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Effective Strategies for Teaching At-Risk African American Males: An Inservice Manual

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EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING
AT-RISK AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES:
AN INSERVICE MANUAL

A Project Report
Presented to
The Graduate Faculty
Central Washington University

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

by
Ethel L. Wellington-Peak
July, 1992

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The purpose of this project was to develop an inservice training manual to guide the delivery of teacher training sessions designed to implement effective teaching strategies for at-risk African American male students at Larchmont Elementary School, in the Tacoma, Washington school district.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with my sincerest gratitude I dedicate this project study to the memory of my mother, Cassie Pearl Wellington. I thank God for her exemplary life and motivating force behind me. My children, Jesse, Carlton, and Cassie Pearl, have made my life complete, and have sacrificed much to see this project done. I love you, my angels! "In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy path."

Amos Quail Wellington, Sr.--Daddy, you are the African American man your sons, grandsons, and all African American males can strive to be. Your unfailing support and belief in me has carried me through this tumultuous year. Charles Coumerilh and Charles Wilson, thank you for your friendship, resources, and encouragements.

Gregory Chan and Osman Alawiye, thank you for your guidance and participation on my committee. I have learned so much from you both. Finally, Jack McPherson, what can I say but, "Thanks, friend." You have been a God send. Your untiring efforts will not be forgotten.

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Introduction

Nobody is able now to deny the black child's impending educational decimation. Joined by complaints of many public school educators themselves, advocates involved in the noisy cacophony of arguments and disagreements are locked in a brinksmanlike quandary over the way in which the black child's education-indeed the existing educational system- can be salvaged; sometimes whether it can be salvaged at all. (Hare, 1985)

In the above statement by Hare, dramatic attention has focused on the lack of appropriate means of educating the African American child. Hale-Benson (1986) has concurred with Hare by stating that the American educational system has not been effective in educating Black children, and that the emphasis of traditional education has been upon molding and shaping Black children so that they can fit into an educational process designed for Anglo-Saxon middle-class children. Hale-Benson has further stated that a disproportionate number of Black children have been labeled hyperactive, given drugs as tranquilizers, labeled mentally retarded, placed in special classes, and suspended, expelled, and eventually pushed out of school.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to develop an inservice training manual to guide the delivery of teacher training sessions designed to implement effective teaching strategies for at-risk African American male students at Larchmont Elementary School in the Tacoma, Washington school district.

Limitations of the Project

For the purposes of succinctness and focus, it was necessary to set the following limitations for this study:

1. Inservice manual: The staff development training model which was the subject of this project, was designed to provide k-5 teachers and staff members at Larchmont Elementary School in Tacoma School District #10 with the training that would enable the implementation of effective teaching strategies for at-risk African American students.
2. Target population: K-5 African American male students enrolled at Larchmont Elementary School referred to the principal's office five or more times during the 1991-92 school year for disruptive behavior.
3. Research: The preponderance of literature summarized in Chapter II of this project has been limited to research current within the last ten years.

Definition of Terms

Significant terms used in the context of this study have been defined as follows:

At-Risk Student: One who is in danger of failing to complete his or her education with an adequate level of skills. Risk factors include low achievement, retention in grade, behavior problems, poor attendance, and low socioeconomic status (Slavin & Madden, 1989).

Drop-out: Neither enrolled in school nor a high school graduate (Current Population Survey).

Inservice Manual: A collection of selected teaching materials (Griffin, 1983).

Intergenerational Communication: The smooth transmission and continuous preservation of the values and traditions of a society from one generation to the other (Hare, 1991).

Learning Styles: Cognitive, conceptual, affective, and behavioral patterns that are typical, consistent and stable processes which people use in their learning (Guild, 1985).

Motivation: A process that can arouse and instigate behavior and give direction and purpose to behavior and which allows behavior to persist and lead to choosing or preferring a particular behavior (Wlodkowski, 1982).

Rites of Passage: A ceremony significant in African American culture which symbolizes the transference of African American boys into the acceptance of manhood (Hare, 1991).

Staff Development: A basic component in the continuing preparation of teachers as they extend their professional, technical knowledge. It has also been referred to as inservice training or education, professional growth, continuing education and on-the-job-training (Griffin, 1983).

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The review of research and literature summarized in Chapter II has been organized to address:

1. General Characteristics of At-Risk Students
2. The African American At-Risk Student and Rationale Supporting Single-Sex Classrooms
3. Learning styles of At-Risk Students
4. Teaching strategies and Models for Working Effectively with African American At-Risk Males
5. Summary.

An Educational Resources Information Centers (ERIC) computer search was conducted to identify current literature, research, and data.

General Characteristics of At-Risk Students

John F. Kennedy, on February 14, 1963, delivered a special message to Congress on the subject of the nation's youth. He stated:

The most direct, rewarding, and important investment is our children and youth in education. A high rate of investment in education is essential for our national economic growth, our scientific advancement, and our national security. Maintaining the broadest possible opportunities in

education is essential to the maintenance of democratic government and to the attainment of our social, cultural, and economic aspirations.

Yet millions of our young men and women do not have proper educational opportunities. As a result, they do not fully develop their intellectual capacities and take their proper place as productive, adult members of society. To strengthen our educational system we must increase both the quantity and the quality of our educational facilities and services, providing an opportunity for every young American to achieve at the highest level of his capacity (Kennedy, 1963).

Guaranteeing what President Kennedy termed "proper educational opportunities" for all student has continued to pose an important and significant challenge to educators. This is especially difficult to accomplish when one considers the growing population of at-risk students who leave school prior to graduation.

Each year nearly one million children drop out of the nation's public schools. That is well over four thousand every school day (Kennedy, 1989). These children are marginally literate and virtually unemployable. They fall prey to social ills such as drug abuse and crime (Butler, 1989). According to the Committee for Economic Development, each year's class of dropouts will cost this nation more

than \$250 billion in lost earnings and forgone taxes over their lifetimes. "Billions more will be spent on crime control, welfare, health care, and other social services" (Butler, 1989, p. 50).

"Excessively high dropout rates threaten the nation's productivity and represent a tragic waste of young lives" (Hahn, 1987, p. 256). Although statistics vary, most research has estimated the national dropout rate between 25 and 30 percent (Dowdney, 1987). Barber and McClellan (1987) have estimated that dropout rates in many urban school systems often fall within the 40-50 percent range.

The chances are great that these youth will become parents without the ability to effectively care for themselves or their children. This has perpetuated the cycle of poverty and failure experiences by a growing segment of the nation's population according to Butler (1989). By continuing to allow our children to fail, we are impoverishing our nation culturally, economically, and politically. Butler has further contended:

This business community's concern extends far beyond the narrow dollars and cents issues. This is a matter of survival, whether the nation remains free and prosperous will depend on our ability to give every American child the opportunity to develop to his or her full potential (p. 53).

It has been established that a major problem confronting American education today is that of at-risk children and their potential for dropping out. In attempting to study the problem, educational researchers have experienced difficulty in defining the dropout or at-risk student population. What is a dropout? The Current Population Survey (CPS) defined a dropout as neither enrolled in school nor a high school graduate (Hahn, 1987). However, this definition has not proven acceptable to some educational researchers who have claimed that the answer depends on who has been asked the question. Some dropout rates have been calculated annually, rather than based on the four year period during which students were enrolled in high school (Hahn, 1987). Multi-year tracking (over four years) has yielded drastically different statistics. United States census figures have been consistently lower than the local or state statistics. Barber and McClellan (1987) reported some interesting statistics after a survey of 17 major metropolitan school districts:

Data from school districts are difficult to obtain and reflect local definitions for the dropout populations. The popular press has given considerable attention to the dropout problem, but because of uneven data gathering and reporting

practices, the press has been unable to provide accurate information about the dimensions of the problem.

The general characteristics of at-risk youth have been documented by research. Student IQ's were below average, basic skills were poor and test scores were below grade level. Some students have had to repeat grades and were, therefore, older than their classmates. Other at-risk student characteristics included: a history of uneven attendance and tardiness; trouble with the police and school authorities; low self esteem and a negative attitude about school; not getting along well with teachers or other students; and many came from poor, minority backgrounds.

Many at-risk students come from families that have hindered rather than encouraged them to succeed in school; many were married, pregnant, or already had a child; many other had job responsibilities that interfered with school performance; and some had a history of drug or alcohol abuse. A review of these characteristics has provided greater insight into the complexity and magnitude of the "at-risk" problem facing educational administrators and teachers in the United States. As Rumberger (1987) said, "There is no typical dropout, they leave school for different reasons" (p. 112).

Based on research findings, it has been concluded that low academic achievement has been a key indicator of the potential to leave school prior to graduation. Educators

must be aware that several factors can be the cause of low achievement:

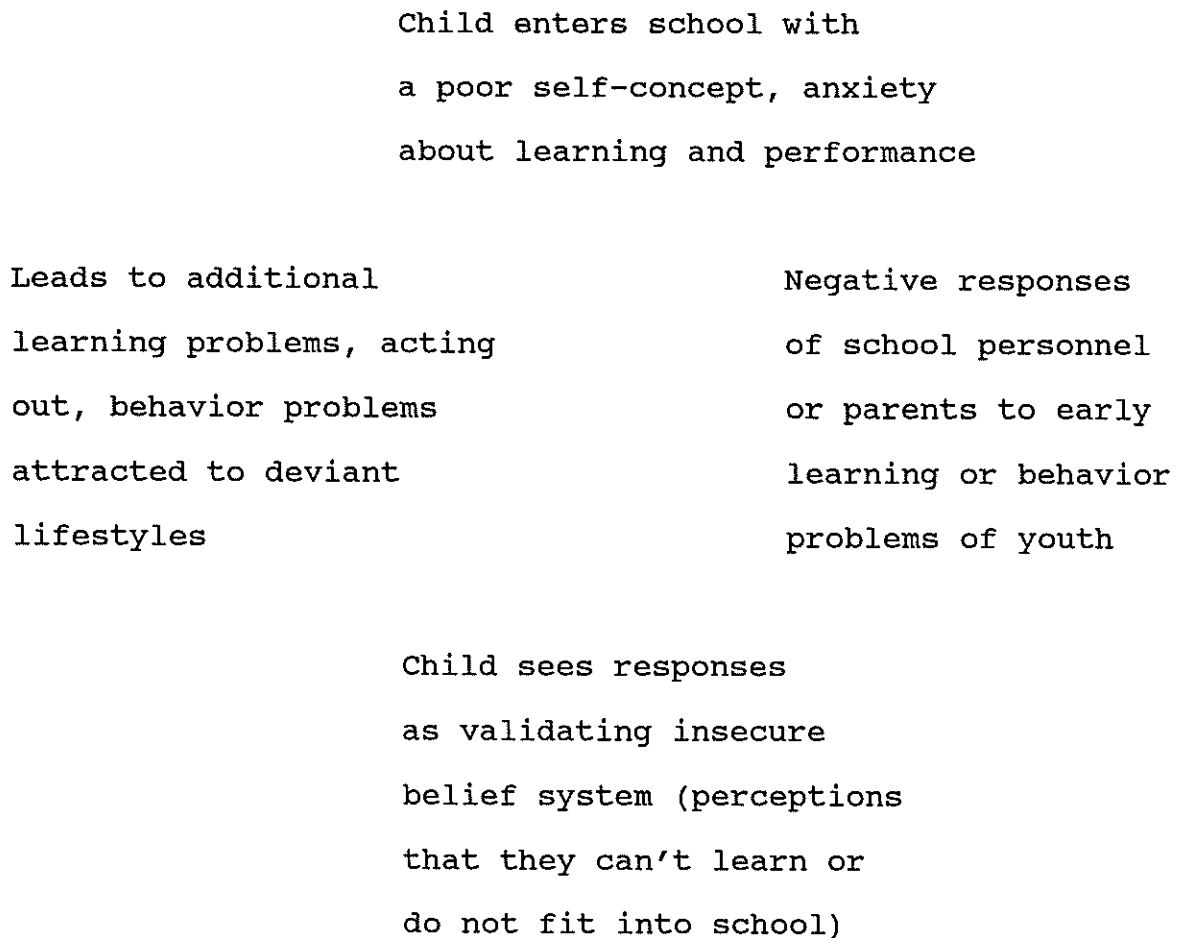
- Lack of Interest
- _ Lack of basic skills
- _ Family problems
- Cultural differences
- Teacher perception
- Readiness
- Lack of previous success.

A general lack of self-esteem has been a strong indicator of the at-risk student (Hodgkinson, 1986). Self-esteem was most affected by the family environment and the school climate. What has taken place at home directly affects a child's performance in school. According to Kurtz (1988) what has been needed for "optimal cognitive development is a family environment that promotes self confidence" (p. 447). Children without the family support, especially those suffering from neglect or abuse, were the least adjusted (Kurtz, 1988) and have shown the lowest levels of achievement and self confidence (Kent, 1976).

Most of the information dealing with the subject of self esteem has centered around the school. A student with low self-esteem is a defeated learner, someone who has given up on themselves as a learner (Conrath, 1988). Professional educators cannot allow this to happen. Jerold Kramer, the principal of Piedmont Continuation High School, stated that

"the central focus of every daily activity at our alternative school was to develop the self-esteem of the students" (pp. 49-50). Hahn (1987) said that most at-risk youth resisted the competition in the classroom because it made them feel bad to lose or be last.

Mills, Dunham, and Alpert (1988) have diagrammed a "Cycle of increasing alienation" associated with at-risk students, as presented below:



The African American At-Risk Student
and Rationale Supporting Single-Sex Classrooms

Increasingly today, black inner city youth emerge as volatile powderkegs of variegated social and physical threats of terror after dark to adults both black and white. Labeled educationally "at-risk," they nevertheless affect upscale middle class suburbia and present imponderable dilemmas that stir constitutional waters on the cutting edge of grownup social conflict and civil liberties. They appear instinctively to anticipate and provoke need redefinitions and reforms in the range of legal and social tolerance. Growing up and sometimes thriving in divergent ways amid homicidal danger and self-destruction, they present themselves, at about the age of four or five to ambivalent public schools" (Hare, 1991).

The above statement by Hare has addressed myriad concerns facing the African American child's academic future. Educational reform will be a key factor in determining the outcome of this dilemma.

Ascher (1992) has discussed how inner city problems of violence, drugs, early parenthood, and truancy have prompted a grassroots movement among educators to create school

programs tailored to the needs of African American male students in urban areas. Said Ascher:

By stressing a strong cultural and gender identity, the new program's aim to inoculate young African-American males against the hostile forces in their environment and to empower them as individuals and as members of their communities.

Further, Ascher has explained how recent research has supported the academic effectiveness of single-sex classrooms and schools for male and female students irrespective of race. Ascher claimed:

Minority females make more cognitive gains from single-sex schooling than minority males . . . while all-male classrooms and schools seem to stress discipline more than do coeducational environments, discipline problems decrease considerably in single-sex schools.

As to whether or not single-sex classrooms are in violation of Title IX guidelines, Ascher explained how the courts have held that the Constitution and laws do not require every public institution to be coeducational. Ascher related how in two recent cases involving long established single-sex schools (one a military academy, the other a single-sex public school), Title IX upheld single-sex programs with long traditions.

To effectively teach an African American male child, the educator must have an understanding of inner-city conditions in America today, and of the African American culture. Hillard (1986) has described the core of African American cultural style as paragraphed below:

African American people . . .

- tend to respond to things in terms of the whole picture instead of its parts. The European American tends to believe that anything can be divided and subdivided into pieces and that these pieces add up to a whole. Therefore, art is sometimes taught by numbers as are dancing and music. That's why some people never learn to dance. They are too busy counting and analyzing.
- tend to prefer inferential reasoning to deductive or inductive reasoning.
- tend to approximate space, numbers, and time rather than stick to accuracy.
- tend to prefer to focus on people and their activities rather than on things. This tendency is shown by the fact that so many black students choose careers in the helping professions, such as teaching, psychology, social work, and so forth. even though a scarcity of jobs exist in those areas and the curriculum is not particularly easy.

- have a keen sense of justice and are quick to analyze and perceive injustice (Rodney King).
- tend to lean towards altruism , a concern for one's fellow man.
- tend to prefer novelty, freedom, and personal distinctiveness. This is shown in the development of improvisations in music and styles of clothing.
- in general tend to be "word" dependent. They tend to be very proficient in non-verbal communications.

An example of Hillard's correlation of the African American child's style of learning to an analytical (i.e., Euro-American, linear sequential) person's style of learning follows:

If this person (the analytical learner) was asked to learn an African American dance, he would be very likely to draw feet on the floor and to break the dance down into steps and try to learn the dance piecemeal. It is also likely that the analytical learner will establish a standard of performance which becomes right or not right. On the other hand, if an African American child were given a similar task, a comparable translation will take place. Details are likely to be blurred, standards faintly adhered to, or the

dance itself may be modified with no real concern for right or wrong so much as fit or harmony.

Akbar (1985) has specifically described the African American child as follows:

The African American Child:

- Is highly affective
- Uses language requiring a wide use of many coined interjections (sometimes profanity)
- Expresses herself or himself through considerable body language
- Relies on words that depend upon context or meaning and that have little meaning in themselves
- Prefers using expressions that have meaning connotation
- Adopts a systematic use of nuances of intonation and body language such as eye movement and positioning
- Prefers oral- aural modalities for learning communication
- Is highly sensitive to others non-verbal cues
- Seeks to be people oriented
- Is socio-centric
- Feels highly empathetic
- Likes spontaneity
- Adapts rapidly to novel stimuli.

According to Kunjufu's research (1985), although many African American boys have excelled in kindergarten through third grade, these same boys regress between fourth and seventh grades, eventually winding up on the bottom rung of the educational ladder, causing many to drop out of school by high school. Seventy percent of African American high school students are in public school, 41 percent are in special education classes, and, of those, 85 percent are African American boys, noting that many remain in the lower track throughout their school experience. The high proportion of African American boys in special education classes is an indication of how the education system works against African American males. Of the 85 percent of African American boys in special education classes, 37 percent are regularly subjected to suspension. The structure of the classroom system, and lack of African American male teachers, create an environment that has promoted failure more often in African American boys. Said Kunjufu:

The bottom line is that to be Black man you have to see a Black man; to be an engineer, you have to see an engineer. Black boys in kindergarten to eighth grade do not see Black teachers. They see athletes and actors.

Hare (1991) has addressed the problem of intergenerational communication as fundamental to

understanding African American male students in the learning environment. Intergenerational communication refers to the smooth transmission and continuous preservation of the values and traditions of a society from one generation to the other. Intergenerational communication insures a peaceful transition from youth to adulthood and creates an understanding of the proper roles of each generation in society. A breakdown in intergenerational communication may contribute to the development of conflicting values in a society and the emergence of rebellious youth. In traditional Africa, intergenerational communication was achieved through a network of traditional institutions and a set of norms, mores, and folkways, which produced common understanding, an essential element in cultural growth and stability. Accordingly, many teachers inclusive of ethnic minorities, but particularly Anglo teachers, have problems relating to African American male students thus allowing a major population of African American males to be deemed at-risk.

Finally, as discussed by Ascher, single-sex educational programs for at-risk African American males have had their supporters and detractors, both within and from outside the African American community, however, given the harsh world that faces many African American young people "and the fact that the schools have never served them well, any grassroots

movement to offer a creative solution should be allowed to flourish."

Learning Styles of At-Risk Students

If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away.

Henry David Thoreau

These words by Thoreau have suggested that there are as many styles of learning as there are students. The task of the teacher, therefore, has been to provide instruction which insures the success of each student. Guild and her associates have done extensive research on learning and teaching styles. A teaching atmosphere that is conducive to all student's learning is one that incorporates a universal understanding of the cultural differences and the varied approaches toward learning.

According to Hughes (1985), attention to learning styles should be more than a way of individualizing. While based on recognition of individual differences, a focus on learning styles can be a significant step for promoting equity in schools. People are different in what they care about and will spend time on, and certainly students are different too. The author agrees first of all, that

individual human differences are positive--and should be used as resources in the school.

Tomlinson (1986) has stated that effective schooling should expand the differences between students rather than restrict them. Many children do not achieve success because their economic and family systems are not strong enough to give them the support they need to succeed in school. Even though external factors play a part in the success of students in school, often the process of learning is not fair to all students.

Guild (1985) has concluded that learning style is independent of intelligence. People of opposite styles can be equally intelligent, but their learning style will cause them to use their skills and approach tasks in particular ways. Research in the Seattle School District has shown, that field dependency, (whole-to-part or global learning) as opposed to field independence, (part-to-whole or analytic learning) is representative of more low achieving students. With this information Guild has taken the position that:

1. The educational system favors students who have an analytical style, and does not adapt to the strengths of students who by a product of nature or culture tend to be non-analytic;
2. Low achieving students have not developed analytical skills, resulting in a type of deficit

in an intellectual skill needed for academic success;

3. Success on achievement tests requires the application of analytic skills, or
4. A combination of several of the above.

Guild has stated that with adjustments in instructional design, methods, management, and evaluation, more at-risk students can find ways to learn which take advantage of their strengths. They can become successful!

Teaching Strategies and Models for Working
Effectively with African American
At-Risk Males

Benson has conducted research in the area of modifying the curriculum to better facilitate learning for African American students. Although her model is suggested for early childhood education, it has potential application in all grades. She has suggested six teaching strategies, paraphrased below, to effectively reach the African American male population:

1. Body Language. Black children are proficient in nonverbal communication, therefore, teachers should be sensitive in their use of gestures, eye-contact, and other non-verbal clues.
2. Standard English. The modeling of Standard English is a must, however, when correcting it should be done

informally. The importance of making corrections early in childhood is paramount because making changes in a child's speech pattern is very difficult to change.

3. Equal Talking Time. Teacher talk should be regulated to the approximate amount of child talk.

Teacher should encourage children to talk conversationally, in recitation, and creatively.

4. Group Learning. Emphasis should be made on small group learning and hands on contact with the teacher.

5. A Variety of Learning Activities. It is suggested that children be taught with a varied format of learning activities.

6. Music in the Classroom. Afro-American music should permeate the curriculum. Black children are exposed to music in their homes and it creates a relaxing environment.

In addition to the teaching strategies suggested above, Benson has encouraged educators to incorporate key features of the Black child's home in the learning environment, particularly in the early grades, thus creating an environment which compliments the culture of the home. Benson has further stated that children should be exposed to a wide range of experiences and cultures. The Afro-American culture should be explored and legitimated concurrently while children are being taught about Euro-American and other cultures. Benson cited four curriculum goals,

paraphrased below for building a program to promote a positive learning environment for African American male students:

1. Language/Communication Skills: Language-related skills are critical in educating all children. Black children have distinctive difficulties in mastering standard English and in achieving reading proficiency. Speaking, listening, labeling, storytelling, chanting, imitating, and reciting are encouraged.
2. Mathematical Concepts: Black children are able to master a wide range of mathematical skills in their everyday lives (like computing baseball batting averages), but they have difficulty demonstrating their skills in the classroom. Developing mathematical proficiency should be emphasized.
3. Positive Self-Concept and Positive Attitude Toward Learning and School: This affective goal was included as part of Benson's overall curricular emphasis because children should not be imbued with cognitive skills at the expense of a consideration for the way they feel about themselves, the teacher, learning, and the school. Educators must be sensitive to the many as yet unidentified ways in which Black children are "turned off" and "pushed out" of school. In addition, providing children with success experiences, enabling them to be self-motivating, and to establish a life-

long love of learning is as important as achievement test scores.

4. Afro-American Studies: A focal point in the curriculum goals is Afro-American studies. Every opportunity should be used to acquaint the children with culture, cosmology, history, and perspective of Africans of the diaspora. As a result of this exposure, the children should have more information about Black culture and increased pride in their racial heritage.

Benson has also detailed a model curriculum relevant to Afro-Americans, with particular implications for Early Childhood Education. The primary features of this model have been paraphrased as follows:

1. High Affective Support: The classroom should have a high adult-child ratio, small-group learning, peer tutoring, and heterogeneous grouping (family style. In addition, frequent touching, lap sitting, holding hands, and hugging will be encouraged).
2. Self-Concept Development: Children's self confidence will be fostered through frequent compliments, display of work, performances, open houses, and frequent success experiences.
3. Creative Expression: Opportunities for all types of creative expression will permeate the curriculum

with particular emphasis in the visual, dramatic and musical arts.

4. Arts and Crafts: The children will be involved in arts and crafts, with emphasis on those that are a part of African and Afro-American culture.

5. Activities: Frequent opportunities will be provided for physical release and for children to teach themselves through play. Movement and dance will be used to support the learning process and permit maximum child movement and self direction as is practical.

6. African Culture: Foods, geography, fashions, music, instruments, songs, to name a few, will be used to expose children to African culture, appropriate to their level of understanding.

7. Afro-American Culture: The children will learn about Afro-American culture through foods, music, folklore, art literature, and history.

8. Extracurricular Experiences: Frequent field trips will be planned, as well as guest teachers from the community (inclusive of parents and grandparents) will be regularly brought into the classroom to teach special skills.

9. Holidays: Attention will be given to the politics of holidays, particularly as they affect the history of Black and other oppressed people in America. For example, if Thanksgiving is discussed it will not be a

celebration of the point of view of the "pilgrims." It will be an exploration of the situation of Native Americans, Afro-Americans, and the European colonizers. The same principle will apply to the fourth of July. Celebrations and commemorations will revolve around events and historical figures pivotal in the Afro-American liberation struggle.

Kunjufu has advocated a "Rites of Passage: program for use in educating African American males which can help them come into full knowledge of manhood, thus increasing knowledge of self by building self esteem. He has suggested that the following steps be taken by educators and community leaders as a means for empowering the African American male child:

1. Organize a group of Black men willing to participate in the program.
2. Develop study sessions with the above group discussing Black history and male development.

Recommended books for study sessions include:

Countering the Conspiracy to Destroy Black Boys, Black Masculinity, Home is a Dirty Street, Black Men, Hazards of Being a Male, Autobiography of Malcolm X, Tally's Corner, Miseducation of the Negro, Destruction of Black Civilization, There is a River, and The Choice.

3. Identify a facility, frequency, and the length of the meeting with young brothers. (Age is discretionary.)
4. Objectives of the program should provide skill development, Black history, male socialization, recreation, and a "Big Brother."
5. Recommended structure would be weekly, with one week allocated to a field trip, Black history, skill development, and "rite of passage" (male socialization).
6. Field trips should include prison, drug abuse centers, teenage pregnancy centers, public hospital emergency room on a Saturday evening, best high school honors class, stock market, camping, and computer oriented business.

Finally, Guild has offered the following advise for professionals responsible for teaching African American at-risk students. Teachers should:

1. . . . present learning in a global way: they should focus on the "big picture" while giving an overview and the concept by talking through a whole project before starting with step one, additionally teachers should give an example of something before the definition, such as lining five children up by their sizes and pointing to the middle child as the one who is the "median" of the group, then defining "median."

2. . . . make connections among content, integrate learning, and identify relationships among subjects by focusing on patterns, such as word families and number relationships, also, making connections between examples in class and material in the text and workbooks. In addition, the use of current events and school experiences to teach and practice basic skills should be encouraged.
3. . . . provide the context for learning and a sense of the purpose of the learning. Using models to provide a context for new material by giving a demonstration of a whole process before expecting students to learn the steps and by regularly reviewing the purpose and main principles of the learning, at-risk students can succeed.
4. . . . provide structure, clear expectations, direction and organization. Giving specific assignment dates and adhering to them, returning assignments quickly, and relating new learning to previous successes and errors, having a clear system for students to get feedback and help on their work are specific examples of the structure necessary for African American at-risk males' success.
5. . . . personalize content by enacting simulations and role plays, attending to personal interpretation and material, encouraging students to give their

feelings and opinions about the material, and attending to the affective impact of the content, such as selecting stories with emotional appeal and impact.

6. . . . emphasize a positive class climate and helpful relationships with others by expressing confidence in child's success by verbal encouragements and pointing out previous successes, creating frequent opportunities for students to be helpful to others, minimizing criticism, and attending to a positive environment in the whole school using a positive discipline code.

Summary

The literature and research summarized in Chapter II supported the following themes:

1. General Characteristics of at-risk youth documented by research include: below average IQ, poor basic skills, below grade level test scores, and low self esteem.

2. Educators must have an understanding of inner city conditions in America today and of the African American culture to effectively teach an African American At-Risk male child.

3. A field dependent learning style (whole to part or global learning) as opposed to a field independent learning style (part to whole or analytic learning) is representative of more low achieving students.

4. Key features of the Black child's home environment should be incorporated, particularly in the early grades, thus creating an environment which compliments the culture of the home.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to develop an inservice training manual designed to implement effective teaching strategies for at-risk African American male students in the elementary grades.

Chapter III contains background information describing:

1. Need for the study.
2. Establishment of district and building level support.
3. Design and development of the inservice training manual.

Need for the Study

The project produced as a result of this study has been an outgrowth of: 1). A specific need within the Tacoma, Washington School District to develop a special learning program for at-risk African American students; and 2). The professional teaching experience of the writer, Ethel L. Wellington-Peak.

Although in prior years the Tacoma School District had implemented a number of special education programs to meet a variety of student needs, nothing had yet been designed and developed specifically to serve African Americans at-risk male students. As a professional educator, this writer had observed for several years, behaviors exhibited by African

American male students and educators who struggled to meet the special needs of these students.

Establishment of District and Building Level Support

In October, 1991, the writer undertook a systematic review of current literature and research related to at-risk student behavior. Upon completion of the review of related literature and research, the writer designed and developed the inservice training manual which was the subject of this project. The teaching strategies developed for use with African American male students were then piloted by the writer at Larchmont Elementary School in the Tacoma, Washington School District during the 1991-92 school year. The inservice training manual developed has been presented in Chapter IV of this project.

Design and Development of the Inservice Training Manual

In October, 1991, the writer undertook a systematic review of current literature and research related to at-risk student behavior. From this research, the writer designed and developed the inservice training manual which was the subject of this project. The teaching strategies developed for use with African American male students were specifically designed for use by the writer at Larchmont Elementary School in the Tacoma, Washington School District during the 1991-92 school year. The inservice training manual developed has been presented in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

The Project

The inservice training manual produced as a result of this project has been designed to guide the delivery of teacher training sessions which will implement effective teaching strategies for at-risk African American male students at Larchmont Elementary School in the Tacoma, Washington School District.

The inservice training detailed in Chapter IV was organized into the four sessions listed below, to coincide with the essential components of the special program for at-risk African American male students at Larchmont Elementary School.

Session One: Student Needs

Session Two: Goal Setting for Students

Session Three: Learning Styles

Session Four: Classroom Management

*EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR
TEACHING AT-RISK
AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES:
AN INSERVICE MANUAL*

Designed for use at Larchmont Elementary School

Tacoma, Washington School District #10

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Inservice Session #1: Student Needs

Topics Addressed:

The Stubborn Teacher

What We Know All Kids Need

The Ten Commandments of Human Relations

Who Are the Kids You Want to Help

Definitions of At-Risk Students

What Do Discouraged, low Self Esteem Kids Need from
Adults?

What Makes Prevention Teachers Effective?

STUBBORN TEACHER

My teacher is so stubborn! She is told that I am unmotivated.

But she invites me anyway.

She is told that I don't have the ability.

She invites me anyway.

She is told I just want to cause trouble.

She invites me anyway.

She invites me again, and again, and again.

She fills my world with invitations.

One day, I'll take the greatest risk of my life.

I'll accept one, and see what happens.

WHAT WE ALL KNOW ALL KIDS NEED!

(The Socialization of Children)

Source: Jerry Conrath
"Imperative for Self-Esteem"

Source: William Glasser
"Need Satisfying Arenas"
from Control Theory in
the Classroom

Sense of Competency

Survival

Sense of Potency

Love (Belonging)

Sense of Usefulness

Power (Empowerment)

Sense of Belonging

Fun

Freedom

Source: Stanley Coppersmith
"The Antecedents of self-
esteem"

Source: Lakota Sioux
Indians "Traditional
Native American Child
Rearing Philosophies"

Significance

Spirit of Belonging

Competence

Spirit of Mastery

Power

Spirit of Independence

Virtue

Spirit of Generosity

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF HUMAN RELATIONS

1. **SPEAK TO PEOPLE.** There is nothing so nice as a cheerful word of greeting.
2. **SMILE AT PEOPLE.** It takes 72 muscles to frown, only 14 to smile.
3. **CALL PEOPLE BY NAME.** The sweetest music to anyone's ears is the sound of his or her own name.
4. **BE FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL.** If you would have friends, be a friend.
5. **BE CORDIAL.** Speak and act as if everything you do is a genuine pleasure.
6. **BE GENUINELY INTERESTED IN PEOPLE.** You can like almost everybody if you try.
7. **BE GENEROUS** with praise-- cautious with criticism.
8. **BE CONSIDERATE** with the feelings of others. There are usually three sides to a controversy: yours, the other fellows, and the right side.
9. **BE ALERT TO GIVE SERVICE.** What counts most in life is what we do for others.
10. **ADD TO THIS** a good **SENSE OF HUMOR**, a big dose of **PATIENCE**, and a dash of **HUMILITY**, and you will be rewarded manyfold.

* What makes prevention teachers effective?

1. Toughness. They are ethically, intellectually, and emotionally tough enough to know they can help the students. When the student gets angry and says an unfortunate thing, the teacher has enough ego strength to keep the critical issue in focus and not get emotional over a relatively trivial item. They are tough enough to keep working with a difficult kid day after day.
2. Compassion. They know the lives of many of these youngsters are depressingly grim. Few dropout-probable kids come from cheerful, supportive homes. They urgently need adults who care, are knowledgeable, have a strong self-esteem, and will get serious work done.
3. Professional. They know why school is important. They value the process of learning, enjoy it, and are willing to talk to kids about the importance of it.
4. Seriousness. They are clear on the end result they want for their students and flexible on means for getting there. But getting there is serious work and students are capable of that. The effective teachers know that discouraged students have adopted an "I don't care" attitude for self-protective reasons and need adults around them who won't back off.
5. Knowledgeable. They know a lot about teaching, learning, locus of control, learning styles, motivational theories and practice, and reasons why some kids become discouraged learners.
6. Creative. They know many ways to explain and introduce topics and ideas and keep at it until the students get it - all students. They get kids thinking, not just repeating "right answers."
7. Authoritative. They lead through their own expertise and sense of competence, and do not need excessive rules and regulations.
8. Role Models. They have high ethical and intellectual expectations for themselves.
9. Sense of Purpose. They know why they like teaching and why they like working with difficult kids.
10. Cultural Competence. They wear their education and competence with pride. They enjoy using their language effectively; they enjoy their knowledge; they enjoy their expertise.

**WHO ARE THE KIDS YOU WANT TO HELP?
SIX COMMON POINTS OF REFERENCE*
"STUDENTS AT RISK"**

1. Push Outs: These are students with whom the school no longer wants to bother, and hence, for whom school is no longer an option.
2. Out of Control: These are kids who refuse to handle any restrictions (you don't have to listen to what people say!?)
Legal Kids
3. Social Mortalities: These are kids who are so mired in their external problems (drugs, alcohol, sexual abuse, homelessness, runaway, suicidal) that school is relatively unimportant.
4. Disadvantaged Learners: These are young people who struggle in school, primarily because of inadequate nutrition, medical neglect, and other impacts from systemic poverty.
5. Discouraged Learners: These are kids who find organized school house learning difficult and have not knowledge of how to improve.
6. Defeated Learners: These are "discouraged learners who upon reaching adolescence, give up trying to achieve and accept the notion that they were simply too incompetent to learn what other kids found relatively easy.

DEFINITIONS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS

A student described as "at risk" is one who is in danger of failing to complete his or her education with an adequate level of skills. Risk factors include low achievement, retention in grade, behavior problems, poor attendance, low socioeconomic status, and attendance at schools with large numbers of poor students.

Robert Slavin
1989

Young people are at-risk, or educationally disadvantaged, if they have been exposed to inadequate or inappropriate educational experiences in the family, school, or community.

Aaron Pallas
1989

Youth are at-risk when they have not been allowed to achieve their full potential, as a result of such failing institutions as the family, community, religious organizations, work places, and other socio-economic institutions.

Fantini & Weinstein
1968

Traditional At-Risk Indicators:

Alienation From Others; Dysfunctional Family Life; Chemical Dependencies; Poverty; Mobility Of Family; Language And Cultural Differences; Juvenile Delinquency; Early School Failures

AASA
1989

Single Parent Family; Poverty; Latchkey Children; Parents Lack High School Diploma; A Sibling previously dropped out; Limited English Proficiency

National Education
Longitudinal Study
1988

Children Living In Poverty; Children Born Out Of Wedlock; Children Born To Teenage Mothers; Children From Divorced Homes.

Susan Guzman Trevino
1991

Students At-Risk: Working Definitions

Statistically, at risk youth are low in reading skills, are behind grade level in credits earned, come from poverty homes with but one parent in the home, are abusers of drugs and alcohol, lack employable skills, and may be juvenile law offenders. Researchers say school dropouts are characterized by one or more of these factors.

Our Other Youth

Jerry Conrath
1990

A student described as "at risk" is one who is in danger of failing to complete his or her education with an adequate level of skills. Risk factors include low achievement, retention in grade, behavior problems, poor attendance, low socio-economic status, and attendance at schools with large numbers of poor students.

Robert Slavin
1989

TRADITIONAL AT-RISK INDICATORS

Alienation From Others; Dysfunctional Family Life; Chemical Dependencies; Poverty; Mobility Of Family; Language And Cultural Differences; Juvenile Delinquency; Early School Failures

AASA
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National Education Longitudinal Study
1988

Children Living In Poverty; Children Born Out Of Wedlock; Children Born To Teenage Mothers; Children From Divorced Homes

Susan Guzman Trevino
1991

*** What do discouraged, low self-esteem kids need from adults**

1. Structure and Predictability. Too many of these youngsters come from home lives of little guidance and direction. They don't need mindless structure with rules and regulations as ends in themselves rather than thoughtful, helpful means to the end of learning. They do need a nourishing, supportive structure and the predictability that serious work is being asked and the reasons for the work are constantly made clear.
2. Flexibility of Means/Consistency of Ends. They need different approaches to teaching and learning (the old ones have not worked) to get them to the ends we expect of successful students.
3. High Ethical and Intellectual Expectations. These are not "dumb" kids. They lack academic skills, so far, but they can think, reason, and solve problems.
4. Academic Skill Work That is Doable, Wrapped in Serious, Provocative Issues and Content. They need intellectual challenges without academic threats. They are not "remedial people," they need to get going on where they are behind: their skills and self-image.
5. Contact With Quality Adults. Too many programs let the kids work in isolation. Most of these youth have too much of that in their lives now. They need time to talk with expert adults. They need engagement with quality adults.
6. Adult Leadership. They need to be confronted when they behave poorly, but with skill and compassion, not as an ego threat or a victory to be won.
7. Choices with a Sense of Direction. We never learn responsibility without making choices, understanding the options, comprehending the consequences, and re-making choices. The notion that kids will learn responsibility only through following orders and rules was not invented by a serious educator. How do we learn what a "responsible" choice is until we make many choices?
8. Serious Useful School Work. They need to know the utility of the work. An intelligent request is, "Why do we have to do this?" It deserves an intelligent answer.
9. Trust. They need for adults to trust that their goal in life is not to be a failure, and they need help to break the cycle of discouragement.
10. Raised Self-esteem. Self-esteem is raised through believable achievement on work that was worth honest effort, not through gushy, vacuous activities with no content.

Inservice Session #2: Afro-Centric Classroom

Modifications

Topics Addressed:

Classroom Suggestions

Environmental Suggestions

Kunjufu's Recommendations

Lessons from History

CLASSROOM SUGGESTIONS

1. Body Language. Black children are proficient in nonverbal communication; therefore, teachers should be sensitive in their use of gestures, eye-contact, and other nonverbal clues.
2. Standard English. The modeling of Standard English is a must; however, when correcting, it should be done informally. The importance of making corrections early in childhood is paramount because making changes in a child's speech pattern is very difficult to change.
3. Equal Talking Time. Teacher talk should be regulated to the approximate amount of child talk. Teachers should encourage children to talk conversationally, in recitation, and creatively.
4. Group Learning. Emphasis should be made on small group learning and hands on contact with the teacher.
5. A Variety of Learning Activities. It is suggested that children be taught with a varied format of learning activities.
6. Music in the Classroom. Afro-American music should permeate the curriculum. Black children are exposed to music in their homes and it creates a relaxing environment.
7. African Culture. Foods, geography, fashions, music, instruments, songs, to name a few, will be used to

expose children to African culture appropriate to their level of understanding.

8. Afro-American Culture. The children will learn about Afro-American culture through foods, music, folklore, art literature, and history.
9. Extracurricular Experiences. Frequent field trips will be planned, as well as guest teachers from the community (inclusive of parents and grandparents) will be regularly brought into the classroom to teach special skills.
10. Holidays. Attention will be given to the politics of holidays, particularly as they affect the history of Black and other oppressed people in America. For example, if Thanksgiving is discussed, it will not be a celebration of the point of view of the "pilgrims." It will be an exploration of the situation of Native Americans, Afro-Americans, and the European colonizers. The same principle will apply to the Fourth of July. Celebrations and commemorations will resolve around events and historical figures pivotal in the Afro-American liberation struggle.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUGGESTIONS

1. High Affective Support: The classroom should have a high adult-child ratio, small group learning, peer tutoring, and heterogeneous grouping (family style). In addition, frequent touching, lap sitting, holding hands, and hugging will be encouraged.
2. Self-Concept Development: Children's self confidence will be fostered through frequent compliments, display of work, performances, open houses, and frequent success experiences.
3. Creative Expression: Opportunities for all types of creative expression will permeate the curriculum with particular emphasis in the visual, dramatic and musical arts.
4. Arts and Crafts: The children will be involved in arts and crafts, with emphasis on those that are a part of African and Afro-American culture.
5. Activities: Frequent opportunities will be provided for physical release and for children to teach themselves through play. Movement and dance will be used to support the learning process and permit maximum child movement and self direction as is practical.

KUNJUFU'S RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Organize a group of Black men willing to participate in the program.
2. Develop study sessions with the above group discussing Black history and male development. Recommended books for study sessions include: Countering the Conspiracy to Destroy Black Boys, Black Masculinity, Home is a Dirty Street, Black Men, Hazards of Being a Male, Autobiography of Malcolm X, Tally's Corner, Miseducation of the Negro, Destruction of Black Civilization, There is a River, and The Choice.
3. Identify a facility, frequency, and the length of the meeting with the young brothers (Age is discretionary).
4. Objectives of the program should provide skill development, Black history, male socialization, recreation, and a "Big Brother."
5. Recommended structure would be weekly, with one week allocated to a field trip, Black history, skill development, and rites of passage (male socialization).
6. Field trips should include prison, drug abuse centers, teenage pregnancy centers, public hospital emergency rooms on a Saturday evening, best high school honors class, stock market, camping, and computer oriented businesses.

Chapter One

Africa, The Beginning of Civilization

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Vocabulary

- Write the definition of each word.
Write a sentence using each word.

* * * * *

Will you carry the torch for justice, freedom, and liberation?

I hope this book has helped you gain knowledge of your history and has made you proud.

I hope it will inspire you to academic achievement that would make Imhotep proud.

I hope that you will become disciplined, serious, and feel a responsibility to contribute to your race.

Your brother,
Jawanza Kunjufu

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Inservice Session #3: Learning Styles

Topics Addressed:

At-Risk Students, Typical Learning Styles

Global Hands-On Learners

Strategies for Teaching

Active Hands-On Learning

Extraverted Learners

Strategies for Teaching

Realistic, Pragmatic Learners

Strategies for Teaching

Personal Learners

Strategies for Teaching

Multiple Intelligences

AT-RISK STUDENTS
TYPICAL LEARNING STYLE CHARACTERISTICS

GLOBAL, WHOLE-TO-PART LEARNING

MAKING CONNECTIONS AND
GENERALIZATIONS

ACTIVE, HANDS ON LEARNING

TOUCHING, MOVEMENT, SHOWING

EXTRAVERTED LEARNING

SPONTANEITY, ACTIVITY, EXUBERANCE

REALISTIC, PRAGMATIC LEARNING

DOING PRACTICAL TASKS, MAKING THINGS
BEING HELPFUL

PERSONAL LEARNING

DISCUSSING IDEAS AND OPINIONS
WORKING IN HARMONY WITH OTHERS

GLOBAL HANDS ON LEARNERS

AS A GLOBAL LEARNER, I

- *** use external referents in processing information
- *** move from the whole to the part (I need to see the forest before I recognize the trees!)
- *** make broad, general distinctions among concepts, see relationships
- *** am affected by others' views on arriving at my own
- *** am socially aware and am interested in people
- *** am comfortable with structure and explicit directions
- *** am more concerned with the product process than the product

1. *Present learning in a global way: focus on the "big picture"; give an overview and the concept.*

Some examples:

- * Presenting the overview of a chapter, a book, a story, a film strip before the specifics;
- * Talking through a whole project before starting with step one;
- * Posting a general outline in order to keep the complete idea in mind;
- * Starting a new unit by listing "what we already know";
- * Giving an example of something before the definition, such as lining five children up by their sizes and pointing to the middle child as the one who is the "median" of the group, then defining "median"; and
- * Skimming a reading by looking through the pictures, the illustrations, the key headings;
- * Using big work spaces, so that all the material for a project or a topic can be kept out at the same time;
- * Always starting at the beginning, such as playing a piano piece always from the beginning rather than only practicing a specific phrase;
- * Focusing on major concepts by discussing general ideas; such as, "Let's discuss some general things to get us started. Talk about your ideas at this point."
- * Reading a story first before focusing on the skills.

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ACTIVE HANDS ON LEARNERS

AS AN ACTIVE HANDS ON LEARNER, I

- *** need to handle materials to understand a concept
- *** want specific demonstrations
- *** need to be active and involved in all aspects of learning
- *** am restless and require frequent breaks and movement

EXTRAVERTED LEARNER

AS AN EXTRAVERTED LEARNER, I

- *** am energized by people and activities
- *** do and talk as I think
- *** use trial and error and make a variety of "false starts"
- *** move quickly from one thing to another
- *** am a risk taker
- *** am friendly and easy to get to know
- *** am spontaneous
- *** am confident in new situations
- *** need to try out an idea, without being held accountable for an immediate correct response

6. *Emphasize a positive class climate and helpful relationships with others.*

Some examples:

- * Attending to a positive environment in the whole school, e.g. positive discipline code
- * Emphasizing positive school spirit, e.g. school song, color;
- * Encouraging group work and working with partners;
- * Using cooperative learning strategies and team competitions;
- * Giving frequent praise and external rewards, such as smiles, hugs, pats on the back;
- * Attending to personal information about students, such as calling students by name, knowing family members, commenting on personal things in a child's life;
- * Expressing confidence in child's success by verbal encouragements and pointing out previous successes;
- * Creating frequent opportunities for students to be helpful to others;
- * Minimizing criticism;
- * Attending to non-verbals; "the medium is the message", including teachers' facial expressions and the seating arrangement in the room;
- * Including recognition of class participation in evaluation.

- *

- *

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- *

REALISTIC, PRAGMATIC LEARNERS

As a realistic, pragmatic learner, I

- * want immediate practical application of learning.
- * focus on concrete information and experience.
- * need sensible rules and routines.
- * am energetic, active and take initiative.
- * value facts and proven experience.
- * want to be involved in learning.
- * need reasons for learning and many practical examples.
- * enjoy practicing my skills and applying them to useful problems.

4. Provide structure, clear expectations, direction and organization.

Some examples:

- * Providing objectives with the class outline and identifying variations from the outline;
- * Reviewing the sequence of the lesson regularly, always starting from the top and pointing out where we are now;
- * Monitoring student work regularly;
- * Having a clear system for students to get feedback and help on their work;
- * Giving specific assignment dates and adhering to them;
- * Returning assignments quickly and relating new learning to previous successes and errors;
- * Posting the schedule and reviewing it frequently.

- *
- *
- *
- *

PERSONAL LEARNERS

As a personal learner, I

- * am perceptive and insightful, especially about people.
- * attend to personal information and examples.
- * work well with others.
- * need frequent praise and support.
- * relate my teachers to the content which they address.
- * learn best when the learning is personalized.
- * am sensitive to my feelings as well as to those of other people.

5. *Personalize content.*

Some examples:

- * Giving frequent illustrations relating to students' and teacher's experiences;
- * Enacting simulations and role plays;
- * Discussing biographic information about scientists, mathematicians, musicians, etc.;
- * Using assignments which focus on personal experience such as a family tree or an interview with a neighborhood person;
- * Using current events and newspaper articles to personalize learning;
- * Using material familiar to students, such as money examples and baseball statistics to illustrate mathematical principles;
- * Attending to the affective impact of the content, such as selecting stories with emotional appeal and impact;
- * Using real examples, such as writing letters for thank you and to request some material needed in class;
- * Humanizing curriculum through use of drama and humor;
- * Attending to personal interpretation of material, encouraging students to give their feelings and opinions about the material.

- *
- *
- *
- *

"MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES" -- Howard Gardner

SEVEN TYPES

1. VERBAL LINGUISTIC-

Enjoys: reading, writing, editing, speaking, word games.
Thinks in words, learns easily by seeing and hearing, memorizes details.

2. LOGICAL/MATHEMATICAL-

Enjoys: patterns, relationships, forming concepts, puzzles, sequential activities, computers, chemistry sets, brain teasers.
Thinks in an abstract, orderly, and strategic manner.

3. VISUAL/SPATIAL-

Enjoys: films, videos, graphic arts, slides, maps, computers, models, puzzles and mazes, daydreaming, doodles, global concepts, charts, graphs.
Thinks in pictures and images. Finds things that are lost or misplaced.

4. BODILY/KINESTHETIC-

Enjoys: sports, active games, role playing, mechanics and crafts.
Learns through simulations, manipulatives, interactive technology, opportunities to move or touch while learning.
Thinks by processing knowledge through bodily sensations.

5. MUSICAL -

Enjoys: melody and rhythm, singing, playing instruments, dancing, performing and composing.
Sometimes needs music for studying, and sometimes can be sensitive to non-verbal sound within the environment.

6. INTERPERSONAL-

Enjoys: group activities, interacting with others, active friendships, leading, and organizing. Sensitive to people and their feelings, and intentions. Learns well in cooperative learning settings, and through empathetic experiences.

7. INTRAPERSONAL-

Enjoys: self-directed activities, quiet times and private places, time to reflect, imagining, and daydreaming, and organizing chaos. Sometimes seems "psychic" in nature.

Learns well through goal-setting, independent projects, computer tutorials.

Inservice Session #4: Student Goals

Topics Addressed:

Goal Setting

Overcoming Obstacles to Goals

Goal-Setting: Charting the Course

Goal Planning Worksheet

Goal Setting and Scoring Worksheet

Weekly Goal Card

A Month of Goals

GOAL SETTING

(The most powerful method of helping discouraged learners develop a sense of control and responsibility, [Internal].)

Goal Imperatives:

1. Short-term, practical, for a specific period of time and monitored and measured frequently.
2. Must be attainable. Within student' control.
3. Something the student wants to improve.
(Negotiated with, but seldom set by the adult.)
4. Must offer some challenge to give pride in effort.
5. Specific and measured in quantity of achievement.
("I got three of four assignments in on time.")
6. Students must see from frequent monitoring that he/she is making progress.
7. Progress must be displayed visually, on some kind of scorecard.

** IMPORTANT - One goal should be to improve on something the student already does well! (Most won't believe that they already do anything well.)

Elementary

Adaptations to the Goal Setting Process:

Establish goals as an essential part of the class.
Score less frequently.
Reduce the number of goals.
Make them specific to a unit of study.
(Change them with each new unit.)

Overcoming Obstacles to Goals

1. Reaffirm your goal for yourself. What do you want to shoot for?

2. What are the "RED FLAGS" that may stop you from reaching your goal?

■

■

■

3. What can you do to overcome these red flags?

4. Goal Deadline

I will try to make this goal by _____

Student Signature

Date

Please note: Content on pages P62-P65 was redacted due to copyright concerns.

Inservice Session #5: Classroom Management

Topics Addressed:

Classroom Management

Effective Strategies for Students Who are At-Risk

Teacher Skills Needed to Develop Responsible Classroom
Management

Checklist Elementary Classroom

Rules and Procedures

Current Procedures

Checklist of Accountability Procedures

Student Accountability

Classroom Management for Beginning

Classroom Assessment

Seating Arrangements

Discipline in the Classroom

Guidelines for Effective Praise

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

SPEND AT LEAST 2 - 4 WEEKS IN SEPTEMBER CONCENTRATING ON:

1. TEACHING AND RETEACHING CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL RULES.
 - EXPECTED CLASSROOM BEHAVIORS
 - PLAYGROUND RULES
 - RULES FOR WALKING DOWN HALLWAYS, WALKING TO SPECIALS
 - RULES FOR ASSEMBLIES
 - ETC., ETC.

2. DEMONSTRATING CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL PROCEDURES.
 - PROCEDURES FOR COMPLETING AND HANDING-IN ASSIGNMENTS
 - PROCEDURES FOR SWITCHING INTO READING GROUPS OR FOR SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTION
 - PROCEDURES FOR SHARPENING PENCILS, GETTING DRINKS
 - PROCEDURES DURING FIRE DRILLS
 - ETC., ETC.

3. PRACTICING CORRECT PROCEDURES.
 - GOING OUT OF THE ROOM AND COMING INTO THE ROOM FROM RECESS OR BETWEEN CLASS PERIODS
 - WALKING DOWN THE HALLS AS A CLASS, AS INDIVIDUALS
 - EXPECTED BEHAVIORS DURING CLASS DISCUSSIONS
 - PROCEDURES FOR CLASSROOM CLEAN-UP
 - ETC., ETC-

4. RETEACHING, MAINTAINING, AND REINFORCING CORRECT STUDENT BEHAVIOR.
 - ENFORCING YOUR DISCIPLINE PLAN
 - QUICKLY HANDLING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR
 - INSISTING THAT ALL STUDENTS FOLLOW THE RULES AND PROCEDURES THAT HAVE BEEN SET
 - REWARDING CORRECT BEHAVIOR AND STUDENT SELF-DISCIPLINE

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE AT-RISK

Research has shown that the following methods for working with at-risk youth have been effective.

1. Classroom instruction should not only be content-oriented (acquiring knowledge) but process-oriented (applying knowledge to real life experiences).
2. Class work should have a significant "hands-on" method of instruction in all areas.
3. Lessons should be devised in a manner to engage the variety of learning styles: Auditory, Visual, Kinesthetic, and Tactile.
4. Students need to be actively and meaningfully engaged. This might mean the development of longer school days and longer school years, for some students. Summer programs are especially helpful.
5. Instructors should have clearly stated goals, extensive training, and frequent evaluation.
6. Teacher expectations should be high and attainable. Students need to feel empowered to be mastery learners.
7. Discipline is not just a form of punishment, but is viewed as an opportunity to teach a skill which is just as vital as the various content areas.
8. When applying discipline be careful "not to win the battle, but lose the war". You can stop immediate problems, but don't destroy the self-concept of the student in the process, or you will have lost the drive and motivation of that student.
9. Instruction should be paced with constant feedback. That is, when presenting information to students, eliciting frequent responses generally increases the quality of the lesson.
10. Varying the lesson activities within given periods has a way of retaining student attention and interest.
11. Peer assistance/tutoring and cooperative learning are positive ways of allowing for general empowerment, self-esteem, motivation, communication, social skills, and quality peer interaction. When they are structured properly, they have a way of diffusing potential "acting out" problems.
12. Programs which have mentors available to the at-risk student during regular and consistent stages are very powerful. Mentors can be community members, as well as a teacher/staff advocate within the building.

Figure 2 - Teacher Skills Needed to Develop
Responsible Classroom Management

Correction

School-Wide Discipline Programs
Implementing Behavioristic Techniques
Employing Problem-Solving Approaches

Prevention

Organization and
Instruction

Incorporating Teaching Methods that
Motivate Students by Incorporating
Multiple Learning Styles and
Instructional Goals
Implementing Teaching that Maximizes
On-Task Behavior
Developing Effective Classroom Rules
and Procedures

Interpersonal
Relationships

Working with Parents
Creating Positive Peer Relationships
Establishing Positive Teacher-Student
Relationships

Theoretical Foundation

Understanding Students' Personal and
Academic Needs

CHECKLIST

ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM RULES & PROCEDURES

	<u>CURRENT PROCEDURES</u>
I. <u>ROOM AREAS</u>	
A. STUDENT DESKS, TABLES, STORAGE AREAS	
B. LEARNING CENTERS, STATIONS	
C. SHARED MATERIALS	
D. TEACHER'S DESK, STORAGE	
E. FOUNTAIN, SINK, BATHROOM, PENCIL SHARPENER	
II. <u>SCHOOL AREAS</u>	
A. BATHROOM, FOUNTAIN, OFFICE, LIBRARY	
B. LINING UP	
C. PLAYGROUND	
D. LUNCHROOM	
II. <u>WHOLE CLASS ACTIVITIES/ <u>SEATWORK</u></u>	
A. STUDENT PARTICIPATION	
B. SIGNALS FOR STUDENT ATTENTION	
C. TALK AMONG STUDENTS	
D. MAKING ASSIGNMENTS	
E. PASSING OUT BOOKS, SUPPLIES	
F. TURNING IN WORK	
G. HANDING BACK ASSIGNMENTS	
H. MAKE UP WORK	

ELEMENTARY

CURRENT PROCEDURES :

I. OUT-OF-SEAT POLICIES

J. ACTIVITIES AFTER WORK IS
FINISHED

IV. SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

A. STUDENT MOVEMENT INTO AND
OUT OF GROUP

B. BRINGING MATERIALS TO
GROUP

C. EXPECTED BEHAVIOR OF STUDENTS
IN GROUP

D. EXPECTED BEHAVIOR OF STUDENTS
OUT OF GROUP

V. OTHER PROCEDURES

A. BEGINNING SCHOOL DAY

B. END OF SCHOOL DAY

C. STUDENT CONDUCT DURING DELAYS,
INTERRUPTIONS

D. FIRE DRILLS

E. HOUSEKEEPING AND
STUDENT HELPERS

CHECKLIST of ACCOUNTABILITY PROCEDURES

<u>I. WORK REQUIREMENTS</u>	PROCEDURES
A. HEADING PAPERS B. USE OF PEN OR PENCIL C. WRITING ON BACK OF PAPER D. NEATNESS, LEGIBILITY E. INCOMPLETE PAPERS F. LATE WORK G. MISSED WORK H. DUE DATES I. MAKE-UP WORK	
<u>II. COMMUNICATING ASSIGNMENTS</u>	
A. POSTING ASSIGNMENTS B. REQUIREMENTS/GRADING CRITERIA FOR ASSIGNMENTS C. INSTRUCTIONAL GROUPS D. PROVISIONS FOR ABSENTEES E. LONG TERM ASSIGNMENTS	
<u>III. MONITORING STUDENT WORK</u>	
A. IN CLASS ORAL PARTICIPATION B. COMPLETION OF IN CLASS ASSIGNMENTS C. COMPLETION OF HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS D. COMPLETION OF STAGES OF LONG-TERM ASSIGNMENTS	

IV. CHECKING ASSIGNMENTS IN CLASS

- A. STUDENTS EXCHANGING PAPERS
- B. MARKING AND GRADING PAPERS
- C. TURNING IN PAPERS

V. GRADING PROCEDURES

- A. DETERMINING REPORT CARD GRADES
- B. RECORDING GRADES
- C. GRADING STAGES OF LONG-TERM ASSIGNMENTS
- D. EXTRA CREDIT

VI. ACADEMIC FEEDBACK

- A. REWARDS AND INCENTIVES
- B. POSTING STUDENT WORK
- C. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS
- D. STUDENTS' RECORD OF THEIR GRADES

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT FOR BEGINNING THE SCHOOL YEAR

Creative Ways to Teach Rules and Routines!

1. **PUPPET PLAYS:** Use puppets to role play good and inappropriate behaviors. Have students discuss what was appropriate. Have students identify what behaviors were not appropriate; what rules relate to the behaviors and what behaviors should have happened instead.
2. **CLASS BOOKLET:** Have students make a booklet of class and school rules. Students should also illustrate this booklet. When the booklet is complete, students should take it home, share it with parents, and both sign the last page of the book as a contract for self-discipline.
3. **STORYTIME:** In September, read books to students that teach lessons on following rules and procedures and the rewards from self-discipline. Your librarian should be able to refer you to the appropriate books.
4. **FILMSTRIPS/SLIDES:** Have students illustrate rules using permanent felt tip pens on blank filmstrips or slides. Show the video creations to the entire class.
5. **POSTERS:** Have students make good behavior, good study habit, safety rule, etc. posters for the classroom, school hallways, cafeteria, and so on. Hang them where appropriate to remind students of your expectations.
6. **LETTERS:** Teach how to write friendly letters. Have students write letters to playground aides, bus drivers, cooks, custodians, the principal, etc. regarding the rules and their plans to be self-disciplined in the area of interest to whom the letter is written.
7. **POSITIVE WRITING:** Discuss with students how to rewrite/edit rules and routines which are negatively stated into positive statements. Assign students to draft a list of rules which are all positive.
8. **T.V. PROGRAM:** Using a banner of paper on a roll and a box with slits for the paper to move through, assign students to work in pairs to create picture frames of illustrations depicting a TV program on class rules.
9. **ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS:** Divide students into small round table groups. Give students topics to discuss regarding specific rules or routines. "What is your opinion concerning the rule.....?"
10. **OOPS, I GOOFED!:** Conduct a class discussion on student experiences when they broke a rule. Have students share a personal experience when they goofed in their behavior. Have students share what they should have done instead. Focus in on the idea that we all make mistakes and it is ok if you learn from the mistake and don't repeat it.
11. **CREATE A PLAY:** Have students write and produce a play on rules and procedures. Have students present the play to other classes in the school.
12. **SCHOOL IN RELATION TO COMMUNITY RULES:** Have students share how school rules and the reasons for following them relate to community rules and their responsibilities as citizens.

13. **RULE UNSCRAMBLE:** Have your class/school rules stated in phrases. Mix-up the words in the phrase. Have students put the words in correct order so they make sense. Or mix-up the letters of the words in a rule and have students put the letters of each word back in order so rules make sense.
14. **RULE BINGO:** Make bingo cards with classroom/school rules listed in each square. Have a student or the teacher act out the rule. Students cover the square if they have the rule listed that is being acted out.
15. **FEELINGS:** Discuss and use pictures to focus student awareness on others' feelings when rules are broken.
16. **WRONG WAY:** Have students role play the wrong way to behave or the wrong way to follow procedures. Video tape the role playing and have the whole group review and discuss not only what was done wrong but how to do it the right way.
17. **HUG OR HANDSHAKE:** When the teacher or students "catch" others following the rules, ask them if they want a hug or handshake and reward them with their wish.
18. **CONTRACT FOR SUCCESS:** Have students write a letter to their parents listing the rules for the class and their plan for successful behavior and self-discipline for the school year. Have students take the letter home and review it with their parents. All persons sign the Contract for Success. Student returns the contract to school the next day.
19. **PICTURE SIGNALS:** Have pictures as signals for each classroom rule. For example, ears for the rule "We listen politely." or chair for "Sit correctly in your chair." Then use the pictures to signal a student if they are not following the rule. The picture signals allow silent management rather than having to stop teaching to tell a student what they are doing wrong.
20. **COMIC STRIPS:** Have students make comic strips illustrating class rules.
21. **VISITING KEY PEOPLE:** Have your students visit the cooks and tell them the rules for the cafeteria. Have your students visit the principal to tell him/her the school rules, and so on.
22. **PUNCH-OFF CARDS:** Give each student an index card. If they are breaking a rule, punch a hole in their card. After so many holes, the student loses a privilege. The positive side to this idea....Give each student an index card. When you "catch" them following rules and procedures, punch their card. After so many punches, the student earns a privilege; or have a system that certain privileges cost so many punches. Students may save their punches to earn the privilege of their choice.
23. **PARTY POINTS:** Have class determine a theme for a class party--popcorn party, ice cream party, etc. and the number of points they need to earn for the party. When the whole class is on-task (etc.) give them a point toward their party.

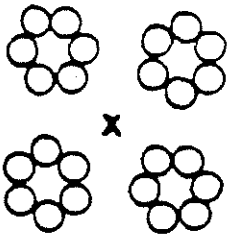
24. **RULES IN THE SACK:** Write rules on cards and put them into a paper sack. Have a student draw out a rule from the sack and explain it to the rest of the class.
25. **CANDID CAMERA:** Video tape students (without them knowing if possible) during routine lessons and activities. Then later play back the tape and have students review and chart behaviors. Have students discuss the areas needing improvement and the areas of self-discipline shown.
26. **ANIMAL SIMILES:** Develop rules using animal similes, such as "Be smart like a fox.", "Be quiet as a mouse.", "Be wise as an owl." Have children write and illustrate rules.
27. **HIDDEN RULES:** Fold paper. On the inside write the class rule. On the outside of the folded paper give clues to the rule. Students read clues and guess the rule. They open the folded paper to see if they are correct. This also works well for a bulletin board display.
28. **NUMBERED RULES:** Give each classroom rule a number. When a student is following a rule correctly, ask students to hold up the number of fingers which relates to the rule being followed. Or when teaching rules, give clues for a specific rule and students hold up the correct number of fingers for the correct numbered rule.
29. **DISCRIMINATION:** Develop a list of correct and incorrect behaviors relating to the rules and routines of the classroom and school. Have students read through the list and separate the correct from the incorrect thus making two lists from the one. Use this discrimination activity during a reading class.
30. **WHEEL OF FORTUNE:** Play Wheel of Fortune where rules are the puzzles to be solved. Students guess letters of the puzzle and try to guess the rule in the puzzle.
31. **AWARDS:** Design certificates or bookmarker awards for classroom rules. Give students the awards when their behavior reflects appropriate behavior in relation to the specific rule.
32. **RULE PROPOSALS:** Have students write proposals for classroom rules including narrative statements as to why their proposals are necessary and important..
33. **CELEBRITY RULES:** Using pictures of famous people, have students draw balloons statements from the people relating a class rule. As an example, have a picture of Ronald Reagan with a caption saying, "I walk quietly when I go to the bathroom." Post the celebrity rules all over the classroom and school.
34. **PICTURE POSTERS:** Have students bring a picture of themselves to school. Use student pictures on posters to highlight a school rule. "The following students believe it is important to respect all teachers." Show their pictures listing their names and grades. Post the posters throughout the school. Use positive peer pressure for pride in school.

Figure 2: Classroom Assessment: Classroom Management and Instruction

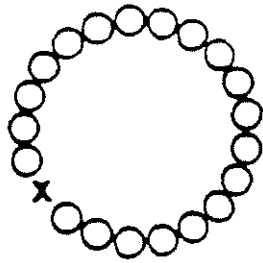
Classroom Factors	Yes	No
1. The teacher interacts positively with the student		
2. The teacher communicates high expectations to the student		
3. Opportunities are provided for students to become acquainted		
4. The student is actively involved with peers either through cooperative learning or peer tutoring		
5. Classroom procedures are taught to students and this student demonstrates an understanding of the procedures		
6. The student's instructional program is appropriate to his/her academic needs (e.g., skill level, learning style)		
7. The subject matter is relevant to the student's life and the student understands this connection		
8. The student understands the teachers' instructional goals and why teaching strategies are being used to reach these goals		
9. The student has been involved in some form of academic goal setting and self-recording		
10. The assessment (grading) system motivates the student to make a good effort		
11. Rules for managing student behavior are appropriate, succinct, stated positively and all inclusive		
12. Consequences for inappropriate behavior are clear to all students		
13. Consequences are educational, respectful and implemented consistently		
14. The students demonstrates she/he understands the rules and consequences		
15. The teacher has met privately with the student to discuss the problem and jointly develop a plan both parties agree to implement in order to assist the student		
16. Academic and behavioral standards are sensitive to the student's cultural background		

Seating Arrangements

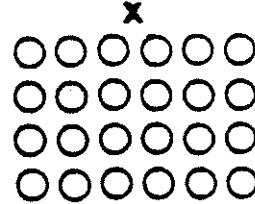
Setting One



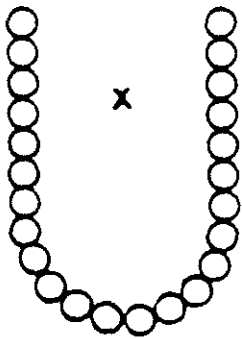
Setting Two



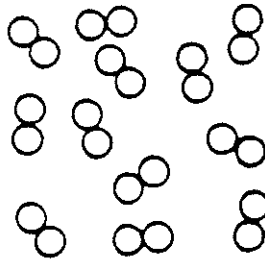
Setting Three



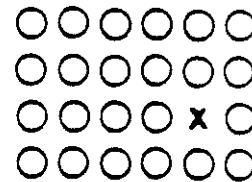
Setting Four



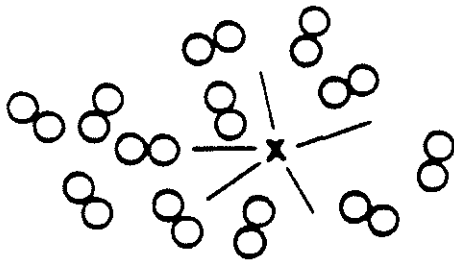
Setting Five
(no teacher)



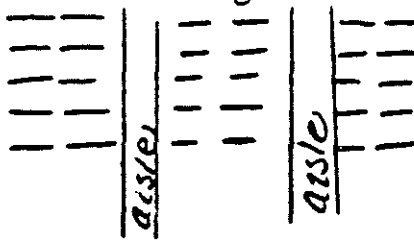
Setting Six



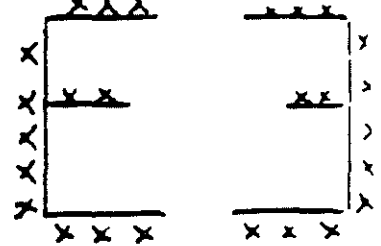
Setting Seven
(teacher moves freely)



Setting Eight
(start of school year)



Setting nine



3. Discipline in the Classroom

My workshop includes a session called Unity/Criticism/Unity. This session can be used as frequently as it is needed, and can be used with both children and adults:

Please note: Text on this page was redacted due to copyright concerns.

A discipline plan that reduces incidents of misbehavior can be a disaster if it reduces student motivation. When evaluating the effectiveness of any discipline plan, the following questions must be included with any numerical data relating to incidents of misbehavior.

1. What happens to the student 10 minutes after an intervention? Is he angry? Is he back to the lesson? Do you see signs of passive aggressive behavior?
2. What happens to the student the next day?
3. What happens to the student a week later?
4. What happens to the student's motivation? Does energy for learning increase or decrease?
5. What happens to the student's dignity? Is it attacked? Is it maintained? Is it enhanced?
6. How is the student's locus of control affected?
7. What happens to the teacher-student relationship? Is communication improved? Did the teacher win the battle (get the student to do what he wanted) and lose the war (destroy their delicate relationship)?
8. Does the student learn about his behavior in a way that provides increased choices, or does the student learn that he has no choice at all? Choices lead to responsibility.

FIGURE 1. GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE PRAISE

Effective Praise:

1. is delivered contingently
2. specifies the particulars of the accomplishment
3. shows spontaneity, variety, and other signs of credibility; suggests clear attention to the student's accomplishment.
4. rewards attainment of specified performance criteria (which can include effort criteria)
5. provides information to students about their competence or the value of their accomplishments
6. orients students toward better appreciation of their own task-related behavior and thinking about problem solving
7. uses student's own prior accomplishments as the context for describing present accomplishments
8. is given in recognition of noteworthy effort or success at difficult (for this student) tasks
9. attributes success to effort and ability, implying that similar successes can be expected in the future
10. fosters endogenous attributions (students believe they expend effort on task because they enjoy it and/or want to develop task-relevant skills)
11. focuses students' attention on their own task-relevant behavior
12. fosters appreciation of, and desirable attributions about, task-relevant behavior after the process is completed

Ineffective Praise:

1. is delivered randomly or unsystematically
2. is restricted to global positive reactions
3. shows a bland uniformity that suggests a conditioned response made with minimal attention
4. rewards mere participation, without consideration of performance processes or outcomes
5. provides no information at all or gives students information about their status
6. orients students toward comparison: themselves with others and thinking about competing
7. uses the accomplishments of peers as the context for describing
8. is given without regard to the effort expended or the meaning of the accomplishment (for this student)
9. attributes success to ability alone or to external factors such as luck or (easy) task difficulty
10. fosters exogenous attributions (students believe they expend effort on the task for external reasons--to please the teacher, win a competition or reward, etc)
11. focuses students' attention on the teacher as an external authority figure who is manipulating them
12. intrudes into the ongoing process, distracting attention from task-relevant behavior

From Jere E. Brophy, "Teacher Praise: A Functional Analysis." Review of Educational Research (Spring 1981): 5-32. Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association, 1981.

Inservice Session #6: Student Accountability

Topics Addressed:

Ways to Accomplish Student Accountability

Glasser's Problem Solving Method

Social Behavior Objective Sheet

Behavior Change Model

Personalized Education Plan

Professional Growth Contract

The Rights We Have in the Classroom

Curriculum of Responsibility

WAYS TO ACCOMPLISH STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY

1. GIVE CLEAR AND SPECIFIC INSTRUCTION FOR GENERAL WORK REQUIREMENTS.
2. COMMUNICATE ASSIGNMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS SO THAT EVERY STUDENT UNDERSTANDS THEM.
3. KEEP TRACK OF WHAT STUDENTS ARE DOING.
4. ESTABLISH PROCEDURES FOR CHECKING SOME ASSIGNMENTS IN CLASS.
5. DEVELOP GRADING PROCEDURES THAT WILL FACILITATE BOOKKEEPING AND BE CLEAR AND FAIR FOR ALL STUDENTS.
6. PROVIDE REGULAR (DAILY IF POSSIBLE) ACADEMIC FEEDBACK TO STUDENTS.
7. PROVIDE INCENTIVES AND REWARDS TO INCREASE STUDENT MOTIVATION.

Figure 10.3 Glasser's Problem Solving Method

Step 1: Be warm and personal and willing to become emotionally involved

**"I am glad you're here and I care about you as
a person and a learner".**

Step 2: Deal with the present behavior

"What did you do?"

Step 3: Make a value judgment

"Is it helping you?"

"Is it helping others?"

"Is it against a rule?"

Step 4: Work out a plan

"What can you do differently?"

"What do you need me to do to help?"

"Do you need any assistance from others?"

Step 5: Make a commitment

"Are you going to do this?"

Step 6: Follow up

"Let's check later and see how the plan worked".

Step 7: No putdowns but do not accept excuses

**"It's O.K. Let's keep trying. I trust that you can develop a
plan that will work".**

**"I now things happen but you made a plan. Do we need
a new plan?"**

SOCIAL BEHAVIOR OBJECTIVE SHEET

Domain: Classroom Interpersonal Personal
 Other _____

Student _____ Date ___/___/___

Obj. No.

Problem Behavior	Problem Context	Curr. Lvl. Fct.

Replacement Response (Acq. or Perf.)	Rqrd. Lvl. Fct.	Intervention Strategies

Evaluation Strategy: direct observation
 checklist or rating scale _____
 permanent products _____
 other _____

Evaluation Schedule: quarterly
 monthly
 weekly
 daily
 other _____

All evaluation data to be recorded on Performance Chart

**Behavior Change Model
(Developing a Personalized Education Plan)**

Is Home/Community Intervention Necessary? Behavior to Change Intervention Plan Person Responsible for Implementation Evaluation Data

Possible PEP for Jason

Behavior to Change	Intervention	Person Responsible	Data
Failure to follow reasonable adult requests	1. Role playing methods for following requests. Do this both individually, with the teacher and with the class This would include teaching Jason how to remove himself to his seat for quiet work when he cannot handle the large group work.	CDS or Principal	Tallies of this behavior
	2. Provide Jason with frequent prompts and reinforcements for using his new skills	Classroom teacher	
	3. Teach students to ignore him when he is inappropriate	CDS and teacher	
	4. Count on with Jason showing improvement to the principal or other valued adult	Teacher	
	5. Consistent time-outs when Jason reaches the maximum allowable number of times he fails to follow a request		
Improved peer relationships	1. Class meeting to help students learn how to ignore and reinforce Jason	Teacher	
	2. Have a peer be his assistant who helps him when he has not heard directions, etc.	Teacher	
	3. Perhaps Jason could tutor in a Kindergarten or first grade classroom so he could be a model rather than needing to obtain attention being inappropriate.	K or 1 teacher and classroom teacher	
	4. Work with Jason and several students from the class on specific activities for recess	CDS	

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH CONTRACT

Professional growth is a sign of a committed, effective teacher.

In order to help make my classes even more effective places to learn,

I, _____, will implement the following two new specific methods during the next two weeks.

1. _____

2. _____

I will share the results of these new teaching methods with _____
Colleague

on _____ at _____
Date Place

Signed: _____
Professional Colleague

Dated: _____

THE RIGHTS WE HAVE IN THIS CLASSROOM

I have a right to be treated with kindness in this room;
This means that no one will laugh at me, tease or
Insult me.

I have a right to be myself in this room;
This means that no one will treat me unfairly because
I am fat or thin, fast or slow, boy or girl.

I have a right to be safe in this room;
This means that no one will threaten me, bully me,
Push me or destroy my property.

I have a right to be heard in this room;
This means that no one will yell or shout, and my
Opinions will be considered in any plans we make.

I have a right to learn about myself in this room;
This means that I will be free to express my feelings
And opinions without being interrupted or criticized.

CURRICULUM OF RESPONSIBILITY

adult responsibilities

RELATIONSHIPS- ADULT CHILD AND PEER RELATIONSHIPS ARE CRITICAL FACTORS INFLUENCING YOUNGSTERS BEHAVIOR

KNOWLEDGE OF RULES, PROCEDURES AND WHY ACTIVITIES ARE BEING PRESENTED

LIMITS - WHAT WILL OCCUR IF RULES AND PROCEDURES ARE NOT FOLLOWED

OPTIONS - WHAT ASSISTANCE WILL BE GIVEN TO HELP THE YOUNGSTER BEHAVE RESPONSIBLY

youngster responsibilities

CHOICES - YOUNGSTERS MAKE CHOICES ABOUT THEIR BEHAVIOR AND WITHIN A RESPONSIBLE ENVIRONMENT THEY CAN BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR CHOICES

CONSEQUENCES - YOUNGSTERS NEED TO BE GIVEN EDUCATIONAL CONSEQUENCES WHEN THEY CHOOSE TO BE INVOLVED IN AN IRRESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR

Inservice Session #7: The Passage

Topics Addressed:

Year of the Passage

Implementation of the Pre-Passage Ceremony

The Passage

The Passage Celebration

I Am A Black Man

YEAR OF THE PASSAGE

- A. The year of the passage begins with the 11th birthday. However, considering the psychology of motivation and commitment, it is important to give the impression that the boy calls for the actual beginning of the experience. Once THE PASSAGE has been popularized and is universally accepted by black people, almost all boys will find it difficult to wait for the 11th birthday to begin their duties. Meanwhile it is up to the parents to ensure that the initiative is taken by the boy without excessive delay. It can be a delay of a week or even a month. But it is important that the boy not delay too long as he will miss the foundation of the first month's activities. He should be strongly expected to call for his PASSAGE on his 11th birthday.
- B. Once the boy takes the initiative, he has already taken the first step towards responsibility. This collaboration between the parent and the child is duplicated considerably by the children's conversion to a parent's religion. The same has been said of some boys who become priests.
- C. THE PASSAGE activities should be flexible so as to allow each boy's creativity to flourish. The requirements offer a challenge and a commitment, a preparation for the responsibilities of adulthood. The paramount focus should be an orientation and exposure to the knowledge and resources that will assist the boy in wise, responsible decisions as he continues chronologically towards adulthood and thereafter.
- D. Some activities are to be completed before the 12th birthday or the day of THE PASSAGE celebration:
1. The Log
 2. An awareness and understanding of self.
 3. An awareness and understanding of immediate and extended family.
 4. Service to neighborhood and community.
 5. Adopt a senior citizen.

6. Educational opportunities, including and beyond public schools, i.e. higher education.
7. Discipline and responsibility.
8. Preparation of *THE PASSAGE CEREMONY*.²¹

IMPLEMENTATION OF PRE-PASSAGE CEREMONY

A. THE LOG

Beginning with the moment the boy enters *THE PASSAGE* year, a record should be kept by the boy and periodically checked by the parent(s) or guardian and the PRESIDING ADULT. (See the Passage script for keys to identify the Presiding Adult). This may include pictures, clippings, notations, articles and other materials pertaining to his transition.

B. AN AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF SELF

The boy is made to understand that an awareness of self includes knowing your past. This is done through history, literature, music, cultural events, family testimony and lore.

- 1) For instance, he may be expected to read a certain number of books and to write reviews of them. These reviews are placed in the LOG. Select some black periodicals (magazines or newspapers) to be read each month throughout the year of *THE PASSAGE*.

One book should be about Africa, one black (American) history, and one in current or contemporary economic, political and cultural issues. Parents and the Presiding Adult will monitor and review the boy's work on the projects.

- 2) With the advice and guidance of the parents and Presiding Adult, the boy should endeavor to gain an understanding and appreciation of beauty in the context of the black and African race.

C. AN UNDERSTANDING OF IMMEDIATE AND EXTENDED FAMILY

A full list is made of relationships and whereabouts of each relative, beginning with immediate family. This project begins with immediate family and goes back as far as possible. Letters may be written to family members in this quest for knowledge of other relatives and ancestors.

D. SERVICE TO NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY

The boy should talk with parents or teachers, spiritual leader or some other responsible persons about some service he can perform for his neighborhood or community.

E. ADOPT A SENIOR CITIZEN

“Adopt” a senior citizen to talk with and help from time to time, such as running errands or doing light chores on at least a once-a-month or weekly basis.

F. EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDING AND BEYOND PUBLIC SCHOOLS, i.e. HIGHER EDUCATION

With the assistance and guidance of the parent and or PRESIDING Adult, inquiry and reflection should from time to time be made regarding possible future careers and educational preparation. The boy should inquire about special programs, schools, training and scholarships available. The boy should have or obtain a Public Library Card.

G. DISCIPLINE AND RESPONSIBILITY

This includes going about appropriate chores in a timely and self-generating or independent way. The boy should begin to practice conspicuous courtesy and appropriate obedience toward parents and elders as a model for life. The boy should begin to practice courtesy and respect for girls and women. The boy should practice respect, care and protectiveness toward younger children. The boy should contact or communicate with

six elected officials or candidates (at least three black ones) on matters of concern to the boy or affecting his neighborhood. These issues should be discussed before and after with parents, teachers and other responsible adults.

H. PREPRATION FOR PASSAGE

Two days before *THE PASSAGE* ceremony, the boy is taken to the Presiding Adult or other responsible adult's home to complete preparation for *THE PASSAGE* ceremony. He spends the day and night before *THE PASSAGE* at the Presiding Adult's home.

While there, the boy

- 1) will complete a spiritual fast
- 2) practice and polish his speech
- 3) is encouraged through appropriate questioning to participate in appropriate discussions with adults
- 4) reviews and finalizes THE LOG

THE PASSAGE*

*For optimal use of *the celebration*, please read "*THE COMMITMENT*" in the front of this manual before proceeding.

STYLE:

Like churches, weddings, Barmitvahs, Kwanzaas, cotillions, fraternal organizations and prayer meetings, *THE PASSAGE* ceremony or celebration will vary from time to time, place to place and family to family according to group style and practice. However, the script presented here, though simplistic on the face of it, has been worked out according to concrete and important psychological principles as well as anthropological and sociological considerations. (see *THE COMMITMENT* for further details)

SETTING:

Any facility such as a place where one would have a wedding, Kwanzaa, graduation or other milestone event.

PARTICIPANTS:

The Boy (on 12th birthday or shortly thereafter)
Parent or Parents
Adults from extended family and neighborhood
Grandparents (if available)
Extended family includes:
1) anybody related to the boy by blood
2) anybody related to the boy in law
3) play brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, cousins
4) friends and mates of the relatives
5) any acceptable person with a supportive interest in the boy's development

USHERS:

Well disciplined teenage boys who, preferably, have gone through *PASSAGE*.

PRESIDING ADULT (ceremony leader):

this might include: pastors, or any other religious practitioners of your choice or/and persons who exhibit transcending wisdom, respect, responsibility and commitment)

SOLOIST AND INSTRUMENTALIST

TEACHERS AND COUNSELORS:

(These include recreational persons, coaches, and church school teachers, scout leaders, helpers and personages the boy can look up to)²¹

THE PASSAGE CELEBRATION

OPENING:

Guests are gathered and seated in the place of *PASSAGE*. The mood is one of joy and anticipation. Care must be taken not to be too loud or boisterous or to distract from the seriousness of the occasion. Once the ceremony begins, the audience must come to complete silence. This silence should be maintained with vigilance until the appropriate moments for expression.

PROCESSIONAL:

Music can be sacred or secular, with significant and appropriate inspirational content. Relatives enter from rear of the assembly. They include aunts, uncles, cousins, godparents, sisters and brothers, grandparents, mother and father. Some distance should be placed between entrance of grandparents and parents and other kin.

When parents are halfway to the Presiding Adult, the boy enters from front of assembly and joins his parents or guardian. Then all three will advance the remaining distance to join the designated spot for the ceremony. Other members of the processional are seated in reserved front row seats.

PRESIDING ADULT:

(Parents and boy are facing the Presiding Adult)

Presiding Adult explains the meaning of **MANHOOD**, its obligations, and responsibility to elders, men, women, children, race, community and nation.

(At the conclusion, the Presiding Adult faces the boy)

Presiding Adult:

“Whose manhood do we honor this day?”

THE BOY OR BOYS:

Give name or names (if more than one crossing into *PASSAGE* at single ceremony)

PRESIDING ADULT:

“Why do you wish to accept the passage to manhood?”

THE BOY:

“The time has come and I am ready to accept my responsibilities”.

PRESIDING ADULT: (Facing audience)

“Do you approve of (name of boy) seeking responsibility for manhood?”

AUDIENCE:

Give expressions of praise and approval.

(At this point parents or guardians should be seated)

THE BOY:

(sits on a high or elevated chair facing the Presiding Adult)

PRESIDING ADULT:

Reads aloud and interprets an inspirational poem: e.g. “If We Must Die” by Claude McKay (available from local library — to be fetched by boy before the ceremony)

SOLOIST/AUDIENCE:

“Lift Every Voice and Sing” (the black anthem, also located and obtained in advance by the boy)

MEN OF THE AUDIENCE:

Read aloud: “I AM A BLACK MAN” (see appendix)

WOMEN OF THE AUDIENCE:

Respond with appropriate expression.

FRIEND OR RELATIVE:

A word of praise for the boy.

MOTHER:

Praise, advice and inspiration for her son.

FATHER OR MALE GUARDIAN

(or male person with long-standing supportive interest in the boy):

Words of encouragement and inspiration

THE BOY:

Stands, acknowledges leader, parents or guardian, relatives and friends.

Reads or recites his prepared speech. This speech should include: some mention of his growth both educationally and spiritually; some word of how his affiliations (clubs and organizations) have enhanced him; books that have left a deep impression; some mention of his community and people dear to him. A general sharing of feelings encountered up to now. If possible, mention of how he plans to contribute to his race and nation as a man.

(note: this speech is prepared with the guidance of the Presiding Adult)

AUDIENCE:

Acknowledges speech and parents. This includes a period of individual testimony in praise of the boy.

PRESIDING ADULT:

Turns to the boy and proclaims:

“(name of boy), we welcome you to the honored realm, challenges and responsibilities, of black manhood.”

(Immediate cheers and approval from the audience. An atmosphere of joy and celebration should be maintained as the instrumentalist (drum, piano, organ, etc...) plays “Lift Every Voice and Sing.”)

PRESIDING ADULT, THE BOY AND THE PARENT(S):

Proceed to the point of exit.

AUDIENCE:

Ushered out by the ushers to receive the boy with handshakes, congratulations and complimentary gestures.

THE FEAST

(African or traditional — with an abundance of fruits and vegetables)

(The music continues, along with the accolades, throughout the feast.)

I AM A BLACK MAN

by Nathan Hare

The evidence of anthropology now suggests that I, the black man, am the original man, the first man to walk this vast imponderable earth. I, the black man, am an African, the exotic quintessence of a universal blackness. I have lost by force my land, my language, in a sense my life, I will seize it back so help me.

Toward that end, if necessary, I will crush the corners of the earth, and this world will surely tremble, until I, the black man, the first and original man, can arm in arm with my woman, erect among the peoples of the universe a new society, humane to its cultural core, out of which at long last will emerge, as night moves into day, the first truly human being that the world has ever known.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, and RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this project was to develop an inservice training manual designed to implement effective teaching strategies for at-risk African American male students in the elementary grades.

Conclusions

Conclusions reached as a result of this project were:

1. Educators must have an understanding of inner city conditions in America today and of the African American culture to effectively teach an African American male child.
2. Current research is available for use in the design and development of strategies for effectively teaching African American at-risk male students.
3. Specialized inservice training is essential for educators to effectively teach African American at-risk male students.

Recommendations

As a result of this project, the following recommendations have been suggested:

1. Teachers responsible for working with African American at-risk male students need to have a clear understanding of the African American

culture and conditions confronting today's inner city youth.

2. Copies of this project should be available in all schools in the Tacoma, Washington School District which serves a population of African American at-risk male students.
3. Teachers should be inserviced on effective strategies for teaching African American at-risk male students so they can help these students achieve success in school.
4. It is further recommended that this project be used as a model by any school district desiring to implement an inservice program to provide educators with effective strategies for teaching African American at-risk male students.

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