DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 391 580 PS 023 714

AUTHOR Kristin, Maureen; And Others
TITLE Improving Primary Student Motivation through the Use of Cooperative Learning Strategies and the Teaching of Organizational Skills.
PUB DATE 1 May 95
NOTE 127p.; Master's Field-Based Program, Saint Xavier University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Undetermined (040) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Class Organization; *Classroom Environment; *Classroom Techniques; *Cooperative Learning; Intellectual Development; Learning Activities; Learning Strategies; *Primary Education; *Student Motivation; Student Participation; Teamwork; Thinking Skills
IDENTIFIERS Organizational Behavior; *Organizational Skills

ABSTRACT

A program was implemented for improving student's motivation in order to increase their performance and self-esteem. The targeted population consisted of primary grade students in middle-class communities within the southwest suburbs of Chicago. Analysis of probable cause data revealed students' lack of skills related to organization, communication, and peer interaction. Faculty reported student deficiencies in active listening and problem-solving skills. Review of instructional techniques revealed that a variety of teaching strategies to meet the needs of many types of learners within the classroom were not being employed. An analysis of the problem setting resulted in the selection of two major categories of intervention: (1) an increase in instructional emphasis on organizational skills and implementation of cooperative learning strategies in student learning tasks. Follow-up assessment indicated that the students showed a marked increase in the use of the targeted organizational skills. As a result of cooperative learning strategies used in the classroom, task-related behaviors also showed improvement. The number of parent contacts decreased. All facets of student work, including test scores, revealed greater productivity. (Three appendices include copies of the informed consent and parent-child survey, a behavioral checklist, a student self-assessment form, and materials used to promote cooperative learning. Contains 59 references. (AA/Author)

IMPROVING PRIMARY STUDENT MOTIVATION THROUGH THE USE OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES AND THE TEACHING OF ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

by

Maureen Kristin
Abby O'Connor
Barbeth Peck
Bonnie Urbanek
Sharon Vrba

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master's of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

Saint Xavier University & IRI/Skylight
Field-Based Master's Program

Action Research Project
Site: Orland Park, Illinois.
Submitted: May 1, 1995

Fernway Park Elementary
Orland Park, Illinois
Helen Keller Elementary
Tinley Park, Illinois
Fernway Park Elementary
Orland Park, Illinois
Helen Keller Elementary
Tinley Park, Illinois
Ridge Elementary
Oak Forest, Illinois

This project was approved by

Mary Y Howell

Advisor

John B. Davis

Advisor

Dean, School of Education

Abstract

Authors: Maureen Kristin
Abby O'Connor
Barbeth Peck
Bonnie Urbanek
Sharon Vrba

Site: Orland Park

Date: May 1, 1995

Title: Improving Primary Student Motivation Through The Use Of Cooperative Learning Strategies And The Teaching Of Organizational Skills

This report describes a program for improving students' motivation in order to increase student performance and self-esteem. The targeted population consisted of primary students in growing, middle class communities within the southwest suburbs of Chicago, Illinois. The problem of motivation had been documented through student records, checklists, and teacher observation, all of which indicated poor student performance.

Analysis of probable cause data revealed students reporting lack of skills related to organization, communication, and peer interaction. Faculty report student deficiencies in active listening and problem solving skills. Review of instructional techniques revealed that a variety of teaching strategies to meet the needs of many types of learners within the classroom were not being employed.

Solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others, combined with an analysis of the problem setting, resulted in the selection of two major categories of intervention: an increase of instructional emphasis on organizational skills and implementation of cooperative learning strategies in student learning tasks.

The students showed a marked increase in the use of the targeted organizational skills. As a result of cooperative learning strategies used in the classroom task-related behaviors also showed improvement. The number of parent contacts decreased. All facets of student work, including test scores, revealed greater productivity.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Abstract i

Chapter

1 Problem Statement and Context 1

General Statement of Problem 1

Immediate Problem Setting - A 1

Immediate Problem Setting - B 6

Immediate Problem Setting - C 9

Surrounding Community - A 13

Surrounding Community - B 17

Surrounding Community - C 20

Regional and National Context of Problem . . . 23

2 Problem Definition 29

Evidence of Problem 29

Probable Causes of Problem 32

3 Solution Strategy 38

Literature Review 38

Project Outcomes 55

Solution Components 55

Action Plan 57

Methods of Assessment 60

4 Historical Description of Intervention 61

Presentation and Analysis of Results 67

Conclusions and Recommendations 70

References Cited 73

Appendix A 77

Appendix B 78
Appendix C 79

Chapter 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

Problem Statement

Primary students exhibit poor motivation as evidenced by test scores, anecdotal records, number of parent contacts, and teacher observation in both academic and non-academic contacts.

Description of Immediate Problem Setting - A

School A, one of five elementary and two junior high schools in Kirby School District 140, houses 548 students in grades kindergarten through five. The average class size based on the 1992-1993 school year figures are: kindergarten - 27.5, first grade - 27.5, second grade - 22, third grade - 27.3, fourth grade - 30, and fifth grade -27. There are four kindergarten classes, four classes each of first and second grades, and three classes each of grades three, four, and five. Fourteen out of the thirty-two classrooms are air-conditioned along with the office, learning center, and teacher's lounge.

As of September 30, 1992, the racial-ethnic make up reported for Fernway students was 94 percent White, .3 percent Black, 2.7 percent Hispanic, and 2 percert Asian. The percentage of students eligible for bilingual education is 1.9 percent, slightly higher than

the district average of 1.5 percent. The attendance rate at School A is 93.3 percent compared to 95.3 percent district wide. The student mobility rate, which is based on the number of times students enroll or leave a school during the course of the school year, is 8.8 for School A. Students who were absent from school without a valid cause for 10 percent or more of the last 180 school days comprise 0 percent, both at School A and for the district (School A Report Card, 1993).

The staff at School A is comprised of 27 teachers, 25 female and 2 male. Fourteen teachers have their master's degree. The average number of years experience is 13 years.

Students are heterogeneously assigned to a homeroom. In addition to core subject areas, students in grades one through five receive one 35 minute period of art per week, two 30 minute sessions of music per week, and three 30 minute periods of physical education per week. Kindergarten students receive one 30 minute period of physical education per week.

One thousand five hundred sixty-four students pass through and actively participate in physical education each week at School A. The gymnasium measures 80 feet long by 50 feet wide, with a height of about 22 feet. The floor surface is comprised of synthetic rubber which provides additional protection against injury. Sufficient equipment is available to offer a well-

rounded physical education program. Physical education objectives are met through demonstration, verbal instruction, skills testing, participation, and group problem solving. Local assessments in physical education are given to all third grade students. District grading for physical education is satisfactory or needs improvement for kindergarten, excellent, satisfactory, or needs improvement for first and second grades, and pass/fail for third, fourth, and fifth grades.

Students in third grade are assessed locally in science, social studies, physical education, music, and art. In addition, third graders take the state assessments in reading, math and language. The grading for grade three is comprised of A-100 to 92, B-91 to 85, C-84 to 72, D-71 to 65, and F-64 and below.

The students are grouped for math. There is one class of high group students. The other two classes are comprised of the remaining students, with no further grouping. The Macmillian McGraw Hill math text is used (Hoffer et al., 1991). Other than switching for math, the students have classes with the homeroom teacher.

A variety of techniques are used to teach reading. Skills are stressed using the Houghton Mifflin reading series (Durr, 1986). A whole language approach is used whenever possible. In addition, novels are used to teach reading strategies and skills. The Accelerated

Reader (Staff, 1994-1995), a computer reading program, is also used to assess reading. Spark's (1987), Power Writing is the base for third grade paragraph instruction. There is also a text, Hartcourt, Brace Jovanovich, used for language instruction (Abrahamson et al., 1990).

The Social Studies curriculum consists of Macmillian McGraw Hill's Communities Near and Far (Banks et al., 1993). The Science curriculum is as hands-on as possible. The current book being used is Silver Burdett (Mallinson et al., 1993). There is also a formal spelling program which consists of the McDougal, Littel Spelling Series (Bohen, 1990).

Children in third grade are eligible for Chapter I Remedial Reading, a pull out program for beginning readers in grades first through third. In Remedial Reading, activities are geared to utilize computer assisted materials with teacher directed activities in individualized evaluation prescription for those students needing remedial help. A Learning Disabilities Program is offered to children in need. Gifted students, those with specific aptitudes in fundamental areas of learning, are clustered in the regular classroom for enrichment activities, with help from the Gifted Education Resource teachers. Computer activities are introduced through computer assisted instruction. The third graders go to the learning center once a week

to develop proficiency in computer awareness activities. Third graders having difficulty in a subject area may have the opportunity for additional instruction through the Tutor Program, either before or after school.

As of this writing, there are no special education classes housed within our school. Projections for the 1994-1995 school year include two self contained special education classes. The subjects of the research for this project will be heterogeneously grouped third grade students.

Description of Immediate Problem Setting - B

School B, one of five elementary schools in Kirby School District 140, houses 614 students in grades kindergarten through five. The average class sizes based on the 1992-1993 school figures are: kindergarten - 22.3, grade one - 27.0, grade two - 26.7, grade three - 26.3, grade four - 26.1, and grade five - 27.0. There are three classes each of kindergarten, first, and second grade, three and a half classes of third and fourth, and three fifth grades. In addition, there are four Early Childhood classes, two Cross-Categorical classes, and one Trainable Mentally Handicapped (TMH) class.

The racial-ethnic groups reported as of September 30, 1992 were 94.6 percent White, .5 percent Black, 1.8 percent Hispanic, and 3.1 percent Asian. There were two and sixth-tenths percent of the students eligible for bilingual education, and two and eight-tenths percent eligible to receive free or reduced-priced lunches. The attendance rate at School B is 96.1 percent, and the mobility rate is 9.9 percent. There were no chronic truants at the school.

The staff at School B is comprised of 40 female teachers and one male. All of the teachers at the school are White.

Students are heterogeneously grouped in each grade. In grades one through five, students receive one 35

minute period of art per week, three 30 minute periods of physical education, and two 30 minute periods of music. Kindergarten students receive two 30 minute periods of physical education per week. Students in grades one through five attend learning center to practice math, reading, and computer skills for one 40 minute period each week, and attend the library on a weekly basis to check out books.

Students in first grade are not currently assessed by any local or state methods. The grading scale for first grade is as follows: 92 to 100 percent - Excellent, 72 to 91 percent - Satisfactory, 65 to 71 percent, Needs Improvement, and below 65 percent - Unsatisfactory. The students are not grouped for reading and math. Reading is taught through the use of a basal text published by Houghton Mifflin (Durr, 1986), through the Whole Language method, and through the Intensive-Phonics Program (Lockhart, 1976). Science and Social Studies are approached through the use of thematic literature units. The first graders use a textbook series by Macmillan McGraw Hill (Hoffer et al., 1991) in addition to the manipulative activities of the Math Their Way program. In addition, the McDougal, Littel Spelling series is used (Bohen, 1990). No formal Gifted Program exists for first grade. Chapter I, and a Learning Disability pull-out program are available for children in need. There is an after-school tutoring

program using fourth and fifth grade students to assist students in need of help in reading and phonics.

As of this writing, there are no special needs children mainstreamed into the first grade classrooms. The subjects of the research for this project at School B will be heterogeneously grouped first graders.

Description of Immediate Problem Setting

School C is part of Forest Ridge School District 142, an elementary school district located in Oak Forest, Illinois. The district is comprised of three elementary level schools and one junior high school.

School C (constructed in 1924), is the oldest facility in District 142. The building accommodates 308 of the district's 1683 students, providing two classes at each grade level ranging from Kindergarten through grade five. Despite the fact that the building is an old structure, renovation has kept the facility in excellent physical condition.

As of September 30, 1993, School C Report Card revealed a student racial/ethnic background of 98.7 percent White, 0.3 percent Black, 0.4 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.0 percent Native American Indian. In addition, 8.1 percent of the students belong in families eligible for public aid or the free/ reduced priced lunch program. The percentage of students qualifying for bilingual education was 1.3 percent.

Attendance figures for district 142 and School C were excellent, reporting statistics of 95.5 percent and 95.9 percent, respectively. The rate of student mobility was 6.5 percent district-wide and 3.0 percent for School C. School C did not have any cases of chronic truants (School C State Elementary School Report Card, 1993).

The average class size for the following grades included in the Ridge Elementary School Report Card for 1993, were as follows:

Kindergarten	19.4
Grade 1	23.5
Grade 3	24.2

These figures were approximately 5.2 percent lower than the district and 1.2 percent lower than the state average.

Time devoted to teaching core subjects, by average number of minutes of instruction per five day school week, revealed a large percentage of time devoted to the subjects of English (160 minutes) and Mathematics (50 minutes). Science and Social Studies followed with an average of 30 minutes each. Teaching time for core subjects, throughout District 142, was consistent. In addition, school figures and district figures were higher than the average time required by the state. (School C State School Report Card, 1993).

The teaching staff of School C, as of September 30, 1993, was comprised of 18 female teachers and two male teachers. Eleven of those staff members held a Master's Degree and nine staff members held a Bachelor's Degree. Consequently, 55 percent of School C's staff members have a Master's Degree or higher, as compared to the district figure of 30.4 percent and the state figure of 46.5 percent. (School C State School Report Card, 1993).

Currently, the first grade reading curriculum for School C concentrates on the Intensive Phonics (Lockhart, 1976) program and integration with the Harcourt Brace Jovanovich basal reading series (Abrahamson et al., 1990). Thematic units are correlated with the reading program to encompass the subjects of science, social studies, literature, language arts and spelling. District 142 is now in the process of investigating the feasibility of a whole language approach to learning for the 1995-96 school term.

Math is approached with the "hands-on" technique. Math Their Way (Baretta-Lorton, 1976) strategies are incorporated with the Addison-Wesley text. School C offers students physical education three times each week (30 minutes), music twice each week (30 minutes), art classes once a week (35 minutes) and computer/library classes once each week (60 minutes with 18 computers). In addition, a Learning Disabilities Program, a Gifted Program, Remedial Reading, Social Services, Chapter 1 Math and Rainbows (counseling group for divorced children) are resources for children that demonstrate a need for service. (School C State Report Card, 1993).

The 1991-92 operating expenditure per pupil was $3,642 for District 142, and $ 4,327 for the State of Illinois. This data was obtained from the State Report Card.

The school gymnasium is a large, fully remodeled facility. During the hours of 11:55 a.m. and 1:10 p.m., daily, the gymnasium is used as a lunchroom.

The subjects of research for the project, at School C, will be of heterogeneously grouped first grade students. As of this writing, there are no special needs children mainstreamed into School C classrooms.

Description of Surrounding Community - A

Orland Hills is located twenty-six miles southwest of the Loop. Just under two square miles, Orland Hills, is sandwiched between Tinley Park and Orland Park, both with populations of around 40,000 as compared to Orland Hills population of 6,038. To the south is I-80, and drive time to both the Loop and Midway Airport is thirty-five minutes. A small, young community, Orland Hills recently celebrated its thirtieth anniversary.

School A Elementary School lies in the eastern part of Orland Park and is the only school in Kirby School District 140 that is not located in Tinley Park. The majority of its students, 489 out of 548, come from Orland Hills. The remainder of the students, 89, come from Orland Park.

In Kirby School District 140, Whites make up 94.3 percent of the population. Blacks comprise .4 percent. Hispanic comprise 2.4 percent, Asian/Pacific Islander 2.9 percent, and Native Americans make up zero percent of the total population. Of the 4,356 students enrolled in Kirby School District 140, 2.1 percent are from low-income families, and 1.5 percent are limited-English proficient. The average class size in kindergarten is 25.5 students; in first grade, 26.7 students; in third grade, 27.7; and in sixth grade, 28.8 students. The district attendance rate is 95.3 percent. The student mobility rate is 8.3 percent. One hundred percent of the

teachers are white. Male teachers make up 10.3 percent and females account for 89.7 percent of the teaching staff. The average years of teaching experience in the district is 12.4 years, with an average salary of $32,134. The pupil-teacher ratio is 23.6:1. Teachers with Master's Degree and above comprise 48.7 percent of the total of 205 teachers. The administrators have an average salary of $59,615, and the pupil-administrator ratio is 288.8:1. Operating expenditures for the district is $3,415 per pupil (School A State Report Card, 1993).

The population of Orland Hills has doubled since 1980, growing from 2,800 to 6,038 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 1993). It continues to grow as evidenced by increased enrollment at School A and Prairie View Junior High. The Village Administrator has predicted that the population will peak at 8,000 in about ten years.

Orland Hills is a residential community. Affordable housing attracts many young families. Prices range from $80,000 to $150,000 with an average of $113,873 in 1992 (Staff, 1993).

The mean income of the 1,410 families in Orland Hills is $44,015. There are, based on the 1990 census, 199 people out of 5,510, or three and six tenths percent living below the poverty level. Of these 199 people, 62.8 percent, are female.

Whites make up the largest percentage of the

population, 92.1 percent. Blacks comprise three and nine tenths percent with mixture of the other races making up the remaining four percent of the population. The ethnic make-up of the community is a mixture of many nationalities with the largest concentration being Irish, German, and Polish (U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 1990).

Of the 3,519 people age 18 and over, 155, or four and one tenth percent, have less than a ninth grade education and 534, or 14.1 percent, have not earned a high school diploma. High school graduates, 1,369, comprise 37.9 percent of the population. Twenty one and eight tenths percent, or 802, have some college but no degree. Six and eight tenths percent have earned an Associate Degree, while 12.4 percent, or 472, have earned a Bachelor's Degree. Individuals possessing graduate or professional degrees total 102, or two and nine tenths percent, of the population aged 18 and over (U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 1990).

Until six years ago, Orland Hills had little sales tax revenue and that kept the property taxes high. However, in 1990, a hotel and car dealership opened. That was followed in 1991 by Orland Town Center. More businesses are expected to locate in this area. Village officials say these businesses will ease the property tax burden even further (Staff, 1993).

An unemployment rate of six and six tenths percent

exists in Orland Hills. Residents pursue a wide variety of occupations ranging from professional, managerial, and professional services, to sales, laborers, and construction, to name a few. Out of a work force of 2,931, 636 work in executive administration and managerial fields or a professional specialty. Of the small amount of light industry businesses, Walmart is the biggest retail employer with 190 employees (Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs, 1994). Other major employers in the community are Beverly Bank, Heritage Glenwood Bank, Georgios Banquet and Hotel, Sherwin Williams, Good Year, Circuit City, Taco Bell, Burger King, Joann Fabrics, and Loehmann's.

There are plans for a village hall to be constructed in Orland Town Center. Orland Hills has created a new recreation department and is planning to build a new recreational facility. Residents enjoy over 60 acres of park land with a fishing lake, a jogging trail, and baseball diamonds.

Description of Surrounding Community - 6

Kirby School district 140 lies in the western part of Tinley Park, an urban area 9.0 square miles that is bordered by forest preserves to the east, and some farmland to the south. It is connected by rail to Chicago's loop, which is 26 miles northeast of Tinley Park. The village of Tinley Park celebrated it's centennial in 1992.

In Kirby School district 140, Whites make up 94.3 percent of the total population, and Blacks comprise .4 percent. Hispanics comprise 2.4 percent, and Asian/Pacific Islander 2.9 percent. Of the 4,356 students enrolled, 2.1 are from low income families, and 1.5 tenths are limited English proficient. The average class size in kindergarten is 25.5 students; in first grade, 26.7 students; in second grade, 28.2 students; and in third grade, 27.7 students. The district attendance rate is 95.3 percent. The student mobility rate is 8.3 percent. One hundred percent of the teachers are White. Male teachers make up 10.3 percent, and females account for 89.7 percent of the teaching staff. The average years of teaching experience in the district is 12.4 years, with an average salary of $32,134. The pupil-teacher ratio is 23.6:1. Teachers with Master's Degree and above comprise 48.7 percent of the total number of 205 teachers. The administrators have an average salary of $59,613, and the pupil-

administrator ratio is 288.8:1. Operating expenditures for the district is $3,415 per pupil. (School District School Report Card, 1993).

The population of Tinley Park has grown 41 percent in the last ten years, from [illegible] in 1980, to 37,121 in 1990. It continues to grow as evidenced by the increased enrollment in all schools, the need to build additions onto several schools, and the need for a new junior high-middle school (U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 1990).

Currently, the average home value in Tinley Park is $139,611, and the tax per $100 is $10.23. There were 475 building permits given in 1992. The average income of Tinley Park residents is $54,033, and the median age is 33 (Living in Greater Chicago, 1993, p.34).

More than 96 percent of the population in Tinley Park is White, and is largely comprised of people of German and Irish origins. The majority, 82.3 percent, have a high school education, while 18.2 percent have a Bachelor's Degree or higher. There are 1,501 residents age 25 and over who have less than a ninth grade education (U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 1990).

An unemployment rate of only three percent in Tinley Park may be due to the wide variety of occupations in the village. Over 5,000 residents are in professional, executive, administrative, or managerial occurations, out of a work force of 18,590. Of the

modest number of light industry businesses. The largest is Panduit Corporation, employing 550 people. Howe Developmental Center for the handicapped is the village's largest employer in the village, with 1,700 employees (IDCCA, 1991).

The village has anticipated and planned for its future growth. The North Creek Industrial Park along I 80 will soon be the site of office and industrial development providing numerous job opportunities for a variety of skill levels. Increased enrollment in Lincoln School District 140 is anticipated as farmland is developed, and annexation continues (Staff, 1993, p.34).

Description of the Surrounding Community - C

Forest Ridge School District 142 lies in the northeast section of Oak Forest, Illinois. The community, as described in the Oak Forest Centennial (1990), takes in an eight square mile radius and has established a reputation for being the city to raise children. The publication continues by commenting on the quality of good schools, obliging neighbors and opportunities for community involvement.

Oak Forest is 22 miles from the Chicago Loop. As reported in the 1990 Census, there were 26,203 residents. More than 80 percent of the housing in Oak Forest was built after 1960. The average home valuation was reported to be $121,594 The total number of occupied housing units reported were 8,865 (97.9 percent). From this figure, 6,918 (76.4 percent) were owner occupied residences, and 1,947 (21.5 percent) were renter occupied residences (U.S. Dept. of Commerce, 1990).

The majority of individuals residing in the community are from the upper-middle class and have lived in the community more than a decade. Forty-two and three tenths percent of the adult population has a high school education, and 32.4 percent has a college or higher education level. The average income reported in 1990 was $54,556. At the same time, only 3.2 percent were classified as unemployed (U.S. Dept. of

Commerce, 1990).

The 1990 Census reported the racial/ethnic background for the community. The population is 97.1 percent White and 2.9 percent Black. From this population, the total number of households was reported at 8,865, with 7,003 being total families. These households encompassed 23,787 individuals resulting in a family average of 3.40 persons. Married couples comprise 5,940 families. Conversely, 282 were male householder with no wife and 781 were female householder with no husband.

Living in Greater Chicago, (Staff, 1993), describes Oak Forest as being primarily a residential community. However, growth in the industrial base with companies such as Adheron Coating Corporation, Metro-Litho Printing Corporation and Fisher Service, located in the Oak Forest Corporate Center at I-57 and 168th Street, is on the rise. The article further stipulates that education at the grade school level is provided by School Districts 142, 144, 145, and 146. High school students attend Oak Forest High School, which is one of two suburban high school recipients of the "For Character" award given by the University of Illinois - Chicago, in 1991. The average ACT score for the class of 1992 was 22.0.

In 1992, the average teacher salary for Forest Ridge School District 142 was $33,212. This figure is

substantially lower than the state salary average of $38,809. Average years of teaching experience was reported at 18.3 for the district and 16.0 for the state. At the time of the report, 98.7 percent of the district's teachers were white and 1.3 percent were Hispanic. The pupil-teacher ratio, at 21.8:1 was higher than the state's ratio of 19.7:1 (School & State Report Card, 1993).

Transportation in Oak Forest is provided by Interstate 57 and Interstate 80 which intersect just south of the city, making driving time to both the Loop and Midway Airport about half an hour. By vehicle, O'Hare Airport is 50 minutes away. Metra's Rock Island commuter train reaches the Loop in 27 minutes (Staff,1993).

Regional and national context of problem

Considerable evidence supports the theory that a large percentage of students do have positive motives regarding learning. They really do want to learn and be successful in school. Bellon, J., Bellon, C., and Blank (1992), in citing Kearns, Hansford and Hattie, and Wlodkowski state that a clear and positive relationship exists between positive self-esteem and academic success (Bellon, Bellon, & Blank, 1992). Research shows that student motivation may account for discrepancies in student achievement beyond those resulting from differences in scholastic aptitude or intelligence.

Motivation is one factor that determines the degree to which a student will understand or gain knowledge and skill. Bellon, Bellon, and Blank (1992), state that concern about motivation is not a recent phenomenon. Teachers with whom they have worked with have been very concerned about students who are turned off about learning. Students with motivational problems tend to exhibit behaviors such as defensiveness, hopelessness, apathy, and anxiety. Failure-avoiding behaviors exhibited by many students prove to be counterproductive and self-defeating in the long term. To protect their feelings of self-worth some students exhibit disinterest and apathy. Forty percent of ninth graders failed two or more courses as reported in one study. They chose to be uninvolved and apathetic. "Nothing ventured, nothing failed," helped them preserve their self-worth by their not trying.

In light of recent research showing that student motivation may have more effect on student achievement than intelligence or scholastic aptitude establishing school and classroom conditions that enhance motivation is especially important (Bellon, Bellon, & Blank, 1992). Research has shown that schools are not as successful as needed to motivate students to learn. Studies have shown that up to one-third of the children in many states who enter school do not complete their education.

Children are born filled with wonder and are

motivated to learn. Unfortunately, motivation seems to decrease as the child gets older. Wlodowski (1990) gives three possible reasons for this lessening: the design of the graded school, the acquiring of advanced knowledge and skills, and the competition and disbursement of motivation rewards.

Motivation is an important factor in student achievement. As defined by Madeline Hunter (1982) " Motivation is a students' intent to learn " (p.11). Hunter further states that motivation is not generic, what is learned can be taught. Wlodowski (1986) refers to motivation as a term to explain why human behavior occurs. He defines motivation as: the word used to describe those processes that can (a) arouse and instigate behavior; (b) give direction or purpose to behavior; (c) continue to allow behavior to persist; and (d) lead to choosing or preferring a particular behavior (Smey - Richman, 1988, p.28). They state that educators need to get a greater number of students to put more time and effort into their studies. It is the opinion of many educators that some students lack the level of motivation necessary for them to attain their potential. An unsatisfactory level of learning is often the result of lack of motivation (p. 260).

The concept of student learning is closely related to that of academic motivation. Wlodkowski (1986) refers to motivation as a term explaining the why of

human behavior. He further maintains that motivation can be aroused, instigated, directed and allowed to persist.

A key issue concerning many educators today is how to motivate students to want to learn. According to Dr. Morganetto (1990) "there are many reports criticizing the level of learning and academic achievement in our public schools" (p. 260).

> For students whose initial motivation is low, their typical classroom experiences may result in the further deterioration of their motivation. Hence, changing teacher behaviors from those that undermine to those that promote the engagement of discouraged children should be a top priority of educational reform. (Skinner and Belmont, 1993, p. 580).

A teacher needs to provide a supportive environment where children feel a sense of belonging and are loved. If a child feels comfort and is appreciated, the classroom will become the place where the child wants to come and learn. Teachers need to convey the feeling that they are not only interested in the students' academics, but also that they care about them as individuals. People tend to be drawn toward others who show genuine concern for their well being. Everyone has a need to feel worthwhile and appreciated. If a good classroom climate is in place, the teacher-student

relationship will be enhanced and the children will be more motivated to work to their full potential. A zest for learning will develop within each child the teacher comes in contact with (B. Ostarello, personal communication, April 17, 1994).

In addition, motivation should emphasize that the goal of a behavior, as opposed to the "doing" of the behavior, is the reason for the performance of behavior (Smey-Richman, 1988). Therefore, motivational objectives should focus on linking organization skills and task performance.

Some research evidence suggests that many students learn best in cooperative programs. Cooperative learning methods have a positive effect on student motivation and achievement. According to Slavin (1978) cooperative learning groups are more motivated, feel more peer support, perceive a greater probability of success and attain a higher level of social development.

Meanwhile, in the schools, the terrain is cluttered with conflicting and contradictory theories about self-esteem and ways to enhance it (Beane, 1991). When looking into the problem of poorly motivated students and those with low levels of self-esteem, one tends to think of inner city schools with a host of socioeconomic levels of society.

That the school plays a role in the development of self-esteem is not a recent idea. It has been part

> of educational thinking for most of this century, particularly since the 1960's when many educators came to realize that affect in general self-esteem is associated with academic achievement. Students having self-confidence are more likely to experience success in whatever they attempt (Beane, 1991, p.25).

Support and encouragement are necessary components in the process of growing up. Many social agencies and institutions are not meeting these needs, due to lack of concern or being over-burdened with federal and state mandates. This makes self-esteem a moral imperative for schools (Beane, 1991).

Self-esteem and motivation are not one dimensional, but are complex issues. Self-esteem and motivation are issues of a global society. Teachers need to be aware of how very important their actions are in providing for the complete development of the children whose lives they touch (Ostarello, personal communication, 1994).

Organizational skill is another student behavior that may contribute to success in school and therefore motivate students to learn. Organizational skills cannot be learned overnight; however, educators can set up conditions to help students improve these skills. It is important for students to see themselves as organized workers. Students need to be made aware that it is to their benefit to work harder and produce more (Gough,

1987). Ray Beck of Project R.I.D.E. (Responding to Individual Differences in Education) included from a literature review conducted by the Northwest Regional Laboratory (Beck, 1992), in Portland, Oregon, that classroom practices were identified to be directly linked with measurable improvements in student achievement. Improvement in student behavior resulted as well.

Students are many times surprised to find out that organizational strategies exists which can direct them in effective learning. Practice in using these organizational strategies will help them master the skills and apply them to new situations on their own (Abbamont and Brescher, 1990).

Chapter 2

Problem Evidence

When a person is motivated, she gives her attention to the task at hand. Several characteristics of low motivation observed by teachers in under-achievers are disorganization, inability to concentrate, and distractability (McCall, 1988). These researchers have chosen to examine behaviors that indicate these characteristics of low motivation.

In order to document the extent of poor motivation in primary students two checklists were utilized. Organizational skills and behaviors related to task were the two indicators chosen for investigation. Within a four week period, 100 primary students were observed by their classroom teacher twice a week and the results (see Table 1) of an organization checklist were compiled.

Table 1

Primary Students Organizational Skills

August 1994 - September 1994

Skill	Times Lacking Skill	Percentage
Inside Desk Neat	166	20.75%
Desktop Clean	240	30.00%
Work Put Away	180	22.50%
Supplies in Place	154	19.25%
Transition	278	34.75%

The results show that one-fifth to one-third of primary students have poor organizational skills. The organizational skills the students are lacking the most in are the areas of transition and keeping their desk top clear.

During the same four week period, 100 primary students were observed by their teachers twice a week and the results (see Table 2) of a task-related behavioral checklist were compiled.

Table 2

Observed Behavior of Primary Students

August 1994 - September 1994

Behavior	Times Lacking Behavior	Percentage
On Task	248	31.00%
Has Materials	142	17.75%
Completes Assignments On Time	150	18.75%
Starts Without Prompting	214	26.75%
Uses Time Wisely	208	26.00%
Responsibility for His/Her Actions	80	10.00%

The lack of behavior observed to be most prevalent was staying on task. Using time wisely and getting started without prompting are also areas of concern.

The data from both checklists showed differences between students organizational skills and task-related behaviors. The data from the organizational skills checklist revealed that 90 percent of high achievers demonstrate the skills with more frequency. Conversely, only 19 percent of low achievers exhibited the skills with more frequency. The behavioral checklist shows that

high achieving students exhibit the behaviors 90 percent of the time as compared to the low achieving students who exhibited the same behaviors 15 percent of the time.

Probable Cause

An analysis of anecdotal records, teacher observation, school records, and teacher peer consultation indicated the following probable causes of poor motivation in primary students. The two-income family is increasingly an economic necessity. As mothers leave home to enter the job world, children spend less time in the company of the person most concerned about their positive development. The two-parent family can no longer be assumed. One-quarter of American families have only one parent living at home, and it is estimated that by the year 2000 the percentage of one parent families will grow to between one-third and one-half of all families in the United States. The number of "latch-key kids" is on the rise (Kagen, 1990).

More students are coming from homes where English is a second language as evidenced by increased enrollments in the TPI (Transitional Program of Instruction) programs in our schools . Parental involvement in their child's education has declined. In the school setting the skills of listening and following directions are lacking. Social skills have shown a marked decrease as evidenced by student behavior.

When a person accomplishes something, learns a new

> skill, or succeeds, that person is often said to be motivated. When that same person gives up a task, is not able to learn a new skill, or fails, that person is often labeled unmotivated. It is as though motivation were the direct cause of behavior. It is not. It is simply a concept that is used, often with great difficulty, to explain why human behavior occurs. As defined by most psychologists and educators, motivation is the word used to describe those processes that can (a) arouse and instigate behavior; (b) give direction or purpose to behavior; (c) continue to allow behavior to persist; and (d) lead to choosing or preferring a particular behavior (Wlodowski, 1977, pp.5-6).

The literature suggests several underlying causes for lack of motivation. Disorganization is one characteristic of underachievers as seen by many teachers. Underachievers lack concentration and are easily distracted. They may be out of control, disruptive, aggressive, shy or withdrawn (McCall, 1988). As the data from the checklists revealed our findings concur with the article cited.

A second factor affecting student motivation is lack of student involvement. In many American schools, instruction involves doing things to students and not with them. According to Goodlad (1984) students are

typically passive instead of active participants in their own education. Students are not given responsibility for their learning. At a conference on academic effort and motivation in 1990, the following were noted: (1) the reward systems of many schools are failing because they do not encompass the needs of all types of learners, (2) often policies work against the best interest of learners by allowing students to avoid difficult academic tasks, (3) academic behavior is affected by peer pressure, and (4) teacher's expectations often lead to the Pygmallion Theory of self-fulfilling prophecies, thereby, limiting student's success in acquiring the necessary skills for learning (Tomlinson, 1991).

In addition to disorganization and lack of student involvement, school improvement strategies that boost academic achievement without increasing student effort have been widely endorsed by schools and reformers for the past 20 to 30 years (Tomlinson, 1991). While these efforts were well intentioned, they were counter-productive. These efforts did not improve school quality, instead, they made it easier to avoid hard work. For fear of blaming the students for their failure to learn, educators have been reluctant to endorse strategies that require hard work from students as a condition for learning (Tomlinson & Cross, 1991).

Another factor to be considered is self esteem. "People with low self-esteem develop behaviors and habits which reflect how they feel about themselves. Although they may realize that many of their behaviors are self defeating, they have difficulty changing them the longer they are part of their lives" (Purser and Windell, 1986, p.2). Perfectionism is a characteristic of many school systems. Outstanding achievement and expectations are rewarded and displayed (Krupp, 1992). An environment that demands perfection breeds tentative and conditional self-esteem (Krupp, 1992). In a study conducted by Bruns (1992), work-inhibited students had a more negative self-concept than did students who performed their schoolwork. The greatest difference was in self-esteem related to school.

The effects of family life on school success must also be considered. Poor self-esteem, as it relates to families, was found to be higher in work-inhibited students. According to Bruns (1992), demographic studies show that the number of work-inhibited students living in single parent homes was almost 50% greater than the general population. The greatest influence on a child's self-esteem comes from their parents. Mothers and fathers can negatively impact their youngsters self-esteem through their lack of acceptance, discipline, love, expectations and guidance. Children do not see

themselves clearly as having a role and a place in their world when they do not feel a sense of connection to a family, a history, and to a tradition (Purser & Windel, 1986).

Finally children are greatly affected by parental level of education. When parental education levels are low, children may arrive at school ill-prepared and may receive little supplementary help or support from their parents. Consequently, children will often fall behind and become frustrated. This affects the child both emotionally and physically (Beck, 1992).

It is indeed regrettable that educators as well as parents unwillingly lock students into cycles of negativism that prevent them from growing to self-sufficiency (Bruns, 1992).

> The structure of American education may be a contributing factor: "Vulnerable, sensitive, weakly assertive children have difficulty succeeding in environments that stress competition rather than cooperation, that are more negative than positive, that reject rather than embrace, that fail rather than encourage, and that blame rather than understand" (Bruns, 1992, p.64).

In summary, probable causes for poor student motivation include:

1. Students have inadequate organizational skills.
2. Students have not been required to be actively

involved in, and responsible for, their own learning.

3. School improvement strategies that do not increase student effort such as competition and grades.
4. Poor self-esteem.
5. The breakdown of family life affects a student's success in school.

Chapter 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Review of the Literature

For over a decade, several reports from national panels and commissions have shown that students' performance does not measure up to their full potential. Motivation was shown to be one of the main reasons cited for a lack of learning (Wlodkowski and Jaynes, 1990).

There are many definitions given for the elusive term motivation. According to DeCharms (1987), motivation is defined as an inner drive or impulse that causes a person to do something in a certain way. Hunter (1981) defines motivation as "a state of need or desire that activates the person to do something that will satisfy that need or desire" (p.4). Hunter further contends that motivation is learned, can be taught, and is the responsibility of the educator. Motivation, as described by Berliner and Casanova (1993), is a misunderstood complex concept. Each student responds differently. What is used to motivate one student successfully may fail to motivate another. Wlodkowski (1977) describes motivation as those processes that stimulate behavior, give purpose to behavior, allow behavior to persist and leads to the selection of a certain behavior.

As educators, we are continually striving to assist

our children to develop a life-long motivation to learn. Despite the fact that this may be difficult to achieve, research is currently available that addresses this issue. Concepts and strategies devised from research, while not definitive, may guide educators in promoting students to embrace academic learning.

Diverse positions exist explaining motivation. Each contains its own body of research. These theories, in many instances, overlap and can, therefore, be used in a cohesive manner (Wlodkowski, 1977).

DeCharms (1987) suggests that teachers can enhance motivation and assure that learning will occur by helping students experience personal causation... "Personal causation, a deliberate action to produce intended change, is a concept that blatantly trades on both a physical concept-causation-and a human modifier-personal" (p.3). Furthermore, a sense of personal causation must be developed prior to intellectual growth. Personal causation is not a single inherent characteristic: "It is unique to persons (personal) and involves a transitive relationship between the person and the world (causation)" (DeCharms,1987, p.8). Studies revealed that when teachers were given training in strategies promoting personal causation (teacher-student interdependence) three significant results were obtained. First, students' feelings of personal causation increased. Second, attendance and tardiness

were positively affected. Third, academic achievement was higher and had a long term effect. The resulting supportive climate helped students see school as a challenge rather than a threat, and helped students thrive by actively pursuing personal as well as group goals (DeCharms, 1987).

According to Hunter (1982), there are six interacting factors, all of equal importance, that have the power to increase students' effort and intent to learn. These factors are: a level of concern, the feeling tone, the feeling of success, the students' interest, the specific knowledge of results, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The students' level of concern is the first factor. Hunter defines level of concern as essential and stimulates students efforts to learn.

Second, is the feeling tone Students put forth more effort to learn if they find their environment pleasant and believe they will be successful. The way a student feels in a particular situation affects the effort that is put forth. Hunter (1982) discusses three feeling tones which children could experience: pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral. Teachers need to choose the tone most productive in terms of students' intent to put forth learning effort.

Hunter's (1982) third factor is the feeling of success. A student must give effort and also have a

degree of uncertainty about the outcome. If a learning task is easy and little effort is required, little success is felt, and a student is not motivated to continue. On the other hand, when effort is given, with no guarantee that the learning can be accomplished and it is achieved, the student feels successful and is usually motivated to continue. If students have experienced success in the past, they will try in future performances, even if there is a greater risk of failure. However, if students have failed in the past, they will be less willing to expose themselves to risk in the future. Teachers need to make success a result of effort.

The fourth factor is the students' interest in the task. This interest is not inborn, but can and should be acquired. Hunter (1982) gives three ways teachers can accomplish this: use students' interest in themselves, do innovative things to enhance the lesson without distracting from the learning, and use the novelty of the lesson and relate it to the student.

A fifth factor is the specific knowledge of results. Giving feedback allows students to feel that an improvement can probably be made. Students discover what is being done well, what needs to be improved, and most importantly, what needs to be done to increase performance (Hunter, 1982).

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, Hunter's (1982)

last factor, exist at opposite ends of the spectrum of learning. However, both are effective. Extrinsic motivation occurs when students learn in order to gain an external reward, such as a grade. Intrinsic motivation occurs when satisfaction comes from taking part in the learning process. The process, rather than the product, is the goal. The goal of a teacher is to help students move from completely extrinsic to more intrinsic motivation - from having to learn material to enjoying learning. Hunter contends that if the first five factors are in place, children will find learning more enjoyable. The student will then move from the extrinsic to the intrinsic end of the spectrum (Hunter,1992).

As a psychiatrist, Glasser (1969) supplies a theory which comes from discipline outside the school. The theory states that people have two basic needs, the need for love and the need for self-worth. In order to achieve a sense of worth, knowledge and the ability to think are needed. Therefore, schools are more directly involved with the need for self-worth.

Glasser (1969), in his Reality Therapy, states that more traditional educators feel that teachers should not become emotionally involved with students. Poor student motivation is given as the reason for failures in school and attempts to apply external pressure usually fail. Glasser feels that direct motivation can be produced

only with some forceful method: restrictions, rules, threats, or punishment. Glasser does not support direct motivation, rather he stresses student-teacher involvement.

Additionally, Glasser (1969) feels that if a child can succeed in school, there is an excellent chance of future success. The biggest problem facing schools is failure. Therefore, environments must be structured where children can succeed.

Lastly, Glasser (1969) contends that there must be relevance of school to life. When relevance is missing from the curriculum, so is learning.

When thinking of the relationship between love and self-worth, the term identity can be used. Schools must give children a road to follow for a successful identity. A philosophy must be implemented in the classroom, and recommendation for change must be within the framework which exists. Education must adapt a philosophy of involvement, relevance, and thinking combined into a total program (Glasser, 1969).

Children are born filled with wonder and are motivated to learn. Unfortunately, motivation seems to decrease as the child gets older. Wlodkowski (1990) gives three possible reasons for this lessening: the design of the graded school, the acquiring of advanced knowledge and skills, and the competition and disbursement of motivational rewards.

The first reason is the school itself. Children no longer work on a one-to-one basis, but are now part of a classroom environment with a possibility of a thirty-to-one ratio. In addition, everything done is now given a grade. Students face the reality of being constantly evaluated and compared with others (Wlodkowski, 1990). Second, there is an increased difficulty with advanced learning. Knowledge and skills become more demanding as students move along in an academic discipline. Many children begin to feel unsuccessful and become discouraged.

Last, students face everyday attractions and distractions. Decisions must be made daily as to how students use their time, energy, and attention. Many motivations other than learning exist in students' lives (motivation to play, be a friend, family member). Distractions of everyday existence have an important impact on students' motivation and can draw students away from the academic world (Wlodkowski, 1990).

Wlodkowski (1990), cites four major influences on a students' motivation to learn: the culture, the family, the school, and the child. In order for motivation to develop, there must be a harmony within all four areas. Wlodkowski contends that as children grow older, motivation becomes a personal characteristic. A child should enjoy the act of learning as well as the final product. A child who values learning becomes a lifelong

learner and is eager to embrace difficult and challenging tasks. Teachers can help to nurture motivation. There is no time line within which a child will develop a lifelong motivation to learn. Motivation is as much a learned trait as it is an inherited tendency. Wlodkowski discusses six guidelines for developing motivation:

1) know students are growing toward increased self-direction and effectiveness, and treat them accordingly.

2) model and share a value for learning.

3) model, acknowledge, and celebrate effort.

4) know children can learn effectively.

5) help students develop appropriate study habits

6) help students develop their identity as a learner.

Wlodowski (1990) suggests five classroom strategies which will build motivation and support students' learning: build a positive parent-teacher relationship, foster success in learning, reduce anxiety, overcome boredom and indifference, encourage effort and perseverance.

The affect of external rewards on motivation is controversial. Kohn (1993) feels there are four reasons rewards fail. First, rewards actually punish, as their use becomes too controlling. Next, their use creates anxiety in students, preventing them from enjoying the

task. It is also easy to ignore the reasons for performance when rewards do not work. A child may be having difficulty at home, and all the bribes in the world are not going to improve academics or behavior. Students, too, are discouraged from taking risks when they feel it is not worth their effort to do so. When extrinsic motivation replaces intrinsic motivation, results are not long-lasting, nor do they lead to deeper understanding.

Young children can learn without being given rewards. At any age, intrinsic motivation promotes productive learning more effectively than the use of rewards. The use of rewards for learning undermines intrinsic motivation (Kohn, 1993).

Kohn (1993) cites that Ames and Dweck, who have pointed out that we cannot explain a child's lack of interest in learning simply by citing low ability, poor performance, or low self-esteem. They suggest that students' interest in what they learn will diminish with increased emphasis on the rewards of academic accomplishment.

Many teachers use controlling academic strategies in the classroom as a means of survival. Kohn (1993) feels that controlling environments reduce student interest. Therefore, it is important that educators set up conditions that make learning possible.

Extrinsic motivators, such as grades, are

destructive to interest and achievement, as they focus on student performance rather than long term and high quality involvement in learning. As Kohn (1993) states, "Grades merely enable administrators to rate and sort children, to categorize them so rigidly that they can rarely escape" (p.201). According to Kohn, the use of comments should replace grades on report cards, because students become too preoccupied with grades. A classroom should feel safe to students so they feel comfortable enough to ask questions and seek help. Grades and tests reduce the chances that deep understanding occurs, and inhibits a truly productive evaluation from taking place.

Many suggestions are offered to teachers in regard to grading. First, Kohn (1993) suggests that the number of assignments that are graded be limited. Of grades given, a rubric with two or three gradations is preferable to A/B/C/D/F. Students should be tested only after learning the material, not while in the process of learning. Kohn also suggests never grading for effort, nor on a curve.

To help students learn, teachers must do more than avoid using rewards. Kohn (1993) suggests the use of collaboration, content, and choice. According to Kohn, cooperative learning should encompass most of the students' day. Teachers must also avoid using extrinsic motivators to induce children to work together. The

content of curriculum needs to be learner-centered. Teachers should use a variety of assignments, many of them hands-on, that offer the students a challenge. Each day should include a block of time in which children have a choice of activities. In addition, students can decide which book the class will read next, or can decide the topic of a writing assignment.

It is important that the school becomes a community where care and trust replace winning and losing (Kohn, 1993). Students need opportunities to discuss values and gain empathy and understanding for others. Class meetings can be held to make decisions, share news, and resolve conflicts. Unity building activities, such as a mural, class song, or book can help students come together. School-wide programs and regular cross-age interaction give students practice in learning to care about others. Prosocial literature can generate discussions about issues relevant to the child's own real-life concerns (Kohn, 1993).

According to Pecaut (1971), students need to be grouped before methods can be applied which will increase students' motivation. Students are grouped according to the developmental issue that is causing interference with learning. These groups are: trust-seeking, approval-seeking, dependence-seeking, and independence-seeking. Many of the emotional and environmental problems which cause students to work

below their potential were found to be motivational in nature. Founded in 1970, by Linnus S. Pecaut PhD., the Institute of Motivational Development's basic assumption underlying the theory of motivation is that "the underachievement is more a function of personality variables than it is of academic skill requirements, and that any effective program designed to improve attitudes and performance in school must deal with removing the emotional obstacles to achievement" (Pecaut, 1975, p.5)

Berliner and Casanova (1993), cite research involving questions which deal directly or indirectly with motivation. They identify the key issues as classroom environment, competitive grades, interest level, retention, inborn ability, and enthusiasm.

Can the learning and motivational strategies used by the teachers affect the learning environment? A study by Marshall (cited in Berliner & Casanova, 1993) deals with the differences in learning and motivational strategies and the effects the results have on the environment. Interactions, motivating statements, management, and teacher beliefs differed in the classrooms observed. In learning-oriented rooms, in contrast with work-oriented and work-avoidance rooms, there was a positive feeling about school. The teacher made sure students felt competent and took responsibility for their learning. Marshall's findings suggest "that our individual views of students probably

guide our relationships in the classroom - and that these relationships influence student behavior" (Berliner and Casanova, 1993, p.110).

Are grades undermining motivation? Butler's research (cited in Berliner & Casanova, 1993) deals with grades and suggests that teachers' habits may undermine students' performance and interest. Butler identifies two methods used by teachers to report performance. The first gives students feedback on how they are doing. The second uses relative, norm-referenced evaluations, such as grades. The researcher indicates that comparative judgements can hamper students' motivation and interest. On the other hand, task-involving feedback appeals to the students' needs to do well and seems to enhance and sustain student performance and interest. Students may put forth more effort to master tasks with such feedback, or at least to improve their performance. When assessing students, grades may be a requirement of a school system. However, the way daily classroom tasks, weekly tests, and homework are evaluated can be changed.

Can teachers "motivate" too much to keep students' attention? A study by Gardner (cited in Berliner & Casanova, 1993) shows that some ways which appear to motivate students actually interfere with learning. In order to keep the interest level high, information is sometimes given which, while appealing to the students,

is irrelevant to the subject material. Gardner thought it was often the irrelevant information that was remembered. Gardner concludes that interest is a better predictor of what is memorable than is the importance of the material (Berliner & Casanova, 1993). When connected to students' lives, topics become relevant.

Are we expecting enough effort from the students? A study conducted by Stevenson, Lee, and Stigler (as cited in Berliner & Casanova, 1993) shows that "the superior performances of Chinese and Japanese students in cross-national comparisons, as well as the success of Asian-American students in the United States schools, is not due to happenstance, luck, or innate ability" (Berliner and Casanova, 1993, p.124). Other factors, such as more time, effort, support, and the values given to education, all contribute to academic success. Educators can increase the effort required of students and in so doing stimulate performance.

Why do students' attitudes become negative as they get older? Hedelin and Sjoberg (as cited in Berliner & Casanova, 1993) investigated this question using attitude surveys. The surveys show that interest is maintained in reading and writing, while students become more negative about everything else. The analysis of the data suggests that "students' perceptions of personal interactions with teachers play a major role in determining their attitudes toward school" (Berliner and

Casanova, 1993, p.126). Students' sense of well-being is heightened in a setting in which students feel both successful and personally attached to the teacher. Students with high self-esteem and feeling of well-being display a positive attitude toward school. Achievement is most likely determined by attitudes as well as by ability. Students are affected by teachers' expectations. If teachers send a message that says motivation is important, then the possibilities are endless. Skill development is not the only indicator of academic achievement. Teachers must provide a balance. The condition necessary for students to develop the motivation to work is experiencing a sense of well-being in the classroom (Berliner & Casanova, 1993).

Can negative behavior be changed? Manning (as cited in Berliner & Casanova, 1993) used Cognitive Behavior Modification, whereby "people learn how to change how they think about the things they do, and reinforce or rebuke themselves" (Berliner and Casanova, 1993, p.128). Students change how they think about their behavior, and in so doing, changes in behavior occur in the classroom. Long-term results show that students seem to be more motivated to achieve in class, and are intrinsically rather than extrinsically motivated.

Ginott (1972) explains that to reach a child's mind we must capture his heart. Only if a child feels right

can he think right. Children need to feel that school is a safe place, that it is all right to make a mistake. The major obstacle to learning is fear: fear of failure, fear of criticism, fear of appearing stupid. To remove fear is to invite attempt. To welcome mistakes is to encourage learning.

Findings indicated that when people work together for a common goal, positive things happen. First, they express support of helping the group achieve its goals. In the classroom, students working cooperatively toward a group goal, see the importance of coming to class each day, completing schoolwork, and other activities that are valued by the group. The group working together produces more and better ideas than do students working alone or competitively (Slavin, 1983). Second, cooperative group members were more friendly, helpful, and attentive to one another and enjoyed their task more than did the competitive group members. Third, when individuals work together toward a group goal, they learn to like one another.

The Johnson's (1986) have a cooperative "Learning Together Model" approach which emphasizes five basic elements of cooperative learning that are a necessity for each lesson taught. These steps are: 1. Positive Interdependence. This procedure emphasizes that students must feel that they need each other in order to complete the group's task, that they "sink or swim"

together. 2. Face to Face Interaction. This step stresses student communication in discussing their findings, ideas, and what they are learning, with other group members. 3. Individual Accountability. This points towards the student's responsibility for not only helping other group members, but the student also demonstrates mastery of the acclaimed lesson. 4 Interpersonal and Small Group Skills. Effective communication, leadership, conflict management skills and trust should be directly taught to the students by teachers, and provide the motivation to use these skills in order for groups to function effectively. 5. Group Processing. Students must be given the time and process to analyze how well their groups are functioning and how well they are using the necessary social skills. This processing helps all group members achieve while maintaining effective working relationships among members.

Robert Slavin has made significant contributions to the linkage of cooperative learning and student achievement. He stresses two conditions that are essential if cooperative learning is to enhance student achievement. First, students within the cooperative groups must be working towards one common goal. Second, success at achieving this goal must depend on the individual learning of all group members. There must be individual accountability as well as group

accountability (Slavin, 1982).

Ginott's views of motivation are best summed up in the following tale:

> A fire broke out in a cramped attic. The firemen who rushed to the rescue found a man heavily asleep. They tried to carry him down the stairs, but could not, and they despaired of saving him. Then the chief arrived and said: "Wake him up and he'll save himself." The moral of the story is clear. Children bored and asleep will not be affected by a well-intentioned rescuer. They need to be awakened to their potential, and they will save themselves (Ginott, 1972, p.256).

Based on the literature reviewed, conflicting theories exist regarding motivation. It is the intent of the research group to extract those findings which may be most productive and useful for day-to-day teaching, and to assess the effects of the chosen strategies on student behavior.

Project Outcomes and Solution Components

A positive, noncompetitive environment appears critical for improving motivation. To achieve this in the classroom, cooperative learning techniques will be employed. As a result of using cooperative learning, during the period, October 1, 1994 through February 15, 1995, the targeted primary students will increase positive behavior indicative of motivation as measured

by teacher observation and checklists. In order to achieve this goal:

1. Teachers will create cooperative lessons.
2. Teachers will create a cooperative learning environment.
3. Teachers will model group skills.
4. Teachers will establish cooperative groups.

As a result of increased instructional emphasis on organization skills during the period of October 1994 through March 1995, the targeted primary students will show an increase in organization and an increase in the number of completed assignments as measured by teacher observation and checklists.

In order to achieve this goal:

1. Teachers will establish procedures for the targeted organizational skills.
2. Teachers will demonstrate the characteristics of disorganized and organized students.
3. Teachers will implement organizational strategies by setting goals and assessing students.
4. Students will use an organizational checklist to self-assess.

According to Grossnickle (1989), parents and educators must work together to establish realistic opportunities for students to develop and practice responsibility and self-management skills:

> Nobody has discovered the sure-fire secret to successfully motivating every student. Nobody has found the single formula that inspires self-motivated students. What educators and parents need, however, are some practical tools to help replace unmotivated students' patterns of failure with success-oriented cycle leading to achievement and self-motivation (p.7).

By helping students develop behavior patterns that will help them have success in school, we hope to improve their motivation. The positive, noncompetitive environment created by the use of cooperative groups should also increase the feelings of success and self esteem in the school setting. This should in turn improve the student's motivation for school.

Action Plan

Using cooperative learning techniques, the following social skills will be emphasized: six inch voices, taking turns, and use of encouragement. Cooperative learning will be implemented throughout the curriculum (Frank, 1988).

In order to facilitate cooperative learning, beginning lessons will contain ice breaker/energizer activities to help create a learning environment in which the students feel safe to interact. As students become more comfortable with each other, more challenging activities will be initiated by the teacher.

These activities will include deinhibitizers, trust-building, communication and decision-making/problem solving. Deinhibitizer activities lend time for confidence building in a supportive environment. These activities are generally more threatening, both physically and emotionally, than icebreakers as they require the participant to engage in more risks.

Trust is the cornerstone of group cohesion and cooperation. Without trust there can be no risk-taking and, therefore, no growth. Trust activities are used to work on developing trust in a gradual way through the use of activities which are both physically and emotionally demanding. They require risk, which invites fear. As the group is able to come together in a trusting manner, they are better equipped to embark on more frustrating endeavors.

Communication activities are designed to encourage sharing in both verbal and non-verbal forms. These activities can be frustrating, but the group is usually motivated by the task and tends to persevere.

In decision-making/problem solving the group is handed a dilemma or a challenge and asked to deal with it. In order to solve the problem, the group members must show an ability to cooperate, compromise, communicate, and reach consensus.

Within the classroom setting, cooperative learning will be utilized three to five times per week. In the

physical education setting, the physical educator will incorporate cooperative learning activities once or twice each week. Visual aids, such as charts and posters will be incorporated within the learning environment. Teachers will model group skills and establish cooperative groups.

Teachers will work on one of the targeted organizational skills every two weeks for ten weeks. The first skill will be having the students work on keeping the inside of their desk neat. The following two weeks students will work to keep their desk top clear. Next, students will focus on placing their assignments in a designated area. Weeks seven and eight will be spent on having students place their supplies in the proper places. Finally, students will be able to make a smooth transition from one activity to the next. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the expectations. Peer evaluation will be done the first week each organizational skill is introduced. Self-evaluation will be done the second week for each organizational skill. At the end of this period, the original teacher checklist will again be initiated for a four week period to assess student improvement of the targeted organizational skills.

Teachers will work on one of the targeted task behaviors every two weeks. Weeks one and two the students will work on staying on task. Weeks three and

four the students will work on having the materials necessary for class. The next two weeks the focus will be on students completing assignments on time. Students getting started without prompting will be the goal of the next two weeks. The fifth targeted behavior will be students using time wisely. Lastly, the focus will be on students taking responsibility for his or her actions. Self-evaluation will be done each week for the targeted behaviors. At the end of the twelve week period, the teacher checklist will again be initiated for a four week period to assess student improvement of the targeted behavior.

Assessment of students will be done in the following manner: student self assessment for organizational skills, teacher checklists for organizational skills and task related behavior, teacher observation, and anecdotal records (see Appendix B).

Chapter 4

Historical Description of Intervention

Our objective was to improve primary student motivation through the use of cooperative learning and teaching of organizational skills. Cooperative learning was used during the period, October 1, 1994 through February 15, 1995, to increase the targeted primary students' positive behavior indicative of motivation as measured by teacher observation and checklists. Also, during this same period of time, increased instructional emphasis on organizational skills was used. Our goal was for the targeted primary students to show an increase in organization and an increase in the number of completed assignments as measured by teacher observation and checklists.

In order to inform the parents that we would be implementing strategies designed to enhance student motivation a parental consent letter was sent home with the students (see Appendix A). Of the consent letters issued 96% were signed and returned.

Four percent of the consent letters were not returned. In our first grade classroom several parents returned letters signed but had additional concerns. One of these concerns centered around the interview process. They were apprehensive as to who would be involved in the interview, how long the interview would

take, and could the parents be present during the interview. Inquiries were made as to whether the interviews would be shared with the child's parents. Another concern focused on whether the use of cooperative learning would have an impact on their child's academic and social development. These concerns were alleviated when the teacher contacted the parents and explained the cooperative learning strategies and the expected outcomes.

A parent survey was developed in August 1994 (see Appendix A). This survey was sent home the first week in September to be completed by the child and his/her parents. The purpose of the survey was to address concerns and any apprehensions the students had. It was our intention to utilize the data generated from the survey to devise strategies and techniques to promote a positive environment that was conducive to learning.

In order to increase primary student motivation two lists were compiled to give the teachers involved in this project a sense of direction and focus. The first list centered on organizational skills and included the following:

1) Inside of desk neat
2) Desk top clean
3) Work put away
4) Supplies in place
5) Transitions

The second list dealt with task-related behaviors and was comprised of the following:

1) On task
2) Has materials
3) Completes assignments on time
4) Starts without prompting
5) Uses time wisely
6) Takes responsibility for his/her actions

Both of these checklists were used by the teachers for a four week period. The teachers used various ways to assess the task-related behaviors and organizational skills of the students. One way was to do a general sweep of the class. A sweep means to glance momentarily at each child throughout the classroom. Another technique was to assess the students as the particular task-related behavior and/or organizational skill occurred. An example of transition, a task-related behavior, was when students were asked to line up and get ready to go to physical education or when changing from one activity to another. These checklists provided the teachers with the necessary data.

As a result, the teachers were able to confirm that there was a need for emphasis to be placed in the areas of organizational skills and task-related behaviors. Once this need was established, each instructor began modeling the organizational skills and task-related behaviors desired in her classrooms. In situational

role playing students were involved in demonstrations of appropriate behaviors and skills. Conversely, inappropriate skills and behaviors were modeled too, helping the kinesthetic, auditory and visual learners.

Visual aids were able to be seen in the classrooms. Posters were displayed that showed the different components of the checklists (see Appendix B for reduced copies of the posters on the checklist). Not only was this beneficial to the average learner but it proved very helpful to the visual learner as well.

Once the students had a clear understanding of the behaviors and skills expected of them the next strategy was to incorporate student assessment. One organizational skill and one task related behavior was targeted and assessed every two weeks. Both weeks of the student assessment, the task related behavior was assessed by the individual student. Peers were not used for assessing the task-related behaviors as it was felt by the teachers that this area was very subjective and would be difficult for peers to assess. The organizational skill; however, was assessed by a peer partner during the first week and the individual student during the second week.

One task related behavior and one organizational skill were assessed bi weekly at first. Once completed, the process was repeated with student self-assessment done on a weekly basis. This took a total of eighteen

weeks.

To provide easy access to the checklists with a minimal amount of interruption students were asked to provide a magnetic clip to secure their checklist to the side of their desks. In the gym, checklists were kept in folders by their squads. Pencils were secured for the students with library pockets. Twice a day students assessed the targeted task-related behavior and organizational skill for that time period. All activity was stopped at the teacher's discretion and the students were asked to assess. As this process was going on the teachers noticed that the students were not accurate in their assessment.

Following the eighteen week period of student assessment, teacher assessment was once again implemented. The results were tabulated and compared with the original checklist, done prior to the intervention.

Cooperative learning strategies were used to teach social skills. They were also used to review and reinforce subject matter content. The skills chosen for emphasis were six inch voices, taking turns, and use of encouragement. Groups of two to four students were formed depending on the specific activity. Cooperative learning was used daily.

To teach these skills we started by creating a caring and loving environment. Expectations for the

students were posted around the room in pictorial and written form (see Appendix C). Teachers modeled the three skills to be worked on. T charts were comprised so the students could see how each skill sounded and looked (see Appendix C). Role playing was another technique used which actively involved the students. Once the students understood the skills, cooperative lessons were introduced (see Appendix C).

Various methods were used to monitor the six inch voices. One way was the use of a noise control student. This student's job was to walk around to all groups during an activity. If a group's voices became too loud, the noise control student would leave a non-verbal warning of a yellow ruler with the group. If the group received three warnings during the particular activity, the group would be dispersed and all members would have to work independently. Soft instrumental music was another way to monitor the noise level. If the group could not hear the music, it would make them aware of the volume and they would adjust it accordingly.

Teacher observation was done to monitor whether students took turns and used encouraging words. Along with this, the students also completed checklists at the end of each activity. Sometimes this was done as a group and at other times it was done by each individual.

Following each cooperative activity each group participated in group processing. This allowed the

students to think about the group's learning experiences. Students reflected on their acquired knowledge as well as on their practiced social skills. Group processing was done sometimes individually within the group, sometimes to be shared with the members of the group, and other times for the group to share with the entire class.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

The results show that all areas of organizational skills showed improvement. The greatest improvements were seen in the areas of Desktop Clean and Work Put Away. The least amount of improvement was seen in the area of Transition (see Table 3).

Table 3

Primary Students Organizational Skills

Fall 1994 & Spring 1995

Skill	Times Lacking Skill		Percentage	
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
Inside Desk Neat	166	90	20.75%	11.25%
Desktop Clean	240	64	30.00%	8.00%
Work Put Away	180	54	22.50%	6.75%
Supplies In Place	154	100	19.25%	12.50%
Transition	278	252	34.75%	31.50%

All of the areas of task related behaviors observed showed improvement of ten percent or more except for the area of responsibility for his/her actions. This area showed an increase of 2% in the number of incidences in which students lack this behavior (see Table 4).

Table 4

Observed Behavior of Primary students

Fall 1994 & Spring 1995

Behavior	Times Lacking Behavior		Percentage	
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
On Task	248	96	31.00%	12.00%
Has Materials	142	56	17.75%	7.00%
Completes Assignments On Time	150	40	18.75%	5.00%
Starts Without Prompting	214	64	26.75%	8.00%
Uses Time Wisely	208	96	26.00%	12.00%
Responsibility for His/Her Actions	80	96	10.00%	12.00%

The data from both checklists showed differences between students organizational skills and task-related behaviors. The data from the organizational skills checklist revealed that 90 percent of high achievers demonstrate the skills with more frequency.

81.50 percent of low achievers now exhibited the skill with more frequency. This is a 62.50 percent improvement from the fall. The behavioral checklist shows that high achieving students exhibit the behavior 87.50 percent of the time as compared to the low achieving students who exhibited the same behaviors 70 percent of the time. This is a 55 percent improvement in the task behaviors of low achievers. High achievers, however, showed a slight decrease of 2.50 percent in the frequency of these behaviors.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Upon reviewing an analysis of the data of organizational skills, the students' showed improvement in each area. The area of greatest difficulty for the students in the fall was transitions. This area showed only minimal improvement in the spring, whereas the other areas showed greater improvement. We attributed this to the fact that keeping one's desk top clean and putting one's work away were easier for the students to visualize. Conversely, transition was more abstract and thus presented more difficulty for the students. There were also many types of transitions which occurred throughout each day.

All of the task-related behaviors showed improvement from the fall except taking responsibility for his/her actions. This was attributed to the fact that even though the high achievers did not improve they were able to maintain and further develop the expected behavior. The low achievers showed a remarkable improvement in exhibiting the task-related behaviors. The accomplishments of the low achievers helped the classes meet the targeted task behaviors. There was a slight increase in the number of incidences of students not taking responsibility for their actions. Contributing factors observed by teachers were the facts that in the beginning of the school year the students were new to the classroom and were unfamiliar with

teacher expectations and many of their fellow students. As the year progressed, many students showed less inhibition as they became more familiar with the expectations and formed many peer relationships.

Social skills emphasized during cooperative learning appeared to have transferred to all areas of the curriculum. The amount of energy and teacher time spent on reinforcing organizational skills and task related behaviors decreased. The students did not consciously think about doing it, it became automatic to them. As the skills and behaviors were internalized the students became motivated. This was seen with the increase in test scores and number of assignments completed. Also the number of parent contacts lessened. Anecdotal records showed more positive behavior as well as teacher observations.

There was a big difference in the children's self-evaluation of organizational skills and task-related behaviors as a large majority of children were not being honest. We attributed this to the fact that many students thought they would be graded on these and the results would be sent home. Despite this, it still had a positive impact on the children as seen by the data collected in the Spring.

Consensus of all the teachers involved in the action research project was that this was worthwhile and beneficial to the students and should be incorporated

into future curriculums. It is recommended that all grade levels within a particular school work together on incorporating communicational skills, task-related behaviors, and cooperative learning strategies pertinent to each grade level. By providing continuity these skills, behaviors, and strategies will be reinforced and cause a ripple effect as the students progress throughout their educational career.

References Cited

Abbamont, G. & Brescher, A. (1990). Study smart. West Nayak, New York: Center for Applied Research in Education.

Abrahamson, R., Farr, Roger C., McGee, N., Roser, N., & Strickland,D. (Eds.) (1990). Language arts and reading series. Dallas, Texas: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Banks, J., Beyer, B., Contreras, G., Craven, J., Ladson-Billings, G., McFarland, M., & Parker, W. (Eds.). (1993). Communities near and far. New York: Macmillan McGraw Hill School Publishing Co.

Baratta-Lorton, M. (1976). Mathematics Their Way Menlo Park, California: Addison - Wesley Publishing Co.

Barnett, C., Charles, R., Eicholz, R., Fleenor, C., O'Daffer, P., & Young C. (Eds.). (1993). Addison - Wesley Mathematics. New York: Addison - Wesley.

Bean, R. (1992). The four conditions of self-esteem. A new approach for elementary and middle schools. California: ETR Associates.

Beane, J. (1991). Sorting out the self-esteem controversy. Educational Leadership, 1, 25-30.

Beck, R. (1992). Project R.I.D.E. responding to individual differences in education. Great Falls, Montana: Sopris West, Inc.

Bellon, E., Bellon, J., & Blank, M. (1992). Teaching from a resource knowledge base. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co.

Berliner, D., & Casanova, U. (1993). Putting research to work in your school. New York: Scholastic.

Bohen, D., & Huycke, M. (1990). Spelling series. Evanston, Illinois: McDougal, Littel, & Company.

Bruns, J. (1992). They can but they don't. New York: Viking.

Costa, A. Bellanca, & J. Fogarty, R. (1992). If minds matter. Palatine, Il: Skylight.

DeCharms, R. (1987). The burden of motivation. In M.L. Maehr & D.A. Kleiber (Eds). Advances in motivation and achievement (pp.1-20) Greenwich CT: JAI Press.

Durr, W. (1986). Reading series. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Foster, E. (1989). Energizers and icebreakers. Minneapolis, Mn: Educational Media Corporation.

Foster-Harrison, E. (1994). Energizers and icebreakers. Minneapolis, Mn: Fducational Media Corporation.

Frank, L. (1988). Adventure in the classroom. Madison, Wisconsin: Madison Metropolitan School District.

Ginott, H. (1972). Teacher and child. New York: Macmillan.

Glasser, W. (1969). Schools without failure. New York: Harper & Row.

Goodlad, J. (1984). A place called school. New York: McGraw - Hill.

Gough, P. (1987). The key to improving schools: An interview with William Glasser. Kappan, May, 656-662.

Grossnickle, D.R. (1989). Helping students develop self-motivation. Baltimore, MD: Educational Press.

Hazouri, S.. (1993). Warm up and wind downs. Minneapolis, MN: Educational Media Corporation.

Hoffer, A., Johnson, M., Leinwand, S., Lodhotz, R., Musser, G., & Thoburn T (Eds.). (1991). Mathematics in Action. New York: MacMillan / McGraw Hill School Publishing Co.

Holubec, E.T., Johnson, D.W., & Johnson, R. (1986). Circles of learning: Cooperation in the Classroom. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Hunter, M. (1981). Motivation theory for teachers. El Segundo, CA: TIP Publications.

Hunter, M. (1982). Mastery teaching. El Segundo, CA: TIP Publications.

Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs. (1994). Community profile of Orland Hills, Illinois.

Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs. (1994). Community profile of Tinley Park, Illinois.

Kagen, S. (1985). Cooperative learning resources for teachers. Riverside CA: University of California.

Kohn, A. (1993). Punished by rewards. Houghton, MI: Houghton Mifflin.

Lockhart, C. (1976). Discover intensive phonics for yourself. Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress

Maehr, M.L. & Kleiber, D.A. (1987). Advances in motivation and achievement. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Mallinson, G., Mallinson, J., Froschauer, L., Harris, J., Lewis, M., Valentino, C (Eds.). (1993). Science Horizons. Needham, MA, Silver Burdett Ginn Inc.

McCall, R. (1988, February). Kids who won't try. Parents Magazine, 116-120.

Morganett, L. (1990). Good teacher - student relationships: Key element in classroom motivation and management. Education, 2, 260-264.

Oak Forest Centennial - 100 years young. (1992, May 10). The Star, p. 10-13 & 25-27.

Pecaut, L. (1979). Understanding and influencing student motivation. New York: Institute for Motivational Development.

Purser & Windell. (1986). Building children's self-esteem. Marion, Ohio.

School A State School Report Card. (1993). Kirby School District #140. Orland Park, Ill.

School B State School Report Card. (1993). Kirby School District #140. Tinley Park, Ill.

School C State School Report Card. (1993). Forest Ridge School District #142. Oak Forest, Ill.

Skinner, E. & Belmont, M. (1993). Motivation in the classroom: Reciprocal effects of teacher behavior and student engagement across the school year. Journal of Educational Psychology, 4, 571-581.

Slavin, R.E. (1978). Student teams and comparison among equals: Effects on academic performance and student attitudes. Journal of Educational Psychology, 4. 532-538.

Slavin, R. E. (1982). Cooperative learning student teams. Washington, D.C.: National Education Association.

Slavin, R. E. (1983). Cooperative learning and the cooperative school. Educational Leadership, 3, 7-13.

Smey-Richman, B. (1988). Involvement in learning for low-achieving students. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Research for Better Schools.

Sparks, J. E. (1982). Write for power. Los Angeles, California: Communication Associates

Staff (1993, April). Southwest suburbs. Living in greater Chicago: Southwest suburbs, GAMS Publishing, Inc., 128-129.

Staff (1994-1995 edit.). Accelerated reader. Accelerated reading program. School A.

Tomlinson, T.M. & Cross, C.T. (1991). Student effort: the key to higher standards. Educational Leadership, Sept, 69-72.

U.S. Department of Commerce. (1990). Census of Oak Forest. Washington D.C., Bureau of the Census.

U.S. Department of Commerce. (1990). Census of Orland Hills. Washington D.C., Bureau of the Census.

U.S. Department of Commerce. (1993). Census Population of Orland Hills. Washington D.C., Bureau of the Census.

U.S. Department of Commerce. (1990). Census of Tinley Park. Washington D.C., Bureau of the Census.

Wenc, C. (1993). Cooperation: Learning through laughter. Minneapolis, MN: Educational Media Corporation.

Wlodkowski, R. (1977). Motivation. Washington, D.C.: National Educational Association.

Wlodkowski, R. & Jaynes, J. (1990). Eager to learn. San Francisco, CA: Jossey - Bass.

Appendices

Appendix A

Informed Consent
and
Parent/Child Survey

October, 1994

Throughout the school year, I will be implemen - ting strategies designed to enhance student motiva - tion. One technique that will be utilized is cooperative learning. Cooperative learning is a method of in - struction in which the teacher sets instructional goals utilizing social skills, positive interdependence, indiv - idual accountability, and group processing. Groups consist of two to five students working towards a com - mon goal to master content.

I would like to interview the students in order to assess the effectiveness of these strategies. This information will be used for my Master's paper for Saint Xavier's University. If your child does not participate, it will not affect his or her grade or their treatment in class.

Please keep in mind that all data will remain confidential. Your child will not be identified in any way. If you choose not to participate it will not af - fect your child; likewise, all results of this study will remain anonymous.

Thank you.

We will participate _____

We will not participate _____

Parent Signature

STUDENT'S NAME _____

Parent/Child Survey

This year, I have undertaken a project to improve children's motivation towards school. In order to do this, I need a better understanding of your child. Please read through and complete this survey with your child and return to school as soon as possible. Your assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated.

1. What are some things that your child is looking forward to this year?

   _____

   _____

2. What is/are your child's favorite academic subjects and what are some things they like about it? (Circle favorite subjects.)

   Reading _____

   Math _____

   Social Studies _____

   Science _____

   Spelling _____

   Handwriting _____

   Language Arts _____

3. What is/are your child's least favorite academic subjects, and what are some things that disturb him about it? (Circle)

   Reading _____

   Math _____

   Social Studies _____

Science _____

Spelling _____

Handwriting _____

Language Arts _____

4. Does your child have any concerns for the upcoming year? _____

_____

_____

5. Do you have any concerns for the upcoming year? _____

_____

_____

6. List any activities your child is involved in. (eg. music lessons, sports, scouting, youth groups) _____

_____

7. Do you and your child spend time reading on a daily basis? If so, how is the reading done, and for approximately how long? (eg. reading independently and/or being read to, and minutes per day).

_____

8. What responsibilities does your child have at home? _____

_____

_____

_____

**Please return by Friday, September 2nd.

Appendix B

Behavioral Checklist
and
Student Self-Assessment

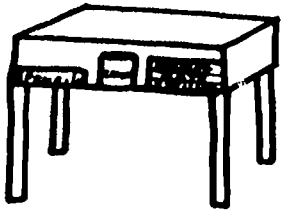
Organizational Skills Teacher Checklist	Inside of Desk Neat	Desk-top Clean	Work Put Away	Supplies in place	Transition quick and quiet	

Task-Related Behavior Teacher Checklist	Stays on task	Has materials	Completes Assignments on Time	Starts without prompting	Uses Time Wisely	Takes Responsibility for his/her actions

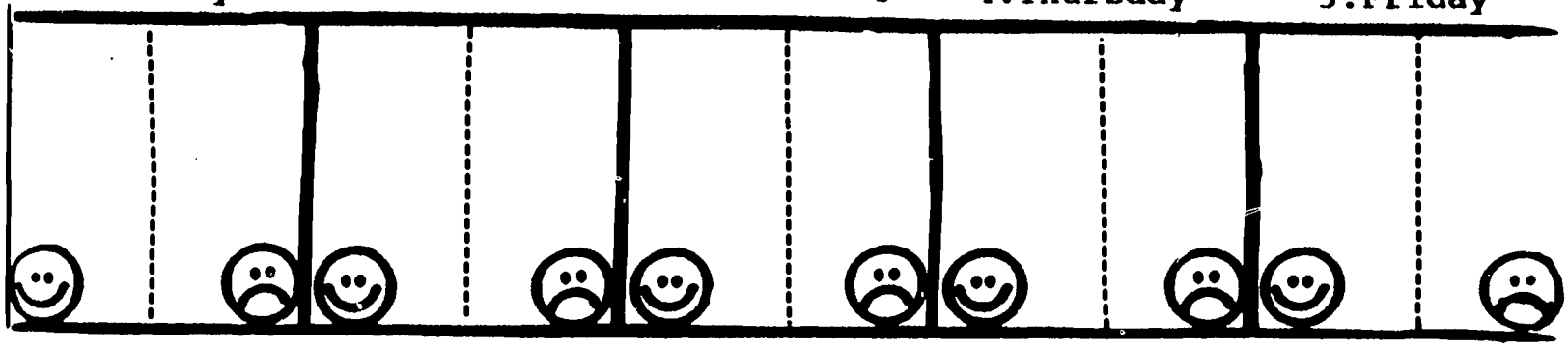
Goalsetter _____

Week of

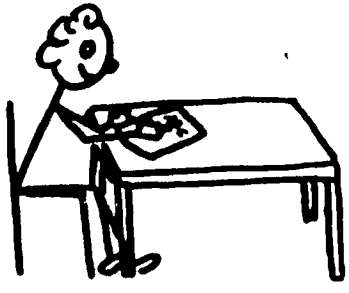
My desk is neat.



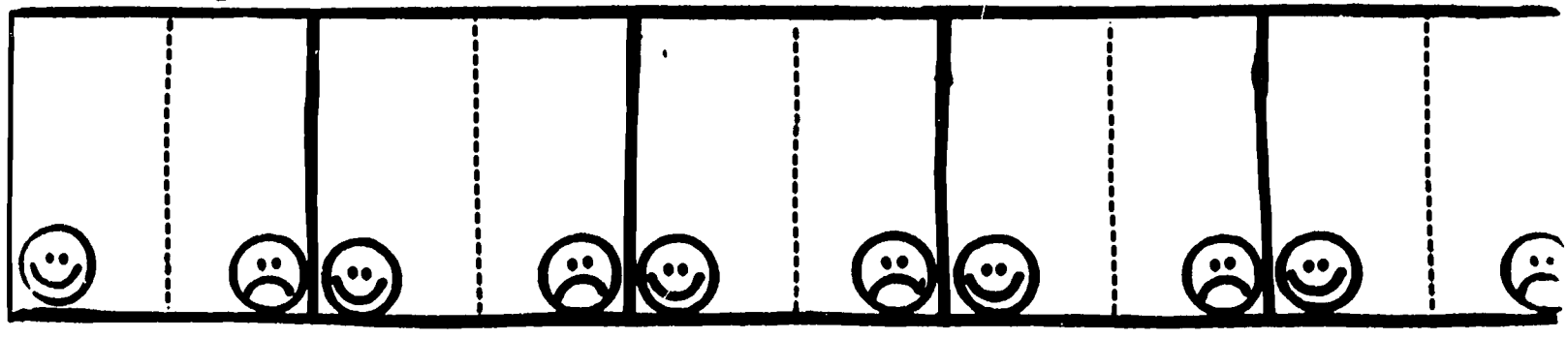
1.Monday 2.Tuesday 3.Wednesday 4.Thursday 5.Friday



I am staying on task.



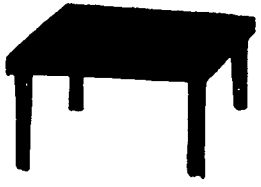
1.Monday 2.Tuesday 3.Wednesday 4.Thursday 5.Friday

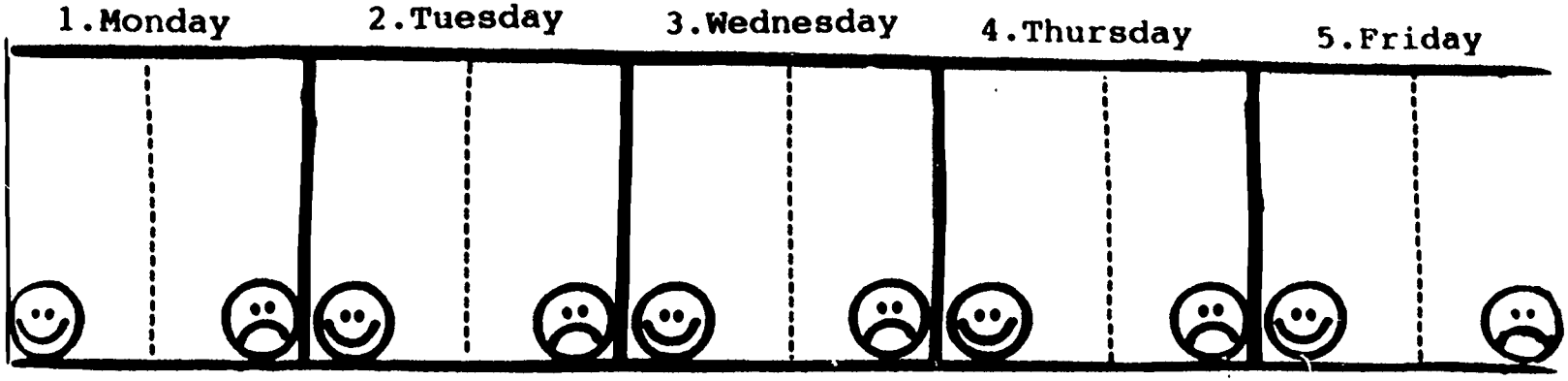


Week of

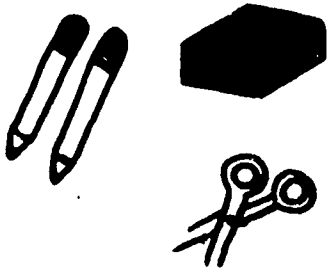
...lsetter _____

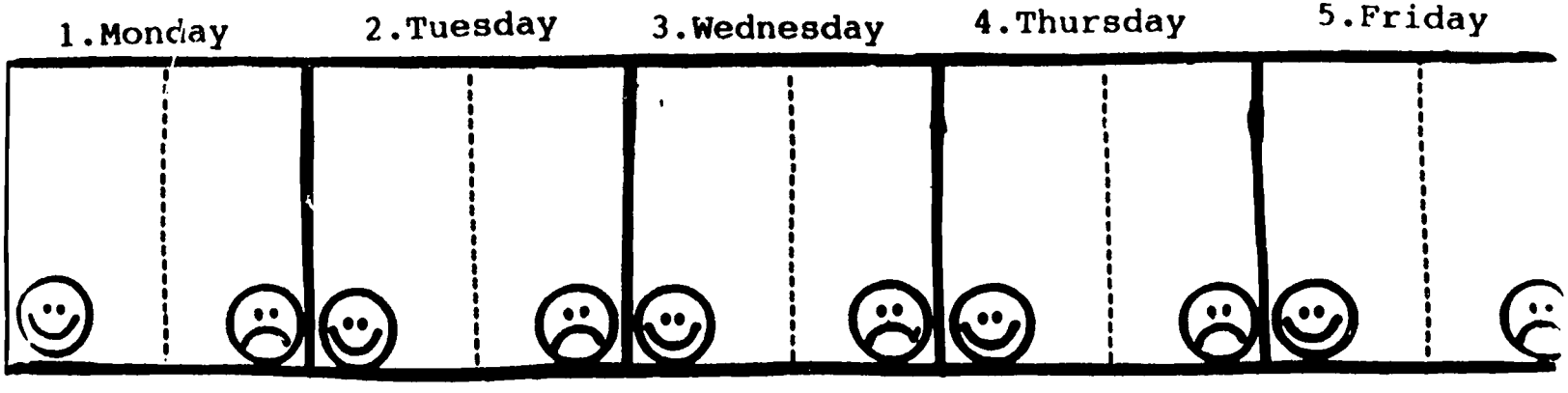
'he top of my
lesk is clear.





[have the
necessary
naterials.

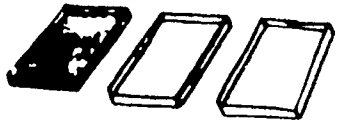


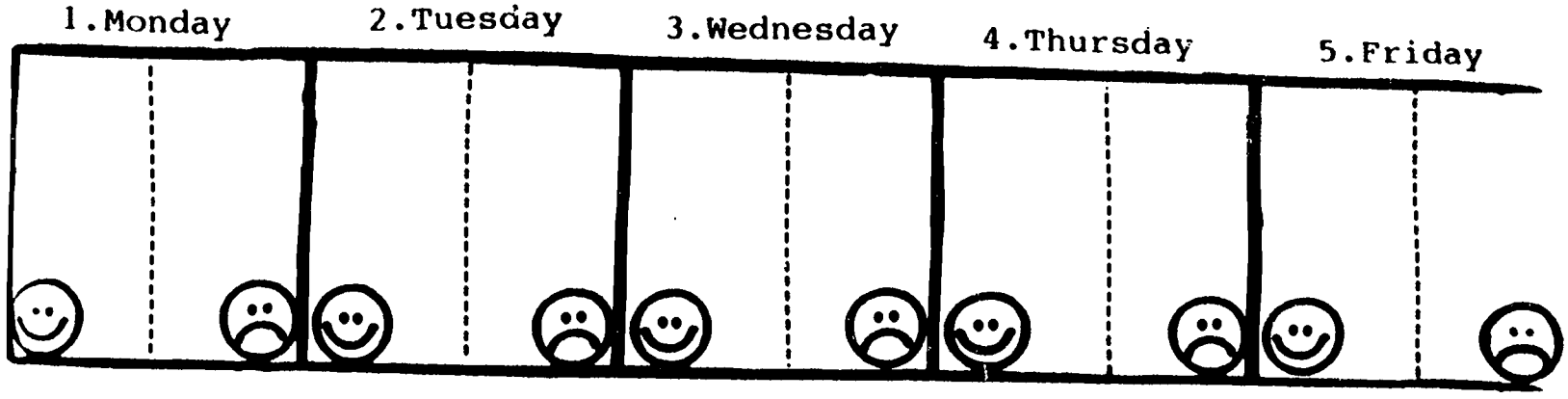


setter _____

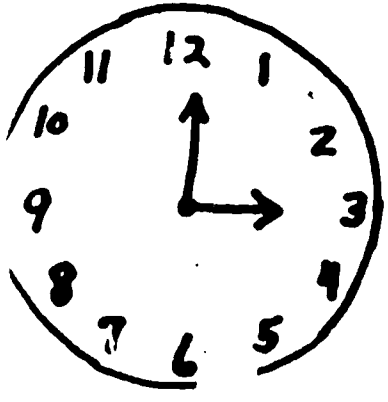
Week of

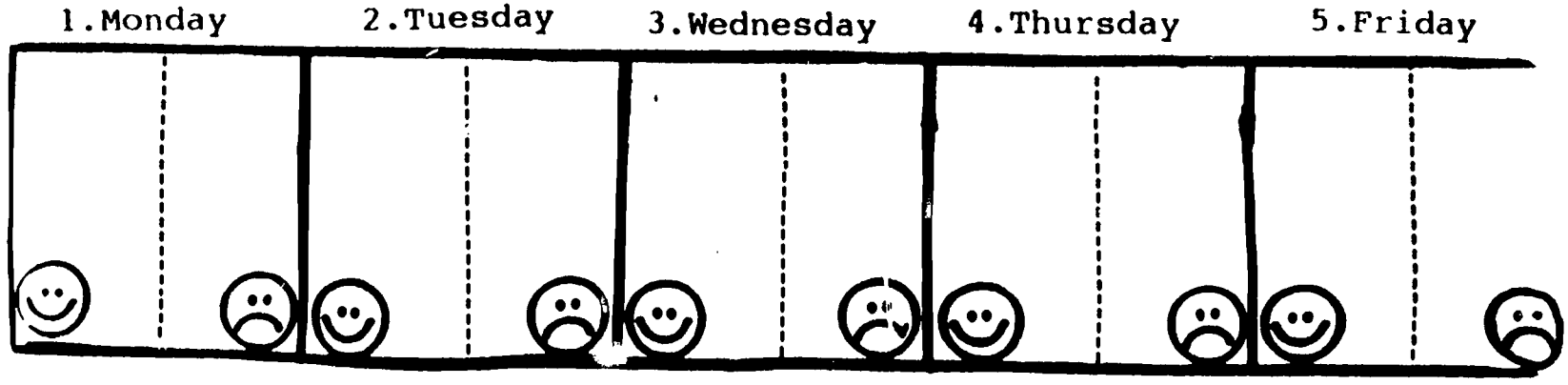
My work is put away.





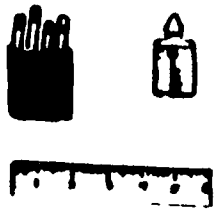
am finished
n time.





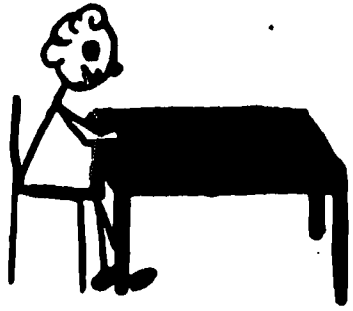
1. Monday 2. Tuesday 3. Wednesday 4. Thursday 5. Friday

My supplies are in place.



1. Monday 2. Tuesday 3. Wednesday 4. Thursday 5. Friday

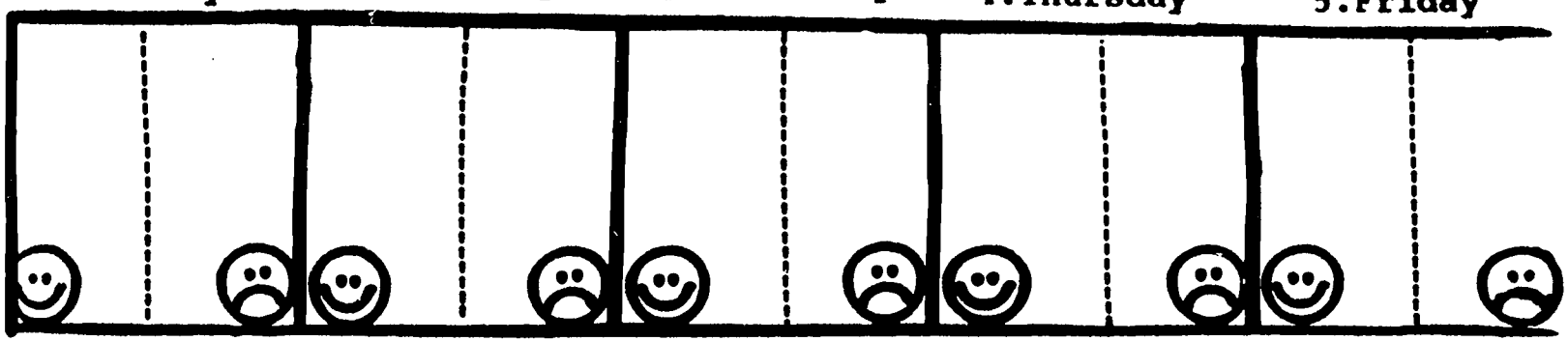
I get started right away.



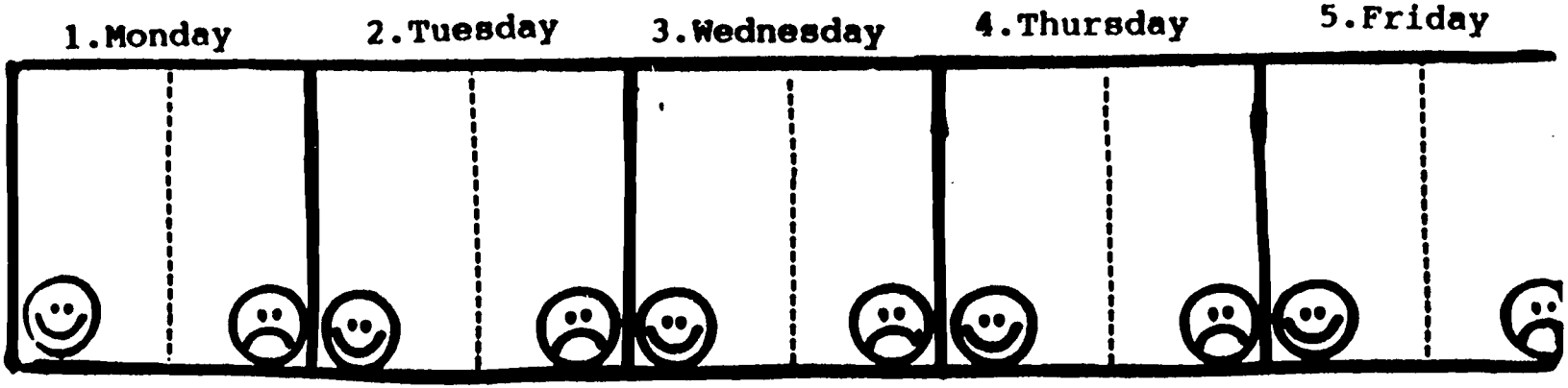
Week of

Goalsetter _____

My transistions are quiet and quick.

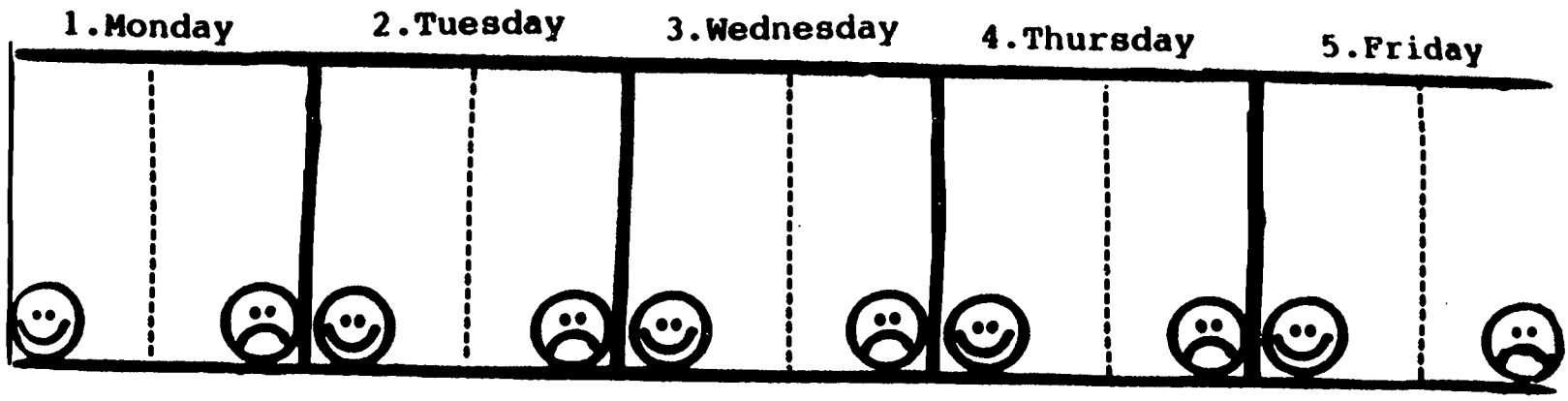


I use my time wisely.

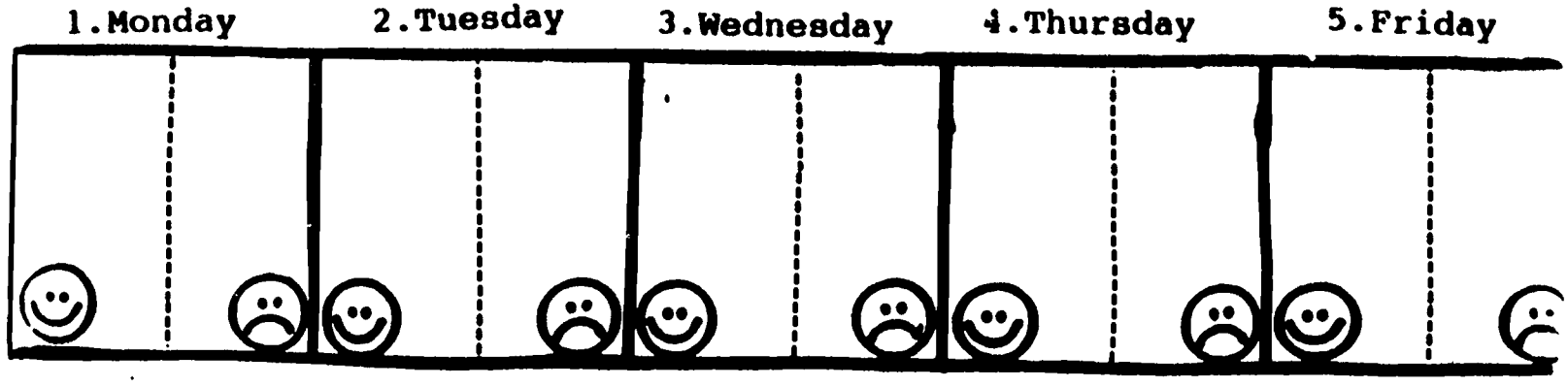


Week of

Goalsetter _____



Takes responsibility for his/her actions

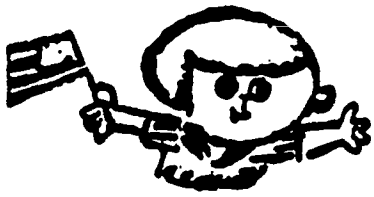


Appendix C

Cooperative Learning
Materials

Our Civil Rights

I HAVE A RIGHT to be happy and to be treated with compassion in this room: This means that no one will laugh at me or hurt my feelings.



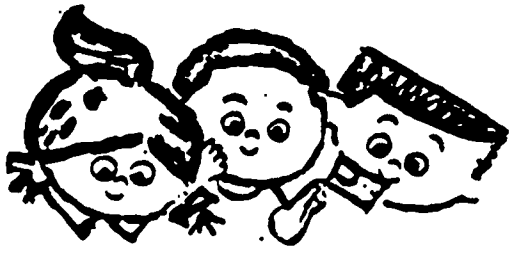
I HAVE A RIGHT to be myself in this room: This means that no one will treat me unfairly because I am:

Fat or Thin
Tall or Short
Boy or Girl

I HAVE A RIGHT to be safe in this in this room: This means that no one will:

Hit Me
Kick Me
Push Me
Pinch Me
or Hurt Me

I HAVE A RIGHT to hear and be heard in this room: This means that no one will:



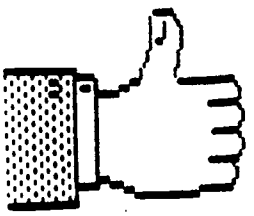
Yell
Scream
Shout
or make Loud Noises

I HAVE A RIGHT to learn about myself in this room: This means that I will be free to express my feelings and opinions without being interupted or punished.

Wow Way to Go You're Special Outstanding Excellent Great Cool Well Done Remarkable You Make a Difference I Knew You Could Do It I'm So Proud of You Fantastic You're Super Nice Work Looking Good You're on Top of It Now Good You're Flying Super You're Catching On Now You've Got It You're Incredible You Did It You're Fantastic You Can Do It Bravo You're Improving Hurray for You You're a Joy How Nice Let's Try Again Dynamite You're a Winner Good for You You'll Make It Happen Wonderful Neat Good Job Great Work Marvelous You'll Make It You're Precious Great Discovery Bingo You're Making Progress Hip, Hip, Hooray Superb Spectacular Terrific You Really Tried I Like You Thanks for Caring Super Job You're Sensational I Like Your Work You Care Good Work Exceptional Performance Fantastic Job You're Responsible You're Exciting Great Idea A Job Well Done You Are Fun You Tried Hard What an Imagination I Trust You You're Important You're a Great Friend You've Got a Friend You Make Me Laugh You Brighten My Day Look How Far You've Come Awesome You're Terrific That's Correct You're a Joy You're a Treasure That's the Best I Know You Can Handle It You're Growing Up Outstanding Performance I Respect Your Judgment You're On Your Way You're a Real Trooper You're Making Progress I Like the Way You Handled That I Knew You Could Do It Hurray for You I Love You That's a Step in the Right Direction How Smart of You Good for You You Mean a Lot to Me I Like You What a Good Listener Be Persistent

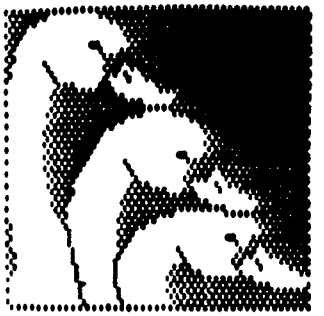
Words of Encouragement

LISTEN TO



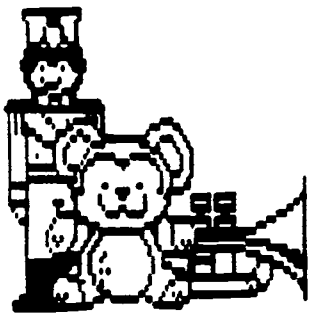
EACH OTHER

KEEP HEADS



TOGETHER

TAKE TURNS

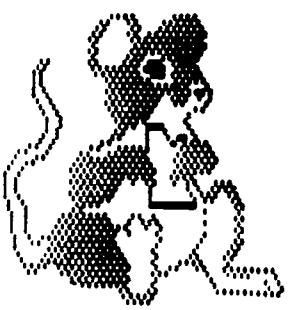


AND SHARE

STAY WITH

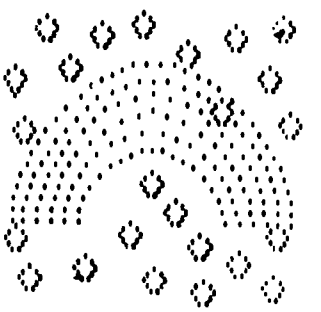
YOUR GROUP

USE QUIET

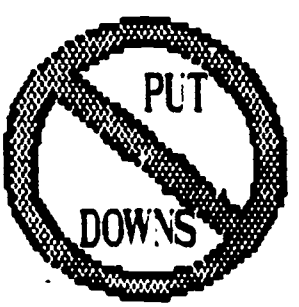


VOICES

USE



HAPPY TALK



Giving Put-ups T-Chart

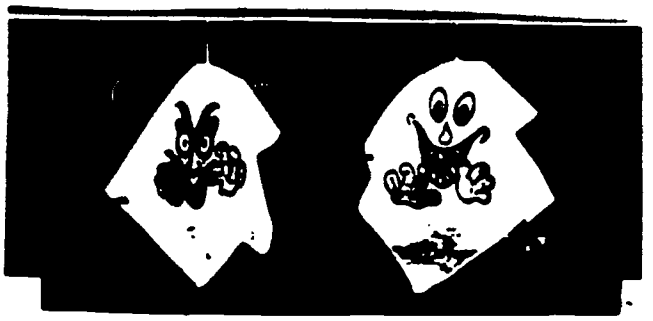
LOOKS LIKE...	SOUNDS LIKE...
using appropriate body talk • looking at the person to whom you're giving a put-up • using a friendly, sincere facial expression • facing and leaning toward the person	a friendly, sincere tone of voice saying • "Great job!" • "Keep going, you can do it!" • "That's a great idea!" • "Don't worry about it. Everyone makes mistakes!"
using put-up body language with all group members	

GIVE ENCOURAGEMENT

Looks Like	Sounds Like
Smiling	"Good job, Jose!"
Laughing	"Nice idea, Sam!"
Making warm faces	"You can do it!"
	"I believe in you."

TAKE TURNS

Looks Like	Sounds Like
People listening One person talking at a time The listeners are looking at the speaker	"Let's go around the circle." "You go first, then I'll take my turn."



STAGES IN TEACHING SOCIAL SKILLS

TARGET SOCIAL SKILL: WHISPER VOICES

STAGE 1 - THE HOOK OR SET:

In order to get the students' attenton to introduce "whisper voices", I found a Halloween item that proved to be most beneficial in teaching the social skill of quiet voices. It is a sound activated Strobie Ghost. I did not tell the class that it was going to be turned on when they came into school. When they came in, of course, the ghost went off. We practiced for the first part of the morning to see if we could be quiet enough for the ghost not to go off.

STAGE 2 - TEACH THE SKILL

I used a T-chart to generate ideas of the specific behaviors of "whisper voices". The class was asked what they thought a whisper voice would look like. We brainstormed this idea, then we did the same for what it would sound like. We decided on the best choices. We wrote them on a display chart, and listed them in their journals for easy reference. Using the "fishbowl" technique, students demonstrated what whisper voices look like.

STAGE 3 - PRACTICE

Did a partner reading activity. As they did the assigned reading, I walked around and observed their use of the whisper voices. When reading was completed, we discussed their whisper voices. Discovered that it was not easy to keep quiet voices. But, everyone seemed to like the fact that they were able to read and listen without being distracted by someone else who might be talking too loud. Also did a round robin. Class was put in groups of three. Roles of reader, recorder, and observer were assigned (see attached). Comprehension questions for the assigned reading were assigned. After each question was completed, feedback was given by the observer, and the roles then changed. The Strobie Ghost was used at various times throughout the day.

STAGE 4 - OBSERVATION

As students practiced using whisper voices during the above activity, the observers had a checklist. The group took

some time to discuss the results and decided what areas needed improvement.

STAGE 5 - REFLECTION

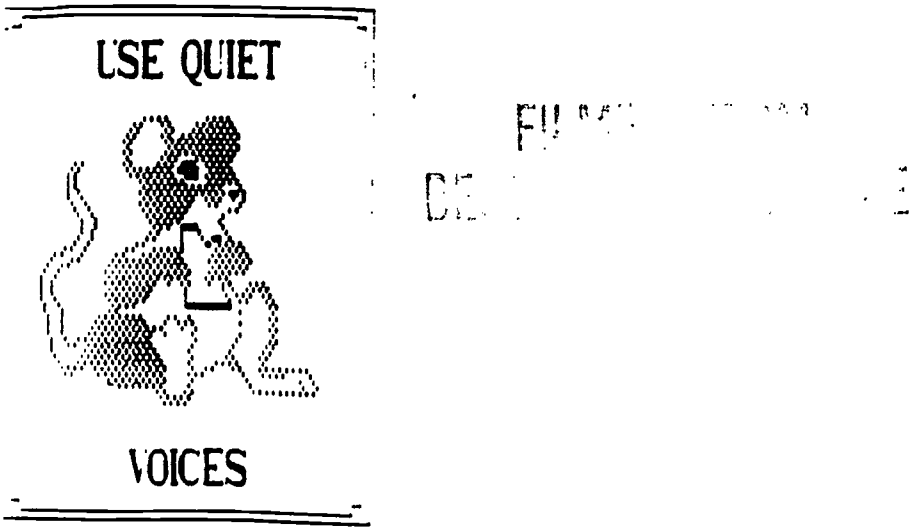
Individual students reflected on their use of whisper voices by using the attached reflective log. The group reflected by using the attached rating scale.

STAGE 6 - RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATION

Recognition will be received from the group members. Group members will come up with a sign of encouragement when something is done well using an ennergizer. Students will appraise their own performance and assess the quality of their own work.

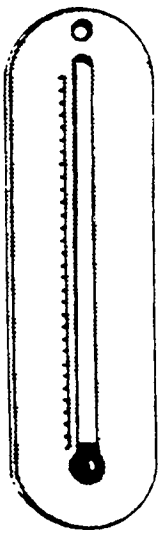
STAGE 7 - TRANSFER

Students should be able to transfer the skill of 'whisper voices" outside of my classroom. This should carry over when they are in any of the specials. Upon returning from classes, students will be encouraged to share their use of this social skill.



ARE WE HOT?

We were _____
in using 6" voices.



- Hot

- Warm

- Cool

- Cold

Shake On It

Time:

4 to 5 minutes

Number of People:

Unlimited

Materials/Preparation:

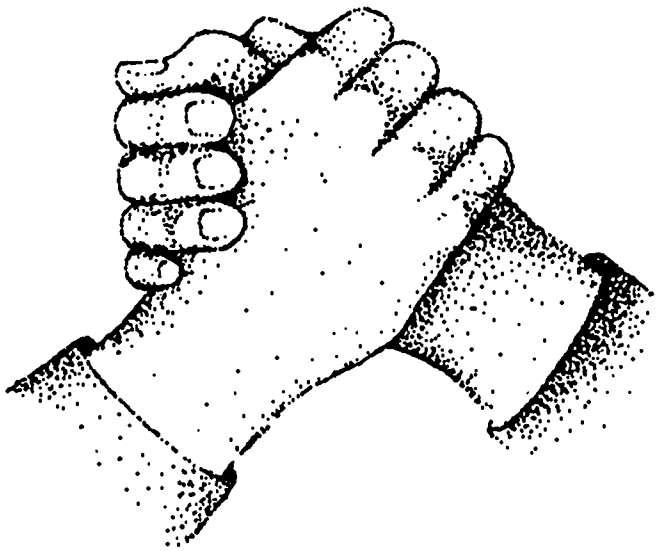
None

To Begin:

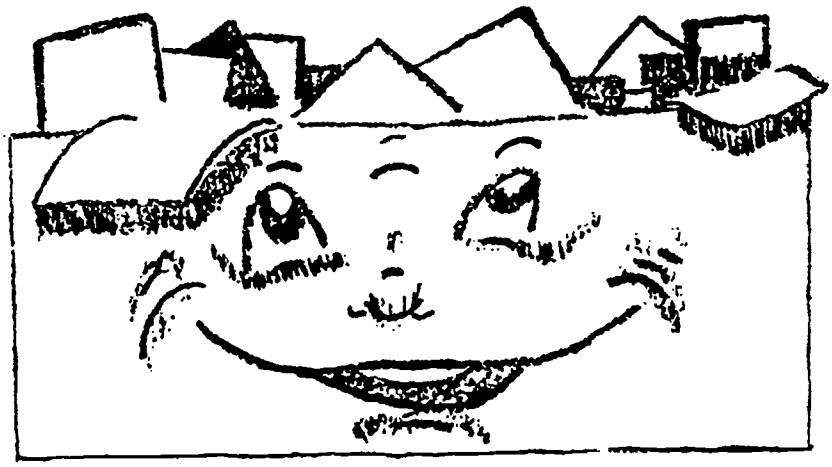
- Ask the participants to find a partner
- Tell the participants to think of one idea or activity that they will take home to their own setting and use.
- Instruct partners to take turns telling what they plan to use and how, and to shake on it.
- Explain to the participants that the handshakes are their contracts.

To End:

- Wish the participants good luck on fulfilling their contracts.



Happy Grams



Number of People: Unlimited

Materials: A box

Time: 1 - 5 minutes

Directions:

1. Keep a Happy Gram post office box (could be a shoe-box or another box) with a slit in it large enough for the "Happy Grams" to go through.
2. Cover the box with some colorful paper and make sure that it has a lid that will lift.
3. Provide a minute or two every couple of days for people to have "Happy Grams" read aloud to them.
4. Students should be encouraged to put a Happy Gram in the box to another participant anonymously with some message of thanks or praise or comment on something positive, in an effort to make sure that every participant receives a Happy Gram. The leader can participat · as well.

Kick the Can't

Time:

5 to 15 minutes

Number of People:

Unlimited

Materials/Preparation:

Small pieces of paper, trash can

To Begin:

- Give each person a piece of paper and instruct them to write down something they think they can't do.
- Place the trash can in the center of the room. Instruct the participants to put their can't dos in the trash can and give the can a good kick.... That is, kick the can't.
- Tell the participants to say to themselves, "I can do it."
- Ask the group to say together, "I can do it."
- Ask the group to say it louder.
- Lead the group in applause.

To End:

- Ask for volunteers to share a time when they thought they couldn't do it and then found out they could.

Put Downs or Put Ups?

Number of People:

Unlimited

Materials:

Bowl or bag to put slips of paper in

Purpose:

To sensitize the participants to the effect of put-downs, as well as to practice distinguishing between a put-down and a compliment

Directions:

1. Ask the members to make a list of different compliments they could give to someone.
2. Then have the members make a list of "put downs" they have heard in the past weeks.
3. These are then placed on strips of paper and put in a bowl or bag.
4. The slips are drawn out one at a time and read aloud.
5. The group decides whether the slip of paper reflects a compliment or a put down.
6. If it is a put-down, the group is to reword it so it can be a PUT-UP! This gives everyone practice in discriminating between the difference between a compliment and a put-down.

Discussion:

This should include an opportunity to talk about how it feels to be put down and what kinds of reactions are appropriate, as well as inappropriate when that happens. A board or flip chart can be kept with the kinds of PUT-UPS the group created.

"Fuzzy" Co-op

Purpose

To develop the positive in the group by experiencing that it is easier to work together when we realize the people around us appreciate our good qualities.

Materials

Two soft balls (any size)

Procedure

1. Form two circles.
2. Give one ball to each circle.
3. Tell the class we are going to pass the ball to those on our right, and that *as* we pass it to them, we are to say something nice about them.
4. Now pass the ball to the *left*, and say something nice about those on your left.

Suggestions for Discussion

Thank the class and tell them that people can realize many good things about each other and themselves when they are members of a group.

Do you like to work with someone who you think does not like you? Why not?

Living Class Tree

Number of People: 5 - 50

Materials: Small post-it notes or tape and small 1" squares of paper

Time: 10 minutes

Directions:

1. Give the participants either several post-it notes or small squares of paper with tape.
2. Instruct the participants to write a positive characteristic on each square about someone in the room—without using any names.
3. Ask for a volunteer to stand in front of the group with arms stretched out on hips, simulating the post of a tree.
4. Ask the group to call out characteristics that they think make for a good helper, listener, or friend. As the characteristics are called out, anyone with those on their squares of paper should stick it on the living tree. You can decide if synonyms are acceptable.
5. At the conclusion of sticking characteristics on the tree, a summary can be made by the tree calling out all the characteristics of a positive helper, friend, or listener.

Alphabet Race

Purpose

To work together and to treat our teammates well.

Materials

Chalkboard

Chalk

Procedure

1. Divide the group into three teams.
2. Line up each group, in relay order, in front of the chalkboard; provide a piece of chalk for each team.
3. Tell the group that we are going to write the alphabet on the board.
4. Each team member is to write only one letter; the next member writes the *next* letter in order. (Example: first, A; second, B; third, C.) Keep going until you have finished the alphabet.
5. The first team finished is the winning team.

Suggestions for Discussion

What did people say to you when you were on the team that encouraged you? That discouraged you?

Do most people try their hardest when they are on a team? What does "their hardest" mean? (In a classroom, children volunteer more readily when a question is general in nature. They will risk giving information when it doesn't apply just to them.)

How do you like people to treat you when you are on their team?

Are teams always fair? What can you do when they are not?

"Blind Man's" Cooperative Walk

Purpose

To allow the class to experience working together and to experience the importance of trust.

Materials

Blindfolds for half of the class

Procedure

1. Divide the class into partners.
2. Tell them to decide who will go first. (This is an interesting process to observe. If necessary, limit time to fifteen seconds for this choice to be made).
3. The person to go first will be given the blindfold to put on.
4. Tell the class that they are to take their partners on a "Blind Man's" Cooperative Walk around the room. Their responsibility is to protect their Blind Man from any danger. Ready? Go! Give them just a few minutes.
5. Reverse the roles for the next walk.

Note: Some groups, after a few turns around the room, can be moved to the hallway or playground areas.

Suggestions for Discussion

How did it feel to be blind? What was the hardest part of this activity?

Did you learn anything in this activity that could help you this coming week?

Activity 38

How Do You Measure Up?

Purpose

To allow students to cooperate with a partner in a helping manner; to share, take turns, and speak to each other in a kind way.

Materials

Two pieces of masking tape per student

Procedure

1. Tell the children to find someone whose thumb is the same size as theirs. (This is a good way to choose partners!)
2. Explain that they are going to do some estimating today and they are going to help each other.
3. Demonstrate how to do the activity with one of the students and yourself:

   Say, "I am going to guess how tall I am by putting two pieces of tape on the floor, one where I think my head would be and one where my feet would be. Then I will lie down between the two points and my partner will tell me if I am right or wrong and help me if I need it. We will take turns."

4. Have the class measure height. (Vary the activity by estimating the length of their arms, feet, legs.)

Note: This activity is great for the loners in your class to feel included in a non-threatening way.

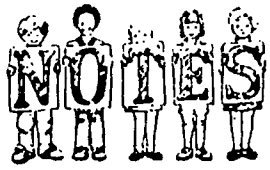
Suggestions for Discussion

Were you helpful to your partner? How?

Were you polite and kind?

Were you surprised by your own measurements?

Did you think you were shorter or taller?



GRADES K-1

THE BUDDIE GAME

Meet a friend! Choose a partner! Tell each other your name. Tell each other something you like about yourself. Let your partner tell you something he/she likes about himself/herself. When the whole group gets back together, let anyone who would like to share what they liked with the group.
The teacher will have made a large smiling face on chart paper. When students share these qualities whith the group, the teacher will write these down on the smiling face. The smiling face can be displayed in the classroom or in the hallway.

WHO IS THIS FRIEND?

The class will sit in a circle on the floor or on their chairs. They will be reminded that they must be good listeners in order to play this game. The teacher will then begin the game by saying WHO AM I? I HAVE.....then the teacher will begin describing a certain child in the classroom. It is a good idea to begin by using adjectives which describe the persons personality, and then work into physical attributes. When the teacher has finished describing that particular student she will say WHO AM I? The students will then raise their hand and take only one guess. When the student has been identified his/her name will go on the board and the game will continue until all the students have been described.

GRADES 2-3

BAG OF GOOD FEELINGS

Each student will be given a brown lunch bag. They will write their name on the bag and color and decorate it. They will then open the bag and tape it to the side of their desk. The teacher will then put the students into groups of four or five students. Each student will be given one small slip of paper for each student. They can cut squares out of notebook paper or construction paper. On each strip of paper, they are to write one nice compliment to each member of their group. They will then give the slips of paper to that particular student who will then place the slips in their paper bag. The teacher will then explain to the class that each of them will have their own bag of good feelings. They will be encouraged to "dig" into their bag and take out a slip to read to themselves when they are feeling low or down in the dumps.

A FRIENDLY SCAVENGER HUNT

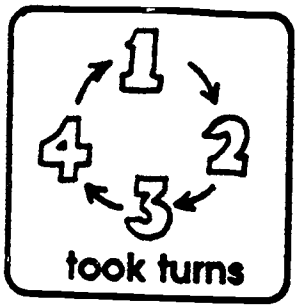
Students will work in pairs going around the class interviewing each other and getting to know their classmates by filling out the scavenger hunt list on the following page. The teacher will set a time limit to see who can find the answers to the twenty-five items on the list. When the time is up, a class discussion will form going over orally all the points on the hunt list. This will not only be fun, but a good way for everyone to become acquainted with each other.

Today I really helped my group by . . .

Today I learned . . .

"How did we do?"

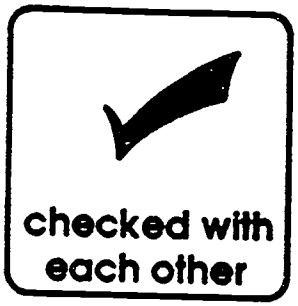
1. We




Yes


No

2. We




Yes


No

3. We


Yes


No

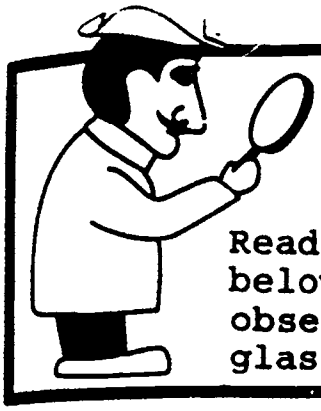
4. We


Yes


No

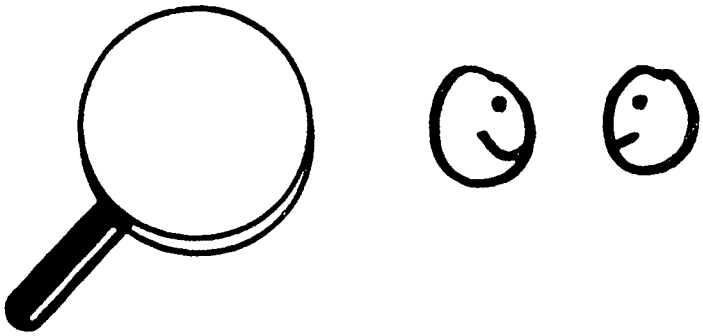
Signed: _____ _____ _____

_____

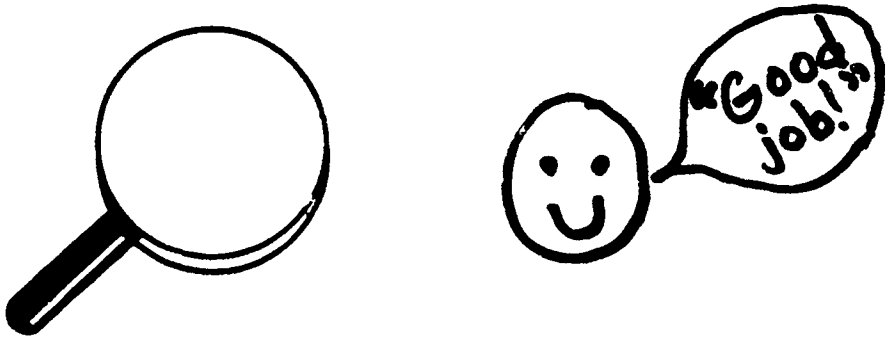


Who Did It?

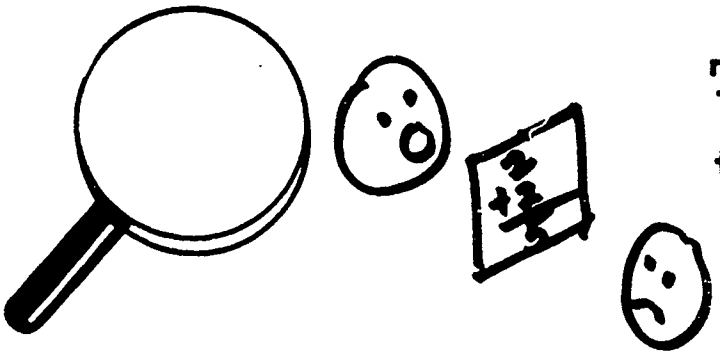
Read each "Happy Talk" behavior listed below. Write the name of the person you observed using "Happy Talk" in the "spy glass" next to the behavior you saw.



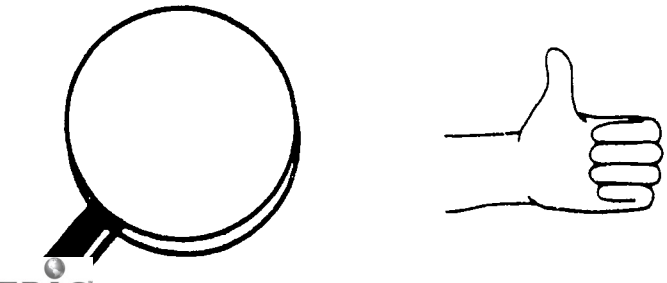
Smiled at someone.



Gave a compliment



Told someone "It's O.K to make a mistake."



Gave a "thumbs-up".