

ADMINISTRATION

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**A FUNCTIONAL LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER
FOR AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

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Introduction

One of the important dimensions of the current revolution in elementary education is the individualization of instruction—a dimension which forces the teacher to change his role from being primarily a dispenser of information to one of diagnostician and prescriber.

Individualized instruction can be labeled as one of the fastest moving innovations in elementary education today. At least many educators are giving lip service to it, and many are eagerly attempting to put the concept into practice. As I work with educators in Missouri and other states, I find there is a sincere desire to implement a program of individualization.

Two factors which I feel are essential in the initiation of a program on individualized learning are: (1) a set of guidelines stated so that skills to be developed are definitely defined and (2) an abundance and variety of supplementary materials.

To accomplish the first factor, teachers must decide on the behavioral objectives for each academic subject from kindergarten through sixth grade. To fulfill the second, they must select from supplementary texts, pamphlets, records, films, and tapes the materials which meet these objectives on all levels for varying learning and study styles.

A trend is to house these materials in a Learning Resource Center (LRC) so they are readily available to all students of the school. It is my observation that establishment of a Learning Resource Center is one of the first steps in individualizing instruction. After the teacher has made an accurate diagnosis and has written an appropriate prescription for the individual the materials are then easily accessible. In my work as an elementary specialist for continuing professional education, I have found a limited number of Learning Resource Centers in operation. Educators know the value of these centers and they desire help in establishing and administrating one.

The Learning Resource Center must have financing and backing of the school district if it is to function efficiently. The Board of Education of Clayton, Mo., granted funds to McMorrow Elementary School to develop a Learning Resource Center. In the following pages George Fairgrieve, Principal; Jane Coffey, Learning Resource Center Director; and Barbara Lehman, Primary Teacher; describe the functional Learning Resource Center at McMorrow Elementary School. As I edited this material, I knew it would be a beneficial document and tool of reference for you in establishing your LRC. Probably you will not need to utilize nor will you agree with all of the material as stated. However, you should find much of it adaptable to your school situation.

It is my recommendation that as you read this monograph you note what appears usable and modify it into a functional plan for your school. Then you will have made an excellent beginning.

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Acknowledgement

The principal portion of this monograph was drawn from a larger work entitled *An LRC Operational Model* written by George Fairgrieve, Jane Coffey, and Barbara Lehman of McMorrow School. That work was supported by funds provided by the Board of Education of the School District of Clayton, Mo., as part of a continuing program of summer curriculum workshops. While Jane Coffey, Barbara Lehman, and George Fairgrieve are the McMorrow staff members most closely identified with the school's learning resource center, others also played major roles in its development. The contributions of Mrs. Nadean Hirth and Mrs. Agnes Reich, primary teachers; Mrs. Jean Moss, fourth grade; Mrs. Alma Dulz, sixth grade; and Mrs. Gloria Abrams, instructional aide; have been, and continue to be, invaluable.

Appreciation is also extended to William D. Hedges, Chairman of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education, and Charles H. Koelling, Director of Continuing Professional Education, who have spent time editing this monograph.

Overview

LRC and the Library

There are many labels which have been attached to a central unit which we call a Learning Resource Center. They include instructional materials center, learning center, multimedia center, and the like. While the word library does not appear to be used unless the function of the center is that of a library only, the library function is definitely an integral part of what we call a Learning Resource Center.

While some might argue that we cannot separate the word library from the functions of an LRC, and while it is true that the library is part of the LRC, we wish here to separate them. Fortunately, what a library can mean to a school seems to be generally acknowledged. The problem is that it is sometimes difficult to move *beyond* the library concept to the more comprehensive concept of the LRC where the book collection becomes only a part, albeit a very important part, of overall instructional services. Thus we will describe library procedures in a separate publication from that describing the functions within the newer LRC concept.

Philosophy

The purpose of this monograph is to describe how a Learning Resource Center can be used to further the individualization of instruction in an elementary school. It is, quite frankly, patterned on McMorrow School, but this in no way suggests that this is the only or the best model.

In our organizational model, the classroom teacher is the manager of the basic and supplementary learning experiences for each child. Being such a manager becomes a very complex task in any program which has individualization of instruction as its main thrust, and where this individualization means that a child's learning experiences are determined by both what he brings to the classroom and by the objectives that the teacher has for him. The crux of individualization is that along with it are such aspects of individualization as different learning materials for different children and differing time segments spent in learning experiences.

This also means that it is impossible for each teacher to have within her classroom the multi-media necessary to provide each child with what he needs. School classrooms lack the size; school districts lack the money.

Classroom teachers must have the support of auxiliary staff to attend to the continuing task of providing materials, setting up the materials, and providing records of what the child does. While classroom teachers may be adept at what we might call

the ringmaster behavior,¹ the number of students at any one time is too large to operate effectively.

Every attempt to spell out in detail the implementation of a program should speak to the limitations involved. We believe that the Individually Prescribed Instruction (IPI) concept as exemplified in the IPI Math Program (disseminated by Research for Better Schools, Inc., 1700 Market Street, Philadelphia, Pa.) is the best model for achieving individualization of instruction. We also believe that this concept is best applied in the areas of basic skills and that use in areas such as social studies and science should be viewed with some skepticism. It is true that there are some areas where the IPI concept seems appropriate, but we wish to focus on experiences which are basic to the educational programs of most children.

Limitations of time and money also indicate that we should direct our work to the description and the development of a learning resource center model in relation to reading and language experiences.

A final limitation is that we do not speak to the provisions for in-school creation and preparation of instructional learning materials, for example, photographs, transparencies, films, and tapes. In any LRC operation is the making of such materials, and this publication describes some things that we have done. However, we have not located a place where this could be done nor described the possibilities. The inclusion of such facilities and trained personnel would be desirable, and we hope that those schools which can provide these services do so in an LRC. In our school, we make tapes wherever there is quiet, transparencies in the secretary's office, and anything else wherever we can.

We do not regard what follows to be the *sine qua non* of elementary school organization, but propose it as a point of departure from which other schools may move as they seek to utilize learning resource centers as a means to individualize instruction.

Facilities and Functions

Physically a Learning Resource Center is a large room or large area in a school where the multitude of materials such as SRA Reading Labs, records, tapes, Cyclo-teachers, EDL Labs and reference materials have been brought together where all teachers may use them. Educators who reject the LRC concept on the basis of cost do not realize that within their own building they probably have sufficient materials with implement an LRC program. And these materials, instead of being used for a short period of time by one teacher with a few students may be used over longer periods of time by many

¹A dimension of teacher behavior reflecting an ability to handle multiple and simultaneous strands of activity and interaction. See Louis M. Smith and William Geoffrey, *The Complexities of an Urban Classroom*, New York. Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1968. pp. 104-5.

teachers and by many students. It is obvious that no one teacher can have in her room the appropriate materials for a wide range of individual student programs. Housing them together means that any one student has access to all the materials.

We might point out here that one of the biggest problems in starting an LRC is the initial step of persuading teachers to give up those materials which can be best utilized in the LRC. We would guess that it has not been an uncommon practice for the administrator to have gone into the classrooms at the close of the year and carried what was needed to the central room. Central housing of materials is difficult to achieve in a school when the teachers have been on the staff for a number of years and have personally encouraged "birthday books" and headed fund drives to finance room libraries.

Schools now being planned or currently under construction have the advantage of being able to incorporate the concept of a Learning Resource Center into the basic design of the building. If we were to design a school now, we would make the LRC the center of our universe as indicated in Fig. 1. The basic concept is represented mainly by a model wherein students spend almost equal instructional time between their own classroom and the LRC. Movement from one to the other is simple and direct and teachers are readily able to see or communicate directly with the LRC staff.

Ours is not an ideal world. Schools are forced to make do with what they have. In our case, it was a kindergarten room used only one-half the time. Figure 2 suggests how it is now organized as our LRC.

There is probably no single way of arranging furniture, equipment, and shelving. The space and design of the room often restrict what one can do. Electrical outlets are rather fixed features. Doors and windows cannot be moved without substantial additional expense.

Basically, it would seem wise to separate the library function as much as possible from the other LRC activities. From that point on, the placement of listening centers, the location of the aide's desk, and the storage of individualized materials are subject to the use that develops in the school. The guiding construct should be that everything should be as movable as possible in order that the best arrangements can evolve rather than be fixed in advance.

The selection of different pieces of audiovisual equipment and the quantity of each should also be determined by needs. However, there are certain items that are basic. Tape recorders and record players with earphones—listening stations—are the basic tools. After that, language masters, filmstrip viewers, projectors, and film loop projectors can be added as it becomes necessary. Incidentally, the inclusion of such large audience devices as television sets and regular movie projectors should be avoided. It would seem likely that TV programs or large screen movies might lure other youngsters from the activities in which they should be engaged. When many children are engaged in different activities in one room, it is best that no one activity prove highly distractable. While there may be times when large audience media are appropriate, this use would be so rare in an LRC that expenditures of this nature are unwise. If TV's must be used, they should be small screen with earphones. A list of many possibilities

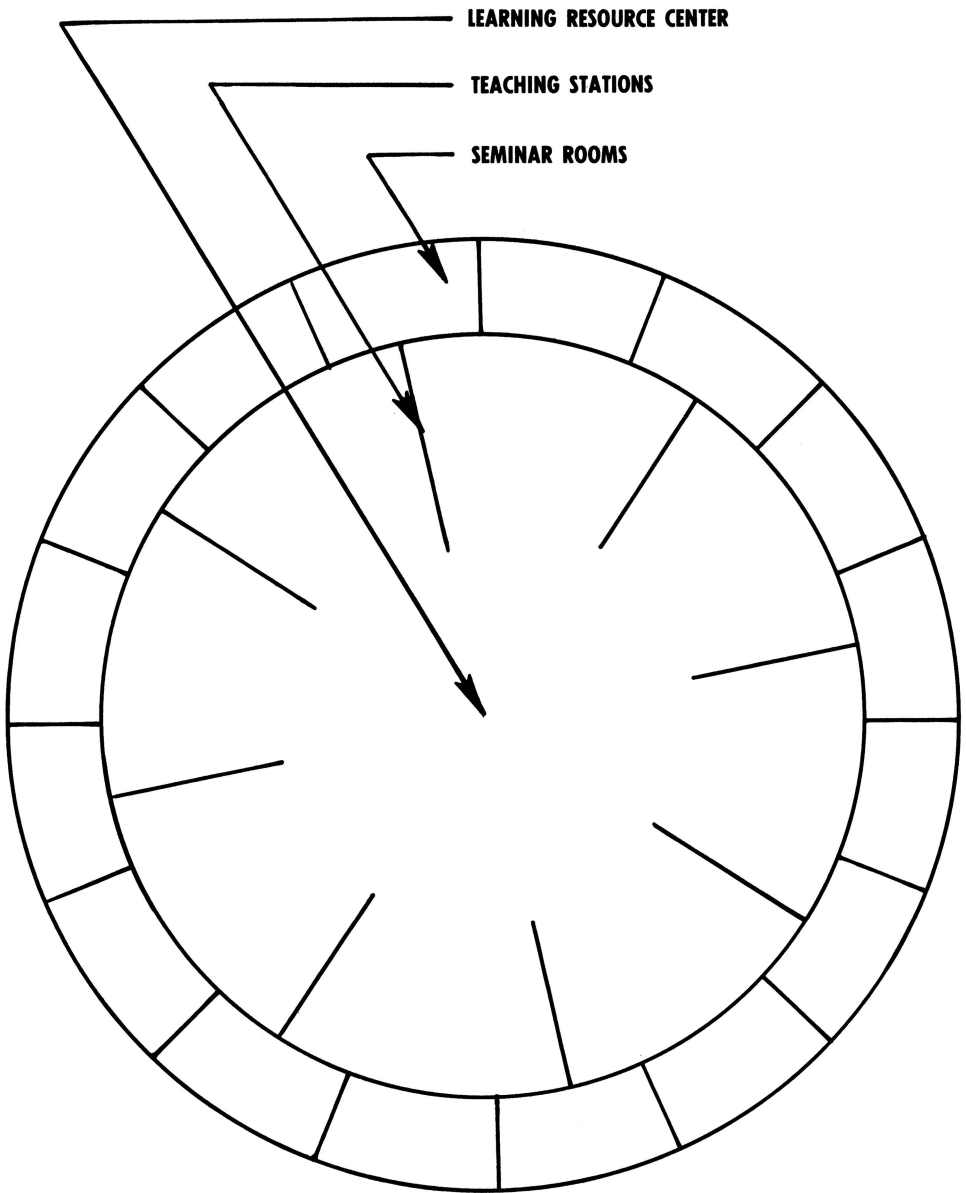
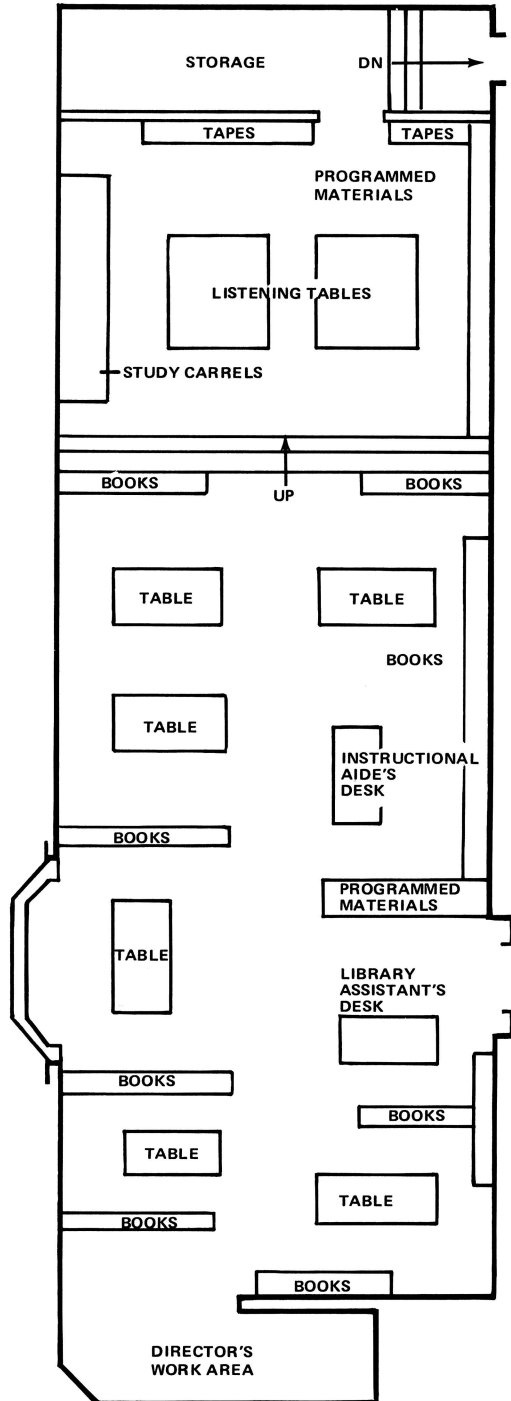


FIGURE 1. BUILDING DIAGRAM

FIGURE 2.
MCMORROW
SCHOOL LRC



of equipment which might have viable use are obtainable in **Standards for School Media Programs**, American Library Association, Chicago, Ill., and the National Education Association, Washington, D.C., 1969.

Housing is a very limited concept and many LRC's are not functional because they become central locations for materials when they should become central locations for learning activities. These activities require people. While many schools have made attempts to provide individual teachers with aides and clerks, it would seem that the use made of these people is a hit or miss affair. LRC's are not merely centers for distribution of materials, but centers where aides implement the learning activities prescribed by the teacher. We hope this will become apparent through the procedures which are described later.

The child, in a school organized so that the classroom teacher has the responsibility for diagnosing and determining the child's learning experiences but where others administer many of the child's tasks in an LRC, finds himself in a learning environment much different from the traditional self contained classroom. Mere movement to and from the LRC provides freedom for development of self-discipline and self-reliance, provides change from the small world of his assigned desk in the classroom, and provides for release of energy in physical activity. It provides the child the opportunity to relate to staff members other than his own classroom teacher. It provides him with the opportunity to interact with students beyond his own classroom group. Above all, it provides him with the opportunity to work on his own personal assignment without being overly concerned about how this compares with the work of other classmates.

Obviously, paralleling the change in role of the student is an even greater change in the role of the teacher. No longer can she function primarily as a dispenser of wisdom. The changing role of the teacher is that she becomes primarily a manager of the child's learning activities, diagnosing and prescribing to meet his individual needs.

It creates a new role within the school, that of the paraprofessional or aide or whatever she may be called, who performs for the child in the LRC those directions given to her by the teacher. She provides the materials, sees that the student works as directed, and returns to the teacher all the necessary information regarding the child's behavior while in the LRC.

Objectives

A truly functional, valuable learning resource center should fulfill a number of basic objectives. The following list is not all inclusive but should suggest the potentiality that LRC's have for students and their teachers. (For many of these we are indebted to a recent SRA Handbook entitled **Learning Centers: Methods and Media**.¹)

¹S. R. A. **Learning Centers, Methods and Media**, Chicago: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1969, pp. 6-7.

It should provide, on an individual basis, a complement to the learning potential of every student (or teacher).

It should provide students with the materials, know how, and desire to become independent, self-motivating, self-disciplined, self-evaluating, creative learners.

It should provide a wide range of basic and specialized materials and equipment.

It should provide warehousing and storage space for many types of materials.

It should provide for in-service training for proper materials utilization.

It should provide for coordination of all existing materials and media in the school curriculum.

It should be an adjunct to the classroom.

It should provide for individual diagnosis.

It should provide for individual rate and capacity.

It should provide for student-student interaction—not just independent study.

It should provide for ongoing pupil-teacher evaluation.

It should provide for open-ended exploration—not predetermined solutions.

It should provide an opportunity for all to be successful—it should not in any way generate failure for some.

It should provide for continuing evaluation and modification according to the needs of the school.

Caveats

LRC's can go awry in many ways. Sometimes it is difficult for teachers to assign students to work with other adults. Sometimes it is difficult for teachers simply to change their role. Because a fully functioning LRC is a new concept there are many problems posed by the lack of knowledge of how to use it, of what materials to purchase for it, of how to schedule students into it.

None of these, however, presents the problem that results from the use of an LRC as a detention hall, as a place for student punishment, or simply as a place to unload students so the teacher has fewer to work with. The LRC does not function as a device for securing free time for the teacher, nor as a place to ease her load, nor should it be associated in the child's mind with punishment.

Another important caveat relates to the temptation some teachers may have to have the child do everything that is available. What the child is assigned depends on what he needs, and it is difficult to imagine that even a very small number of children would need everything that is available.

A third caveat relates to the temptation to purchase every program or piece of equipment that is available in order to make the LRC a good place for "show" when educators come to view. This should be rigorously avoided. The staff should order those things which can and will be used. Implicit in the model is to do what we have

done—spell out for all—students and staff—what is available for what objective. Evident in this is that no LRC can contain everything that is published or manufactured. But an LRC can contain much that is valuable, and this value is directly proportional to use, and this use in turn can be brought about only by teachers being knowledgeable regarding what is available and appropriate.

Another temptation to be resisted is the purchase of commercial materials for aesthetic purposes. This is just another aspect of the “show and tell” syndrome. As far as decoration is concerned, there is much that can be acquired economically, and indeed an LRC can become rightfully a display case for exhibition of the creative and artistic results of children’s work, especially those relating to reading, social studies, science, and art. Dioramas on books children have read, posters, and models can make the LRC visually inviting as well as instructionally functional. Even though every child does not visit every classroom, all spend time in the LRC where they may enjoy along with their own work the work of others. An LRC can become not only the physical center of the instructional program but also the psychological center of the child’s life in school.

Finally, an LRC cannot be started with the expectation that learning materials are simply purchased, placed in the LRC, and are ready for children to use.

In the development of our LRC we have worked for three years in two and three week curriculum workshops and have spent many hours during the school year just taking the materials we have bought and making the modifications and adaptations which are necessary to utilize them effectively with children.

Publishers and manufacturers prepare materials for mass consumption. From these, school people must select those materials which can be adapted to their program. The McGraw-Hill Sullivan Programmed Reading Materials, described as a means of individualizing instruction, required modifications for use in our specific program. We found that in order to individualize instruction we had to make our own tapes which enabled a first grader to take advantage of word formation and letter dictation activities when he was ready according to his individual progress in the program. Without these tapes, a teacher would have no way of working with 20 to 25 youngsters who were spread out through the continuum in accordance with their differing learning rates.

In wishing to take advantage of the suggested Scott, Foresman & Co. supplementary literature, we found it difficult to give each child the story when he was ready for it if we had to follow the traditional model of the teacher’s reading the book and displaying the pictures to the whole group as she went along. We thought that tapes of these stories where a child, alone or with one or two others, could actually hold the book and listen to its being read when he was ready for it, would be a much more valuable learning experience. We looked in vain for satisfactory commercial tapes, and then made our own, which was a good choice. When the child heard his own teacher’s voice, or the voice of a teacher he knew, it added to his enjoyment of the learning experience.

One of the major tasks is simply the indexing of materials and the preparing of record sheets which can be put into the hands of teachers. Each teacher must have available at all times information on what is available and what the uses are. As materials are revised or new materials come out, parallel revisions must be made in these record forms.

Basic Considerations

Personnel

Basic to the whole operation we have suggested is that the LRC have a director, leader, head-librarian, or whatever you wish to call her, who is responsible for its overall operation. She must be talented both as a teacher and as a librarian. People with these talents are becoming more numerous every day. In prior years, however, it has been necessary to take a teacher and train her as a librarian, or to take a librarian and train her in teaching. It would seem that the former is a much happier arrangement. Librarianship is a rather exact science, the fundamentals of which can be identified with precision and hence readily learned. For a librarian to become knowledgeable about all aspects of teaching, especially of the curriculum and relating what she does in the LRC to that curriculum, is another matter. When the major thrust of an LRC is defined in terms of serving as a means to further individualization of instruction, then the move from teacher to librarian appears to be the much more reasonable one.

The person who fills this role, herein called **LRC director** for convenience, must not only be knowledgeable about the operation of an elementary school library, how to catalog, how to choose acquisitions with care, especially when money is short, but also must know in detail the curriculum of a school, the practices of teachers, and the characteristics of the children. In short, she must be another teacher. She must be able to operate all types of audiovisual equipment. On occasion she must even be able to repair a projector or a tape recorder.

The following list suggests the duties of the LRC director:

Implement policies.

Constantly evaluate library service in light of educational program.

Set up programs for students and staff.

Report to principal and other administrators.

Work with teachers.

Plan new expanding service.

Help students.

Supervise implementation of K-6 library skills and activities.

Check tools to strengthen collection.

Update materials.

Insure sequential story and literature program.

Schedule use of library.

Inform teachers of new and existing materials.

Correlate book and non-book material.

Plan budget, i.e., regular books, materials, supplies, equipment.

Handle all matters relating to Titles II and III of ESEA.

Cooperate actively with other local area libraries.

Re-evaluate efficient use of available space.

Read book reviews and examine materials.

Visit other libraries.

Attend exhibits of library materials, e.g., book, audiovisual, and equipment.

Attend professional meetings and serve on committees relevant to the job.

Prepare materials for summer curriculum teams and workshops.

As can be seen by the above list, a portion of her duties are administrative. She must direct activities of other staff members or adults in the center. Basically, two additional people are needed, and where the director does not have to be a full time person, although this is the ideal, these two others must be full time.

One, who will function as a "pure" librarian, called **library assistant** here, serves to check books in and out, shelve books, help children find them, and take care of the multitude of details inherent in the day by day operation of the library portion of the LRC.

The director, of course, retains the duties of book selection, schedules the people who perform the librarian function, and trains them in that function. Because these people who take care of all the normal routines do not work with children in an instructional sense nor need come to the school with a high degree of training, they may be volunteer mothers or people who are simply interested in serving the school.

While many administrators have reservations about the mothers of their students serving in the school, these relate mostly to not having mothers in charge of their neighbor's children or in not having mothers have access to records, test scores, and evaluations of other children. In an LRC where the duties are clearly spelled out one should find very few parents who would attempt to violate this, and the ways in which it can be violated are virtually non-existent. The majority of parents are aware of the norms governing professional behavior within the school.

The following list suggests some of the activities of the library assistant:

Check in and shelve books.

Check out books.

Reserve books.

Record circulation statistics: daily, monthly, yearly.

Retype filled book cards.

Issue notices for overdue books.

Do minor book repairs.

Read shelves (see that books are in proper order).

Help keep room neat and attractive (shelves, chairs, bulletin boards, displays, etc.).

Familiarize self with multi-media and equipment.

Check lists and tools for book selection.

Type e.g. (material lists, correspondence, bibliographies, etc.).

Do other clerical duties as needed.

Straighten to make ready for next day's work.

The second, and by far the newest role in the LRC is that of the **instructional aide** who serves primarily to fill the prescriptions made out by the teachers. She, also, need not be a well trained or experienced person in working with children. She should have at least a high school education and exhibit the enduring traits of patience, kindness, sense of humor, and the like which all of us in the schools should have. Her duties consist of the pulling of materials, setting up necessary audio-visual equipment, scoring the work, and sending a record back to the teacher.

The total number of instructional aides in the LRC is determined, unfortunately, more by cost than by curriculum. Teachers will find the number of hours students can use the LRC somewhat limited by space, number of aides, use by other teachers, and similar organizational problems. This, however, should not deter making maximal use of the facility within any limitations these considerations impose. The best solution we have found is to schedule times when one or two teachers have priority over the others. Figure 3 is such a schedule. It is important to note that the teacher does not send her entire class at this time. She sends those who need work and who can be accommodated. This allows for further individual or small group instruction in the classroom while some children are working on prescribed work in the LRC. It is also important to note that students in other rooms are not precluded from using the LRC if there is space and aide service available. (Whole classes may come on occasion to the LRC, especially for lessons in library skills, story hours, and the like.)

As the number of instructional aides is a limiting factor in how many children can be served at any given time, likewise the variety and quantity of audio-visual equipment limits activity. In order that the maximum use of equipment, programs, aides can be made, it is necessary that there be a close working relationship among teachers, LRC director, and instructional aides. A schedule will not, by itself, ensure maximum use. It is static and cannot accommodate the ever fluctuating dynamics of an instructional program. While it must be used as a guide, teachers who need LRC services should always inquire if they are available. This is one reason why we are enamored of the idealized building diagram in Fig. 1. Since we are limited to using as resource centers rooms which are often quite distant from many classrooms, personal and professional cooperation becomes a necessity. Helpful to this would be the inclusion of a communication system to and from each classroom and the LRC. This is an expensive alternative.

While instructional aide time may be limited by finances, there are other alternatives in providing such aid. For example, high school students in the eighth semester have been available and desirous of serving in elementary schools. There is help even closer at hand. Intermediate grade students can help primary students, and usually this help is reciprocal in that the older student learns by teaching and helping. While research literature is not voluminous on this subject, what is there suggests that lower achieving student tutors benefit even more than higher achieving student tutors as they work with younger students.

As a final comment on personnel, we might mention the role of the library coordina-

FIGURE 3.

McMORROW SCHOOL L. R. C. SCHEDULE

[9:00-11:45 a.m. - LRC open for book circulation and
 [12:45- 3:15 p.m. reference work K-6.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00- 9:30	Grade 3	Grade 3	Grade 3	Grade 3	Grade 3
9:30-10:30	Grade 1 Grade 2	Grade 1 Grade 2	Grade 1 Grade 2	Grade 1 Grade 2	Grade 1 Grade 2
10:30-11:00	RECESS 1-4				
11:00-11:45	Grade 1 Grade 2	Grade 1 Grade 2	Grade 1 Grade 2	Grade 1 Grade 2	Grade 1 Grade 2
11:45-12:45	CLOSED				
12:45- 1:15	Grade 6	Record Keeping	Grade 6	Record Keeping	Grade 6
1:15- 1:45	Grade 5	Grade 1	Grade 5	Grade 1	Record Keeping
1:45- 2:15	Grade 3	Grade 5	Grade 5	Grade 5	
2:15- 2:45			Grade 2	Grade 2	Grade 4
2:45- 3:30	Grade 4	Grade 4	Record Keeping	Grade 4	Grade 4

The LRC Schedule is an attempt to describe the principal use of the LRC at any given time. However, it is not restrictive. Children may come for activities at various times of the day which appear to be scheduled for only a certain time. The schedule is a guide to use, rather than a directive.

tor. In a district where more than one school has an LRC, a person who can organize and handle a central cataloging function is invaluable. Such a person can coordinate orders from all the schools in the district, unify procedures, supply leadership in library matters, and serve as a resource person.

Operation

Essential in the description of the instructional aide's role is the method of operation of the LRC. Specifically, each child in the school is provided with a three ring binder. This binder contains an index and assignment and scoring sheets for all learning resource center materials appropriate for him. This binder can include any portion of or all the sheets, one of which appears in "Curriculum Application" of this monograph.

The classroom teacher decides from the index what work she wants the child to do in the LRC. She dates the assignment, puts a paper clip on that page in order that the aide may readily identify the assignment, and sends the child to the LRC. The child reports to the instructional aide in the LRC. The aide pulls the appropriate materials, starts the child off in the assignment, and provides supportive measures as necessary. This support might include helping a child who has trouble starting and stopping a tape recorder or assisting a child in headset adjustment.

When the child has completed his work, the aide corrects it, records the results in his three ring binder, sees that the child returns the material to its proper place, and sends him back to the classroom. Thus, immediate feedback is provided to the student and the teacher.

The three ring binder containing all the activities available for each child is kept by the child throughout his elementary school career. As the child moves upward through the grades each teacher can readily see what he has done in previous years, and the information is much more precise and valuable than achievement test scores, grade reports, and like summary records. Also, it is a living record for the child as he progresses through the skills to which he must attend in the elementary school.

Figure 4 charts the sequential steps.

Students

By now the role of the student should be clear. He goes to the LRC at the direction of his teacher, presents his three ring binder to the instructional aide, and returns to his room upon completion of the assigned work. This does not imply that what he does comes naturally. Upon initial entry into a school where an LRC provides the student with a substantial portion of his learning experiences, a child should receive formal instruction regarding his role. His first task is to learn how to identify his LRC assignment in order to minimize the time the instructional aide spends in pulling his materials and getting him started. In addition to this, he must be prepared to

take with him whatever materials there may be in his classroom for completion of the work. Upon returning to his classroom, he must learn to report to the teacher in whatever form she has established.

In the LRC he may find that he has to deal with equipment and materials with which he is not familiar. It becomes the responsibility of the classroom teacher to acquaint the student with the equipment and materials with which he will be working. She can give a practice lesson in the classroom, take the children herself to the LRC, or make special arrangements with the aide for an introductory lesson.

An important consideration is that this type of operation increases pupil movement throughout the building. In our experience we have found that children readily adapt to procedures where they pass individually or in small groups from their classroom to distant rooms and return from them. We would argue that among all those who find their roles changing with the implementation of an LRC, students learn most easily and most readily.

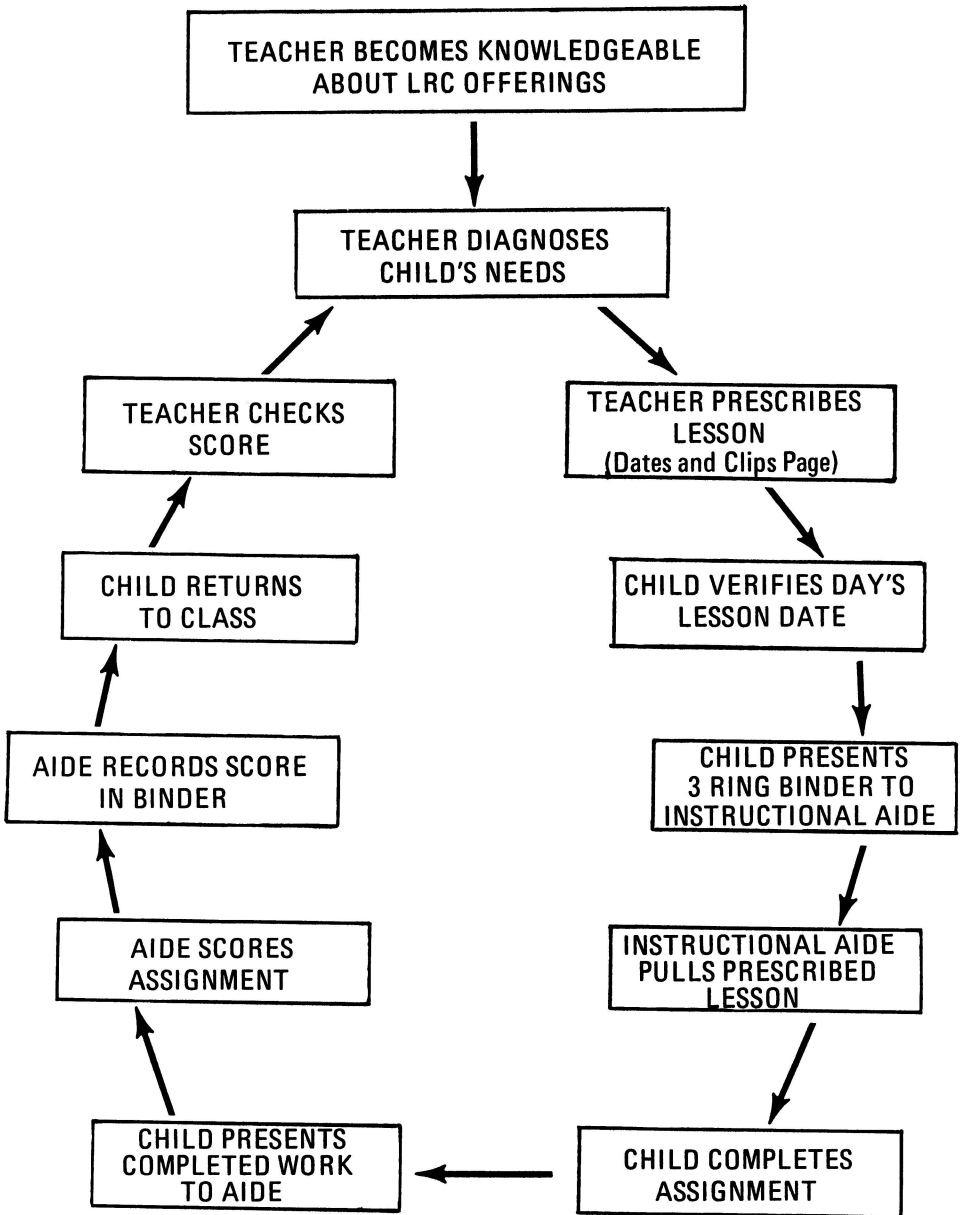


FIGURE 4. SEQUENTIAL STEPS

Curricular Application

The examples of a curricular application which follow are meant to be suggestions of what can be done in an LRC and do not attempt to define the only or the best approach to any learning activity. These examples are taken from a list of reading objectives which have been written in behavioral terms. It is our bias that basic skills should be so defined. This does not mean that the total instructional program can ever be wholly defined in behavioral terms. It does mean that wherever possible we wish to do so, and it would seem that reading lends itself more readily than some other areas to this treatment.

In three examples, the items on the left are the behavioral reading objectives.¹ On the right are learning materials available in our LRC which can be prescribed for the child to help him reach the objective.

Example 1:

Level A

4. Listens for initial consonant sounds.

OBJECTIVE: Given two common words pronounced by the teacher (e.g. bird-ball, boy-take, banana-dog), the child is able to tell when the words do and do not begin alike.

1. Ideal Consonant Pictures for Peg Board 272-1.
2. Ideal Magic Cards 272-2.
3. Scott, Foresman & Co. First Talking Alphabet Part I Initial Sounds.
4. Scott, Foresman First Talking Alphabet Part II Initial sounds.
5. Houghton Mifflin Listen and Do Initial sounds.
6. Field Enterprises Cyclo-teacher 201-204a.
7. SRA Word Games Lab I Initial consonants.

¹Wayne Otto and Joe Peterson, "Defining Objectives for Essential Reading Skills." *Educational Products Report*, 2 (7) 18-24; April, 1969.

Example 2:

Level B

3. Has phonic analysis skills.

OBJECTIVE: The child is able to identify two simple consonant combinations—ch, th, sh—that result in a single new sound. (The child is asked to identify the digraphs, i.e., two consonants with a single sound, in words enunciated by the teacher: she, chaff, teeth, fish, beach.)

1. Ideal Blends and Digraphs 273-1 Ideal Magic Cards 273-2.
3. Scott, Foresman & Co. First Talking Alphabet Part I. Initial and final digraphs.
4. Houghton Mifflin Listen and Do 26-30.
5. SRA Word Games Lab I Purple 819.
6. Programmed Reading: A Sullivan Associates Program (our tapes).

Example 3:

Level C

2. Has phonic analysis skills

1) Long vowel sounds

OBJECTIVES: 1. The child is able to pronounce real words and nonsense words with a single long vowel sound and identify the vowel heard (e.g., nose, brile, cheese, seat, labe).

1. Ideal Vowel Pictures and Words 274-1 Long vowels.
2. Ideal Magic Cards 274-2.
3. Scott, Foresman & Co. First Talking Alphabet Part II. Long vowels.
4. Field Enterprises Cyclo-teacher 209-210a.
5. SRA Word Games I Silver 10 Green 29-34.
6. SRA Power Builders Lab 1c. Green 1, 2, 6, 7, 11, 12, 16, 17.

We have previously spoken of a three ring binder which each child has and which contains work sheets for all the activities available in the LRC. For the types of materials listed in the three examples there are record sheets on which the instructional aide records the results of the work the child does. The binder contains a page for each of the six activities listed in example 2. (A sample record sheet for item 2, the Ideal Magic Cards, appears on the following page.) The last column, the percent correct, is filled in by the aide after the child has done the assignment.

We can use a fourth example to illustrate more clearly how the teacher works with a child. When a child is ready to begin work on simple consonant digraphs, the teacher's first task is to determine the desired behavioral outcome of the child's work on this skill. For example,

Objectives:

1. The child is able to identify simple initial two consonant combinations - ch, wh, th, sh - that result in a new sound.
2. The child is able to identify the initial digraphs in words he hears.
3. The child is able to write the appropriate initial digraph for pictured words or for words he hears.

Certainly the teacher will devote some class time to working with the child on this skill. She must provide a sufficient base of understanding for objective 1 in order that the child may take full advantage of the available LRC activities to reinforce objectives 2 and 3. This groundwork is essential if the child is to meet with success and view his experiences in the LRC with enthusiasm. The assignment must be designed to meet his needs and be within his range of experience and ability.

Assuming that the teacher has provided the necessary background to meet objective 1, she is ready to make an LRC assignment to assist the child in meeting the requirements of objective 2. From her knowledge of the different learning materials available in the LRC, she determines that any or all of the following activities could be considered valid assignments to meet objective 2.

Example 4:

OBJECTIVE: The child is able to identify the initial digraphs in words he hears.

1. Ideal Magic Cards 273-2. Card No. 6.
2. Scott, Foresman & Co. First Talking Alphabet Part I. Lessons 31-36.
3. Houghton Mifflin Listen and Do. Lessons 26-30.
4. SRA Word Games Lab I. Game 8.
5. SRA Word Games Lab I. Check Test 8. (Our tapes.)
6. Programmed Reading: A Sullivan Associates Program. (Our tapes 12b, part 2.)

MAGIC CARDS
NO. 273-2 1.

NAME _____

DATE	CARD NO.	DESCRIPTION	-	% CORRECT
	1	Consonant Blends br, gr, tr, dr, fr, pr	4	
	2	Consonant Blends bl, cl, fl, gl, pl, sl	4	
	3	Consonant Blends st, sm, sp, sw, sn, sk	4	
	4	Consonant Blends - Review	4	
	5	Consonant Blends - Review	4	
	6	Initial Consonant Digraphs wh, th, ch, sh	4	
	7A	Final Consonant Digraphs sh, th, ch	12	
	7B	Initial and Final Consonant Digraphs Review	8	
	8	Initial and Final Digraphs - Review	6	

1. This record keeping page was designed at McMorrow School and is not provided by the publisher.

Ideal Magic Card Lesson 6 would serve as a diagnostic tool to determine which, if any, digraphs the child might be able to identify. Analysis of his work might lead to an assignment for additional practice in distinguishing between sh and ch. Let us assume that this child learns best from auditory input and that he works better alone than with others. The peer tutor Work Game activity would be ill suited to his mode of learning. A better choice for this child would be the First Talking Alphabet recorded lessons on digraphs. Satisfactory completion of this assignment could be followed up by the SRA Word Game Check Test 8.

For the child who shows mastery at this time, no further work is necessary on this skill. Please note, however, that the following materials were not prescribed for this child.

1. SRA Word Games Lab I. Game 8.
2. Houghton Mifflin Listen and Do Lessons 26-30.
3. Programmed Reading: A Sullivan Associates Program. (Our tapes 12b, part 2.

Any or all of these activities could be used if the child were still experiencing difficulty with the skill or if they were better suited to his needs. Upon mastery of objective 2 the child moves on to objective 3.

What has been so briefly described above is what many teachers attempt to do in their classrooms now. But, to equip each classroom with the variety of materials which were applicable in just this one simple case would be prohibitive in terms of cost and space. In addition, it is totally unrealistic to expect the classroom teacher to be engaged with 20 or 25 students, all doing different work in different materials, without the help of an aide.

The LRC provides the means to implement a degree of individualized instruction by housing all the necessary materials and equipment in one center and by providing the instructional aid, and aide, to administer the specific learning experience.

Summary

In the preceding section we suggested how a variety of materials can be organized for use on an individualized basis. There are also published programs which can be used in their totality in working with children. There are listening skill programs such as the Houghton Mifflin Listen and Do and the EDL Listen and Think. In social studies the EDL Study Skills Library Kits can provide many appropriate activities. Other areas of the curriculum in addition to reading need to be explored for appropriate applications of individualized instruction as we have described it. For example, we approach social studies and science on a group basis, there are many skills within these areas, such as map reading, where programmed materials would be most effective. Our purpose throughout this monograph is to suggest the expanding universe of applications in an LRC to individualize instruction rather than to limit in any way what can be done.

One of the limitations which we sense in our own operation is that we lack instructional games. We are sure that such games as Scrabble, Anagrams, Take 12 (math), Concentration, puzzles, and the like can be as profitably used as the Initial Consonant Games, Word and Picture Matching, and Rhyme Lotto in our instructional program. While much of learning with games may be said to be "incidental", we feel that these activities can be valued much more highly. Games provide practice in basic skills, provide a release for the child from the normal routine of classroom operation, and simply make school learning a great deal more fun.

While games are played by elementary school youngsters in a variety of settings at a variety of times, we would hope that our move to include them would be guided again by our basic thrust of implementing individualization of instruction. A math game such as Take 12 would be prescribed by the teacher because the child needed the concepts involved as well as he needed different learning materials under different circumstances.

We need to devote much thought and planning to the inclusion of such materials and activities. Perhaps other schools and other LRC's may take steps to show us the potentiality that games can provide. We find ourselves accepting such statements as "... 'play is the serious business of childhood', and a child may as easily spend whole days in the sandbox as in the reading center. . ."¹ without having any theoretical base to support that acceptance. But accept it we do, and our next major step in the development of our LRC will be in this direction.

Almost parenthetically we would also mention that while our use of the LRC is highly structured we wish to allow room for the creativity of the LRC director and her staff. There can be unstructured activities, that is, activities determined within the

¹Bonnie Barrett Stretch, "The Rise of the Free School." *Saturday Review*, 53 (25): 76-69, 90-93; June 20, 1970.

LRC rather than by the classroom teacher, and we would guess that in the provision of games this would occur most readily. There is no reason why children cannot come at times to the LRC and select an activity on their own. This, too, is a direction in which we wish to move.

Finally, and this is more a change than an addition, we wish to move to the use of cassette tape players. Our work started five years ago, and we have relied heavily on conventional tapes. Cassettes, however, are easier to use and easier to store, and the players cost substantially less than the tape recorders and players we now have. Also, battery operated players are available, and these can dramatically increase flexibility in the LRC and in the classroom. Those who are in the initial stages of developing an LRC would be wise to investigate the possibilities of using cassettes almost exclusively.

While we recognize the work involved as we must continue in developing our own LRC in terms of integrating individualized materials into curricular areas, in adding instructional games, and in moving to the use of cassettes, we are confident that our model of operating an LRC works, and works successfully. The major elements are that the classroom teacher has the responsibility for determining the child's program, and while the child works with many other adults, the classroom teacher retains this responsibility and she delegates it only for certain tasks the child does.

Once materials are gathered in an LRC and teachers become knowledgeable about these offerings, teachers can diagnose the needs of their children, prescribe work, and send them to the LRC for the activity. With the assistance of the instructional aide, the child does his work, has it scored and recorded, and returns to his teacher who examines his score and prescribes further work in accordance with the child's needs. An LRC can be used in this manner to further the individualization of instruction in an elementary school.

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