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A Parent Handbook for Primary Students with Learning Disabilities

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A PARENT HANDBOOK FOR PRIMARY STUDENTS
WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

A Project Report
Presented to
The Graduate Faculty
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Master of Education

by
Susan K. Busey

August, 1987

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Parents play an important role in the educational process, especially with Special Education students. When a child is identified as Learning Disabled, parents often ask, "What can we do at home to help?" When there is parent-school cooperation and coordination all will benefit, particularly the child. This project provides parents of the Selah School District in Washington State with information and activities in the academic areas of reading, mathematics, and written language, that will reinforce and strengthen those skills taught at school.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Most parents have aspirations for the success of their children as they enter school. Unfortunately, not all children meet with this success. Although most parents are aware that their child is experiencing difficulty, many do not, and find out only when the school contacts them for permission to assess their child for learning problems. When a child had difficulty learning, parents want to help their child, but often do not know how to proceed. Some parents contact the school for help, some do nothing.

For those parents whose child is found to have a Specific Learning Disability (SLD), Public Law 94-142 (The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975) mandates that parents or legal guardians be involved in developing an Individual Education Program (IEP) for their child. The psychological testing results are discussed as well as the strengths and weaknesses in the academic areas. This process of sharing information gives the parents insight and input into the education the school will be providing their child. Still, parents often ask what activities they can do at home

to help develop their child's abilities in the areas of reading, mathematics, and/or written language.

Statement of the Problem

Parents of a child with a Specific Learning Disability need access to a handbook containing activities which will help strengthen their child's skills in the areas of reading, mathematics, and/or written language. At the present time this type of material is not available to parents in the Selah School District in Washington.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to develop a handbook of activities to be used by parents of students in grades one and two, who have been identified as having a Specific Learning Disability. The activities are designed to reinforce skills being taught in the Special Education classroom in the area of reading, mathematics, and written language. The handbook resulting from this project will be available to any parent in the Selah School District in Washington State wanting to help his/her child at home.

Educational Significance

A child's success in learning has direct influence on his future. Since a child's education neither begins nor ends with the hours he/she spends in school, any coordinated effort between school and home may increase the possibility that a child will experience success in learning.

Scope and Limitations

This handbook was designed for parents of the Selah School District with children in first and second grades, who have been identified as having a Specific Learning Disability in the academic areas of reading, mathematics, and/or written language.

The review of the literature was selective and confined to information directly related to the effectiveness of parents working as tutors with their children at home in academic areas.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are given as clarification of the content of this project:

Specific Learning Disability. Specific Learning Disability (SLD) is a discrepancy between a child's overall intelligence and his ability to learn in the academic areas of reading, mathematics, and/or written language (WAC 392-171-411, p. 20).

Parent. In this project the term parent refers to any adult or legal guardian of a child who has been identified as having a Specific Learning Disability (author).

Activity. The term activity includes ideas, games, suggestions, experiences, interactions that have been designed for the parent to do at home (author).

Academic. For the purpose of this project this term refers to the content areas of reading, mathematics, and written language (author).

IEP. The acronym IEP stands for individual education program as designed and implemented under the guidelines of Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 392-171-461).

Special Education. Special Education refers to the personnel, services, resources, and curriculum available to students who have been identified as Handicapped under the guidelines of WAC 392-171-413 (author).

Specific Learning Disability. Specific Learning Disability (SLD) refers to the handicapping condition as per the guidelines of WAC 392-171-411.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Much has been and will continue to be written about the need for parents and schools to work together. This is especially true with regard to the education of the handicapped. Many professionals working with young, handicapped children view parental involvement as a necessity. Parent-school cooperation in educating the handicapped child is beneficial not only for parents and the school, but most importantly to the child, especially during a time when parent involvement has become a focal concern of American schools (Sonnenschein, 1981).

The most promising way to improve relationships between parents and educators is to establish a view of parents as partners (Sonnenschein, 1981). Sonnenschein stated that those who can accept this view and establish collaborative relationships, will not only develop new perceptions of parents, but will allow parents to revise some of their assumptions and attitudes about professionals. There are unmistakable signs of mutual trust and respect in a healthy collaborative relationship. It is the children who will benefit the most from the increased and improved communication

between home and school. Kroth (1975) concurred that a healthy parent-professional relationship affects the future academic and emotional growth of the handicapped child.

Belief in the benefits of parent participation has been associated with legislative mandates requiring programs to include components of parent involvement (Cone, DeLawyer, & Wolf, 1985). The question of whether or not to encourage the inclusion of families is answered by Public Law 94-142 (The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975) which requires that the parents be included as an integral part of the child's education program (Bricker & Casuso, 1979).

Public Law 94-142 (Section 4(a)(19)) requires that each eligible handicapped child must be provided with an Individual Education Program (IEP). It states:

a written statement for each handicapped child developed in any meeting by a representative of the local education agency or an intermediate educational unit who shall be qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of handicapped children, the teacher, the parents or guardians of such child, and whenever appropriate, such child. (n.p.)

Public Law 94-142 promises to bring meaning and order to the fragile home-school relationship (Abeson, 1980).

Although the law attempts to build in protective mechanisms to insure that the schools and a child's parents act in his best interest, communication, which must be built or shared and expressed concern about each child as an individual, is the key ingredient. The question, therefore, appears not to

be "whether" families should be included but how they should be most effectively involved (Bricker & Casuso, 1979).

A major type of parent involvement is assisting with learning activities at home, which may occur with or without specific advice and direction from the teacher (Epstein, 1981). These learning activities may be designed to build general skills and behaviors, or specific learning skills that are directly coordinated with the child's class work.

Epstein (1987) identified three general areas in which parents can be involved:

1. Parents may be asked to assist the child to build skills that are useful in school, but do not duplicate the teacher's efforts.

2. The parent may be asked to reinforce learning and discipline on a reward-or-punishment schedule set up in cooperation with the teacher.

3. Parents may be asked to assist their children to review, complete, or extend skills that the student is working on in class. (p. 8)

Epstein (1987) also identified 16 specific ways that teachers can involve parents at home:

1. Ask parents to read to their children regularly or to listen to the children read aloud.

2. Loan books, workbooks, and other materials to parents.

3. Ask parents to take their children to the library.

4. Ask parents to get their children to talk about what they did that day in class.

5. Give an assignment that requires the children to ask their parents questions.

6. Ask parents to watch a specific television program with their children and to discuss the show afterward.

7. Suggest ways for parents to include their children in any of their own educationally enriching activities.

8. Send home suggestions for games or group activities, related to the children's schoolwork, that can be played by either parent and child, or by child and siblings.

9. Suggest how parents might use home materials and activities to stimulate their children's interest in reading, mathematics, and other subjects.

10. Establish a formal agreement whereby parents supervise and assist children in completing homework tasks.

11. Establish a formal agreement whereby parents provide rewards and/or penalties based on the children's school performance or behavior.

12. Ask parents to come to observe the classroom (not to "help") for part of a day.

13. Explain to parents certain techniques for teaching, for making learning materials, or for planning lessons.

14. Give a questionnaire to parents so they can evaluate their children's progress or provide some other form of feedback.

15. Ask parents to sign homework to ensure its completion.

16. Ask parents to provide spelling practice, math drills, and practice activities, or to help with workbook assignments. (p. 8)

Epstein (1987) stated further that principals tend to encourage teacher's to involve parents in reading activities more than other subjects, and teachers report widespread use of techniques that involve parents with their children in reading and related skills and activities. Her research has also found that teachers who frequently used home learning activities are usually able to involve parents of all educational backgrounds, even though other teachers report that parents with less than a high school education lack the ability or willingness to help their children with learning activities at home.

Epstein (1987) concluded that

to involve more parents more often and more productively requires changing the major location of parent involvement from the school to the home, changing the major emphasis from general policies to specific skills, and changing the major target from the general population of students or school staff to the individual child at home. (p. 8)

Cone, DeLawyer, and Wolf (1985) were surprised that so little attention has been focused on assessing parent involvement. They stated that "currently most of our conclusions about the benefits of that involvement come from research comparing programs with and without it" (p. 418). Herman and Yeh (1983) supported this opinion by recognizing that there has been little research or evaluation investigating the effects of involving parents in the educational process.

Although there is, for the most part, an underlying assumption that parent involvement is beneficial, some thoughtful criticisms of parent involvement have appeared in the literature. Farber and Lewis (1975) as cited in Wiegerink, Hocutt, Posante-Loro, and Bristol (1980) cautioned against the involvement of parents as teachers stating that this will impair their roles as parents and may be viewed that the school is trying to lower their costs by transferring the responsibility of education onto the parents. Wiegerink et al. (1980) also cited Rutherford and Edgar's (1979) view that while parents should be involved in policy-oriented areas of their children's education,

they should not be involved at home in teaching, especially when the child is handicapped. Their belief is that these parents already experience stress associated with "difficult parenting" and should not be subjected to additional stress.

Wiegerink et al. (1980) summarized their research on parent involvement as follows:

Although parental involvement has been found to be generally linked with positive findings in child performance, parent satisfaction, and program success, to what extent this is a correlation versus a cause-and-effect relationship is not known. To date there has not been sufficient study of the methods of parental involvement that may cause increases in child progress, parent satisfaction, and program success. Only a few studies have directed themselves toward possible relationships; however, these do tend to support the efficiency of parental involvement. Parental involvement is not a singular or monothetic concept but a cluster of activities that vary from project to project in function, type, and underlying philosophy; thus, they cannot be readily compared or aggregated. In the end this may make generalizations about parent involvement meaningless. It may be more important to discover the direct impact of different forms of parent involvement on different types of parents with different needs. It seems logical that parent involvement will be found to be most effective when its form and substance vary with the changing needs of children and families . . . Parents of handicapped children cope best when they have satisfactory support networks; parent involvement should be a source of support rather than stress.
(p. 31)

Maddux and Cummings (1983) reviewed many problems and pitfalls they felt can result from parental tutoring. They advocated that too often tutoring becomes a negative experience for children and their parents based on the following reasons: "most parents are not professional educators; they have limited access to teaching materials;

and the home is often a highly distracting environment" (p. 30).

They further stated:

When parents tutor, the child may be placed in the position of failing in the eyes of the adults most important in his life. This can damage the child's self-confidence and result in further failure. Some authorities have expressed fears that tutoring changes the parent-child relationship into a teacher-child relationship; the child loves a one-of-a-kind mother or father and gains yet another teacher. The parent-child relationship is precious and should not be jeopardized for the sake of possible academic gains. (p. 30)

Maddux and Cummings (1983) also felt that if academic learning is required in both the home and school, a child who has difficulty learning gets very little relief. The home ceases to be a haven from scholastic pressures.

Aside from general cautions about home tutoring that they feel apply in all situations, Maddux and Cummings (1983) identify some circumstances which make tutoring by parents especially inadvisable:

1. If there is parental disagreement over whether or not the child should be tutored;
2. If no quiet, nondistracting place is available in the home;
3. If tutoring might result in neglect of the needs of other family members (in cases where there are many children or where someone suffers from a chronic illness);
4. If either parent resents the time spent tutoring or feels guilty;

5. If tutoring sessions are skipped or cut short;
6. If time spent in tutoring deprives the child of opportunities to make friends with other children or develop necessary social skills.

The authors concluded by urging each family to consider the above issues before they make their decision to tutor their exceptional child at home.

Programs that involve parents in the school and encourage home learning can play a major role in creating a desirable context for teaching and learning (Comer, 1986). In his study, he found that parent participation restores trust, mutual respect, and agreement among parents, teachers, and administrators in the education process. It involves parents with the school at times other than when their children are in trouble. It also uses parents as their strengths permit and develops in them a sense of ownership of the school and responsibility for its outcomes.

When children enter formalized academic instruction, they are exposed to many and varied professional teachers. DiSibio (1984) stated that throughout the education process parents continue to be a strong force in the general development and reinforcement of academic skills, especially in setting realistic and attainable standards and expectations for achievement.

Researchers, practitioners, and policy makers consistently rank parent involvement high among the components of

effective schools. Two decades of research on family environments show that children have an advantage in the school when their parents continuously support and encourage their school activities (Epstein, 1987).

A study by Epstein (1987) showed that parents who were frequently involved by teachers in learning activities at home recognized that the teacher worked hard to involve parents; received most of their ideas from the teacher on how to help their children; felt that they should help their children at home; and understood more about their child's education. Parents rated these teachers higher in teaching ability and interpersonal skills. This study also found "that, while students made higher gains in reading achievement if their teacher frequently used parent involvement, there was no similar patterns for gains in mathematics scores, which tended to be influenced by other school and family factors" (p. 9).

Rich (1985) reported that the Home and School Institute has initiated a number of successful home-teaching projects with school systems in California, Michigan, South Carolina, and the District of Columbia. These projects which do not duplicate school work, involve sending home learning activities as "recipes" for parent and children to do together. As a result, student test scores have improved, as have attitudes about schools. The findings indicate that all parents can help teach children.

Herman and Yeh (1983) suggested that parent involvement might be expected to influence positively students' school success; that is, by being involved, parents can become more familiar with their children's formal education, and better able to reinforce at home the principles and concepts of that process. Their research used data collected as part of the Center for the Study of Evaluation (ECE) program. Because parent involvement and participation represented a major component in the ECE program, a variety of data about this area was collected. These data allowed Herman and Yeh (1983) to examine the relationships among various aspects of parent involvement and their effect on parent satisfaction, teacher satisfaction, and student achievement. Aspects of parent involvement studied included parent-school communication, parent awareness of school operations and events, parent participation in school activities, parent influence in school decision making, and parent-teacher relationships.

Two hundred fifty-six schools were selected to participate in this study. Two second-grade and two third-grade classrooms in each of the 256 schools were randomly selected for this study. Teachers and a sample of parents, as well as the school principal, were the subjects of data collection. In addition, from within the sample, 72 schools were chosen for more intensive study. In these schools, criterion-referenced reading and mathematics tests were administered to the students in the selected second- and third-grade classrooms.

The results suggested that parent involvement in schools is beneficial. The degree of parent interest and participation in school activities is positively related to student achievement. The amount of school-home communication is also indirectly related to achievement. With regards to parent satisfaction, both parents' perceptions of their influence in decision making and the perceived quality of parent-teacher relationships are positively related to parent satisfaction. Herman and Yeh (1983) further stated "that school-home communication is positively related to parent participation and that parent participation in school activities is positively related to both perceptions of parent influences in school decision making and quality of parent-teacher relationships" (p. 14).

Hourcade and Richardson (1987) advocated that parent tutoring at home with their learning disabled children can provide additional time to cover and review crucial concepts and skills. In addition, they stated that the home provides a comfortable setting in which learning is likely to occur and that cooperative home-school programs can help to establish important links in the educational process when concepts and skills taught at school are practiced at home with parent supervision, the child receives a vital message regarding the importance of education.

Hourcade and Richardson (1987) conducted a study to increase vocabulary development through a home practice program involving a game approach. They had determined game formats to be highly motivating. Also, parents of the students to be studied had expressed that they experienced anxiety and frustration when working with their Specific Learning Disability children in more traditional academic formats. The games were designed to provide a method of home drill that would ease pressure on students for good academic performance, and eliminate the frustrations parents felt when trying to carry out academic remediation.

Twelve students (10 boys and 2 girls), previously diagnosed as learning disabled and currently enrolled in an LD program, were selected to test the game approach. They ranged in age from 9 years 4 months to 11 years 5 months. Their reading levels as measured by the Woodcock Reading test ranged from 1.6 to 5.7. The home program consisted of teacher-made games designed to provide additional practice, and were sent home every two weeks to coincide with vocabulary lists being taught at school.

Statistical procedures evaluated the average number of words the students were able to read before and after implementation of the home game approach. Before beginning the project, students were learning an average of 9.5 of the 15 words on each 2-week list. After the project began, students were learning an average of 12.7 words of the 15,

a statistically significant improvement. They also found a clear, positive relationship between the number of minutes parents reported playing the games with their children and the increases in number of words learned per 15-word list. The results of this study strongly suggest that the home practice program using a game approach is an effective procedure to help learning disabled students acquire word recognition skills more effectively.

Summary

Overall, the literature reveals that parent participation makes a significant difference in the child's progress, that parents can and do become highly skilled teachers, that involved parents gain considerable knowledge about their children's handicapping conditions, and that parents learn to be successful advocates. The data supports the idea that a parent component in the educational program for handicapped children makes a positive difference. It not only offers a way in which students receive the drill and practice necessary to acquire academic skills in a relatively easy but painless way, but also parents become more interested in their child's school program, thus opening lines of communication between home and school.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

A selective review of the literature pertaining to the effectiveness and need for parent involvement at home working with their children on academic skills was conducted. This study was limited to the literature pertaining to children in primary grades with learning disabilities.

Material that pertained to how parents could assist their child who has been identified as Specific Learning Disabled (SLD) was selected and adapted for a handbook. The handbook was designed with activities in the areas of reading, mathematics, and written language for parents to use with their children at home. It is to be used by parents of SLD children in primary grades in the Selah School District.

The activities selected in the following handbook were designed to strengthen and reinforce skills being taught at school. These activities are directly related to objectives written on the Individual Education Program. The following sample objectives were used as a guideline when selecting appropriate activities:

READING:

1. S will recite ABC's with 100% accuracy.
2. S will name upper case letters.
3. S will name lower case letters.
4. S will match upper to lower case letters.
5. S will give sound when shown letter of letter combinations (see Appendix A).
6. S will read selected color words (see Appendix A).
7. S will read selected number words (see Appendix A).
8. S will read days of the week (see Appendix A).
9. S will read common signs (see Appendix A).
10. S will read months (see Appendix A).
11. S will read selected sight words (see Appendix A).
12. When reading a story at _____ grade level, S will be able to correctly answer 5 comprehension questions.

MATH:

1. S will rote count to _____.
2. S will count objects to _____ using ordinal numbers.
3. S will count by (2s, 5s, 10s) to 100.
4. S will match/point to/name geometric sets.
5. S will match sets of objects 0-10.
6. S will name numbers (0-____).
7. S will legibly write numbers to _____.
8. S will recite/point to/name days of the week.
9. ~~S will recite/point to/name days of the week.~~

10. S will identify date and days of week using a calendar.

11. S will tell time to hr/1/2/15 minutes/5 minutes/1 minute.

12. S will name/identify value of penny, nickel, dime, quarter, half-dollar, dollar.

13. S will count money to \$1.00/\$5.00/\$10.00.

14. S will compute addition facts (0-9) (10-18).

15. S will compute subtraction facts (0-9) (10-18).

WRITTEN LANGUAGE:

1. S will trace/copy geometric shapes.

2. S will legibly trace/copy first and last name.

3. S will legibly write first/last name from memory.

4. S will copy name/address/phone number.

5. S will write name/address/phone number from memory.

6. S will legibly write lower case letters when dictated randomly.

7. S will legibly write upper case letters when dictated randomly.

8. S will write lower/upper case letters from memory.

9. S will write letters/letter combinations of consonants/short vowels/blends/digraphs (see Appendix A).

10. S will spell words from regular class spelling workbook.

11. S will spell _____ words from the first 100 selected Atlantic/Pacific sight word list (see Appendix A).

12. S will copy/write sentences dictated by T using correct letter formations, spacing, capital, and punctuation.

The activities chosen were based on certain criteria. The first of these criteria was to use activities that encouraged the child to do a lot of talking and the parent to do less talking. This provides the child with the opportunity to tell about things, to give some reasons for what she/he is doing, and to ask questions. This will provide activities that emphasize the child's learning and avoids parent intrusion into the child's thinking and doing.

Another criteria for a good home learning activity is that directions for the task must be stated clearly enough for the parent to understand what is to be taught and for the child to know what is to be learned. These directions are straight forward and with a brief written format. The format includes the academic area for which the activity is designed, why it is considered important for the child, how it can be taught by the parents, what materials are needed for the activity, and ways in which the skills gained from this particular task can be expanded upon and extended. If materials are needed for the task, whenever possible, these are materials readily found in the home.

Throughout the handbook, the emphasis is that the most important consideration for a good home learning activity is that the parent and child have fun doing the activity and that each one believes what they are doing together is worthwhile.

CHAPTER IV
THE PROJECT

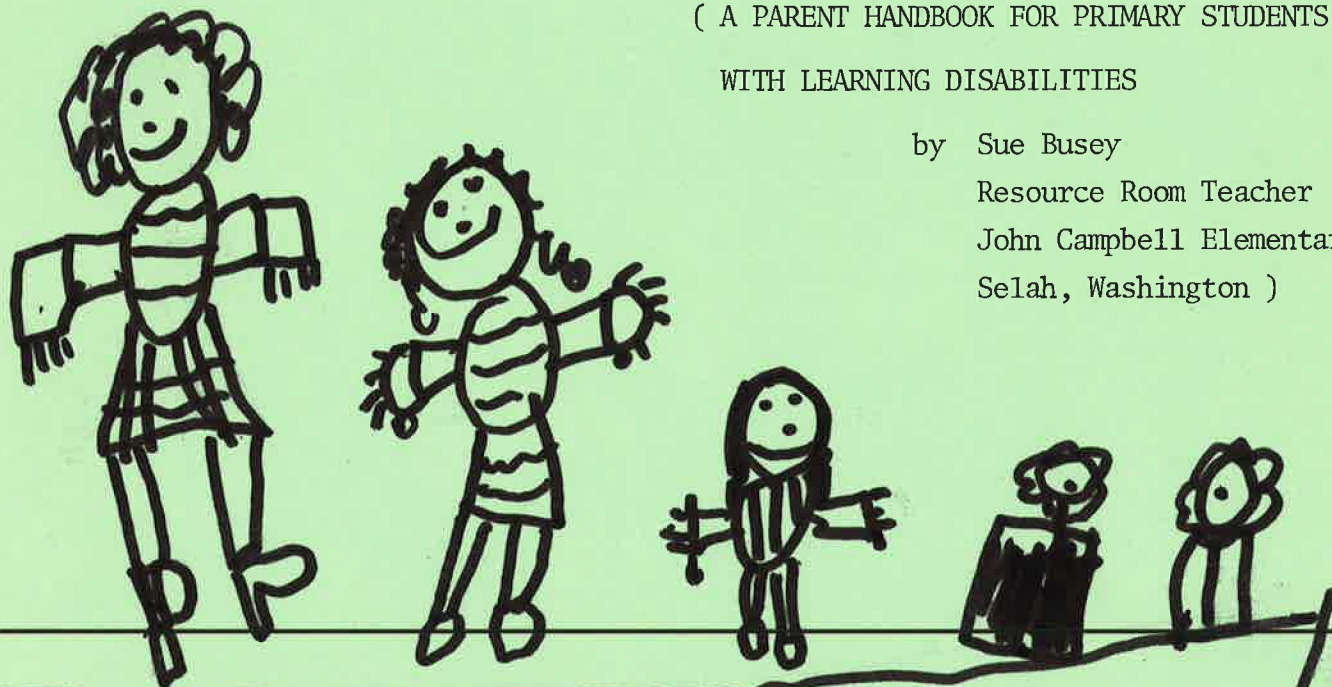
Chapter IV is the project "Parent Guide." It is paginated as a separate entity. Chapter V will continue on page 23.

Parent

Guide

(A PARENT HANDBOOK FOR PRIMARY STUDENTS
WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

by Sue Busey
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GENERAL INFORMATION

Your child has been identified as having a specific learning disability. Among the first questions that parents ask are, "What does it mean?" and "How can we help at home?" This handbook, hopefully, will help to answer these questions.

Having a learning disability does not mean that your child is not able to learn. Rather, a learning disabled child will learn in different ways. Both parents and teachers want and need to know more about how a child interacts with his environment, how such a student learns, and what teaching techniques are most effective.

Much research has been done concerning the learning disabled child. Some generalizations can be made:

1. A learning disabled child has average or at least near-average overall ability (intelligence).
2. The quality of work that the student produces in the areas of reading, math, and/or written language is much lower than could be expected from a child of comparable ability level and age.
3. There are no other sensory or physical problems present. That is, the child is not blind or hard of hearing.
4. The learning problems that appear in the classroom are not primarily due to emotional disturbances. A learning

disabled child may, however, show emotional problems because of failure and frustrations experienced in school learning.

5. Children with learning disabilities have difficulty learning from traditional group instruction. They typically learn more in a classroom or with a teacher who is able to individualize according to the needs of the child.

6. Parent involvement at home, practicing and reinforcing skills taught at school, is effective in increasing student achievement.

Learning disabled children exhibit some characteristics that are very different from each other. There are many problems that such a child may show, although this is not evident in all cases. Some students are overactive and have trouble staying in their chairs or attending to a task for any length of time. Others may sit for long periods of time, not moving at all. Some are very graceful or athletic, while others trip over their own feet. Some seem to take in information better with their eyes, while others may learn better when they hear more than they see. Intensive repetition may be very important for some learning disabled children. Material or skills which seem at first too difficult, may be mastered with more exposure, more opportunity to practice. It seems to take some children longer to learn a skill to the point where it becomes automatic. This may be true for learning a sequence of sounds (telephone numbers, spelling words, etc.), or a series of movements (tying a shoelace). Most children,

especially those with learning disabilities, learn best through a combination of seeing, hearing, and touching-- rather than sitting back passively and being told or shown something. It may be because touching and handling makes things less abstract; it may be because the impulses from the muscles to the brain facilitate the learning process. Moreover, there are some experiences that can only be learned through movement. Children may not easily understand the words: light, heavy, rough, smooth, near, far, high, low, under, and over, if they have not had real experiences that make these words meaningful.

Children learn better if the material or the situation has some kind of emotional impact. If it is exciting or fun, it is learned with much less effort. Children also learn a tremendous amount at home from other children and from their parents. Home learning activities can be accomplished as a game together with the family or just on a one-to-one basis. When helping a child at home, the time should be viewed as fun, as a game, or some special time with mom or dad rather than a work assignment. If the child feels pushed and starts to resent a given task, it becomes very difficult to teach that skill. Another danger to avoid is overdoing it. A child who is worked with for only 5 or 10 minutes per day may learn more than if s/he were forced to sit down and study most of the evening. Young children especially need time to play and engage in activities of their own choosing. On the other hand, if a child should

initiate a certain game or activity, or does not want to stop, by all means, continue.

It is important to realize that learning disabled children learn differently in some important ways, and that more time, more activities, and more help may be needed to teach certain skills. For that reason, it is essential that both the school and the family work together. At school, the child has been tested and observed to find out how s/he best takes in information and how this information is processed into learning. On the basis of these results, teachers in the special education classrooms, will be able to adjust their program so that the child can best be served. Such programs are designed to meet the specific needs of the learning disabled child and are highly individualized. In the special education classroom, the child will be working, to a great extent, either on a one-to-one basis with the teacher or aide or s/he will be working in a small group, with maybe two, three, or four other students who work in similar ways. The special education program may employ more than one sense at a time in an activity; that is, both touching and hearing and possibly vision may be combined in one exercise of learning a letter sound. The child may trace the letter on paper, look at it with the eyes and say the name and sound aloud. For other children within the classroom, just looking at the letter and saying the sound without writing it may work better. Another group may use writing as the primary way of

learning the letters. Each child's needs are different. Materials and activities that work with one child may not produce the same results with another child. There is no one method nor material that works well for all learning disabled students.

The school, in particular the special education classroom, will provide corrective measures and activities to help the learning disabled child. The goals and objectives are specifically outlined on the Individualized Education Program (IEP). There are many activities that parents can do at home that directly relate to the skills that the child is working on in school.

The following sections contain information and specific activities designed to be used by parents at home. All information and activities relate primarily to the academic goal areas of Reading, Math, and Written Language.

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Reading

Activities

The

Tree

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CLOCK Poison

FOUNDATIONS FOR READING

1. Language Development - the basis of all learning.
 - a. Talk to your children from the moment they are born. Speak clearly and expect them to do the same. When you are doing something--cooking or fixing the car--remember to talk it as you do it.
 - b. Listen to your children. Good talkers make good readers, and it's great to know someone cares enough to pay attention.
 - c. Make sure a child is read to for at least 15 minutes a day from the time s/he is a few months old. The time you make for togetherness will last a lifetime.
 - d. Play word games and use new words. The librarian can direct you to lots of books to help you with this.
2. Coordination and Muscle Development - needed in all school tasks.
 - a. Use large muscles by providing opportunities to run and jump, hop, and catch balls.
 - b. Use small muscles by cutting, pasting, drawing, and painting, and working with puzzles.
 - c. Coordinate hand and eye by stringing beads, building with blocks, sorting objects and letters. Be

Constantly aware of encouraging left-to-right direction, which is very difficult for some children.

3. Real World Experiences - Reading means more if you can back it up with memory pictures from the world around you. Make your child aware of his/her own world.
 - a. Visit zoos, museums, and libraries.
 - b. Visit airports, parks, and fishing docks.
 - c. Visit fire stations, factories, and farms.
 - d. Encourage collecting and find a place for those shells, rocks, stamps, and bugs.
4. Good Health
 - a. Keep your child well fed and well rested.
 - b. Get a vision and hearing check if you suspect any problems.
5. Self-esteem and Confidence - have much to do with learning.
 - a. Nobody is good at everything. If school is especially difficult, find the things a child likes to do and give him/her lots of chances to do them.
 - b. Laugh at your own mistakes and help your child laugh at his/hers.

GUIDELINES FOR READING ALOUD

You may have tangible wealth untold;
Caskets of jewels and coffers of gold,
But richer than I you can never be . . .
I had a mother who read to me.

("The Reading Mother" by Strickland Gillilan)

Why Read Aloud?

1. If there is one single thing that helps a child become a better reader, it is being read to regularly from infancy to adolescence. Research shows time after time that this makes for better comprehension, vocabulary, writing, and speaking.
2. Reading aloud awakens children's imaginations, improves their language skills, and creates a thirst for knowledge, entertainment, and enjoyment.
3. The gift of reading and the love of books is something that must be passed on from one generation to another.
4. The closeness that comes when a parent reads to a child helps strengthen the child's sense of security, which, in turn, contributes greatly to the later development of independence.

How to Read Aloud:

1. Set aside a regular time each day.

2. Sit together comfortably. The warmth and security of your nearness makes it a happy, shared experience. And the child can then follow along easily.
3. Make it fun. Read along slowly, with expression.
4. Get your child involved in the story. Have your child:
 - a. turn the pages
 - b. point to objects in the pictures
 - c. repeat catchy words and phrases
 - d. talk about what happened and why
 - e. describe a favorite part or character
 - f. point to certain words
 - g. tell what they liked best in the story and why
 - h. tell what happened in his/her own words
5. Read only as long as your child enjoys listening.
6. Connect the book to your child's life, so the events and ideas become more meaningful and personal.
7. Encourage and respect your child's own interpretations.

What to Read Aloud:

1. Children love books about things they know, things that touch them personally. Be sure to choose books that are meaningful to your child.
2. Vary what you read so your child learns about new things, gains new understandings, and discovers that each book has something fresh and interesting to say.

3. Read all kinds of stories: funny, sad, mystery, adventure, animal, fantasy, and fairy tales.
4. Include plenty of poems.
5. Include nonfiction writing that gives information.
Read stories about real-life people.

SUGGESTED BOOK LIST FOR PRIMARY GRADES

Great to Read Aloud:

Aardema--Why Mosquitos Buzz in People's Ears

Bate--Little Rabbit's Loose Tooth

Bemelmans--Madeline's Rescue

Berstein--The First Morning

Bodecker--It's Raining Said John Twainig

Brown--The Runaway Bunny

Burningham--Mr. Gumpy's Outing

Burton--The Little House

Cleary--Ramona the Pest, and others

Calhoun--Cross Country Cat

Cosgrove--Serendipity, and others

dePaola--Strega Nona

DeRegniers--May I Bring a Friend?

Emberly--Drummer Hoff

Flack--Angus and the Ducks

Gag--Millions of Cats

Galdone--The Little Red Hen

Goble--The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses

Haas--The Maggie B

Hoban--Bedtime for Frances, and others

Horwitz--When the Sky Is Like Lace

Keats--Pet Show

Kellogg--Can I Keep Him?
Kraus--Whose Mouse Are You?
Lionni--Swimmy
Lobel--The Great Blueness
McCloskey--Make Way for Ducklings
McDermott--Anansi the Spider
McPhail--The Bear's Toothache
Maestro--A Wise Monkey Tale
Marshall--George and Martha
Mosel--The Funny Little Woman
Mother Goose
Nakatani--My Day on the Farm
Parish--Good Work, Amelia Bedilia, and others
Peet--Kermit the Hermit, and others
Potter--Tale of Peter Rabbit
Rayner--Mr. and Mrs. Pig's Evening Out
Rey--Curious George
Rice--New Blue Shoes
Rockwell--The Dancing Stars
Sendak--Where the Wild Things Are
Seuss--Horton the Elephant, and others
Steig--Silvester and the Magic Pebble
Viorst--I'll Fix Anthony
Ward--The Biggest Bear
Warner--The Boxcar Children
Wildsmith--The Little Wood Duck

Nursery Rhymes and Poetry

Cole--Oh, What Nonsense!

Fisher--A Cricket in a Thicket

Langner--Hi Diddle Diddle, A Book of Nursery Rhymes

McCord--Far and Few

Watson--Father Fox's Pennyrhymes

Picture Books and Easy Readers

Bonsall--The Case of the Cat's Meow

Bridwell--Clifford the Big Red Dog

Bright--Georgie

Brown--Goodnight Moon

Hoff--Danny and the Dinosaur

Lobel--Frog and Toad Are Friends

Keats--The Snowy Day

Mayer--There's a Nightmare in My Closet

Raskin--Ghost in a Four-Room Apartment

Rojankovsky--Animals in the Zoo

Slobockins--Caps for Sale

Ungerer--Crictor

Viorst--Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good,
Very Bad Day

Facts and Fun Books

Bridwell--How to Care for Your Monster

Lawson--Ben and Me

Leach--Riddle Me, Riddle Me, Ree

Merriam--Mummies at Work

Schwartz--Tomfoolery, Trickery and Foolery With Words

Peters--How to Write Codes and Send Secret Messages

Selsam--Sea Monsters of Long Ago

Wyles--Magic Secrets

READING ACTIVITIES

- ACTIVITY: Cross It Out
- OBJECTIVE: To identify letter names
- MATERIALS: Newspaper, old magazines, cereal boxes, etc.
Marking pen.
- PROCEDURE: Give the child a section of newspaper and the pen and have him cross out all the "Bs" he can find. Check to see that all letters were found or that the correct letters were crossed out. Identify a letter first if the child is not sure what it looks like.
- COMMENTS: Have the child use different colored pens to make checking easier.
- Have the child circle all the words he can read and then read them to you.
- Have the child cross out certain words. (See word lists from school)
-

- ACTIVITY: Word and Letter Recognition
- OBJECTIVE: To identify letter names and sounds; to read selected words

- MATERIALS:** Round pieces of cardboard (pizza size), clothespins, pictures from magazines, glue, pens, word list from school.
- PROCEDURE:** Cut out and paste pictures around rims of cardboard. On clothespins write words (or beginning sound) for pictures. Child reads the clothespin (or beginning letter sound) and clips it to the correct picture.
- COMMENTS:** Use upper case letters on the cardboard and match with lower case letters on clothespins. Words could also be printed on the cardboard next to the picture to make the task easier.
-

- ACTIVITY:** Sequencing Pictures
- OBJECTIVE:** To arrange pictures that tell a story in sequence
- MATERIALS:** Three pictures cut from an old story book, magazine, or comics. (One beginning, one middle, and one ending picture pasted on squares of cardboard.)
- PROCEDURE:** Talk about stories--how they have a beginning, middle, and end. Place the pictures in order and tell a story as the child studies the pictures. Then shuffle the pictures.

Encourage the child to arrange the pictures in

order. If necessary ask, "What happened first?" "What happened next?" "What happened last?"

COMMENTS: Have the child make up a story to match the pictures.

Increase the number of pictures as skill increases.

ACTIVITY: Let's Make a Book

OBJECTIVE: To develop reading vocabulary

MATERIALS: Paper, magazines, crayons, glue, scissors, hole punch, yarn, word lists from school

PROCEDURE: Using word list from school (common signs, color words, sight word, etc.) draw or have the child draw, or cut out pictures that show the meaning of the word. Paste on paper, one per page, then string together with yarn. Go through the pictures together, read the word, then read the words from the list.

COMMENTS: Make one book for each list--review them often. Point out real-life examples of the words (in the grocery store, in the care, around the house).

ACTIVITY: Matching Letters Names and Symbols

OBJECTIVE: To match the names of the letters with the correct symbol

MATERIALS: Large, colored pipe cleaners

PROCEDURE: Twist the pipe cleaners into the shapes of the letters of the alphabet. If the child is able, let him help. Have the child trace each letter with his finger and identify it.

COMMENTS: It may be easier for the child to manipulate the letters if they are glued onto a piece of paper.

Have the child name the letters that you point to.

Make two sets--one for upper case and one for lower case.

ACTIVITY: Identifying Sounds

OBJECTIVE: To identify the beginning sounds of household objects

MATERIALS: Common household items such as a pan, fork, lid, rolling pin, etc.

PROCEDURE: Place various items on a table in front of the child. Ask the child to name the items. Then ask him which item begins with the "p" sound, the "l" sound, and so forth.

COMMENTS: Have the child tell what letter name the item begins with.

Have the child give the ending sound or letter name.

Have the child give a rhyming word for the item (pan-man).

Have the child slowly say all the sounds in the item, then say it fast (p--a--n--pan).

ACTIVITY: Clothespin Colors

OBJECTIVE: To read selected color words and match to corresponding color

MATERIALS: Wooden clothespins, 2 x 2 inch paper, felt pens or crayons

PROCEDURE: Write a color word on each clothespin. Mark each piece of paper with a certain color. Have the child clip the clothespin to the piece of paper that is the same color as the word.

COMMENTS: If the child has difficulty reading the color words, provide him/her with a chart that has the color words and color together.

Have the child clip the clothespin on various objects around the house that match the word.

ACTIVITY: Identifying Letter Names

OBJECTIVE: To name letters of the alphabet

MATERIALS: Sandpaper, construction paper, glue

PROCEDURE: Cut out letters to be learned on sandpaper, glue to construction paper. Have the child trace the letter with his/her finger and say the letter name.

COMMENTS: Have the child give you the letter you ask for, or point to the letter you name, or name the letter you point to.

Have the child match upper case letters to lower case letters.

Have the child put the letters in ABC order.

$$3 + 2 = 5$$

$$1 + 1 = 2$$

$$\begin{array}{r} +6 \\ 4 \\ \hline 10 \end{array}$$

Math

Activities

$$\begin{array}{r} 1 \\ +3 \\ \hline 4 \end{array}$$

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

$$8 - 4 = 4$$

5¢

25¢

$$\begin{array}{r} -26 \\ 14 \\ \hline 12 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{r} -4 \\ 2 \\ \hline 2 \end{array}$$

MATH ACTIVITIES

- ACTIVITY: Awareness of Time and Days of the Week
- OBJECTIVE: To help give the child an awareness of the passage of time and learn the days of the week, months of the year.
- MATERIALS: Calendar with large numbers
- PROCEDURE: Hang the calendar in a place where it will be seen many times during the day. Each morning discuss the name of the day, the name of the month, how many days have gone by, how many are left, point to the day it is today, etc.
- COMMENTS: Have the child point to the day of the week you name.
- Play "What comes after . . . Monday?" "What comes before . . . Friday?"
- Plan a special day and let the child mark off the days.
-

- ACTIVITY: Counting and Matching
- OBJECTIVE: To give the child practice in counting and matching colors
- MATERIALS: Egg carton, dry macaroni, marking pens
-

PROCEDURE: Write the numerals 1-12 in the bottom of the divided sections of an egg carton. Use a different colored numeral for each section. Color macaroni with the same colors used for the markings. Have the child sort the macaroni by number and color. For example, if the number 3 is red, then the 3 red macaroni go in that space. This activity is self-correcting as there is just enough macaroni to put in each section of the egg carton.

COMMENTS: Use higher numbers depending on the skill level of the child.

Use two colors in each section--talk about the combinations.

ACTIVITY: Naming Basic Shapes

OBJECTIVE: To be able to name the shapes--circle, square, triangle, rectangle, diamond

MATERIALS: Construction paper shapes that are big enough for the child to stand on. Make all shapes the same color.

PROCEDURE: Place two shapes on the floor, telling the child their names. Have the child stand on the circle, etc. Add other shapes one at a time.

Ask the child to tell you what the name of the shape is.

COMMENTS: Make two or more of each shape and have a friend play.

Play Simon Says using the shapes.

Have the child name the shapes as you stand on them.

ACTIVITY: Bean Counting

OBJECTIVE: To count sets from 1-10

MATERIALS: Beans (or any small objects), paper cups, felt pen

PROCEDURE: Label the cups from 1 to 10. Child puts in the correct number of objects in each cup.

COMMENTS: For added interest use raisins, miniature marshmallows, or peanuts.

Use higher numbers as skills increase.

Do the activity for the child, but make a mistake. Have the child check your work and find your mistake.

ACTIVITY: Domino Cards

OBJECTIVE: To match objects and number words

MATERIALS: Ten sheets of white paper, black paper to make dots out of, pens, ten strips of paper with number words written on them, glue

PROCEDURE: Cut circles out of black paper, glue onto white paper in Domino fashion. Write number words one to ten on paper strip. Child matches the number word to the correct Domino.

COMMENTS: Have the child put the number words in order from one to ten.

Have him label items in the house with the number words (four chairs, one T.V., etc.)

ACTIVITY: Match and Clip

OBJECTIVE: To count sets, read numbers and number words through ten

MATERIALS: Two pizza wheels (cardboard), clothespins, pictures (May be hand-drawn), felt pens

PROCEDURES: On outside rim of pizza wheel, glue or draw sets of objects 1-10. Place these in random order. Label 10 clothespins with the numbers 1 through 10 and label 10 other clothespins with the number words. On one wheel the child matches the pictures and the numbers, on the other wheel the child matches the pictures and the number word.

COMMENTS: Use higher numbers as skills increase.

Have the child find the mistake that you make on the wheel. Have the child arrange the clothespins in order 1-10.

- ACTIVITY: Number Writing
- OBJECTIVE: To write numbers legibly
- MATERIALS: Pie pan (or paper plate), honey (or maple syrup, chocolate syrup)
- PROCEDURE: Pour a small amount of honey in the bottom of the pie pan so that it lightly covers it. Have the child write the number with his finger. As he writes the number he is to slowly say the number. Child may lick his finger if task is done correctly.
- COMMENTS: Begin this activity by having the child copy the number.
- Watch carefully for formation (see formation sheet).
- Use higher numbers as skill level increases.
-

- ACTIVITY: Counting Money
- OBJECTIVE: To count coins
- MATERIALS: Play money (or real money), paper cups, felt pens
- PROCEDURE: For beginning money skills, write value on the cup (5¢, 1¢, etc.) and have child sort coins into the correct cups. Also use the decimal forms (.05, .10, .25, etc.). Place a certain value on the cup (17¢, .07, etc.) and have the child put that amount into the cup.

COMMENTS: Using real money will make the activity more meaningful.

Be sure to also use the names of the coins interchangeably (25¢ or quarter).

Discuss the fronts and backs of coins.

ACTIVITY: Telling Time

OBJECTIVE: To tell time to the hour, $\frac{1}{2}$ hour, 15 min., etc.

MATERIALS: Clocks around the house (digital and with hands), paper plate, paper to make hands, pen

PROCEDURE: Talk about clocks and their importance. Use time in giving information to your child ("We will eat at 6:30"). Make a clock using a paper plate. Have the child set the hands to show a specific time.

COMMENTS: Use minutes as skills increase.
Set the clock and have the child read the time.
Practice writing the time that the clock says.

ACTIVITY: Dice Throw

OBJECTIVE: To compute addition facts

MATERIALS: Dice, paper, pencil

PROCEDURE: Child throws the dice, writes the equation (adding the two dice together), solves the problem.

COMMENTS: Beginning students may use dice as a form of number recognition (count the dots--write the number).

Make dice to show larger numbers.

Use three dice or more as skills increase.

ACTIVITY: Story Problems

OBJECTIVE: Addition and subtraction facts

MATERIALS: Picture from a magazine, small counters (edible are best), glue, firm paper, paper and pencil

PROCEDURE: Cut out a scenery type picture, glue it to firm paper for more stability. As a story problem is told to the child, he adds or subtracts the counters as need be. For example, two fish were swimming in the lake (child puts two peanuts on the picture of a lake), three more fish joined them (child adds three more peanuts). How many fish are there in the lake? (Child counts and answers).

COMMENTS: Use M & Ms, raisins, chocolate chips, fish crackers, etc.

Have the child write the equation as he creates it.

Have the child make up the story problem.

Use addition and subtraction problems

Use a variety of scenes--farm, beach, sky,
etc.

- ACTIVITY: Unscrambled Math
- OBJECTIVE: Addition and Subtraction facts
- MATERIALS: Paper for flashcards, pen
- PROCEDURE: Make up a set of flashcards (0-9, or 0-18 depending on the child's level). Write facts and answers on the cards, then cut off the answers, using a different zigzag pattern for each card. Child puts correct answer to each fact, making sure shapes match.
- COMMENTS: Use flashcards to increase speed. Time how fast the child can answer, next time see if he can beat his time.

go

Dog

Look

Written

it

Language

activities

Big

a b c d e f g h i j k l m
n o p q r s t u v w x y z

WRITTEN LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

- ACTIVITY:** Tracing Patterns
- OBJECTIVE:** To trace geometric shapes
- MATERIALS:** Short lengths of different colored yarn
(about 12 to 18 inches)
- PROCEDURE:** Begin by laying three pieces of yarn on the floor in overlapping patterns. Have the child trace with his finger one color yarn (make sure it is the hand he writes with). He should trace from one end to the other without stopping or going onto another color. Form shapes (such as, circle, square, etc.) and have the child trace these as he says the name of the shape.
- COMMENTS:** Form letters for the child to trace.
Try the activity with three pieces of yarn the same color, or with more than three pieces.
-

- ACTIVITY:** Letter Writing
- OBJECTIVE:** To write letters legibly
- MATERIALS:** Pie pan or paper plate, honey or other syrup
- PROCEDURE:** Pour a small amount of honey in the pan so that it lightly covers the bottom. Have the child

write the letter you say with his finger. As he writes the letter he should say the name of the letter. Child can lick his finger if he is correct.

COMMENTS: Child may need to copy the letters if he is not sure.

Give the sound and have the child write the letter (and vice versa).

Watch formation of letters.

Practice spelling words this way for variety.

ACTIVITY: Personal Postcards

OBJECTIVE: To write name/address/phone number

MATERIALS: Postcard, pencil/pen

PROCEDURE: Provide various opportunities for the child to practice writing his name, address, and phone number. When the child can do this correctly, have him print this information on the back of a postcard. Let him decorate the card. Then, mail the card to his home.

COMMENTS: Draw lines to help child keep information straight.

Practice writing the information in very small letters (like what will be required on the postcard).

- ACTIVITY: Dotted Data
- OBJECTIVE: To write first/last name legibly
- MATERIALS: Lined primary paper, clear contact paper, crayon or water-based pen
- PROCEDURE: Prepare a worksheet for the child by writing the child's first and last name with dotted lines. Cover the worksheet with the clear contact paper. Child is to trace the letters with his finger, then with the crayon or pen. The child should then write his name independently.
- COMMENTS: Check formation of letters as the child traces. As the child progresses, add address, and phone number. Use as a way to practice spelling words from class.
-

- ACTIVITY: Sequencing Letters in Spelling Words
- OBJECTIVE: To spell selected sight words from class
- MATERIALS: Many pieces of 2 x 2 inch paper, piece of paper for each spelling word (2 x 5 inch), pen, spelling list from school, envelopes
- PROCEDURE: Using the spelling list from school, write one word on each strip of 2 x 5 inch paper, write individual letters for each word on the small pieces, place the letters in an envelope with

the spelling word. The child reads each spelling word, puts the individual letters in the correct order, spells the word while looking at it, spells the word without looking. Then the child proceeds to the next word.

COMMENTS: Have the child write the spelling word after he has put the letters in the correct order. Give a spelling test (written) as practice.

ACTIVITY: Carbon Copy

OBJECTIVE: To trace/write letters of the alphabet legibly

MATERIALS: Paper on which selected letters are printed (provided by classroom teacher), sheet of carbon paper, blank pieces of paper, pencil

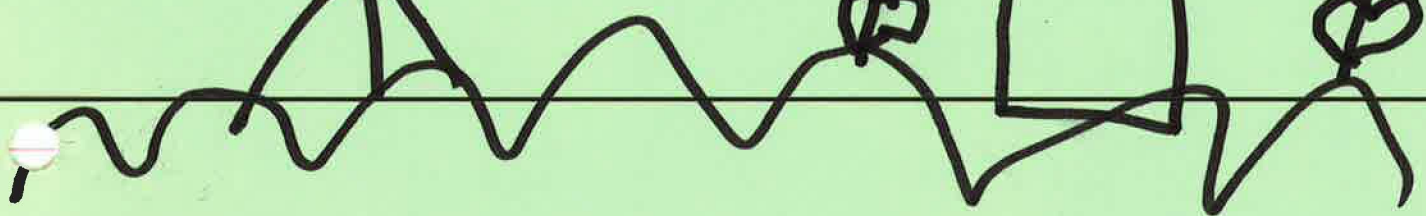
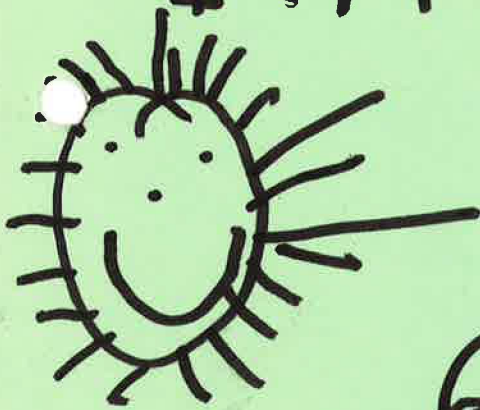
PROCEDURE: Show the child the correct order in which the sheets must be placed to make a carbon copy on the blank sheet. Demonstrate by tracing the letters. Have the child trace the letters. Then show him the carbon copy he made and have him trace his own paper.

COMMENTS: Do only a few letters at a time so the child does not get bored. Dictate the letters he has traced and have him print them without tracing.

Have the child say the letter name and/or sound as he traces.

Miscellaneous

Information



MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Desirable Teaching Behaviors

1. Explain what is going to happen before you start. If children have an idea of what is expected before they start, they learn to think about what they are doing.
2. Give time to look at the material before starting work. If they become familiar with the materials first, they will learn to think about what they are doing.
3. Ask questions that have more than one right answer. If children see more than one point of view, they learn to be open to ideas.
4. Ask questions that require more than one or two words to answer. If children learn to give more than a "yes" or "no" answer, they learn to think their answers through.
5. Encourage children to talk about their answers. If children talk about their answers, they learn to think more deeply about things.
6. Encourage children to ask questions. If you let children ask questions, they learn to be curious.
7. Give time to think about a problem. If children are given time to think, they learn to think for themselves.
8. Encourage children to back up their answers with facts and evidence. If children can explain how they got

an answer, they have learned to find the correct answer without guessing.

9. Praise children when they do well. If children hear from you how well they are doing, they learn to feel good about themselves.

10. Let children know when their answers are wrong, but do it in a loving way. If children see the difference between right and wrong, they learn to keep working until they find the right answer.

Kitchen Activities

Many learning activities can take place in the kitchen. The kitchen with its association of food and fellowship, has natural attractions for children. Although every parent knows that it is much easier to get the work done without the kids around, there are tremendous dividends to be had in letting them pitch in and help. For example, the kitchen is an ideal place to help a child develop the skills needed in writing, that is, flexible finger movements, a range of hand movements, and the ability to distinguish between the right side and the left side of the body by learning to use each differently.

Using a rolling pin is a good two-handed activity. The child can use the rolling pin to crush graham crackers in a paper bag, and make graham cracker crust. With rolled dough, cookie cutters can be used for cutting out circles, squares, and triangles. This is an excellent lesson in

learning shapes; and when the cookies can be eaten later, the motivation is increased.

A variety of different movements can be experienced in the kitchen. Hulling strawberries, snapping beans, peeling potatoes and carrots (with a potato peeler), beating eggs with an egg beater, stirring and beating with a spoon, turning the handle of a meat grinder, grating cheese, and pouring liquids are a few of the actions in which the child can participate. Many children never get a chance to do these things. In trying to judge the independence of a child, parents are often asked if s/he can get a glass of milk independently. "No, we don't let him because he always spills it," is a common reply. Some of these skills have to be taught systematically. If pouring milk is a chronic problem, work on the pouring motion itself. Let the child pour split peas or rice from one container to another; or to make it more interesting, chocolate chips or miniature marshmallows. (The incentive can be that they get to eat the ones that aren't spilled). Then they can progress to liquids. Water is easily available and is easy to clean up, if spilled.

The kitchen setting is a fine place for language training. If new experiences are introduced, children should be taught the words for them. The value of this does not lie in learning the technical vocabulary of the kitchen, but in the chance to see how language is differentiated. This helps sharpen perception. In some ways it is like

learning a foreign language. Some people believe that to learn alternate ways of saying things, and to be able to recognize which situations call for which ways of saying them, increases the child's intelligence. Words such as hulling, dicing, chopping, slicing, beating, are good ones to teach in conjunction with an activity. First teach the action, then the word.

The kitchen is the logical place for experiencing and learning the words: hard, soft, greasy, sticky, clean, dirty, liquid, powder, hot, cold, lukewarm, cool. There is an opportunity to heighten both the visual (what the child takes in through his/her eyes) and the auditory (hearing) senses as well as to stimulate the senses of taste and smell. Teach words like sweet, sour, salty, bitter by having the child close his/her eyes and taste various spices or food items.

Developing awareness of sequence, order, and system can be done in the kitchen through cooking. Teach a recipe. Start with a simple one. Divide it into steps. Make sure each step is clearly understood. Then introduce them in order--step 1, step 2, step 3--demonstrate the importance of doing them in order. Then encourage the child to do them independently. Very young children can be taught to make homemade soup, fudge, cookies, and scrambled eggs.

Games

GAME	SKILL	AGES
Perfection	Eye/Hand Coordination	5 to adult
Concentration	Math and Visual Memory	7 to adult
Spill and Spell	Spelling	8 to adult
Game of the States	Language/Memory	6 to jr. hi.
United States Puzzle	Language/Memory	6 to jr. hi.
Password	Language Skills	8 to adult
Multi Rollaway	Visual Motor	6 to jr. hi.
Scan	Visual Skills	6 to jr. hi.
Memory Game	Visual Memory	6 to jr. hi.
World Map Puzzle	Language/Memory	6 to jr. hi.
Etch-a-Sketch	Eye/Hand Coordination	5 to jr. hi.
Space Probe	Eye/Hand Coordination	6 to jr. hi.
Barrel of Monkeys	Eye/Hand Coordination	6 to jr. hi.
Stratego	Logic and Reasoning	7 to jr. hi.
Scribbage	Spelling and Reading	8 to jr. hi.
Scrabble	Reading, Spelling, Math	8 to adult
Trionimos	Math	7 to adult
Battleship	Logic and Reasoning	7 to adult
Connect Four	Logic/Visual Skills	7 to adult
Chess	Logic and Reasoning	7 to adult
Monopoly	Math, Reading	all
Probe	Reading, Spelling	7 to jr. hi.
Tinker Toys	Eye/Hand Coordination	6 to 12
Checkers	Concentration, Reasoning	6 to adult
Dominos	Math, Visual Skills	6 to jr. hi.

GAME	SKILL	AGES
Uno	Math, Colors, Reasoning	6 to adult
Candy Land	Color Recognition	4 to 10
Chutes and Ladders	Color Recognition	4 to 10
Bingo	Number Recognition	6 to adult
Pick-up Sticks	Fine Motor	6 to 12
Wheel of Fortune	Spelling	8 to adult

Positive Discipline

Suggestions for Parents:

1. Try to put together a message about how you are experiencing the situation--called an "I-message." Include the behavior that bothers you, the effect that behavior has on you, and how you feel about it. Deliver your "I-message" to the person you wrote it to. Watch to see if there is any change in the behavior.

2. Practice starting sentences with "I feel . . . I like . . . I need . . ." "I would appreciate it if you would . . ." Encourage family members to do the same when they express themselves to you, learn to listen with caring and concern, and try to openly acknowledge the feelings they are expressing without becoming defensive and judgmental.

3. Plan for weekly family meetings during which each member is given a chance to discuss his concerns and problems.

4. Practice the art of silence the next time your children argue, say nothing (unless you must intervene to protect one child's safety!). If necessary, become involved

in something else--read the newspaper or leave the room. Keep a notebook handy and give yourself a mark for each time you remember. Record what happens next when the children bicker. If necessary, separate the children--but do not take sides or become involved in any way.

5. Offer limited choices. "You may wear either this dress or that one." Then stick to it. Treat arguments, complaints, and rebuttals with silence. (If the child actually defies you and starts to put on pants, calmly remove them, put them away, and remind her that she must choose between the two dresses.)

6. Practice telling your child only once what you expect. Do not repeat yourself. Walk away. Act as if she will obey. "Go ahead and choose one then come to my room so I can help you button up." (Make sure your child does not have a hearing problem and keep the direction simple and direct.)

7. Prepare the child ahead of time for any changes in the schedule. "In 5 minutes it will be time to clean up." "We are going to Aunt Margaret's for dinner tomorrow."

8. Practice rewarding the child for appropriate behavior. "It makes me happy to see how nicely you two have been playing together. I have time to play a game of cards with you now, because I have been able to get all of my work done faster than usual." Hug your child in public when s/he is sitting quietly and not disturbing anyone.

9. If you consider your child's behavior to be dangerous, destructive, self-defeating, or embarrassing to you, stop it immediately--with as little reinforcement as possible.

10. If the child persists in being negative, try "timeout." Remove the child from the situation temporarily, and have him sit in a certain chair or go to a specified place until he is quiet and ready to cooperate. Later, when all has calmed down, explain to the child why you could not allow him to continue to behave in dangerous, destructive, or self-defeating ways. Help him to see his mistakes. Assure him that we all make mistakes, and that you want to help him learn from his mistakes and not to repeat them.

11. If you decide that you would like to try to stop spanking, talk with your child about it. Tell him why you have been spanking (e.g., because you thought it was necessary), and why you are going to try to stop (e.g., because you feel there are better ways to teach him what he needs to learn). Depending on the age and ability of the child, ask him how he feels about discipline. What helps him to behave? How does he feel when he is spanked?

Decide ahead of time what you are going to do the next time misbehavior occurs. Have a plan of action--a substitute for spanking. Let the child know beforehand what he can expect: timeout, loss of privileges, living with consequences, and rewards for appropriate behavior. He will

surely test you at times to see if you are serious. Be patient with yourself, and don't expect changes overnight.

12. Spend time alone with each child. It is ideal if parents can take turns doing special things with their children "one on one."

13. Decide on one behavior you feel needs to be changed in your child--one that will make him more competent, responsible, or easier to live with. (Get himself ready for breakfast or the bus on time, practice the piano or feed the dog without being reminded, say something kind to his sister, stop slamming doors.) Keep a private record of the number of times in one week this behavior occurs or is a problem, then discuss it with him. Tell him why his present behavior bothers you and why you feel it is in his best interest to change. (Don't let his lack of enthusiasm deter you.)

Ask him what reward he would be willing to work for. Negotiate until you find one you can agree on and afford. Set up terms--a point for each success--and a long-term reward for a certain number of points. (Sometimes two long-term rewards are wise: your favorite dinner for every 5 points, and a pair of skates for 50.)

Help the child make a chart, booklet, or poster on which to record progress or place stickers. Put it in a conspicuous place--if he wants to.

Don't remind the child further of the plan. At the end of each day, you might ask him how he did, or if he needs

help. Show an interest in adding stickers, points, etc. Don't mention failures--only successes. Never take away a point that has been earned. If the plan is not working after 2 weeks, renegotiate. Discuss why he feels it didn't work and see if he is willing to change the rewards and try again. If the plan is successful, change rewards and keep on going, until the habit is firmly established and rewards are no longer necessary.

14. Choose one behavior you would like to change in yourself. Tell your family about it. See if they will help you by rewarding you in a certain way (breakfast in bed, cooking dinner, baby-sitting) and set up a similar incentive program for yourself.

15. Take one behavior that annoys you and try the "When . . . then . . ." approach. In a casual manner, suggest to your child that "When he has . . . (emptied the dishwasher) . . . then he can (invite his friend to come over)."

16. Make a list of things you expect your child to do. Check yourself. Are they realistic? Age-appropriate? Are you prepared to follow-through? Can you refrain from doing the job for him if he is lax or slow?

17. The next time you take your child anywhere, think ahead about the problems you might encounter. Discuss your expectations with him before you leave home. ("I know it's hard for you to sit through church. Why don't you take paper, pencil, and a marker with you to occupy your time?"

For an older child you might say, "Try to see if you can remember things the preacher or Sunday School teacher says. Write each thing down, and I will play one game of checkers with you for each point you remember.")

18. Have a family rap session the night before you need help with household chores. Tell the children what you need to get done and see how they think they can help. Encourage them to decide, divide up the work, negotiate. Don't criticize, offer alternate suggestions, or discourage them. Let them see if they can work out a plan. Later, discuss how they felt, what worked, and what went wrong.

19. When you are going to take a child to the store, tell him ahead of time what you are willing and not willing to buy for him. Suggest that he can pick it out when you are ready to leave the store, provided he has been helpful and well-mannered. (If he hasn't, leave without the present, saying nothing.)

20. Try to think of consequences you can allow your child to suffer the next time he makes a mistake, forgets something, or is destructive. Encourage him to decide how he can make amends and then let him. Don't let him off the hook.

Positive Reinforcement

1. Practice "catching" your child when s/he is behaving appropriately. Reward him verbally and/or nonverbally.

2. Tell someone else something positive that your child did, and be sure s/he overhears you.

3. Expect your child to be different. Remember that they try not to be alike. Enjoy and accentuate their positive differences. "Lynn loves to read." "Sarah loves to listen to music," then they will not need to differ in every way.

4. Encourage your children, especially when attempting something new.

5. Praise your child for a job well done.

6. Ask children to make lists of things they like about their sister/brother. Hang lists on the refrigerator door and add to them.

7. Allow and encourage children to talk about the difficulties they have with their siblings--what they do that makes them mad. Let them feel hateful. Don't shame them for their feelings. Being allowed to "talk it out" will diminish the need to "act it out."

8. Encourage talking between all family members. Allow them to talk over their problems, work out their own negotiations, and "make a deal."

9. Reward cooperative behavior siblings.

10. Reinforce thoughtful, generous, and kind behavior between your children. If it is nonexistent, try making a chart on which each child receives a point for every considerate remark and deed. A certain number of points

earned (e.g., 10 points) allows child the right to choose his/her favorite dinner menu, etc.

11. If your children are "arch-enemies," it might be wise to separate them as much as possible. Don't allow them to eat breakfast together, watch TV together, etc. Let them earn the privilege. "One half hour of 'no fussing' time today will bring one half hour of fun together in the den tomorrow."

12. Spend quality time alone with each child every day. In your private talks, mention ways in which s/he is important to his/her brother or sister. Children love to take turns going out alone with a parent for a special time together.

13. Let young children make their own "fun book" with pictures of things they like to do. Write the number of points needed to earn each privilege, and let children earn a point for each 15 minutes of cooperative behavior.

14. Have regular times when all family members can get together and share what each likes most about the family, and/or individual members of the family. Also express appreciation to all family members frequently and spontaneously throughout the day.

15. During regular family "get together" times, have each member of the family share something they have done which they feel good about.

16. Really take time to listen to your children, and your spouse.

17. Totally accept your child and love him/her for who s/he is. Look for the positive qualities in your child.

18. Hold and cuddle your child(ren) often.

19. Tell your child(ren) and spouse that you love them often.

20. Make your child(ren) feel needed. Give him/her jobs to do that are his/hers alone--which no one else will do if s/he forgets. (This will free up some time for you.)

21. Give each child a bulletin board hung in a conspicuous place where s/he can put pictures, papers, articles, collages, and drawings. Leave it to him to decorate and change the board as s/he wants.

22. Remember: the more capable children feel, the more skills they can master, the more obstacles they can hurdle--the more competent they will feel. Nothing builds success like success itself, and no one can succeed without just making mistakes.

23. Do something fun as a family (e.g., go on a fall picnic). Laugh with your family.

24. Enjoy a silly moment with your child.

25. Enjoy a silly mement with your spouse. Laugh together. Do something fun--just you and your spouse alone together.

26. Forgive family members (and others) for a wrong-doing.

27. Do something extra nice for your child(ren) and spouse at least once a week.

28. Show some genuine affection or tenderness toward your child(ren) and spouse.

29. Share your child(ren)'s and spouses hurts--and joys.

Increasing Self-esteem

Suggestions for Parents:

1. Show love through words and gentle touches. Tell your child "I love you very much," "you're special." Give hugs, kisses, and gentle pats.

2. Tell your child the specific things you like about his/her behavior, "I like the way you waited so patiently today." "Thank you for helping me. I feel happy about that and now have time to play with you."

3. Be sure to separate behavior of the child from the child as a person. It's good to express positive feelings about appropriate behavior. More important, however, is the expression of love and support for your child as a special person. No other person is the same as another and everyone is special in their own way.

4. Give clear direct messages: negative words = low self-worth. Aim parent disapproval at behavior, not the child personally. Parental action needs to be directly related to child's action.

5. Help your child accept his/her body and its functions: exploration of body including genital areas is normal; if excessive, distract with something else to do.

6. Accept messy diapers by being pleasant so child will feel OK about elimination of body waste.

7. Allow your child to experience failing (you really can't prevent it even if you try) without feeling like a failure. Everyone makes mistakes and mistakes provide an opportunity for new learning.

8. Help your child to be independent by encouraging him/her to learn a new skill. Keep letting him/her try even if the first few attempts end in failure. After the skill is learned let your child do it on his/her own. (Example: learning how to put on a coat.)

9. Help your child by giving a job or responsibility that s/he can do successfully--then let him/her do it on his/her own. If it's not "perfect" don't do it over--it will only lower self-esteem.

10. Allow your child to express feelings and accept the feelings even if you disagree.

11. Help your child to learn self-control and cooperation. "I know you want to keep playing now but it's time for lunch. You can help me make the sandwiches."

12. Treat your child with the same respect you'd give to another adult.

13. Talk in pleasant tones. Your tone of voice may communicate more to a young child than the actual words. Positive comments said with a rough or sarcastic voice causes confusion within the child and lowers self-esteem.

14. Choose some time each day to give your child your undivided attention.

15. Things to do together:

- a. Share time by watching your child play, commenting on the activity and giving positive feedback of appropriate behavior.
- b. Listen to and talk with your child at his/her level of understanding.
- c. Read a story to your child.
- d. Go for a walk, play a simple game or drive to a favorite playground or park.

16. Be understanding of your child's frustration.

Talk about how you think he feels and see if there's another way to solve the problem.

CONCLUSION

As mentioned earlier, it is very important that the school and home work together. Only if what parents do at home and what teachers do at school are striving for the same results, will we all, together, help the child as much as possible.

Whatever parents choose to do with their child, whether it is to cook together, to shop together, go to the park, or to play a game or learning activity together, the experience can be very educational for the child. It can be filled with much fun for both the parents and the child. It is very important for any child to have fun with his parents and to be encouraged by his parents, but this is exceedingly true for a child who has a learning disability.

What a parent is doing when having a child help in the kitchen or when doing a learning activity with the child is instilling faith and confidence and the desire to learn in the child. The parent is helping the child to realize what he can do and how much he can learn.

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CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This project resulted from a need perceived within the Selah School District in Washington State, to develop a handbook for parents of Learning Disabled children in the primary grades. A review of the literature was conducted to research the effectiveness of parents working as tutors with their Learning Disabled children at home in academic areas. Using material from the literature as a guide, advice and recommended activities were developed into a handbook. The purpose of the handbook was to provide parents with information and specific activities to do at home in the academic areas of reading, mathematics, and written language. The activities were designed to reinforce specific skills taught at school, particularly those within the Special Education classroom.

Conclusions

The literature reviewed in the study supports the idea that a parent component of an educational program for a handicapped child makes a positive difference. Bricker and

Casuso (1979), Sonnenschein (1981), and Epstein (1987) agreed that a cooperative program between school and home results in planned educational efforts for the child; that learning opportunities extend across environments and particularly to natural environments, such as the home; and that when learning is consistently supported by all significant individuals, in a child's environment, the child benefits. Studies by Comer (1986), Epstein (1987), Rich (1985), Herman and Yeh (1983), and Hourcade and Richardson (1987) advocated that by being involved, parents become more familiar with their child's formal education, thus, better able to reinforce at home the principles and concepts of that process. Their data suggest that when cooperation exists between school and home the child may progress more rapidly and ultimately be more successful in the learning process.

Recommendations

As a result of completing this project, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Further studies should be conducted to test the effectiveness of the specific activities presented for parent use.
 2. John Cambell Elementary, Selah, Washington, the school that this handbook was designed for, will be a K-2 elementary in 1988, therefore, activities for kindergarten
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students with Learning Disabilities should be included in the handbook.

3. A parent questionnaire may be helpful in determining the usefulness of the handbook and activities therein.

4. Parents should be encouraged to provide learning activities at home during vacations, especially summer.

5. Discussion of the handbook at a parent support meeting may be beneficial to answer questions and/or clarify directions.

6. Determine the best time to give the handbook to parents--at the time of the initial IEP conference, at a meeting afterwards with just the parent and Special Education teacher, or as asked for by the parents.

To be of value the handbook must be in use. Every effort should be made to encourage and counsel parents in the use of the handbook. If parents see results from the use of the handbook, they will be encouraged in its further use.

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APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

Letter combinations: sh,wh,th,ch,fl,br,st,sm,sn,sw,sp,str

Number words: one,two,three,four,five,six,seven,eight,nine,ten

Color words: red,yellow,orange,green,blue,purple,brown,
black,gray,white,pink

Days of the week: Sunday,Monday,Tuesday,Wednesday,Thursday,
Friday,Saturday

Months of the year: January,February,March,April,May,June,
July,August,September,October,November,December

Common signs: stop,go,enter,exit,men,women,girls,boys,
walk,poison,danger,push,pull,ladies,gentlemen

Atlantic/Pacific Sight Words:

1st 100: a,about,all,an,and,are,as,at,back,be,big,but,by,can,
could,day,did,do,down,each,find,first,for,from,get,good,has,
had,have,he,her,hers,him,his,how,I,if,in,into,is,it,just,
like,little,long,look,made,make,many,more,me,my,no,not,now,
of,on,one,or,other,out,over,people,said,see,she,so,some,then,
that,the,their,theirs,them,then,there,these,they,this,time,
to,too,two,up,use,was,very,water,way,we,were,what,when,which,
will,with,word,words,write,you,your,yours

2nd 100: after,again,air,along,animals,another,any,around,
asked,away,because,been,before,boy,called,came,children,come,
different,does,don't,earth,eat,end,even,every,father,food,
found,going,got,great,hear,help,here,home,house,its,keep,know,
last,left,line,live,looked,man,may,me,men,most,mother,Mr.,
Mrs.,much,must,name,need,new,next,night,number,off,old,only,
our,part,picture,place,plants,put,read,reight,same,saw,say,
school,show,small,something,sound,still,sun,take,tell,things,
think,thought,three,throw,together,under,us,used,want,well,
went,where,who,why,work

3rd 100: add,almost,also,always,began,below,better,birds,
box,boys,car,city,cold,country,cried,cut,days,didn't,dog,door,
draw,enough,ever,eyes,far,feet,few,fish,four,girl,ground,grow,
hard,head,heard,high,I'll,I'm,inside,it's,kind,kinds,knew,
large,land,let,letter,letters,might,Miss,money,morning,mother,
more,near,never,often,oh,once,one,own,page,paper,parts,
pictures,play,ran,room,run,see,sentence,sentences,set,should,
side,sometimes,soon,spelling,story,such,sure,thing,three,
today,told,took,top,tree,trees,try,until,vowel,wanted,ways,
while,white,world,year,years

4th 100: above, across, age, am, animal, answer, baby, ball, beautiful, best, between, bird, black, blue, body, both, call, cannot, can't, cat, change, comes, done, eggs, face, fire, five, fly, form, four, friends, front, gave, girls, green, hand, himself, hold, family, fast, feel, horse, hot, important, learn, leaves, lights, lived, living, looking, makes, means, miles, moon, others, places, plant, ready, really, red, sat, says, second, seen, short, six, sky, sail, song, sounds, spell, started, stay, stood, stop, stopped, study, table, talk, tells, that's, those, times, toward, town, turn, turned, walked, warm, whole, wind, window, without, yes, young

5th 100; against, am, anything, bed, behind, being, book, bright, built, buy, care, carry, cars, catch, class, coming, complete, covered, dark, dry, everyone, everything, father, fine, friend, fun, game, garden, glass, goes, gold, gone, grass, half, hands, happened, happy, hit, hole, ice, king, kept, learned, legs, let's, listen, maybe, milk, missing, names, nothing, numbers, ones, opened, order, outside, piece, rain, remember, rest, ride, river, road, round, seeds, sets, ship, sing, six, sleep, slowly, snow, someone, space, stand, start, store, street, strong, summer, tail, tall, ten, tiny, tried, walk, watch, winter, woman, wood