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## The Selah Study Skills Program A Total Approach to Aid Students with Learning Disabilities

J. Roger Strate  
*Central Washington University*

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THE SELAH STUDY SKILLS PROGRAM  
A TOTAL APPROACH TO AID STUDENTS  
WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

---

A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Graduate Faculty  
Central Washington State College

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Education

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by  
J. Roger Strate  
July 18, 1969

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Kenneth R. Berry, COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

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William Gaskell

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Lloyd M. Gabriel

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For their help in preparing the slide-tape production on which this thesis is based, the author wishes to express his appreciation to Charles McNurlin, Superintendent of Schools; Robert Kellman, Assistant Superintendent; Ted Hendrickson, Principal, Sunset School; Jeanne Guthrie and Jeanette Johnson, Elementary School Study Skills Teachers; Helen Dunn, High School Study Skills Teacher; and Larry George, Elementary and Junior High School Art Teacher, all of School District #119, Selah, Washington; and to Dr. Lloyd Gabriel and Dr. William Gaskell for their encouragement during the preparation of the manuscript.

The author also wishes to express his deep gratitude to Dr. Kenneth Berry of Central Washington State College for his unflinching and freely given guidance and assistance throughout the writing of this thesis.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED . . . .	1
The Problem . . . . .	1
Definitions of Terms Used . . . . .	2
Dyslexia . . . . .	2
Communication . . . . .	2
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE . . . . .	3
Conclusion . . . . .	7
III. PROCEDURES . . . . .	10
IV. EVALUATION OF PRODUCTION EFFECTIVENESS . . . . .	12
Conclusion . . . . .	13
Summary . . . . .	14
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	16
APPENDIX A. Model of Communication . . . . .	19
APPENDIX B. Pre-Test and Post-Test . . . . .	20

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
I. Analysis of Production Effectiveness:	
Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test . . . . .	15

## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Public relations and communication have become an integral part of the school system. Because of the higher plane of education of the parents of today and their interest and knowledge of the educational process, it is imperative that the schools take every opportunity to inform the public about new educational techniques.

#### I. THE PROBLEM

In 1965, School District #119, Selah, Washington, initiated an eclectic approach to alleviate learning disabilities referred to as dyslexia. The purpose of this thesis was to produce a slide-tape that will inform educators and the public in general about the following five areas of the study skills program: (1) why and how the program was started, (2) identification, testing, and diagnosis of the disabled learner, (3) educational therapy used, (4) supportive educational therapy used, and (5) evaluation and prognosis of the Study Skills program. The measure of effectiveness of the presentation was determined by (1) giving the audience a test before viewing the slide-tape, (2) giving the audience a test after viewing the slide-tape, and (3) comparing the pre-test and the post-test.



## II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Dyslexia. The term "dyslexia" has many different definitions, depending on what authority one reads. The author discussed this with Mrs. Jeanne Guthrie, the originator of the Selah study skills program. She stated the meaning of the term in relation to the Selah study skills program as: a condition in which an otherwise alert, intelligent child is badly handicapped in the areas of reading and written expression, even though he has been taught by the best of conventional methods.

Communication. Throughout the report of this study, the word "communication" shall be interpreted as meaning the act of conveying a message from a source to a receiver.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Due to the fact that public schools rely primarily on public support, either directly or indirectly, it is rather absurd to assume that we should, or even could, divorce school activity or planning from the community. Sumption and Engstrom stated this idea as follows:

The concept, in brief, is that of shared ownership of the educational enterprise. It regards each individual in the school community as a part owner of an educational venture. He is a shareholder by virtue of the fact that he pays taxes to support education in his community (6:2).

If we accept the premise of shared ownership, then we must agree that the stockholders have a right to know and be involved in making decisions concerning the operation of the schools.

The local education systems have the responsibility to formulate school programs, keeping in mind the needs of the community they represent. To do this they must be aware of at least six factors that keep a community unique, according to Sumption and Engstrom: (1) tradition and nationality background, (2) sets of values which the community holds, (3) economic bases, (4) geographic features, (5) social structure, and (6) political structure (6:5).

The duty of the elected officials (School Board) and the paid professionals (Superintendent, Principals and Teachers) is to initiate new programs and keep the public informed as to the philosophy, goals, objectives, and evaluation of said programs. "School-community relations is an area of community life that involves every member of the community, but the initiative and leadership for effective action must come from the school" (7:1). To do this an honest public relations program should be in force at all times.

Public relations is more than just "selling the public" on a certain item: it should denote the involvement of the total school community in the process of a solid educational program for the children. Belmont Farley has given us a good critical evaluation of the philosophy of just "selling the schools" without discrediting its use in some areas.

The concept of educational publicity as a means of "selling the schools to the public" is not comprehensive enough, however, to encompass the whole job. The phrase may have value upon certain occasions, and may serve as a stereotype in visualizing some other functions of publicity for certain people, but it falls far short of describing the practice and suggesting the significance of this new school service. The need for interpretation, like that for administration and for research, has arisen from the nature of organization of education itself. For while it may often with advantage employ the principles of psychology used effectively in ordinary advertising, both its objective and its results differ essentially from those of a sales campaign (3:6).

Referring again to our basic premise, the schools belong to the public, it is rather inane to assume that we can sell the public something they already own. Yeager gave support by the following statement:

Selling the schools to the public is based upon an unworkable philosophy, in that it is manifestly impossible for the community to buy, or even wish to buy, that which it already possesses (since the schools belong to the people) (8:109).

School public relations has become something more than just presenting facts--"publicity" or "selling." Public relations has become far broader than the mere interpretation of the school program. Co-operative search for mutual understanding and experience in effective teamwork is now the goal. School public relations in this sense must necessarily keep the child as its focus against the essential background of society's needs.

J. M. Hickey said, "Its purpose (public relations) more specifically stated, will include the following:

1. To inform the public about the work of the schools.
2. To establish confidence in the schools.
3. To rally support for proper maintenance of the educational program.
4. To develop awareness of the importance of education in democracy.
5. To improve the partnership concept by uniting parents and teachers in meeting the educational needs of children.
6. To integrate the home, the school, and the community in improving educational opportunities for all children.
7. To evaluate the offerings of the schools in meeting the needs of the children in the community.

8. To correct misunderstanding as to the aims and objectives of the schools (4:14).

In assessing the information available concerning public relations, the author found that communication emerges as the key factor. Public relations and communications are so intertwined it is almost impossible to discuss one without the involvement of the other. In dealing with school-community relations an accurate and planned method of communication will facilitate sound public relations with the community. "Communication is basic to every human effort, and particularly is this true of the educational enterprise" (6:161).

If educators expect the public to support them and work with them, then educators must see to it that the public knows what the school programs are, particularly innovative programs. The consensus of the author's findings indicates that a good communication structure should incorporate the following characteristics: (1) be planned or structured, (2) reach everyone in the community, (3) be honest, (4) be accurate, (5) be flexible, (6) be two-way, and (7) be evaluative.

If we accept these seven characteristics, then any planned or structured program should have stated objectives. Sumption and Engstrom have listed ten:

1. The first objective is to provide the public with information about their schools.

2. To provide the school with information about the community.
3. To establish and maintain public confidence in the schools.
4. To secure community support for the school and its program.
5. To develop a commonality of purpose, effort and achievement.
6. To develop in the community a recognition of the vital importance of education in our social and economic life.
7. A corollary objective is one of keeping the people informed of new developments and trends in education.
8. To develop, through a continuous exchange of information, an atmosphere of cooperation between the school and the other social institutions of the community.
9. To secure an unofficial but frank evaluation of the program of the school in terms of educational needs as the community sees them.
10. To develop public good will toward the schools (6:105).

To meet these objectives one must understand that communication is a complex operation.

In every communication situation in which we engage, whether we are talking to an individual or group, writing a staff memorandum, reading a novel, or appearing on radio or television four basic elements are at work. These four basic elements are source, message, channel, and receiver (2:11).

The relationship of these basic elements, explained by Berlo's model (Appendix A) (2:12), holds the key to successful communication. If we can understand and express these relationships, then our communication is successful.

## I. CONCLUSION

Schools have regular contact with the public's most priceless possession, its children; and yet, these schools

find that there is a need to make further efforts in building good public relations. Perhaps ideal children, in an ideal school under an ideal teacher, would make any public relations project superfluous, but such is not the case. Consequently, fathers and mothers and community leaders need other means of learning about the schools (5:416).

The author, with the above statement in mind, produced a vehicle of communication that meets the following two of the ten objectives set forth by Sumption and Engstrom: (1) Provide the public with information about their schools, and (2) keep the public informed of new developments and trends in education.

Considering the characteristics set forth in this paper, the author chose a slide-tape production as a means to communicate the study skills program. The simplicity of equipment affords good mobility for use as an inservice device for new and experienced teachers in the district, as well as for showing to service clubs and interested individuals of the lay public (parents) and visiting district organizations. This presentation provides a common experience as a basis for two-way communication. This is vital for understanding and evaluation. The production can be changed constantly as the program is evaluated and updated.

One must realize that this is just one of the many ways a school district can communicate with the public, but

communication is the binding that holds the blanket of public relations together.



## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURES

Eight people besides the author were involved in the production of the slide-tape. First, the Superintendent of Schools became convinced of the importance of the project. Once this was done the involvement of the rest of the personnel became easier. Then the study skills teachers, Mrs. Guthrie, Mrs. Johnson, and Mrs. Dunn cooperatively determined the main areas of the study skills program to be discussed.

Writing the narration was then undertaken with the help of the people involved in each area to be explored in the presentation. The narration was then recorded.

Using the script, the author listed and described the pictures needed. Permission of the parents of the children used to pose for the pictures was then obtained. Interestingly, some of the children who posed were students who were enrolled in the study skills program--some were not. The pictures were taken using two or three different exposures for each pose.

The writer discovered that all ideas contained in the script could not be captured with live subjects. With the help of Mr. Larry George, art teacher for the Selah Junior

High School, District #119, cartoons were designed, produced and photographed to capture ideas needed.

Finally, the pictures were put into the proper sequence and correlated with the tape recorded narration.

The procedures described here are very brief. Describing each problem or procedure would be overwhelming and of little use, as any audio-visual production will have its own unique problems.

## CHAPTER IV

### EVALUATION OF PRODUCTION EFFECTIVENESS

To evaluate the effectiveness of this production, the author constructed a multiple-choice type test consisting of twenty questions. Two questions for each of the nine items listed in the five stated objectives of the slide-tape and two questions of a general nature were constructed for the test. This provided the writer with an equivalent test form consisting of ten pre-test questions and ten post-test questions. Refer to Appendix B.

To determine which of the ten pairs of questions would be used for the pre-test and which would be used in the post-test, the writer used the coin-flipping method of selection which was described by J. Frances Rummel in An Introduction to Research Procedures in Education.

The pre-test was given to the fifty-two students in an Education 447 class (Classroom Teaching Problems) at Central Washington State College. Immediately following the pre-test, the production describing the Selah Study Skills Program was presented, and the post-test was administered. A comparison of these tests is shown in Table I.

After analyzing the pre-test, the author found that correct answers ranged from zero on questions one, eight, and nine, to eighteen correct on question five. The

correct answers on the post-test ranged from a low of fifteen on questions 1a and 8a, to a high of fifty-one on questions 3a and 5a, with fifty correct on question 6a. A definite gain in the number of correct answers given was accomplished on each of the ten questions of the post-test.

Although the author did not weight the questions according to significance before the tests were administered, it is interesting to note the gains made in questions three, six, and nine. Question three pertained to the type of student who is involved in the Study Skills program (under-achieving, with normal or above learning capacity, rather than retarded), and number six concerned the theory on which the Study Skills program is based. Question number nine related to the emphasis to be placed on grade levels in the future. The understanding of these three points should serve to enhance the support given to this program by the lay public.

## I. CONCLUSION

Noting the comparison of the two tests, the author believes there was a significant gain of knowledge about the Selah Study Skills program shown. He therefore concludes that a degree of communication has taken place.

## II. SUMMARY

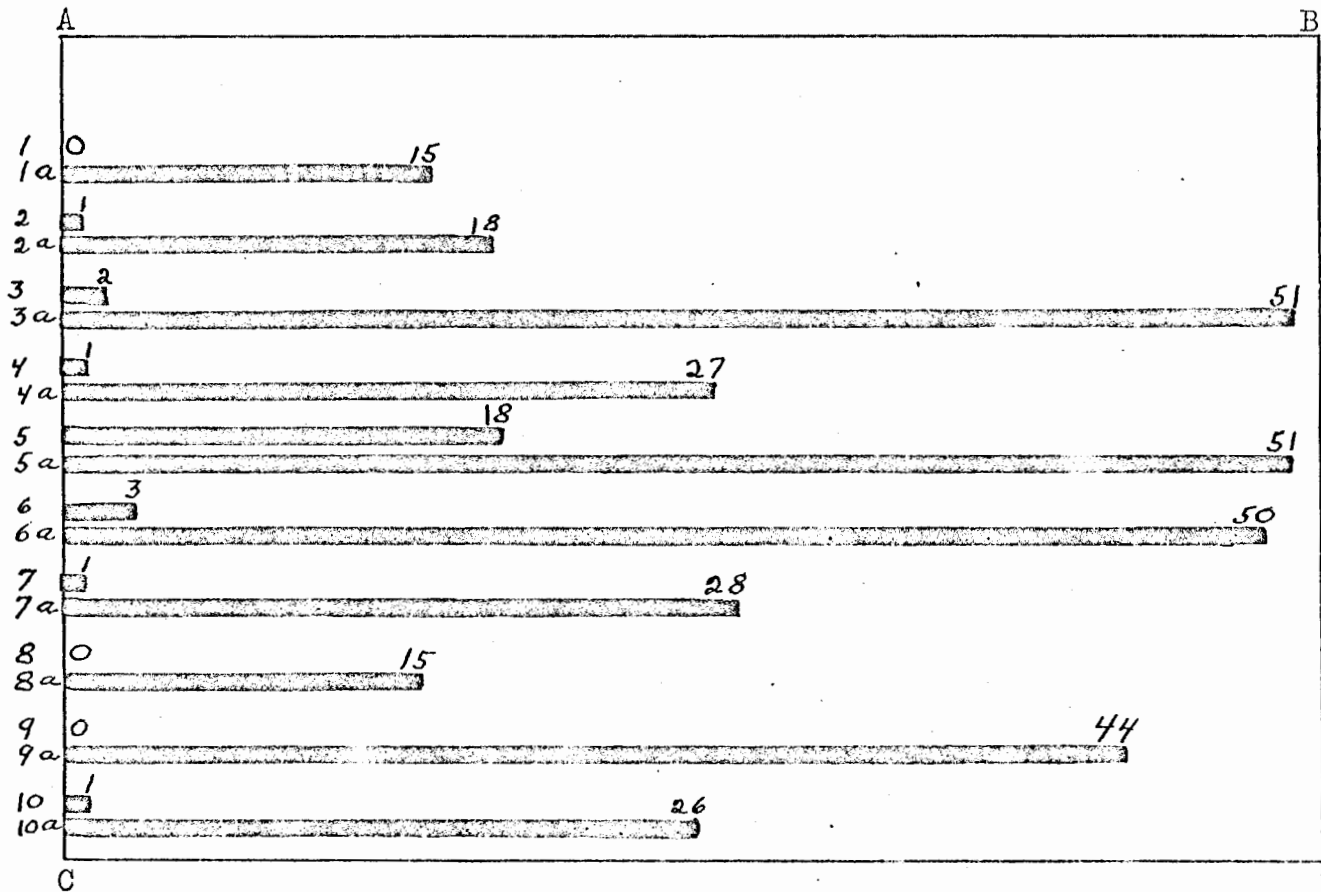
This paper attempts to communicate the following five aspects of the Selah Study Skills program: (1) why and how the program was started, (2) identification, testing, and diagnosis of the disabled learner, (3) educational therapy used, (4) supportive educational therapy used, and (5) evaluation and prognosis of the Study Skills program.

A slide-tape was produced and two tests, a pre-test and a post-test, were constructed for the purpose of evaluation of the effectiveness of the slide-tape in communicating knowledge of the Selah Study Skills program to the audience.

The presentation of the slide-tape and the administering of the tests was accomplished, with positive results shown from the test comparisons.

TABLE I  
ANALYSIS OF PRODUCTION EFFECTIVENESS  
COMPARISON OF PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST

A - B = Number of correct answers  
A - C = Pre-test and post-test questions, as follows:  
Digit alone = pre-test question  
Digit + "a" = post-test question



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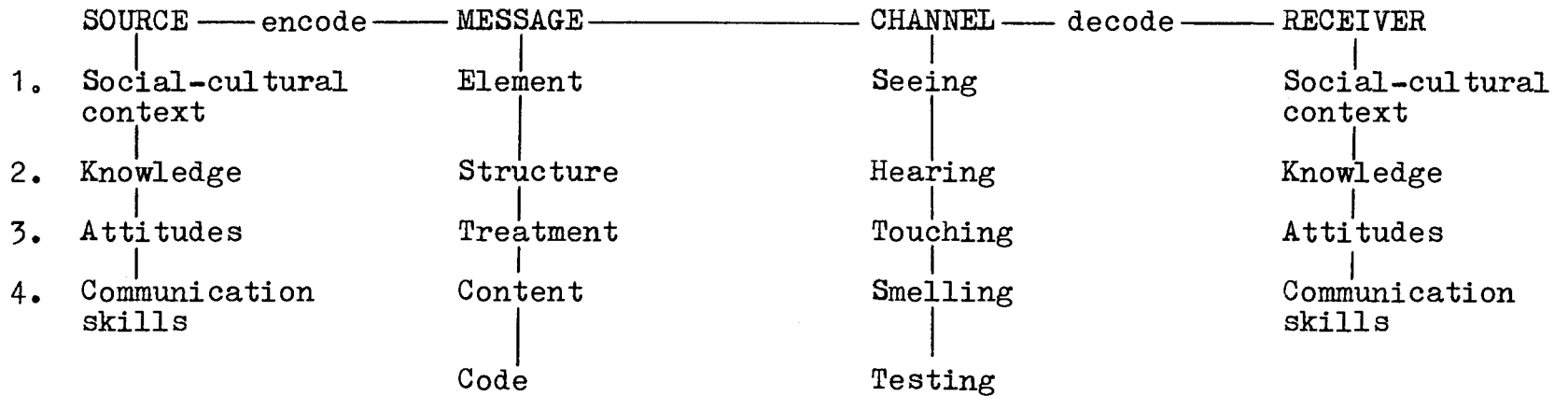
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APPENDIX

## APPENDIX A

### MODEL OF COMMUNICATION



Author: Left to right flow would indicate one-way communication. When the receiver becomes the source we have two-way communication (2:12).

## APPENDIX B

### PRE-TEST\*

**DIRECTIONS:** WHEN ANSWERING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE, BASE YOUR ANSWERS SOLELY ON THE SELAH STUDY SKILLS PROGRAM. CHOOSE THE BEST ANSWER. DO NOT GUESS. MARK DON'T KNOW.

1. The Study Skills Program at Selah was started because these people saw a need for it:
  1. the PTA, principal at Sunset, and parents
  2. the principal at Sunset School, teachers, and parents
  3. the administration, School Board, and psychologist
  4. teachers, principal, and administration
  5. don't know
  
2. The program is financed by:
  1. special levy
  2. Federal funds
  3. special grants
  4. local and Federal funds
  5. don't know
  
3. The Study Skills Program is designed for the student who is:
  1. a slow learner or mentally retarded
  2. primarily emotionally disturbed
  3. not working to capacity
  4. behavioral problems
  5. don't know
  
4. Before students are admitted to the Study Skills program they are tested as follows:
  1. no testing is necessary
  2. individual test by psychologist
  3. individual tests are given by Study Skills teacher
  4. individual tests are given by psychologist and Study Skills teacher
  5. don't know

\*The numbering of the questions in this test corresponds with the order of listing of the nine specific areas of study which are included in the five aspects of the Selah Study Skills program covered in this paper.

5. Learning problems may become obvious:
  1. at any grade level in any subject area
  2. only in spelling, reading and writing
  3. only in reading, P. E. and math
  4. only in reading, math and science
  5. don't know
  
6. Educational therapy as taught by Study Skills teachers is based on:
  1. Mrs. Guthrie and Mrs. Johnson's experience as teachers
  2. learning theories of many authorities
  3. programmed learning
  4. educational learning packages
  5. don't know
  
7. Supplementary educational therapy is a continuous program involving:
  1. school psychologist
  2. speech therapist
  3. school nurse
  4. lay aides
  5. don't know
  
8. The Study Skills program in the High School places the most emphasis on:
  1. grammar
  2. reading
  3. self-concept
  4. subject matter
  5. don't know
  
9. Study Skills concentration will be focused on:
  1. primary students
  2. junior high students
  3. intermediate school students
  4. high school students
  5. don't know
  
10. Students participation in educational therapy is approximately:
  1. 15 minutes a day
  2. 45 minutes a day
  3. 60 minutes a day
  4. all day
  5. don't know

## POST-TEST\*

DIRECTIONS: WHEN ANSWERING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE BASE YOUR ANSWERS SOLELY ON THE SELAH STUDY SKILLS PROGRAM. CHOOSE THE BEST ANSWER. DO NOT GUESS. MARK DON'T KNOW.

1. Students in the Selah School District who did not learn by conventional methods are receiving special help through Study Skills because:
  1. the administration and school board recognized them
  2. teachers and parents recognized them
  3. parents recognized them
  4. teachers recognized them
  5. don't know
2. The Study Skills Program was started through the efforts of:
  1. Dr. Von Pein, Mrs. Guthrie and Selah School Administration
  2. Mrs. Guthrie, Dr. Von Pein and parents
  3. Selah School administration, Mrs. Guthrie and teachers
  4. Mr. Strate, Mrs. Guthrie and Dr. Von Pein
  5. don't know
3. The classroom teacher refers a student for Study Skills testing because:
  1. the student is a slow learner or mentally retarded
  2. the student is a behavior problem
  3. the student is not working to capacity
  4. the student is emotionally disturbed
  5. don't know
4. Admittance to Study Skills is based on:
  1. individual tests given by psychologist
  2. individual tests given by classroom teacher
  3. group tests given by classroom teacher
  4. individual tests given by Study Skills teacher
  5. don't know

\*The numbering of the questions in this test corresponds with the order of listing of the nine specific areas of study which are included in the five aspects of the Selah Study Skills program covered in this paper.

5. Students may be able to read, write and spell but still have difficulty in:
  1. reading comprehension
  2. P. E.
  3. art
  4. music
  5. don't know
6. According to Selah Study Skills teachers, the best way to teach reading is:
  1. Look-Say
  2. phonetics
  3. Fernald tracing
  4. a combination of various methods
  5. don't know
7. Supplementary educational therapy is provided by:
  1. classroom teachers, lay aides and psychologist
  2. lay aides, classroom teachers, and parents
  3. parents, lay aides, and psychologist
  4. psychologist, teacher, and parents
  5. don't know
8. Student evaluation is based upon:
  1. student view of himself
  2. teacher observation of student attitudes
  3. parental acceptance of the program
  4. student's willingness to continue in program
  5. don't know
9. The future major emphasis will be placed with:
  1. high school
  2. intermediate school
  3. primary school children
  4. junior high
  5. don't know
10. The maximum length of time students could spend in the program is:
  1. 1 school quarter
  2. 1 school year
  3. nine years
  4. twelve years
  5. don't know

### DIRECTIONS

Start slide projector and run first 15 slides using your own judgment on time lapse. Start tape recorder with 16th slide. After the 16th slide and the word "problems" in the dialogue, show next two slides during pause and then proceed, changing slides as indicated by asterisks.

You have just seen some example behaviors of children that often have learning difficulties. What you are about to see is a program designed to eliminate these problems.\*

This film is presented for information, not entertainment. The problems we will discuss are most serious for many students.

The Five facets of the Study Skills Program are\*:

1. Why and how the program was started\*.
2. Identification, testing, and diagnosis of the disabled learner\*.
3. Educational Therapy\*
4. Supportive educational therapy\*
5. Evaluation and prognosis of the Study Skills program

May I introduce to you now Mr. Charles McNurlin, Supt. of Schools, Dist. #119, Selah, Washington.\*



For some years we have expressed concern that a small percentage of our students, although seemingly normal in every respect, have had a difficult time achieving academic success in school. The problem did not seem to be associated with any physical problem nor were these children in the lower range of ability academically.

In 1964, we called a study meeting to which we invited a psychologist, a curriculum consultant, an ophthalmologist, a professor of elementary education, and some of our local administrators at which time this situation was discussed. As a result of this meeting we began to suspect that there were some children with perceptual problems which made the normal learning processes unusually difficult for certain individuals. The following year we discussed this matter again with Dr. Donald Von Pien, Director of the Yakima County Cooperative for Special Education, and he told us about a teacher who had made an in-depth study of this problem and who seemed to have some of the answers that we were looking for.

We invited this teacher, Mrs. Jeanne Guthrie, to visit us and we suggested that she might like to come to Selah to work with some of our students who seemed to have severe learning problems. Mrs. Guthrie accepted our invitation and our Study Skills program was on the drawing board. I feel that my recommendation to the Selah School Board, and their subsequent action in providing this type of experimental program which has helped so many boys and girls, is one of the high points of my professional career.

I would like to introduce Mr. Robert Kellman, our Assistant Superintendent, who will discuss the implementation phase of this program.\*

When we were given the "go ahead" on this program, we actually did not have one vacant room in either of our elementary schools. However, our elementary music teacher graciously agreed to give up her music room in Sunset Elementary School, our intermediate building, and teach all of her classes in the regular classrooms. While this gave us the one room we needed for our Study Skills Center, we realized that it was in the wrong school - we would rather have located the program in our primary building as we felt that the earlier we worked with this type of student, the better. However, we were anxious to begin developing the program so we were very happy to utilize the space made available.

Mrs. Guthrie spent the fall of 1965 developing her screening and diagnostic tests and identifying the students that were likely prospects for the program. We were able to furnish the room and to provide the necessary equipment and materials by utilizing both local and federal funds. As supervising principal, Mr. Ted Hendrickson, worked very closely with Mrs. Guthrie and he should be credited with helping establish many of the procedural aspects of the program.

After our first year of operation we felt that we were definitely on the right track, and we were able to add Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Dunn to the program the following year by using funds made available to us under the provisions of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The Study Skills program has grown in scope and depth and has proven itself to be a most important and significant development in our quest for quality and relevant education for all students in the Selah Schools.

With the introduction of the why and how of the program I would like to show you the "team" or personnel involved with each child that might have a learning problem\*:

The classroom teacher, the parent or the principal are usually the people involved in discovering a possible problem; the teacher through classroom observation, the parent through home observation, the principal through overall observation of general attitude, discipline and academic trends.

School Counselor ---- works in the area of Social adjustments\*.

School Nurse ---- helps rule out physical disorder and can recommend physical examinations by doctors.

School Psychologist ---- helps determine the learning capabilities along with the social and emotional dynamics involved in the child.

Speech therapist ---- helps correct speech problems.

Medical Doctor ---- Examines child for possible physical causes of learning difficulties\*.

All of these people are vitally important in ruling out the more obvious reason for the child's not learning\*.

It is now the distasteful task of the principal to determine the capacity of the program - just how many students can the study skills teachers work with and still maintain a high degree of efficiency\*.

When the complete screening process is finished, the Study Skills teachers, Mrs. J. Guthrie\*, Mrs. J. Johnson\*, and Mrs.

Helen Dunn\*, go to work. Their program is structured from the resources of the following authors and specialists in the many areas they cover.\*

Note authors with asterisk are people Study Skills teachers have had direct contact with.

Now Mrs. Johnson will explain Identification and Diagnosis of the child with a learning disability, Mrs. Johnson.\*

Who are the children we work with in Study Skills? Let's start by saying who they are not. The program is not designed for the mentally retarded, or the slow learner. Selah has excellent Special Education classes for these students.

Secondly, Study Skills is not set up for those children whose problems are primarily emotional\*. The district has started a counseling program which we hope will continue to expand. Also, in Yakima, we have the services of the Child Guidance Center\*.

The child with whom we are concerned is one whose over-all ability, as seen by his teachers and measured by group or individual testing, is good; but whose achievement in the classroom does not measure up to this potential\*.

You have seen in the foregoing pictures some of the behavior that results from learning disabilities. What are the causes of these problems? They are numerous and often obscure. They may range from a developmental lag in one or more areas, through breaking the writing arm in first grade, to missing a good deal of school, or moving often from school to school.

Sometimes at the root of the problem is specific language disability, often called dyslexia\*. This is a condition in which an otherwise alert, intelligent child is badly handicapped in the area of reading and written expression, even though he has been taught by the best of conventional methods\*.

But while experts in various fields are working out the causes, schools cannot merely stand and wait. We know that the high school drop-out is often the student whose school

failure began in early grades\*. With the increasing importance of educational and vocational training, schools are under pressure to provide for all children, including those with educational handicaps.

Fortunately, though we may never know the underlying cause of a particular child's problems, help is increasingly available for those problems\*.

How do we identify our boy or girl - and a boy he is, possibly 8 times out of 10? The first step is a referral by his classroom teacher. Our teachers have become quite adept at picking out those students who can benefit from Study Skills help\*.

Often the child is tested by the school psychologist, whose reports can be very helpful as to the areas we should look at more closely\*.

The child is then given a battery of individual tests by means of which we try to locate as exactly as possible the sources of his troubles\*.

First, we find out just how well he reads, silently and orally. We use one or more individual tests to determine grade level and comprehension\*. For comparison, we find how well he can get information from listening alone\*.

We check auditory discrimination: even though his hearing is good, does he hear fine differences in speech sounds? How is his articulation? Can he reproduce sounds as well as discriminate\*.

Is he able to blend together isolated sounds to make a word? Does he have auditory memory, that is, how well can he hold in mind a sequence of sounds? We use both speech sounds and rhythm patterns to check this.

Moving into the visual area:

Is the child able to single out important items from the background? If not, lines of print may jumble up badly for him. Can he see the difference between language symbols that look very much alike: "r" and "n", for example; or the words "what" and "that", and "here" and "where"? Has he established a consistent left-to-right working direction? If he has not, "was" easily turns into "saw" or "b" into "d". Does he have visual imagery: can he picture events in a story; is he able to call to mind the form of a word? Many poor readers and spellers cannot; but there are ways of helping to establish this ability.

One avenue of learning that is sometimes almost forgotten is the tactile-kinesthetic sense- learning that comes through touch or movement. The spelling test that we include often points out the child who needs tactile-kinesthetic-motor training. Inconsistency -spelling a word in different ways at different times- or a lack of firmness and control in handwriting may indicate this need.

Sometimes the breakdown seems to be in the integration process. For instance, many of our students cannot write the alphabet. We try to find out why: does a particular student forget the names of the letters, or remember the names and forget how to make them? When shown letters or letter combinations, can he give the sound they represent? Even more basic, does he really understand that certain letters and groups of letters stand for certain speech sounds?



We note right or left-handedness and check to see whether dominance and right-left awareness are clearly established.

We also note other factors: how does the child hold his paper and pencil? What are his head and body positions when reading and writing?

Teachers sometimes refer students to Study Skills who are able to read and spell but who lack comprehension. These are the children sometimes known as "word callers", who seem to have no way of organizing their knowledge of the world. During testing we look for indications of this lack of structure. How well does the child follow directions? Does he speak in sentences, or in monosyllables and fragments? Does he have an awareness of cause and effect relationships? Has he an adequate sense of time and space?

When the test results have been analyzed, we are able to decide whether a certain child is a candidate for Study Skills help. The tests are also invaluable in pointing the way toward the quickest and most effective methods to use in remediation.

The student is now enrolled in the Study Skills Program. How does he learn best? Is he an auditory learner? By auditory perception we mean the ability to receive and understand sounds and their meanings. Some methods or techniques we may use, not necessarily in this order are:

The tok-bak. This instrument allows the student to monitor his own speech sounds.

Tap patterns: This non-verbal auditory exercise involves not only listening but sequence and rhythm. We have a game we invented which is an effective device to teach this skill. Games can be excellent tools for teaching skills.

**Listening exercises:** The student listens to instructions or phonics lessons or stories, etc. He may do this with listening only or it may involve the visual and/or tactile-kinesthetic-motor.

Is this student a visual learner? By visual perception we mean he has the ability to accurately interpret what he sees. A student may learn visually but have visual perception inaccuracies so that he jumbles letters or words, or may have difficulty recognizing the relationships of objects or words to each other. Here are some of many activities designed to develop different areas of visual perception.

Parquetry blocks can help a child with visual memory development. Visual tracking helps establish a left to right progression, builds memory, and trains the eyes to follow a line across the page. The mirrorreading board is sometimes used with students who have great difficulty with reversals. They mix b and p, or was and saw or forget the little words, or lose their place often.

Is he a tactile-kinesthetic-motor learner? By this we mean a combination of touch; the sense by which muscular motion, position, or weight are perceived; and movement. Some children can learn by sounding and spelling aloud; some by looking at a word and getting a mental image of it, but for some, the best way, possibly the only way, is through tracing. They need the actual process of writing the word to fix it in memory.

This girl is discriminating between geometric shapes using only the tactile-kinesthetic-motilities.

Here she is discriminating between letter shapes.

Tracing exercises using one or both hands.

Chalkboard exercises involving unilateral and bilateral movements are sometimes helpful.

These are only a very few of the materials, learning devices or techniques that we use.

Diagnosing how the student learns and using his strengths to build up his weak areas, form the basis of the Study Skills Program. Some students need to have the stimuli reduced; seeing, hearing, and saying a word all at the same time may make them hopelessly confused. Others may need a multi-sensory approach. Some people depend on one of the modalities while others need two or three.

(Shut off tape recorder and change)  
(slide carrier here.)  
(Start slide and tape at same time.)

Because children have demonstrated so clearly that they don't all learn the same way, we cannot recommend any one way of teaching beginning reading as the best. Some children will learn to read no matter what method is used. Some will learn to read by the phonetic approach, while others will do better with the visual approach. The important thing is that the child be introduced to the type of beginning reading suited to his strongest modality which should be developed to the point where he cannot fail. In other words, we have not found one best way to teach reading to all children.

So far we have been concerned with the basic skills. We may find a student who has these skills, but who is still having difficulty in the subjects that require abstract thinking. His teacher will say "he can read the words, but can't understand what he has read".

This is the student who may have quite a store of facts, but has no structure he can use to pull them together into a coherent whole; he lacks "the big picture".

Language, speech and concept formation are based on the learning of earlier perceptual skills. A student can talk clearly and still have language problems. He may lack labels and will say thing instead of the actual name of the object. He may have the labels but can't group them appropriately---he may say iron, steel, and tin are hard rather than the more abstract term "metal". He may be unable to recognize the common characteristic of a button, paper clip and zipper. He may have vocabulary difficulties, to him a "sharp cheese" must be pointed. Since language, speech and concept formation are so inter-dependent this comes to be a more individual matter than teaching the basic skills.

After a student is beginning to progress, he receives supportive educational therapy. Other people become involved, his teacher, his parents, lay aides, but still under the Study Skill umbrella.

His teacher will find supplementary materials in the resource center so that he is progressing in the classroom on his own level at his own speed. He may work individually or in small groups with a lay aide. His parents may borrow materials to further strengthen areas of weakness. It has been the policy of our program to have the student stay in his classroom except for the 15 to 30 minutes each day when he comes to the Study Skills Room.

We provide spelling or reading that he works on in his room until he is able to ease back into his grade level materials.

This may take a few months or several years, depending on the severity of his problems and our skill at diagnosing his difficulties and providing the right educational therapy.

Mrs. Dann will now explain the Study Skills Program in the High School.

The Study Skills Program in the Selah High School is sequential to that offered at Sunset, but with a somewhat different emphasis.

By the time a student has entered 9th grade with inefficient learning skills, it is usually too late for successful corrective training. Therefore, we place more emphasis on teaching compensatory and coping skills. The decision to extend the program to include grades 9 through 12 was made primarily because we are aware that not all freshmen enter high school with learning skills, motivations, and commitments sufficiently strong to insure successful achievement- let alone survival on the secondary level.

These are the students we want to identify. Generally speaking, these students are characterized as being able, but underachieving. More specifically, they show one or more of the following behaviors, or combinations thereof, by which they may be identified as students with learning problems.\*

This student is uncommitted; that is he sees very little relevance or value in learning the academic content presented at school. He usually has little respect for himself as a person of value.\* His immaturity may be shown by a weak sense of responsibility, lack of self-direction, poor time and energy management, and inability to relate effectively in social situations either to peers or adults.\* He has inefficient learning skills. His independent reading level may be three or four years below grade level. His spelling, grammar, and composition skills are inadequate.\* His research skills are inefficient. He is unable to use multi-media learning tools effectively.\*

He doesn't know how to prepare for a test; he doesn't know how to take one. His note-taking abilities from reading or lecture are so inadequate that his notes are unreasonable and of little value to him for reference or review. He has weak listening and oral communication skills. He is unable to ask for individual help or participate freely in small group discussions. His vocabulary, especially speaking and writing, is limited to the extent that it is a barrier to learning and to demonstrating what he has learned. He has no usable system of learning. If one or more of these behaviors is observed, this student may be referred to the Study Skills teacher by the guidance committee, a classroom teacher, a parent, or by himself.

Once a student has been referred, our procedure is as follows:

**Diagnose for clues to the problem.**

Determine what can be done to help the student improve.

Develop, with the student, a plan which will probably include appropriate individual or small group instruction in reading, study, and communication skills, as well as instruction in effectual use of multi-media learning tools.

We also strive to assist the student in evaluating himself in terms of his strength and weaknesses; his interests, activities, and home or work responsibilities; his special talents, attitudes, and values; and his time and energy.

It should be made clear here, that "WE" refers to a team effort which includes the parents, the classroom teacher, administrators, counselors, and the Study Skills teacher.

Perhaps of equal importance during this procedure, is our effort to elicit a commitment from the student to his plan,

demand responsibility from the student to his commitment, and stress relevance.

Finally, our responsibility is to build and reinforce self esteem by assisting the student through instruction and guidance, so that he may earn successful achievement through honest effort. We want to help him know himself better, and like himself better, so that he may more nearly realize his potential as a person.

Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Guthrie and Mrs. Dann have briefly explained the Study Skills Program. I would like to introduce to you now Mr. Ted Hendrickson, principal of Sunset Elementary School, Selah, Washington, who will discuss evaluation and prognosis of the Study Skills Program. Mr. Hendrickson.

This is a very short and simplified explanation of the Study Skills program in the Selah Schools. Changes are continually being made but we strive to remain within this present framework.

To briefly summarize what you have just seen: First, the student is identified as not achieving at his apparent capacity.

Then the general diagnosis is made. Many of the students have more than one difficulty. That is, they may have a hearing problem plus a learning problem, or a student may have poor coordination and wear glasses, or have a physical illness that has added to his difficulties.

The Study Skill testing is time consuming but extremely necessary. Finding exactly where a student is, what he can do, what vital gaps are preventing him from succeeding in school is very important, because you must know where a student is before you can plan where he should be going. The educational therapy is planned in the areas of auditory, visual and tactile-kinesthetic-motor and then language, speech and concept formation.

Supportive educational therapy involves many teachers as continued evaluation is made during the rest of the student's school career. Lay aides and parents also assist in this therapy.

When is a student ready to leave Study Skills? We find that as his skills increase, so does his confidence. When the student, the Study Skills teacher and the classroom teacher feel that he is ready to cope with regular classroom work, he is graduated from Study Skills with the understanding that later he can ask for further assistance if he needs it. Because of the number of students on the waiting list, our criteria for selection and graduation must be very clear and understood by all people involved.



How do we evaluate whether this program is helping students? Before and after reading scores, achievement tests, and report card grades have been watched and recorded for four years.\* Although we certainly do not claim 100% success, these records show substantial gains for most students.\*

Harder to measure but even more important are changes that come about in a child's attitude as he gains the power to cope with the tasks of learning that formerly brought only confusion and frustration.\*

In the near future Study Skills concentration will be devoted to include more work in the Primary Grades. This is the ideal situation we have found as it is best to detect these problems early and remedy them as soon as possible.

At the Primary School, the psychologist now gives all incoming first graders a screening test to determine whether their visual skills and coordination are well enough developed for beginning reading. Those children who are lagging in these particular areas spend a certain amount of time each week in the Frostig Program for Visual-Motor Perception or the Getman Program for Psychological Readiness.

Another encouraging project involves several high school students who are working on a one-to-one basis with primary children whose poor language development is hampering their progress.\*

This primary and secondary work is in addition to but consistent with our regular Study Skills program for we here at Selah are trying to see that each child has the best possible preparation for his future.