A set of tasks requiring reading comprehension, mathematics problem solving and a writing sample were administered in the classrooms. Results of these various assessment efforts indicated that:

Non-graded children performed reading, writing and mathematics problem-solving tasks as well as the graded program children and may use a greater variety of strategies including figures or symbols to solve problems.

Non-graded program children responded that they were particularly engaged by the learning and atmosphere of their school, they liked opportunities for self-expression and they listed specific academic subjects that they liked.

Non-graded program children predominately listed independent strategies other than "ask the teacher" if they needed help to solve a problem at school, illustrating their sense of independence.

Non-graded program parents rated "encourage self-direction so that the child sets goals and knows how well he/she is doing" higher than graded program parents.

Non-graded program parents rated "opportunities for students to progress at their own rate"

higher than did graded program parents.

Standardized Testing Data

Although the school department recognizes that the use of standardized testing with young children yields data of questionnable value, a nationally standardized achievement test was administered in the spring of 1989 to all non-graded and graded program students exiting the primary phase (grade two equivalent) to provide a data base for the general public. These data revealed that the students in both the graded and non-graded programs achieved comparable scores in all subject areas except the following: graded program children obtained slightly higher scores in spelling and mechanics; non-graded program students obtained significantly higher scores in word attack, language expression and mathematics problem solving areas.