

THE USE OF THE SRA YOUTH INVENTORY FOR GUIDANCE  
IN PERSONAL-SOCIAL RELATIONS

by

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## INTRODUCTION

What are the differences between the worries and concerns of girls living in a large middle, lower-middle class urban area of Wichita High School West and those of the "mythical" average high school sophomore? Here is a relative new high school (1953) composed of a socio-economic group of students which is rather uncommon in most mid-western communities, but is rapidly becoming a significant portion of our nation. The city of Wichita, Kansas, which has doubled in size since 1945 and now has a population of 312,131 and has attained the title of "Air Capital of the World." Much of this growth has been on the west side of the city, thus making necessary the addition of three new public high schools to the Wichita system in the 1950's. Very few parents of West High students are professional workers; many work in the aircraft plants. Divorced and remarried parents are not uncommon; many mothers work. Married girls are no longer unusual in the classroom at West, and many senior boys and girls are engaged. This report attempts to analyze how this student body differs from the mythical average as determined by the SRA Youth Inventory and to answer the question of what the curriculum of this school should provide to meet certain needs of sophomore girls.

### Statement of the Problem

Guidance is an educational process by which we assist individuals in the making of choices and adjustments in signifi-

cant situations in their lives in which they need help (Baker, 3). And the high school girl is most concerned with her problems in the personal-social area (Wichita Study, 4). With hero-worship crushes of junior high school days being replaced by interest in real live boys and being accepted by the peer group an item of no little importance, the sophomore girl becomes acutely aware of her deficiencies in personal-social relations. If these deficiencies are not explored, explained, understood, and rectified, serious worries and problems can develop. Counseling and group guidance type classes provide excellent opportunities to help the sophomore girl adjust to these new social demands and understand her own personal feelings.

There are several measuring devices available to find needs, interests, and worries of the high school student. One of the best available in the field of personal-social relations is the SRA Youth Inventory (Clark, 5). This provides a check list of 298 questions which help identify problems which the person being tested thinks bothers her. Through the process of careful prestudy, the Purdue Opinion Panel came up with a systematic, country-wide analysis of what young people consider to be their most important problems (Remmers and Shimberg, 11). Being the most valid and reliable of the currently available personality tests, the SRA Youth Inventory was selected to help define the particular needs of the tenth grade West High School girl (Clark, 5).

## Procedures

In March of 1958 the SRA Youth Inventory was administered to 30 sophomore girls enrolled in Personal Living, a one semester elective course in the homemaking department of Wichita High School West. The results of this test were used as the basis for this report. Table 27 in the Technical Supplement for the SRA Youth Inventory was used as the basis for scoring (Remmers and Shimberg, 12). National percents for grade ten were used as the basis for comparison for the test group. Items on which the West group differed more than ten percent were used for special study.

### A REVIEW OF LITERATURE CONCERNING THE USE OF PERSONALITY INVENTORIES

The class of sophomore girls to which the SRA Youth Inventory was administered was basically a group guidance course. This type of course has met with success and failure in different situations. However in the large school the course stands in a unique position. Many of the criticisms hurled at our large city high schools are based on the premise that the large school is too impersonal; the student does not get enough individual attention. William D. Roche feels that the advantages of the guidance classes in the large school stem from these three facts:

- (1) the class counteracts the impersonality of a big school.
- (2) the class helps achieve rapport with the students.
- (3) the class strengthens the school's public relations (Roche, 13).

However this type of class does have pitfalls that must be avoided. In the "Introduction Chapter" of his most recent book John Rothney points out that we can not use the same formula for all youth of the same age and school level in solving their problems (Rothney, 14). Just because certain procedure may help in the solution of one person's problems does not mean the same solution will work in all situations. Dr. Rothney recognizes that the use of personality tests and inventories are helpful, but care must be taken so that all the problems are not grouped or classified and solution attempted in the group guidance set up. The need for individual counseling is magnified, not lessened, by the use of the personality inventory. However, he does feel that personality inventories point up the similarity of many students' problems--problems which are almost normal developments in the process of growing up--that opportunities should be provided in high school classes to consider these problems. It is because of the irregularity in the occurrence of time and the variability in the intensity of the problem that personalized assistance must be available.

In his earlier book Dr. Rothney pointed out that our tests were not perfect but that we could not wait until the right test came along; we have students to work with right now (Rothney and Roens, 15). He lists six methods of studying behavior, one of which is personality tests and inventories. Some of the disadvantages of these instruments, according to Dr. Rothney, are that the results can be faked; the test reports the obvious; it does not tell the why of behavior; it relies on self judgment

which may be invalid. In helping these students our counsel can be only as good as the data about the students' behavior permits.

If we agree with the statement:

The program of the school...should be designed to promote normal development and thereby avoid unnecessary maladjustment.

we will often find ourselves using, though imperfect, some of these instruments (Warters, 18). One of the sounder instruments in the field is the Science Research Associates (SRA) Youth Inventory (Remmers and Shimberg, 12). This is a check list of 298 questions designed to help teachers, counselors, and schools identify problems that young people say worry them the most. The authors of the test consider it a means of adjustment and an aid in the counseling interview because it is an indication of what the student thinks his problems are. It is not ready for use as a screening or diagnostic instrument in counseling situations except by carefully trained personnel. But the test is as good as any of its kind for experimental or survey purposes.

The test items of the SRA Youth Inventory had direct contributions from:

- (1) the persons primarily concerned with these problems, the students,
- (2) professional educators,
- (3) and comparative studies.

The authors of the test have done well to caution repeatedly against mechanical use of the results. The reliability coeffi-



cients vary from .75 to .94 with a median of .88. The interpretation of scores is not easy for they simply indicate frequency of problems and not severity. Each of the eight areas is sufficiently homogeneous to warrant use of a single score for it. The norms are more than adequate for most instruments of this sort, and there are separate norms for different groups.

In the Examiner's Manual that accompanies the Inventory much useful information concerning the Inventory is given (Remmers and Shimberg, 11). The Inventory deals with the student's favorite topic--himself--and therefore provokes immediate interest. The Inventory:

- (1) helps the student focus attention on those things which are of concern to him,
- (2) tends to give the student a perspective and to establish a priority for attacking his problems,
- (3) helps to motivate the student to seek the solution of problems he can handle himself,
- (4) encourages him to seek help in working out more difficult problems.

The result provides the teacher with information he needs to understand better his student and will help him plan the curriculum in personality units and suggest supplementary material for the students. This technique can be used with all students in grades 7-12. Forty minutes should be allowed in giving the Inventory. Honest answers to personal items can not be expected unless there is good rapport between the examiner and the group. The test can be hand scored or machine scored.

All items in each area have been validated for internal consistency. Each area can be regarded as a separate test. A



student could check many items which reveal no serious problems or check just a few which are serious. If a student checks too few items in an area suspicion may be aroused. The student may not recognize his problems or he may be trying to conceal them. High area scores could also be interpreted that the student is interested in this topic and would like to have more information. The examiner, therefore, would not have students compare scores with each other, but each individual could compare his own high and low area scores.

These scores should not be taken at face value but should be used with other information by the teacher. It could also serve as a screening device for the counselor.

The results can be used by students in giving a starting place to work on their own individual problems; teachers can use the results to study individuals or to point up common problems of the students. These results could then be used as the basis for group activities. The counselor can use the basic difficulty scores in setting up priority for scheduling interviews; also referral use to community sources and resources personnel can be made. The administrator can use the test result for group analysis; he can find where the curriculum needs to be developed and also where the school is now doing a good job.

The Inventory was tried out on 4,000 seventh and eighth graders for standardization. The results were startling in that for practical purposes no difference between responses of junior high school and senior high school students were observed. After having a sample of 374 seventh and eighth graders check

words that were difficult to understand, a "List of Words and Phrases" is now included in the inventory.

Inventory items fall into two categories: (1) those which mental hygiene experts suggest are indicative of a basic personality disturbance; and (2) those which are essentially a matter of problem recognition. By means of this method the basic difficulty key was obtained. A good indication of the validity of the Inventory was obtained when seven experts in fields of guidance, clinical psychology, and education were asked to classify inventory items into one of the above categories. On 19 items experts agreed unanimously; on 89 there was only a single dissenting opinion.

Reliability is the consistency with which the test measures whatever it does measure (Adams, 1). Following is the reliability chart for the individual areas of the inventory based on senior high students:

Area	Reliability
1. My school	.84
2. Looking ahead	.90
3. About myself	.88
4. Getting along with others	.88
5. My home and family	.94
6. Boy meets girl	.87
7. Health	.75
8. Things in general	.89
Basic difficulty	.90

Less stability in health area scores probably are a function of the smaller number of items used in this area. Nevertheless caution must be used in interpreting scores in this area (Remmers and Shimberg, 11).

Validity is the accuracy with which a test measures what it is supposed to measure. There is no obvious outside criteria with which to check what a pupil thinks his problems are. So items which a person checks have validity for that individual.

From past research it was determined that the arrangement of the items into block areas or scrambled and all items mixed together with no particular form of arrangement gave no difference in scores, so it was decided that arrangement of items into distinct problem areas does not have any marked difference on a student's responses. Also there was no evidence of response set due to difference in instructions. The findings suggested that if the students were cooperative and the proper rapport was felt between the examiner and the group and the students felt secure in knowing the test results would be held in confidence that there was little reason to believe that the items checked as problems were a function of the instructions.

Several studies had been made from use of the SRA Youth Inventory. Some of these studies have yielded useful information about the inventory as well as helping in the guidance of the test-takers. In one recent study Smith and Hudgins used a sample group of 29 girls who were in a church supported residential school to which the girls had been sent by a juvenile court or a children's social agency (Smith and Hudgins, 16). The median age of these girls was 15 and the median IQ 89. The girls came from the lower socio-economic levels. Their homes had been unable to provide wholesome environments. These girls showed peaks in their problems in the areas of the

inventory concerned with school, home, and self. The average score was above the 75th percentile--75 being the breaking point on the profile chart. Those ranking above the 75th percentile are considered to have more serious problems. The authors came to the conclusion that the SRA Youth Inventory has a degree of concurrent validity for adolescent girls.

The disadvantageous position of the lower class child in a school system with middle class values has long been a pertinent topic in educational circles. The "rewards" of the school seem to be received by children of the middle and upper classes. The purpose of a study by Reeves and Goldman was to examine aspects of differences between social class as defined externally (others' opinions) and internally (how the individual sees himself) (Reeves and Goldman, 10). If there is considerable discrepancy, tension results. The child may "be rejecting one group and be rejected by the other."

The Reeves and Goldman study was conducted in one of the high schools in a semi-rural community in a western section of New York State. All social class levels were represented. Three hundred and eighty-five students in grades nine through twelve were used. The external measure applied was Warner's Revised Index of Status Characteristics. The internal measure was Sims SCI scale. In the Warner's Index a weighted total is developed that is based on occupation, source of income, type of dwelling, and education. On the Sims Scale the subject himself rates 42 occupations according to level. This indicates the occupations the subject perceives above and below his level.

From this information a discrepant and a congruent group were formed and the two groups equated. Then the following procedure was used:

- (1) all took the SRA Youth Inventory.
- (2) three teachers rated each subject as to:
  - (a) relatively very well adjusted.
  - (b) relatively well adjusted.
  - (c) relatively not well adjusted.
  - (d) relatively poorly adjusted.
- (3) all referrals to the school psychologist for six years were examined.
- (4) the principal's records of referrals for discipline reasons were examined.
- (5) each student arranged persons in his grade on a scale of six from number one, "My best friend," to number six, "I dislike them."

In testing out the hypothesis interesting results were obtained. The first hypothesis was that the discrepant group would report more problems on a problem check list. No significant difference was found. The second hypothesis was that the discrepant group would be rated by teachers as less well adjusted. This was found to be true only at the ninth grade level. The third hypothesis was that the discrepant group would have a record of more frequent referrals to the school psychologist for diagnosis and treatment of adjustment problems. Some basis was found for this. The fourth hypothesis was that the discrepant group would have a record of more referrals to the school principal for discipline reasons. Again some basis was found

for this hypothesis. The fifth hypothesis was that the discrepant group would be less well accepted by their peers on a sociometric scale. This was significant at the ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade level, but was not true on the twelfth grade level.

Although the findings were not conclusive, the testers felt there was some support for their hypothesis concerning the association of maladjustment with social-level discrepancies. Peer perceptions were the most sensitive measure of the kinds of maladjustment which is associated with social-level discrepancies. Although social class and environmental differences did have some effect on inventory scores, Auld felt "the difference between the low income and high income groups are not large enough to justify publication of separate norms" (Auld, 2). In every area except two the low income group checked more items. Only in Area Eight, "Things in General," did the high income group check more items on which the difference was significant.

Drucker and Remmers found significantly more basic difficulty items checked by pupils in low economic status, Catholic pupils, and those pupils whose parents did not finish high school (Drucker and Remmers, 7). The results indicate that Catholic boys check more problems than do Catholic girls, and Catholic girls check more problems than do Protestant boys and girls.

The basic difficulty scale was found to be the most helpful screening device in calling attention to unrecognized adjustment



problems of girls who are judged well-adjusted by their teachers and fellow classmates in a study for the National Institute of Mental Health by Dr. Charles Ullmann (Ullmann, 17). The study was developed in a county in Maryland using one-half of all the white ninth grade pupils. Twenty-three different teachers and 404 boys and 406 girls were used. Three types of screening instruments were used:

- (1) teacher ratings
  - (a) adjustment ratings on a three point scale.
  - (b) forced choice from 18 groups of items.
- (2) self ratings
  - (a) SRA Growth Inventory (basic difficulty score).
  - (b) California Test of Personality (self and social adjustment scores).
- (3) socio-metric ratings--each subject identified three classmates he felt were characterized by certain traits.

The teachers identified more boys than girls as severely maladjusted. The SRA Youth Inventory identified more girls than boys as maladjusted. The California test fell in between the two extremes. The difference could have been because of greater sensitivity of the Youth Inventory to the problems of girls. The basic difficulty score makes a unique contribution by drawing attention to girls who are considered well-adjusted by teachers and classmates and whose overt behavior does not reveal their lower adjustment level.

In an experiment sponsored by the Educational Records Bureau, Jacobs used teacher ratings as a criterion (Jacobs, 8).



Teachers and principals identified certain students as "problems." The average scores of the problem group and the control group showed the same incidence of problems on SRA Inventory. The Inventory again pointed up problems that were not recognized by overt behavior.

In a study by Druckers and Remmers counselors rated students as best adjusted and least well adjusted (Drucker and Remmers, 6). Some overlap was noticed, but there was good agreement between counselor judgments and Inventory scores. This result points out that trained counselors are better able to recognize problems within students, even without the use of the Inventory.

Meyer obtained correlations between the Youth Inventory and the Henman-Nelson Intelligence Test and found them low (Meyer, 9). He found that on Area Eight, "Things in General," that the brighter student was more concerned about world affairs, religion and ethics. He suggests on the basis of the basic difficulty data intelligence is involved in the recognition of important problems.

There are yet many unexplored opportunities for using the SRA Inventory in comparative studies and analyses of local situations. For the classroom teacher, the trained counselor and the professional researcher this testing instrument lends itself to the gathering of reliable data with interesting results.

#### FINDINGS

##### My School

The first section was called "My School." This area focused

attention on the things that may keep the student from getting what she wants out of school--her study methods, school courses, relationships with teachers, or shyness and worries that keep her from concentration on her school work.

Fifty-three percent of the norm group wished they knew how to study better while the percent was 63 for the West High group, giving evidence that the students in this large school felt they had not been taught to study as well as the national average felt they had. Since 33 percent of the norm group would like to take courses not offered in school and only 23 percent of the West group checked this item, we might conclude that the large school does a better than average job of meeting the curriculum needs of the student. Seventeen percent of the West group "hated school" as compared with eight percent of the norm group.

Table 1. Analysis of differences in answers to items of the SRA Youth Inventory about "My School" by sophomore girls of Wichita High School West and the National Norms.

	: National Norm %	: Wichita Sophomore Girls %	: % Up (+) or Down (-) :from Norms:	: Items with variations of 10 percent or greater from the National Norm.
	53	63	10+	2.I wish I knew how to study better.
	33	23	10-	8.I would like to take courses that are not offered in my school.
	8	17	11+	11.I hate school.
	14	3	11-	22.My teachers give me no encouragement.
	10	0	10-	24.My teachers don't make assignments clear.
	22	7	15-	28.My teachers play favorites.

The illusion of the impersonal teacher of the large school was shattered by responses to items Number 22 and 24. Whereas 14 percent of the norm group felt that "my teachers give me no encouragement" and 10 percent felt the teachers "don't make assignments clear," in the West group only one person felt that her teachers didn't encourage her and none felt that assignments were not clear. This was surprising in a sophomore group who are supposed to be the "confused" ones in a three-year high school. Seven percent of the West group as compared to 22 percent of the norm group felt that their teachers played favorites.

#### After High School

Table 2. Analysis of differences in answers to items of the SRA Youth Inventory "After High School," by sophomore girls of Wichita High School West and the National Norms.

		: % Up (+) :		
: Wichita :		: or :		Items with variations of 10
National:	Sophomore:	Down (-)	:	percent or greater from the
Norm % :	Girls % :	from Norms:	:	National Norm.
43	17	26-	:	34. What are my real interests?
47	30	17-	:	35. What shall I do after high school?
57	30	27-	:	36. For what work am I best suited?
61	50	11-	:	37. How much ability do I actually have?
40	27	13-	:	38. I would like to know more definitely how I am doing in my school work.
34	13	21-	:	40. I want to know more about what people do in college.
25	7	18-	:	42. What are the requirements for college?

Table 2. (Concl.)

	: National Norm %	: Wichita Sophomore Girls %	: % Up (+) or Down (-) from Norms:	: Items with variations of 10 percent or greater from the National Norm.
34	13	21-	43.	How shall I select a college?
25	7	18-	44.	Can I get into the college of my choice?
26	10	16-	50.	I would like to have more vocational courses.
46	20	26-	52.	What are some careers for girls?
43	27	16-	54.	What courses will be most valuable to me later on?
22	3	19-	55.	What fields are overcrowded?
42	17	25-	56.	What career shall I pursue?
24	10	14-	59.	What are the opportunities in different fields?
34	50	16+	61.	How do I go about finding a job?
28	13	15-	65.	For what kind of job should I apply?
19	7	12-	68.	What's expected of me on a job?
19	3	16-	69.	What is proper office etiquette?
47	37	10-	70.	Am I likely to succeed in the work I do when I finish school?

Forty-three percent of the norm group checked "What are my real interests?" while only 17 percent of the West group checked this item. This is a difference of 26 percent and would lend evidence as to the effectiveness of group guidance courses and counselors within a school system. Perhaps this same reason accounts for the smaller number checking items 35, 36, and 37

which ask, "What shall I do after high school? For what work am I best suited?" and "How much ability do I actually have?"

As compared to 40 percent of the national norms checking "I would like to know more definitely how I am doing in my school work," 27 percent of the West group checked this item, a difference of 13 percent. The reason for this might be explainable by the school system's policy of informing students and their parents of failing grades several weeks before the end of a grading period, thus giving the student a chance to improve his grade.

There were negative differences on several of the questions concerning college. Thirteen percent of the West group as compared to 34 percent of the norm group wanted to know more about what people do in college. However, ten percent more of the West group as compared to the norm group were interested in the requirements for college. But 21 percent less were interested in selecting a college and 18 percent less were interested in how they could get into the college of their choice. Although a lower percent of the West High graduates enroll in college than in the average Kansas High School, this is less interest than what is indicated nationally on the sophomore level and indicates the need for generating more interest in going to college in the West High School area.

Sixteen percent less than the norm group would like to take more vocational courses, which brings to our attention again the wide variety of courses available at West High School. Twenty-six percent less were interested in "What are some

careers for girls?", indicating either that occupations units in the ninth and tenth grades are very successful or there is apathy concerning this subject. This same attitude is expressed in the remainder of the job questions, as indicated by the response to questions 55 through 70. These items merited from 12 to 25 percent less response than was indicated by the norms. One might well conclude that these girls were more interested in a job and its financial rewards than in a career in a field in which they were suited and where they could be a contributor rather than a receiver. The one major exception to this trend was the question concerning how to go about finding a job; 16 percent more than the norms checked this question, giving us, perhaps, more basis for the hypothesis that the girls were interested in a job and money rather than in a career.

#### About Myself

The next section, labeled "About Myself," dealt with personality problems concerning themselves. In all instances where the deviation was more than ten percent, the responses showed less, rather than more concern with the problem mentioned. Only 13 percent, ten percent less than the norm group, felt concern because they were not popular with the boys. None of the girls felt "low" much of the time. From ten to 13 percent less than the norm group felt that their feelings were easily hurt, they did things they later regretted, they must be always on the go, they lacked the drive others have, or felt that they were not wanted. It was interesting that 17 percent less than the norms



Table 3. Analysis of differences in answers to items of the SRA Youth Inventory, "About Myself," by sophomore girls of Wichita High School West and the National Norms.

		: % Up (+) :		
: Wichita :		or :		Items with variations of 10
National:	Sophomore:	Down (-)	:	percent or greater from the
Norm % :	Girls % :	from Norms:	:	National Norm.
23	13	10-	:	79. I'm not popular with boys.
11	0	11-	:	81. I feel "low" much of the time.
37	27	10-	:	82. My feelings are easily hurt.
43	30	13-	:	85. I often do things I later regret.
14	3	11-	:	87. I lack the drive others have.
14	3	11-	:	89. I feel that I'm not wanted.
37	20	17-	:	93. I feel that I'm not as smart as other people.
28	17	11-	:	94. I must always be "on the go."
29	10	19-	:	97. I would like to discuss my personal problems with some one.
27	13	14-	:	102. I'm trying to get rid of an undesirable habit.
26	13	13-	:	109. I wish I could overcome being careless.

felt that they were not as smart as other people, indicating a rather homogeneous grouping in this class. Nineteen percent less than the norm group wanted to discuss their personal problems with someone, indicating either a blissful lack of knowledge of their problems or the availability of the high school's counselors. Group guidance courses may also have provided an outlet for problem discussion. Because 14 percent



less than the norms wanted to get rid of an undesirable habit or wished they could overcome being careless, the girls indicated satisfaction with the status quo, possibly including undesirable traits in their personalities. Perhaps here it would be desirable to create dissatisfaction so that improvement might take place.

#### Getting Along With Others

The next section, "Getting Along With Others," concerned personality problems that involved others. The only question here that elicited more than average concern related to finding a part-time job to earn spending money, indicating again the high value placed by these girls on money. There were 19 questions out of 40 in which the girls indicated over ten percent less interest than what was considered average by the norm group for this age group.

Table 4. Analysis of differences in answers to items of the SRA Youth Inventory, "Getting Along With Others," by sophomore girls of Wichita High School West and the National Norms.

	: National Norm %	: Sophomore Girls %	: % Up (+) or Down (-) :from Norms:	: Items with variations of 10 percent or greater from the National Norm.
60	43	17-	115.	I want people to like me better.
14	0	14-	116.	I don't know how to introduce people properly.
34	13	21-	117.	I wish I could carry on a pleasant conversation.
56	30	26-	120.	I want to make new friends.

Table 4. (Concl.)

	:	:	% Up (+) :	
National:	Sophomore:	Wichita :	or :	Items with variations of 10
Norm % :	Girls % :	Down (-) :	from Norms:	percent or greater from the
				National Norm.
23	13	10-		122. I need to be more tactful.
25	13	12-		125. I'm ill at ease at social affairs.
23	10	13-		126. I want to learn to dance.
19	0	19-		128. I wish I had things to talk about in a group.
24	0	24-		129. I can't live up to the ideals set by groups to which I belong.
17	7	10-		131. How much initiative should I take in getting invited to parties or dances?
24	10	14-		132. I need to learn to be a good listener.
44	17	27-		135. There aren't enough places for wholesome recreation where I live.
59	47	12-		137. I get stage fright when I speak before a group.
17	3	14-		139. I need to learn how to get along with people my own age.
23	13	10-		141. I'm often left out of things other kids do.
31	13	19-		144. I don't know how much of my inner feelings to reveal to my friends.
24	10	14-		148. I'd like to know how to become a leader in my group.
23	33	10+		150. I can't find a part time job to earn spending money.
30	17	13-		152. I don't have a boy friend.
20	3	17-		154. I can't seem to live up to the ideals I have set for myself.

Such items concerning the social graces as making introductions, being tactful, learning to dance, being ill at ease at social affairs were of little concern. Possibly this supported the commonly held conception that the city youngster is more socially sophisticated. The girls must have felt acceptance by their peer group, judging from their responses to such questions as "I want people to like me better; I want to make new friends; I wish I had things to talk about in a group; and I can't live up to the ideals set by groups to which I belong," because their response to these questions showed from 17 to 24 percent less interest than the norm group.

The response to the last group of questions in this section was consistent with this disinterest. Exactly ten percent less than the norm group indicated an interest in the question, "How much initiative should I take in getting invited to parties or dances?". Ten percent of the West High group as compared to 24 percent of the norm group felt that they needed to learn to be a good listener. Seventeen percent of the West High group as compared to 44 percent of the norm group--a difference of 27 percent--felt that there weren't enough places for wholesome recreation. Here the adequacy of city life in leisure time activities compared to that of the average American high school student was reflected. From 12 to 14 percent less than the norm group got stage fright, felt that they needed to learn how to get along with people their own age, or "felt left out of things that other kids did." Nineteen percent less than the norm group felt that they did not know how much of their inner

feelings to reveal to their friends. Fourteen percent less than the norm group, ten percent as compared to 24 percent, wanted to know how to become a leader in their group.

The only question in this section in which the test group revealed ten percent more interest than the norm group concerned finding a part time job to earn spending money. Here again, the greater than average concern over jobs and money showed up. Thirteen percent less than the norm group were concerned because they did not have a boy friend and only three percent, as compared with 20 percent of the norm group, said that they could not live up to the ideals set by the group.

#### My Home and Family

Table 5. Analysis of differences in answers to items of the SRA Youth Inventory, "My Home and Family," by sophomore girls of Wichita High School West and the National Norms.

	:	:	:	:
	: Wichita :	: % Up (+) :	:	: Items with variations of 10
National:	Sophomore:	Down (-) :	:	percent or greater from the
Norm % :	Girls % :	from Norms:	:	National Norm.
16	27	11+	155.	I have no quiet place at home where I can study.
12	27	15+	161.	I feel there is a barrier between me and my parents.
23	40	17+	162.	I can't discuss personal things with my parents.
10	23	13+	176.	My parents don't trust me.
15	27	12+	194.	My family is always worried about money.
15	27	12+	199.	My parents interfere in my choice of friends.

The next section of the SRA Inventory concerned "My Home and Family," and here the variation to the norm group swung in the opposite direction where none of the questions rated a less than ten percent interest. Those questions in which the test group indicated an 11 to 17 percent more interest than the norm group brought forth some interesting points concerning these girls' feelings toward their parents. Eleven percent more than the norm group stated they had no quiet place at home to study. From 13 to 15 percent more felt a barrier between them and their parents; felt they could not discuss personal things with their parents and felt that their parents did not trust them. With 12 percent more than the norm group feeling that their family was "always worried about money," this group's particular interest in money was again accentuated. Twelve percent more than the norm group felt that their parents interfered in their choice of friends.

#### Boy Meets Girl

Table 6. Analysis of differences in answers to items of the SRA Youth Inventory, "Boy Meets Girl," by sophomore girls of Wichita High School West and the National Norms.

		: % Up (+) :		
		: Wichita : or :		Items with variations of 10
National:	Sophomore:	Down (-)	:	percent or greater from the
Norm % :	Girls % :	from Norms:	:	National Norm
39	17	22-	:	208. I seldom have dates.
19	0	19-	:	210. There is no place to dance in the town where I live.
33	23	10-	:	212. I don't know how to keep boys interested in me.

Table 6. (Concl.)

National Norm % :		Wichita :		% Up (+) :		Items with variations of 10 percent or greater from the National Norm.
Sophomore :		Down (-) :		or :		
Norm % :	Girls % :	from	Norms:			
18	7	11-		214.	What are good manners on a date?	
29	17	12-		220.	Is it all right to accept "blind dates"?	
17	3	14-		222.	I'm dating a person of a different religion than mine.	
22	37	15+		236.	What things should one consider in selecting a mate?	
27	37	10+		237.	How long should people know each other before getting married?	
23	47	24+		238.	How can I prepare myself for marriage and family life?	
30	47	17+		239.	What things cause trouble in marriage?	

A sharp division of interest showed up in the section on "Boy Meets Girl." There was less interest in the questions concerning dating and more interest in those concerning marriage than the average for the normal sophomore age level. Twenty-two percent less than the norm group felt they seldom had dates and not a single girl checked "There is no place to dance." Although 23 percent worried about keeping boys interested in them, this was ten percent less than the norm group. Eleven percent less than the norm group wanted to know what were good manners on a date, and 12 percent less were concerned about the rightness of blind dates. This might have been influenced by

the fact that this class had recently finished a unit on dating. Fourteen percent less than the norm group worried about dating a person of a different religion than their own. As to the marriage questions, from ten to 24 percent more interest was shown than by the norm group of sophomores. "How can I prepare myself for marriage and family life? What things cause trouble in marriage?" and "What things should one consider in selecting a mate?" were problems of real concern to these sophomore girls. Whether this finding indicated that much emphasis should be put on not marrying until a person is older or an attempt should be made to prepare these girls to cope with the problems of early marriage becomes an important curriculum problem of this high school.

#### Health

Table 7. Analysis of differences in answers to items of the SRA Youth Inventory, "Health," by sophomore girls of Wichita High School West and the National Norms.

: : % Up (+) :		: Items with variations of 10	
: Wichita : or :		: percent or greater from the	
Norm % :	Girls % :	from Norms:	National Norm.
56	43	13-	240. I want to gain or lose weight.
28	17	11-	241. I want to learn how to select foods that will do me the most good.
33	13	20-	246. I want to improve my posture and body build.
16	0	16-	249. Is smoking harmful?

In the section on "Health" not a single item rated more



interest than the norm group and 17 items showed less concern than was indicated by the norm group. Although 43 percent of the test group were concerned about gaining or losing weight, the norm reply was 56 percent. Selecting foods rated 11 percent less than norm reply, whereas improving posture and body build rated 20 percent less than norm reply. Not a single girl, as compared with 16 percent of the norm group, was concerned about smoking being harmful.

#### Things In General

Table 8. Analysis of differences in answers to items of the SRA Youth Inventory, "Things In General," by sophomore girls of Wichita High School West and the National Norms.

		: % Up (+) :		
: Wichita :		or :		Items with variations of 10
National:	Sophomore:	Down (-)	:	percent or greater from the
Norm % :	Girls % :	from Norms:	:	National Norm
21	10	11-		271. How does one set standards of "right" and "wrong?"
14	3	11-		275. Can I believe the newspapers and radio?
19	3	16-		276. How can I help get rid of intolerance?
18	0	18-		278. What can I do about the injustice all around us?
18	7	11-		279. I'm mixed up about world affairs.
32	20	12-		280. I'm worried about the next war.
30	3	27-		281. Is there something I can do about race prejudice?
27	7	20-		282. Is there any way of eliminating slums?

Table 8. (Concl.)

	:	:	% Up (+) :	
National:	Wichita :	Sophomore :	Down (-) :	Items with variations of 10
Norm % :	Girls % :	Norms :	from Norms :	percent or greater from the
				National Norm
14	0	14-		283. What can I do to help get better government?
24	13	11-		286. How can I learn to get the most for my money?
12	0	12-		288. What can I contribute to civilization?
13	0	13-		292. How can we get honest government?
45	17	28-		298. What makes people selfish or unkind?

In the "Things in General" section in which items concerning ethics and philosophy of life were presented, lack of concern for social problems was evident.

Eleven percent less than the norm group were concerned about how one sets standards of right and wrong, whether one can believe the newspapers and radio, how one can learn to get the most for his money or admitted they were mixed up about world affairs. From 12 to 20 percent less than the norm group concerned themselves about getting rid of intolerance, what they should do about injustice, worried about the next war, or wondered if there were any way of eliminating slums. Only one girl in the test group - a 27 percent less than the norm group - wondered if there was something she could do about race prejudice, and 28 percent less than the norm group wondered what makes people selfish or unkind. Items with a "zero" reply were: "What can

I do about the injustice all around us? What can I do to help get better government? What can I contribute to civilization? How can we get honest government?".

#### IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

In Area one, "My School", the West High girls approached being "average" quite closely. On only six items was a variation of more than ten percent noted. More than the norm number of girls felt deficient in their ability to study; more hated school. Whether this feeling was the fault of a large school system or the result of the socio-economic status of the West High area would be difficult to determine without additional information. The study habit deficiency, now recognized, could be aided by the inclusion of such units in sophomore English courses, or better yet, at the ninth grade level in the intermediate schools. But additional study is needed to ascertain why West girls "hate" school.

Less than the norm group checked that they wanted courses not offered. This answer lends impetus to the concept that the varied curriculum of the large school comes nearer meeting the needs of more students. And rather than the students feeling that the teachers were impersonal, on three items concerning teachers, there was less than the norm number checking these items. Wichita High School West had better than average teachers from the students point of view. The large school is only as impersonal as the teaching staff will let it be.

In one of the references the author mentioned that those

students who came from socio-economic groups where few had attended college showed a curiosity about college and were concerned about a different kind of college question. This idea was supported in section two, "After High School." More were interested in the requirements for college; less in knowing about what people do in college; how to select a college; or how to get into a particular college. Without superimposing the values of the faculty on the student body, work must be begun earlier than high school in the student's educational career to explore the values of a college education.

Twelve items concerning careers, interests, and how to succeed on a job merited less than the norm number of responses. These girls had had at least two occupations units in their school careers. Some of their questions were probably answered there. The one job item that came out ahead was "how to go about finding a job." These girls want a job to earn money. It appeared to matter little to them how to make a success of that job, as long as they can find one and earn money. If there was ever a school that needed office practice and distributive education courses supported, these results point out that West High does. Also the necessity of continuing the occupations units was emphasized.

The girls reported few worries "About Myself." There wasn't a single item that elicited a greater than norm response. Many rated less. In "Getting Along With Others," the only item that elicited a greater than norm response concerned finding a part-time job to earn money. Again the importance of money to these

girls was pointed up. The social sophistication of the city girl was emphasized by the lack of response on other items in this area. Having places to go, knowing how to dance, being popular with boys, and learning social graces were not worries to these sophomores. For some of these girls social life may not have made many demands from the etiquette standpoint. But for the majority, social sophistication had come early.

There seemed to be more family problems among these girls than was indicated by the norm group. Working mothers and step-parents were not uncommon for this group. Most of their homes were the small bungalow type and one complaint of these girls was no quiet place at home to study. From the responses a lack of warm, friendly feeling among family members was noted and father was always worried about money. Another implication of this study was the need of these girls to be helped into getting more enjoyment out of their present family life.

Social sophistication was again indicated in the "Boy Meets Girl" area. Six questions concerning dating obtained a low response, but questions concerning marriage were of much interest. Either these girls needed help in planning and preparing for a more stable early marriage or discouragement toward early marriage. Although the national trend was toward early marriage, West High seemed to be leading the trend. Certainly here was an area that could be explored more deeply in further study, but this study indicated that West High must do something if the needs of all her youth were to be met. West High perhaps had a good start in this direction. A good marriage course was available; child

care was offered; the homemaking department offered foundation work and advanced courses in foods and clothing; home decoration attracted the senior girls. But the fact that marriage was such a strong interest at the sophomore level emphasized the need for attention.

Health problems were of little concern to these girls. Things in general interested them even less. They just weren't concerned with the condition of the world around them. Perhaps in this last section was the greatest challenge for our large secondary schools in the industrial sections of our cities. Although these sophomores had not yet been exposed to the social science courses, they were supposedly going through one of the most altruistic phases of their development. But these girls lived in their own little orbits and preferred not to be bothered with the more weighty problems. Certainly one of West's problems in curriculum development was how to get their money-conscious, marriage-minded girls more interested in becoming responsible citizens.

In summarizing the implications of this study, the findings indicated that too many of the girls had trouble studying and disliked school. They felt their teachers were good, but there was a lack of interest in actually going to college. There was much importance attached to money, so getting a job had great significance. A certain level of social sophistication was present and the girls felt secure in their social life. There was a lack of warm companionable family living in their present homes, yet these girls were vitally interested in marriage for

themselves. They had little interest in the world's problems and improvement of society.

In this report some problem areas have been explored that appeared to be of concern to this particular local situation. Perhaps the results of this study can be used in future curriculum planning at the sophomore level for West High School girls.



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THE USE OF THE SRA YOUTH INVENTORY FOR GUIDANCE  
IN PERSONAL-SOCIAL RELATIONS

by

ELEANOR ANNE HERR THOMAS

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AN ABSTRACT OF A REPORT

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What were the differences between the worries and concerns of sophomore girls living in a large middle, lower-middle class urban area and those of the "average" sophomore? This study was an attempt to analyze these differences, as indicated by the results of the SRA Youth Inventory which was administered to 30 sophomore girls enrolled in the spring semester of a group guidance course, Personal Living. The location was Wichita High School West, which had an enrollment of 1800 pupils.

Very few parents of West High students were professional workers; many worked in aircraft plants. Divorced and remarried parents were not uncommon; many mothers worked. Married girls were no longer unusual in the classroom.

The SRA Youth Inventory, one of the best of several inventory devices in the area of personal-social relations, is a check list of 298 questions which helps the person being tested to identify problems. The inventory makes use of a basic difficulty key which identifies 101 items as being indicative of more serious adjustment problems.

In scoring, percents for grade ten were used as comparison for the test group. Items on which the West group differed more than ten percent above or below the norm group were selected for special study.

The questions on the Inventory were divided into eight sections. In the first section "My School" the tested group approached the norm group quite closely. The differences which were above the norm group response were that more hated school and more wished they knew how to study better. Wanting to take

courses not offered in school and items concerning the teachers rated a less than the average norm reply. Indications here were that the girls liked their teachers; felt their curriculum was adequate, but they felt they didn't know how to study as well as most sophomores and more hated school.

The second section, "After High School," covered job and college questions. The girls were curious about the requirements for college, but indicated little interest in actual selection of a college. One job question, "How do I go about finding a job?", received a higher than norm response, but the other career questions did not arouse much interest. Another job question in section four seemed to confirm the feeling that these girls were quite interested in money, but not much concerned with the career aspects of working. However, these girls had recently completed a career unit in this course.

Area three was "About Myself." None of these items rated a higher than norm response from the test group, many rated less. The girls did not seem to be introspective. If undesirable aspects of their personalities were there, the girls were satisfied with the status quo.

Responses to items in area four, "Getting Along With Others," were similar. The supposed social sophistication of the city youth was evident here and these girls seemed to feel acceptance by their peer group. The item concerned with finding a part time job to earn money was the only one which rated above the norm group, and as mentioned in section two, seemed to point up the emphasis placed by this group on money.

"My Home and Family" was the topic in area five. Again concern with money was evidenced by the above norm group response to the item, "My father is always worried about money." A lack of warm, companionable family living was indicated by the above norm group responses to questions concerning personal relationships between the girls and their parents.

Dating and marriage questions were covered in area six, "Boy Meets Girl." The evidence of social sophistication was in the responses to the dating questions. None rated above the norm response, several rated below. But the situation was reversed on the items concerning marriage. These girls indicated a greater response than what the norm group indicated was typical for sophomores. Because these girls were not receiving satisfaction from their present family living and indicated such a premature interest in marriage, the need for attention in this area was emphasized.

Area seven concerned health problems and none of these questions received a greater than norm response. Area eight, "Things in General," was devoted to the social-citizenship-philosophy-religion type question. Here, not a single item received above the norm reply; 13 items were below the norm group. Four items were not checked by any of the girls. These items asked about getting better and honest government, contributions to civilization, and doing something about the injustice around us. Improvement of society did not concern these girls.

The findings of this study were that many of the girls had trouble studying and disliked school. They felt their teachers



were interested in them and fair, but there was a lack of interest in actually going to college. There was much importance attached to money, so getting a job had great significance. A certain level of social sophistication was present and the girls felt secure in their social life. There was a lack of warm companionable family living in their present homes, yet these girls were vitally interested in marriage for themselves. They had little interest in world problems and social improvement.

Other uses of the SRA Youth Inventory and findings from studies using the SRA Youth Inventory were cited in the review of literature in this report. The inventory is useful in group guidance situations and is a helpful device to the school counselor. Problem areas of classes, as well as that of individuals, can be located and the results used in curriculum planning and individual counseling in local situations.