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### THE SLOW LEARNING CHILD

From The Teaching of Reading To Slow-Learning Children  
by Samuel A. Kirk. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1940.

The slow learning child is one of low intelligence, who is incapable of keeping up with his classmates in the regular public schools, and who therefore requires a modified curriculum for his maximum growth and development. Any child who has an IQ below 80 and who is not progressing in school at the same rate as other children may be considered mentally retarded.

There are of course many degrees of mental retardation. For the purpose of education, supervision, and care the following classification is usually employed:

1. An idiot is a mentally retarded child with an IQ below 25 who is incapable of learning even the rudiments of school work. He is usually incapable of taking care of his personal needs and requires supervision and external support for his survival. Any attempt at academic training for an idiot is considered a waste of time.

2. An imbecile is one whose IQ falls between 25 and 50. He can care for himself personally and do odd jobs, but requires supervision and total or partial support for existence. Educationally an imbecile rarely reaches beyond the first grade.

3. A high-grade mental defective, usually called a moron, is one whose IQ ranges roughly between 50 and 70. Under favorable circumstances with adequate training, the high-grade mental defective can become self-supporting. In many cases he will require little or no supervision. Educationally he may attain a level between the first and fourth grades.

4. The borderline defective is one whose IQ is roughly between 70 and 80. This type is usually capable of self-support, and frequently can compete with other members of our society. Educationally he may attain a level between the third to eighth grade in school.

The following conclusions may be made concerning the mentally retarded child:

1. The mentally retarded child is one who has an IQ below 80, and who, because of intellectual and educational retardation, requires a special curriculum adapted to his capacities and limitations.

2. About two to five percent of the juvenile population are mentally retarded and require a special curriculum for their growth and development.



3. In physical characteristics such as height and weight, and in motor development, the mentally retarded are on the average only slightly inferior to the normals. There is a great overlapping of the subnormals and normals in these characteristics.

4. In functions such as speech, mental growth, and learning ability the mentally retarded child is significantly inferior to the normal child.

5. The investigations on play activities, occupational activities, and personality seem to indicate that the mentally retarded have greater difficulties than normals.

6. Idiots and imbeciles are considered uneducable and are usually cared for at home or in institutions for the mentally deficient.

7. High-grade and borderline mentally retarded children are educable and can be trained in the rudiments of reading, and in some cases can reach as high as the sixth or seventh grade. Since reading is a very important school subject in our present civilization, society may well devote time and energy to such training.

8. The schools should not require the mentally retarded to keep up with the curriculum constructed for the normal child, but should have a curriculum adapted to his needs and capabilities. Furthermore, since intellectual development and learning ability are the main deficiencies of the mentally retarded child, and since there is no overlapping between the normals and subnormals in these functions, it would appear that greater emphasis should be placed on the study of their learning capabilities and techniques for the most efficient methods of instructions.

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Tidyma, Willard F. Directing Learning Through Class Management. Farrar and Rinehart Inc. New York, 1937. Chap XIV

Wofford, Kate V. Teaching in Small Schools. The Macmillan Company New York. 1947.



SUGGESTED OUTLINE AND PARTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY TO GIVE SOME DIRECTION TO THE STUDY OF GROUPING AND PROMOTION POLICIES.

One of the most complete lists for the grouping of children is presented here in abbreviated form. It is taken from

The Grouping of Pupils, Thirty-Fifth Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education, 5835 Kimbark Ave., Chicago, 1936. Part 1. p. 86.

An examination of these several types reveals that they fall into two large groupings--those based on the homogeneity and those based on the heterogeneity of human beings.

- I. Physical development
  1. Chronological age
  2. Physical maturity
  3. Physiological maturity
  4. Health
  5. Height
  6. Weight
  7. Anatomical age.
- II. Intelligence
  1. Intelligence test results
  2. Teachers' ratings
  3. Probable learning rate
- III. Achievement
  1. Achievement test results
  2. Teachers' marks in one or more subjects
  3. Rank in class
- IV. Motivation
  1. Ratings or judgment traits
  2. Achievement quotients
  3. Rank in class
- V. Social factors
  1. Social age or maturity
  2. Home environment
- VI. Special abilities or interests
  1. Prognostic or placement test results
  2. Special abilities test.
- VII. Special disabilities
  1. Defective vision or hearing
  2. Defective learning
  3. Physical deformities
  4. Speech defects.

Association for Childhood Education, Growth Through School Living, Bulletin, March 1940, Washington, D. C. pp. 14-19

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Course of Study For Virginia Elementary Schools

Cook, Walter W. Grouping and Promotion in the Elementary School. University of Minnesota Press--Minneapolis, Minn. 1941

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WHAT DATA SHOULD A SCHOOL HAVE ON EVERY PUPIL?

- I. Pupil's Identifying Data
- II. School History
  - A. Grade Placement and Record
  - B. Attendance
- III. Home and Family Pattern
  - A. Atmosphere of Home
  - B. Status of the Pupil in the Family
  - C. Social-Economic Status of Family
  - D. Marital Status of Parents
  - E. Religion or Church Preference
  - F. Siblings  
( Determine whether the pupil is an only child, the oldest, the youngest of a few or of a large number of siblings, a middle child, a girl among boys, or a boy among girls.)
  - G. Parents' Attitude Toward School
  - H. Parents' Plans for Pupil's Future
  - I. Family Talents and Accomplishments
  - J. Recreations and Activities--Nature and Extent.
  - K. Cultural and Educational Resources of the Home
  - L. Physical and Health Status of the Family
  - M. Modern Equipment in the Home
  - N. Health Conditions in Every Home.
- IV. Physical Status and Development
- V. Mental and Educational Development
  - A. Academic Record of pupil
  - B. Standardized Tests Administered
- VI. Personal and Social Development
- VII. Pupil Behavior and Conditioning Factors
- VIII. Personality Difficulties and Mental Hygiene

For other suggestions and bibliography, see Report of Study Groups, Loudoun County Negro Teachers, 1944.

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