Team-teaching in an educable mentally retarded class

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TEAM-TEACHING IN AN EDUCABLE MENTALLY RETARDED CLASS

A THESIS
SUBLIME TO THE FACULTY OF THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, ATLANTA UNIVERSITY, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

BY
PRISCILIA ANNE ANDERSON RUCKER

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
ATLANTA, GEORGIA
JULY, 1967
DEDICATION

TO MY DEAREST HUSBAND

JACK

TO MY PARENTS

REV. & MRS. LEON R. ANDERSON

TO MY SON AND DAUGHTER

KENNETH AND MONICA

TO MY SISTER

MARY ATHLENE ANDERSON

For their patience, help, love and understanding during the time of this study, with love and gratitude I dedicate this work.

P.A.R.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer gratefully extends thanks to the team members and principal who contributed their time and efforts to the completion of this study.

The writer extends thanks to her advisors Dr. Mildred Barksdale and Dr. Huey E. Charlton.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Rationale.--Mental retardation is one of the greatest tragedies in mankind's experience. Because of it, millions of people from all social groups have been prevented from achieving full status as human beings. Today there are more than five million mentally retarded persons in America. Two to three per cent of these persons are school age children. Until a few years ago, there was virtually no hope or help for mentally retarded children. Now due to medical research and the work of thousands of educators, they are being helped. Medical and social researchers have located more than ninety different causes of mental retardation.  

Researchers have found that retardation often depends upon the physical condition of the mother during pregnancy. As more causes of retardation are discovered, authorities are confident that eventually retardation can be curtailed by constant medical check-ups before and during pregnancy.  

The mentally retarded child is one who deviates from the normal child intellectually. This deviation is so great that the child cannot  

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1"Mentally Retarded Children...they can be helped," Look Magazine, November 24, 1959, p. 31.

receive maximum benefit from a regular school program. The intelligence quotient ranges from twenty-five to seventy-five. The mentally retarded child is more like the normal child than he is different from him. It is the teacher's obligation to see that these children are trained so as to make the best possible contribution to society commensurate with their abilities.

There are three distinct groups of retarded children for educational purposes. These groups are the trainable mentally retarded, the educable mentally retarded and the slow learners.

The trainable mentally retarded require custodial care and supervision for their entire lives. The slow learners are the highest intellectually able group of retarded children and are the largest in number. They are from fifteen to seventeen per cent of the school population that can not quite keep up and are usually doing the poorest work in the regular classroom. They are normal in their emotional, social, physical and motor development.¹

The educable mentally retarded are those children who are so intellectually retarded that it is impossible for them to be adequately educated in the regular classroom. They are, however, educable in the sense that they can acquire knowledge and ability in the academic areas that will become usable tools.²


The educational provisions usually made for the educable mentally retarded are special classes housed in regular elementary and secondary schools. The purpose of the special class is to provide an educational experience adjusted to the child's ability. The special class helps make the child a more useful and happy citizen. He is able to have the satisfaction of having achieved in some area as other children in regular classes.¹

Samuel A. Kirk suggests that:

The program of special classes for mentally retarded children should include special diagnosis, periodic remedial procedures in reading and other skills; teaching methods which utilize the best practices in learning; systematic instruction programmed in sequence; individualized instruction; and success experiences.²

Kirk also believes that although this principle is applicable to all children, it is particularly necessary with children who are retarded.

The educable mentally retarded children make up two per cent of the school population and they need much consideration. They have achievement potential, but less choice than normal children. They must be guided properly to understand their achievement potential. They must be guided properly to understand their abilities and disabilities and their strengths and limitations. Only after this is done will they be able to make maximum contributions to society.³


³Ibid., p. 124.
Guidance for mentally retarded children can be a field in itself. Every individual needs personal and social adjustment. Through counseling, these children will develop a realistic understanding and use of their abilities. They must develop a healthy personality in order to be able to cope with the necessary adjustments in their environment. William Cruikshanks says, "Guidance for exceptional children involves the total efforts of many persons. Any approach toward finding a real solution to the problem of organizing services for exceptional children must take into account: (1) general problems involved, (2) an understanding of the diagnostic information required, (3) the role of the personnel involved and the unique problems, characteristics, and needs of specific children and groups of children."\(^1\)

Jerome H. Rothstein has noted in his book *Mental Retardation*, the recommendations according to research made by the White House Conference on Children and Youth. They are:

- That the needs of mentally handicapped children be recognized as those of all children with additional needs for special care arising from the nature of the handicap. That communities and individual citizens assume responsibility for making community services broad enough to meet the special needs of these children.
- That in-service training courses on mental handicap be made available to all public school teachers. That public school systems provide special professionally trained teachers, supervisors, and administrators. That in order to improve the treatment and training of mentally handicapped children, research be undertaken in areas contributing to an unfavorable stereotype of the mentally handicapped in public and professional groups.\(^2\)
- That action programs are set up to modify stereotypes.

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Evolution of the problem.—During the latter part of the school year 1965-66, it was noted that there were more children who needed the help of the special class teacher than there were special teachers provided at James L. Mayson Elementary School in Atlanta, Georgia. There was also a space problem in the school facility. After much planning, the members of the Department of Services for Exceptional Children, Atlanta Public School System, devised a method whereby the needs of many of these children would be met. This method was team-teaching in the special classes.

Team-teaching in the regular class is beginning to be a common practice but it is a first break in tradition for the special classes in the Atlanta schools. This program would give individual attention to each pupil and provide for individual and independent functioning of each pupil. More importantly, this plan would enable the best utilization of the limited space in the school where this writer was employed.

The writer was working in a team-teaching situation consisting of thirty-two children, two special class teachers, and specialists in the fields of library science, art, music, physical education, speech therapy, and a teacher of the partially sighted.

It was the intent of the writer to present a picture of how the team was set up and its operation during the year 1966-67 at the James L. Mayson Elementary School in Atlanta, Georgia.

Contribution to education.—The writer was of the opinion that such a study would present, especially to those interested in educating the educable mentally retarded and team-teaching, insight into the
technique and its usefulness in the future.

Team-teaching may have a prominent place in tomorrow's instructional programs for the mentally retarded. This study may prove helpful to neophyte teachers of the educable mentally retarded as they become aware of the scope and depth of their chosen field.

**Statement of the problem.**--This study was designed to describe the organization of a team-teaching unit for educable mentally retarded children and the operation of the class for the purpose of gaining new insights into team-teaching and to formulate hypotheses about the use of team-teaching in classes for the educable mentally retarded in the future.

**Purposes of the study.**--The purposes of this study were to:

1. Gain new insights into team-teaching as it is used with the mentally retarded.

2. Develop hypotheses about the future use of team-teaching with educable mentally retarded children.

3. Serve as a possible aid in teacher training sessions for potential team-teachers of the educable mentally retarded.

4. Serve as a possible bases for further experimental research.

5. Present samples of materials used in the class.

**Limitations of the study.**--The limitation of the study was:

1. It concerned a team-teaching unit involving thirty-two educable mentally retarded children enrolled in the class during the first semester of the school year 1966-67.
Definition of terms.--Significant terms used in this study are hereby defined:

1. "Mental retardation"--Refers to the condition of an individual who functions intellectually below the average, but whose social adequacy is not in question.¹

2. "Special class"--A class organized for educational services for children who are mentally retarded but attain an intelligence quotient of fifty to seventy-five and are taught in public schools.²

3. "Educable mentally retarded"--A term which refers to children who attain intelligence quotients ranging from fifty to seventy-five, who are capable of growing up to be socially and occupationally independent in homes and communities.³

4. "Intelligence quotient"--Represents the position of the individual and his rate of mental growth with respect to the total distribution of population as measured by a specific test.⁴

Locale of the study.--This study was done at the James L. Mayson Elementary School in Atlanta, Georgia. This was one of the pilot classes for team-teaching.

Period of study.--This study was conducted during the summer of 1967.

Subjects and materials.--The subjects in this study included thirty-two educable mentally retarded children, an art instructor, a

³Ibid., p. 55.
⁴Ibid., p. 55.
physical education instructor, a teacher of the partially sighted, a librarian, a music instructor, a speech therapist and two special class teachers at the James L. Mayson Elementary School.

The following material was used in the study:

1. Records kept by the two special class teachers.
2. Records kept by the specialists and principal.
3. Sample copies of exercises prepared for the pupils in various subjects and an outline of the room used for the class.

Method of research.—The research design was exploratory. Its main purpose was "to gain familiarity with a phenomenon or to achieve new insights into it, often to formulate a more precise research problem or to develop hypotheses."\(^1\)

The method used to collect data was the technique of unstructured observation in the form of participant observation. In this form of observation, the observer took on the role of a member of the group and participated in its functioning.\(^2\)

Both of the special class teachers recorded the same events and these records were used to ensure accuracy. The following outline was used as the data are presented in narrative form:

1. The participants
   - Who are they?
   - How are they related?
   - How many are there?


\(^2\)Ibid., p. 207.
2. The setting
   Its appearance
   What kinds of behavior it encourages, permits, discourages or prevents.

3. The purpose bringing these participants together
   How do they react to the purpose?
   What goals are the participants pursuing?
   Are the goals compatible or antagonistic?

4. The social behavior
   What do the participants do?
   How do they do it?
   With whom and with what do they do it?

5. Frequency and duration
   When did the situation occur?
   How long did it last?
   Is it unique?
   What gave rise to it?

Procedural steps.--The following procedural steps were taken:
1. Literature related to the problem was surveyed and summarized.

2. Material concerning the organization and operation of the team-teaching unit in the Educable Mentally Retarded Class at James L. Mayson Elementary School was compiled and presented in narrative form, complemented by tables according to the purposes of the study.

3. Findings, conclusions, implications and recommendations were presented.

Survey of related literature.--A review of literature pertinent to this study reveals that educators are quite concerned about the team-teaching technique and educating the mentally retarded.

Research shows many factors which have had a profound effect on American education. They are teacher shortage, knowledge explosion, understandings of child growth, and our educational purposes. All of
these things show why team-teaching was developed.¹

To meet the teacher shortage, some communities have resorted to increasing salaries. The longer school year and day, more courses, and more home work represent some of the responses to the knowledge explosion. Multi-graded or multi-aged classes some with overlapping grades or ages, are a variation of the non-graded theme which is basic to many recently developed organizational patterns.²

Team-teaching is a better approach for solving some of the problems just discussed. Team-teaching presents a pattern which can lead to a program of school wide improvement. It permits better grouping practices based on greater knowledge of child growth and development.³

The national commitment to team-teaching is substantial. The communities engaged in team-teaching are spread over twenty-four states with concentration in Massachusetts, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Colorado, Utah and California. It is difficult to estimate the extent of enthusiasm for and commitment to team-teaching within the profession itself.⁴

The enthusiasm for team-teaching in the regular class has not spread to the special class for mentally retarded. There is some


²Ibid., pp. 10-11.

³Ibid., p. 11.

evidence of team-teaching in classes for the trainable mentally retarded and in classes for the educable mentally retarded in Atlanta, Georgia.

A team-teaching plan differs from any other plans of assignment in the nature and composition of the team itself, the ways in which it works together as a cooperating group, and the ways in which instructional periods and the responsibilities for conducting them vary from time to time, depending on the purposes and nature of the unit being developed at that time.

Dr. Ira J. Singer defines team-teaching as "an organizational device which encompasses all aspects of the teaching-learning experience."¹ Properly planned and executed, the team pattern invites a searching reappraisal of such factors as educational objectives, teacher role, school schedule, class size, curriculum development, facilities design, teacher-teacher, student-student, student-teacher, and teacher-student relationships and school-community relations.²

The objectives of an educational program for all children are personal and emotional adjustment, social adjustment and economic adjustment. These objectives have been achieved in many instances in the regular class where team-teaching was the organizational pattern. What then is team-teaching really like?

Team-teaching is a plan for organizing and assigning members of a school staff in which two or more staff members are responsible for cooperatively planning and carrying on the classroom activities and

²Ibid., p. 13.
educational experiences of a group of pupils, including decisions by team members as to the particular instructional responsibilities of each member of the team and the class groupings in which pupils assigned to the team shall be placed for instruction. The team may consist of different specialists and the responsibilities are assigned accordingly.¹

Considerable variation exists in team-teaching arrangements. In its simplest form two teachers may work together as a team in planning and carrying on instruction for the pupils. Aides may be used in making and using instructional materials and the pupils may be regrouped in any way desirable.²

The process of curriculum planning for the team-teaching arrangements has two features which intensify the potential advantages of team-planning. The teaching team is concerned with a particular group of pupils. These pupils are known to the teachers, and team planning gives each teacher an opportunity to learn more about his pupils through the eyes of the other team member(s). In such planning it is also possible to combine efforts to make better provisions for individual pupils. Most teams would profit greatly by experience and training in group procedure.³

Recent curriculum planning for the educable mentally retarded has not found a single panacea for this group of individuals. As to


²Saylor and Alexander, op. cit., p. 361.

³Ibid., p. 447.
special classes, curriculum planners may well become more critical as to what "special" traits are best provided for in special classes. The idea of special classes organized purely on the basis of IQ is rejected, if one accepts the conclusions of research on ability grouping. On the other hand, the idea of special opportunities for many types of special groupings rather than across the board classification, is completely consistent with the philosophy of true curriculum differentiation for individual learners.¹

The curriculum of the elementary special class is developed around two major areas of emphasis - improvement of general living skills and developing proficiency in the understanding and use of academic skills. The curriculum is developed in terms of the characteristics and needs, the instruction is adapted to the ability level, and there are practices of good principles of mental hygiene. All of these are designed to change the attitudes and behavior of these children to a more positive course of action when it is necessary.²

The total classroom atmosphere should be one to improve and promote healthy emotional development. Instruction should be assigned and taught at the child's developmental and readiness level. The class is composed of children with similar problems and abilities, thus providing each child with peer relationships.

The methods of instruction used with educable mentally retarded children are in many ways identical to those used by good teachers with

¹Saylor and Alexander, op. cit., pp. 392-393.

children in regular classes. Materials must be presented in a greater variety of ways because much repetition must be done. Consequently, the research in team-teaching for regular classes is being used to improve instruction for educable mentally retarded children.

The Department of Services for Exceptional Children in the Atlanta Public Schools System has undertaken the task of setting up pilot teaching units in several elementary schools where special classes are located. The purpose of the teams is to see if outcomes will be favorable enough to cause the widespread use of team-teaching in special classes.

Much more research is needed regarding the effect of special classes on the utilization of student talents. There is virtually no research about the use of the team-teaching technique in special classes.
Organization of the team-teaching unit.--The planning for this team-teaching class began during the spring of 1966. Members of the State Education Department of Services for Exceptional Children visited the school and saw the space used for teaching the educable mentally retarded children. There was no other space available for use by this class. The present classroom was a converted storage room for books. The size was twenty-four feet by twelve feet with two levels. The upper level was smaller than the lower level. Each level had one window and circulation of air was poor in summer and winter. This room was situated at the end on a hallway. Any traffic in the hall would disturb the class.

After the visitors left the building, the information was taken to the Department of Services for Exceptional Children of the Atlanta Board of Education. The members of this Department had tested many children at this school and they knew that there were many children who needed the service of a special class. These children could not be taught in this small area, so to conserve space and provide for the large number of children, team-teaching was suggested as the answer.

The principal of the school was contacted by the Department of Services for Exceptional Children. This idea of team-teaching was discussed with her. She was readily in favor of the suggestion because
the school's need was so great. At the time of the meeting with the principal, there was only one special class teacher. In order to have this organizational pattern, at least two teachers were needed. Another teacher had to be secured and trained from the faculty. The number of special teachers available was limited. There was a member of the faculty who was interested in special education and agreed to take courses over the summer in order to be ready for the class in the fall. The special teacher and the teacher to be trained were then called in for a conference with the principal.

During the conference the two teachers were asked many questions about their philosophies of education and child growth and development. After much discussion, both teachers agreed that the plan was worthy of a trial. Records were to be kept daily of the experiences and any other pertinent information the teachers felt would be helpful in evaluation. The teachers agreed to plan together the experiences the boys and girls were to be involved in. The principal explained that the services of persons in library service, speech therapy, art, music, physical education, and a teacher of the partially sighted would be available to the team. These persons were to be used and included in any planning that was necessary for them to participate in.

A time schedule was to be set up during planning session in August of the next school term. The two special class teachers and the specialists were to work out a schedule that would serve the needs and abilities of the children assigned to the group. The schedule was to be flexible so that all learning experiences would be available for the children to take advantage of.
Most of the school was already working in the team-teaching pattern. The educable mentally retarded class was to make an easy transition from self-containment to team-teaching. Cooperation among the teachers was stressed from the principal's office. The principal felt that the teachers who were trained to work with the same kind of children should be able to share the teaching responsibilities of a group of children.

A time in the afternoon was to be set aside each day for evaluation of the day's work and planning for the next day's experiences. One day a week was set aside for weekly planning. The teachers planned together the unit to be studied and the activities the pupils were to be engaged in. This included planning with the librarian about available materials, ordering films and filmstrips, arranging trips and securing persons to visit the class.

The evaluation sessions gave the teachers a chance to see what did or did not go as planned and then plans could be made to better arrange or change the experiences for another time.

Advantages and disadvantages.--These were the advantages this writer found to be true in the situation:

1. The teachers were used more efficiently and more effectively.

2. The behavior patterns of many of the children improved.

3. In organizing instruction, greater flexibility, as to the composition of class groups, the time schedule, and methods of instruction, was achieved.
4. The teachers were encouraged to develop to a higher degree their competencies in instruction and subject matter.

5. The teachers participated in experiences that contributed to their professional growth.

6. The children in the team achieved in spite of the many adjustments they had to make.

These were found to be disadvantages in the team-teaching class:

1. The two teachers were not matched emotionally and by temperament.

2. The team members did not share or exhibit the same philosophies of education and child growth and development.

3. Methods of discipline were very much in conflict.

4. Both teachers did not adjust to the team idea.

5. The close personal relationship between teacher-pupil was not maintained for the teachers shared all information about each pupil with the other team member.

6. Materials were not readily available when needed.

7. The responsibility of carrying on the activities was sometime left to one member of the team.

Despite the difficulties in team-planning, it is believed that these disadvantages can be overcome and much better planning and teaching will result as individual teachers profit from each other's experiences and ideas.
From observations made in the class these hypotheses may be drawn:

1. That team-teaching will become the organizational pattern used more frequently than other patterns because of the many forces in education which lead toward team-teaching. Classes for the educable mentally retarded will be included in the organization.

2. That the achievement of the pupils will not change greatly, but the individualized instruction will help create in the child a responsibility for getting the education he needs for economic independence.

The participants.--Participating in the team unit were teachers who were specialists in library service, physical education, music, art, speech therapy, a teacher of the partially sighted, a principal, and two trained teachers of the educable mentally retarded. The persons in the class itself were thirty-two educable mentally retarded children. They were elementary school children with ages ranging from eight years to fourteen years. There were fifteen girls and seventeen boys.

The intelligence quotient range for this group of children was fifty-four to seventy-five. The grade levels were pre-primer through third grade second month. There were some higher grade placements in arithmetic.

The children and the specialists were related to each other as pupil-teacher in a learning situation. These children had been placed in an educational environment designed in terms of their particular needs and characteristics. They have similar problems and abilities. Some of these children had special problems in speech and sight. Because of these disabilities, they received aid from specialists in these areas. Four of the children in this group received speech
therapy twice a week and one child received help from a specialist for the partially sighted.

The setting.--The setting was a special class located in an elementary school in Atlanta, Georgia. The school facility had ten classrooms, a library, an office, an auditorium, a cafeteria, a clinic and rest rooms. The special class was located on the main hall next to the office. It is twenty-four feet by forty-eight feet in size. There is a door leading to the main hall and one leading to the front grounds of the school. In the classroom, there was a water fountain, two chalkboards, a metal cabinet, two wall bulletin boards, a portable bulletin board, ceiling lights, four large windows on the east side, thirty-two chair desks, a work table, two desks and two chairs for the teachers and one television set. There were many shelves along the wall near the windows.

The room was a large one, so that the children were able to move about freely and small enough for inter-group feelings. Children with aggressive tendencies were not placed near other children or near each other. Mentally retarded children are not born with behavior deviations. The deviations are caused by the demands which they cannot meet. This classroom environment provided some experiences which contributed to emotional adjustment and acceptable behavior. There were educational games and puzzles, books, crayons and needle work which helped to reduce frustrations and feelings of inadequacy.

The large classroom permitted quiet movement and not confinement to one area. The group organization provided peer relationships for each child. Materials in the room were on all levels to provide for
development on the various levels of understanding. For activities other than academic, the younger girls banded together, as did most of the younger boys. The older boys and girls mixed with the others most of the time. At the end of the first semester the children had learned to mix with the different groups.

Many of the children attempted to gain attention from the exhibition of unacceptable behavior. This type of action was not permitted. A special area was set apart for use by children who had no self control. Self direction was encouraged in that each child was guided toward choosing the materials best suited for him. Each child was guided toward independence in social and intellectual experiences.

During the month of December, a twelve year old boy entered the class. The other children had participated in the program for almost four months. This young boy used language that was not desirable. Another boy who was also known to use this language said to him, "man we don't say those words in here." On another occasion a small girl was observed not talking or participating in any form in the break activities. Some of the girls tried to play with her. About two months later this same child had learned to move about with the other children and participated at first alone and later with a few other children.

The purposes for bringing these participants together.—The purpose for bringing these thirty-two educable mentally retarded children together in this team-teaching unit was to provide space for the class and to provide the service for the many boys and girls who needed the class. The organization of the teaching staff was different,
but the environment would be designed to meet the needs and characteristics of these children.

The arrangement used would be team-teaching. This was an experimental class. The two special class teachers and other specialists were grouped in order to carry on the classroom duties and activities. The teachers provided the educational experiences.

Many of the children had no reaction to their placement in the class. These were shy and retiring children. Several children resented being placed in the class. These were the ones who had records of irregular attendance and had been sent to juvenile home. They have been ordered to attend school regularly. Others in the class did not seem to care one way or the other about their placement.

The majority of the children placed in the class wanted to learn how to read especially and to make a good grade on their papers. Their previous school records show failures in all subjects. In this class they hoped to become contributing members of the group. They hoped to be able to perform well in some area, so as to be recognized by others as having achieved.

A small number of the children knew that they were being forced to attend school. They had no real goals. They just came to school at all hours, doing little or no work and trying to keep the other children entertained or in trouble.

The social behavior.--When most of the children were placed in the class, their behavior was more aggressive toward the world in a negative sense. They did not like to be touched by anyone or to be near any of the other children. Some of the boys and girls were quiet
and withdrawn. They would not participate in any kind of activity because they had been rejected and humiliated so often before being placed in the class. Relating a few examples will show the many different kinds of behavior patterns that were exhibited in the class.

Janice was twelve years old. Her placement before this team-teaching special class was the regular special class. She did not adjust to large groups of children because she wanted a lot of individual attention. She talked loud and out of order during class periods. Profanity and fighting were second nature to her. She could really have been a good third or fourth grade pupil if she could learn self-control.

Steven was eight years old. He was very quiet and withdrawn. He would not play games or attempt to do any class work.

Ann was a very friendly outgoing girl. She talked a lot and would finish most of her work. She was thirteen years old and had an intelligence quotient of sixty-four. All of the children liked Ann and sought to be her friend.

David was fourteen years old and had an intelligence quotient of sixty-six. He was considered the bully and all of the boys, large and small, seemed to be afraid of him. He was loud and ordered the other children around. When he could not boss the others, he became angry and rude. He has hit at his teachers several times.

Annie was eight years old. Her intelligence quotient was sixty-six. She was a very quiet girl and always very neat and clean. Whenever she was told to do something by one of the teachers, she cried and asked to be excused.
Reginald was thirteen years old and had an intelligence quotient of fifty-nine. Reginald read well, but could not do any arithmetic. He never associated with any of the other boys and girls. At physical education hour, he walked around the field alone with his hands in his pockets. He cried when someone gave his swing a push when he was on the playground. At the end of the semester, he was friendly with the other boys. He played ball and ran around as any normal child would.

In order to show and describe other kinds of behavior the participants exhibited and the other activities they participated in, it was necessary to give a time schedule and then go through a day with these children and their leaders. Special services as, use of the library, speech therapy and assisting the partially sighted will also be given as a part of a day's activities.

The daily schedule was as follows:

8:00 - 8:30  Morning Devotion and Sharing  
8:30 - 10:00  Language Arts  
10:00 - 10:15  Break  
10:15 - 11:15  Arithmetic  
11:15 - 11:25  Preparation for lunch  
11:30 - 11:50  Lunch in Cafeteria  
11:50 - 1:00  Unit Activities  
1:00 - 1:30  Arts, Craft and Music  
1:30 - 2:15  Physical Education  
2:15 - 2:30  Evaluation and Planning  
2:30  Dismissal  

The devotional and sharing period was a time when every child had a chance to become leader for a while and express themselves.

During the Language Arts period at the beginning of the year, the entire group was taught or retaught the spelling of their names, birthdates, addresses, telephone numbers and their mothers and fathers names. All of the children needed the review because they
forget the things easily. After several weeks, the ones who progressed faster were given writing lessons, some cursive and others manuscript. Each child worked at his or her own rate of speed. At the end of the semester most of them could spell and write their names, addresses and birthdates. Both of the special class teachers had a group they worked with during this period. There were fifteen in one group and seventeen in the other.

In the remaining portion of the period, the children were divided into three groups. All of the children working on pre-premier, premier, and first grade levels were in one group. Children on the second and third grade levels were grouped together. The first group was taught the alphabet, words they used regularly as is, are, the, and at, and general listening and speaking. They use alphabet flash cards, colorful books, records and record player, earphones and learning sheets for studying sounds.

The second group used language books on the second grade level and spellers on the second grade level. Sometimes the lessons were oral and other times written. During the oral lessons, most of the children responded well. The spelling lesson was sometimes taped and played back as the teacher worked with another group.

The third group used language books and spellers on the third grade level. The tape recorder was used quite a bit in this group. They had sessions where they recorded only to hear themselves on tape. At other times poems or choral readings were recorded. Spelling was also recorded on tape. The children enjoyed using the tape recorder and seemed to retain more during these sessions.
In the language period for the third group, they were taught to use capital letters, to use punctuation marks, to write good sentences and paragraphs, word usage, oral reporting and simple letter writing. All of the children were taught to use good manners. All of the things taught to these children had to be repeated time and time again. The same lesson was presented in different ways so that the children would not get bored with trying to learn. The ways of presenting a lesson varied from films, discussions, role playing and excursions to visiting the library and finding information on one's own.

All of the groups used the film strip projector and movie projector for following up subject matter and sometimes for plain enjoyment. The children were very attentive during the time a movie was shown and readily talked about what happened after it was over.

The reading period was set up in much the same way as the language arts period. The groups were flexible so that when one child was ready to move to another level, the transition was easily made and without disrupting the class functionings. All of the groups were started together so that the different groups would not be idle, therefore not noisy. All of the children might listen to a poem and be asked to draw what they felt the poem was about and to color that picture. Then one group at a time was started on the lesson for that day. Ditto sheets were also used with interesting lessons to get the children started.

During one reading period, a group was to act out a story they had finished reading. All of the other children in the class became the audience. The children enjoyed performing and the class enjoyed the
performance.

During the first semester, the children were taught word attack skills, reading for details, oral reading to find specific facts, following directions, locating sources of information, noting opposite relationships, vowel and consonant sounds, word meanings, compound words, paragraph completion, contraction and other comprehension skills.

Reading was a period that most of the children enjoyed and they responded well. All of them learned something they did not know before and this made them feel successful. In each class period, most of the children respected the child who was reciting. On occasions there were one or two children who felt it necessary to disturb the class by speaking out of term, or causing an argument. One girl in particular had to be sent home 'for a rest' because she could not control her temper and was unruly. She paid no attention to her teacher or teachers. She would stay at home for a week and return to school. When she returned to school she would apologize and settle down to work again. This girl had been referred to Child Guidance Clinic, but the treatment was not continued by the family.

After the language arts period, there was a school wide break. The children were permitted to go to the rest rooms and the water fountains. The teachers accompanied the children. After returning to the classroom, the children were sometimes shown a short film or played a game together. This was done to give the children a chance to relax after working for a long period.

The next class period was arithmetic. This was the most difficult and time consuming period of the day. It was difficult because
all of the children needed to begin at a different point. This made each child work on a different level. The teachers had to plan carefully for each child in order to meet their needs. Some children worked on the same grade level, but needed different skills. All of the children needed a lot of help in learning arithmetic facts in adding and subtracting. There were film strips, records and flash cards to help in this area. Many of the children still do not know them and count on their fingers. They have to repeat these drills over and over in order to retain them.

The children had lessons in counting by groups, counting money, simple arithmetic processes and some children were able to talk about fraction on a low level. The lessons on counting money led to a unit on the bank which was done as a social studies activity.

After arithmetic was over the children went to wash up for lunch. During the lunch hour, many of the children ate hot lunches and others brought their lunch from home. Those who could not afford to pay the entire price for a lunch were able to eat for what they could bring. These were partial lunches. The children practiced their good manners in the cafeteria as long as they were alone. When another class joined them, they seemed to forget and had to be reminded of where they were.

In the cafeteria the girls generally sat apart from the boys. One or two children sometimes chose to sit alone and eat. They were always asked to come back and join the group. They would reluctantly come back where the others were. After the twenty minutes were over, the children would get in a line, girls first, and go back up stairs to the classroom. They were allowed to stop for water on the way back.
After the children were settled in the classroom, the social studies unit or science unit activity was begun. The very first social studies unit was "All About You." In this unit the children discussed all of the things they knew about themselves. They were shown films about the parts of the body and how to take care of them. The school nurse visited the class and talked to the children informally. They were told how to keep clean and how to keep their bodies in good shape.

As an activity, the children found pictures in magazines and made posters and scrapbooks. They wrote simple stories and made up poems and riddles. Some of the children drew pictures and used them to make their posters. The teachers read stories about the body and helped the children make up health rules that were listed on the board. An inspection period was set and many of the children began to change their cleanliness habits. They were neater and cleaner. This had been a great problem in this class.

One of the science units was "Plants and Animals of Long Ago." The children collected all kinds of plants, drew pictures, learned what makes plants grow and how they are different today. They learned to spell new words or at least to recognize them. The most exciting thing they did was to make a terrarium. They were amazed to see the plants lasted without being watered.

Each unit lasted from two to three weeks. Most of the time, the length of time depended on the interest of the group. If the interest waned, the unit was cut short and lengthened if the interest was high.

On each Monday, Wednesday and Friday, the children participated in an art class. At scheduled times, the area specialist in art came
to demonstrate new techniques and methods to the children. They had classes in crayon resist, abstract string painting, drawing and using water colors. They were very creative for the most part, even though some of them copied what others had done. They also did some sand casting, which was more interesting to the boys.

When the art specialist was not present, one of the special class teachers instructed the children. The other teacher was always there to assist in whatever was needed to be done. The children worked with construction paper, scissors, paste, yarn, paints and brushes, drawing pencils and colors. Only a few of the children did not participate in the art work. These were usually the boys.

On Tuesdays, the girls were taught to make hand bags out of burlap of various colors. They also made place mats and a few of them began crocheting. The girls bought their own needles and the school supplied the thread. The children were very cooperative and worked with a minimum of noise. The bags had beautiful designs on the fronts and the girls were very proud of them. A few of the boys learned to make some crocheting stitches.

The boys were led in other activities by the male special class teacher while the girls were busy. The boys went outside for extra physical education activities. They played football and ran races with each other.

Each Thursday, the children and their two teachers were engaged in a music class. They all went to the music area together and the teachers stayed and participated with the children. The class lasted twenty minutes each time. New songs were learned and some music back-
ground. The musical instruments were the things the children enjoyed most. All of them got a chance to play something during the course of the semester. Two of the girls became members of the school chorus and participated when they performed. The only thing that kept some of the others from joining was their reading ability. The music specialist was very patient with the children and the children responded to her teaching. She gave them songs they would like, but were not too hard to learn. Many were sad when it was time to return to the class.

All of the outdoor physical education activities were directed by a specialist in that field. Most children enjoy being outside and these children were no different. The period lasted for forty-five minutes. During this time, the children learned and played many different games. They played soft ball, volley ball, soccer, football, tag team racing, and fancy rope activities. Sometimes the activities were selected so that the boys and girls played together. Other times they were separated. One boy in the class became a member of the school basketball team. He received an award for participating in the sport.

In addition to the regular classroom activities the boys and girls played indoor games if the weather was inclement. They played educational games and other games just for fun. Shuffle board was one they particularly enjoyed. There was also a park about four blocks away that the children were allowed to visit sometime.

Another special time in the schedule was the library story hour. The librarian came to the class room and read stories and poems to the
children. If there was a special holiday or event, the story or poem would fit the occasion. The children were permitted to check out books from the library any time they wanted to. Many children took advantage of this and began to check out books regularly.

When a unit was planned the librarian was a vital part of that plan. She found materials for the children that they could read pertaining to the topic. Reading levels made her job harder, because most books that large children are interested in are too hard for them to read. The librarian did manage to find picture books and reading material for those who were interested. The librarian understood the kind of children she was working with and was very kind to them. When she read stories to them, they were very quiet and were able to discuss the happenings with her after the story was over.

The children who needed speech therapy were from three families. In one family, there were two boys; in another family there was a boy and a girl; and the other child had brothers in the class with the speech therapist who were not in the special class. These children needed the help very badly.

The speech therapist would send for the children twice a week in the afternoon. The special class teachers were given a report of what lesson the child was working on. During class periods he was given what help the teachers could provide them with. The therapist used word games, the record player and other lessons that were done on ditto sheets. At the end of the semester, a little improvement could be seen.
There was one child in the class who needed the help of the specialist who worked with the partially sighted. This little girl was nine years old. Her sight was very poor and she wore very powerful lens.

The child's sight had kept her from achieving as she could have. She had been a discipline problem because she could not keep up with the regular class work. At first she used the books with the large print. Later she was able to use the regular school texts the other children used.

At that time, the specialist only had to check each time she visited the school to see if any special materials were needed for her to work with. Usually no materials were requested.

All of the activities the children participated in that were discussed, resulted in improved behavior. The day to day contact with children and teachers improved the behavior pattern of many of the children. This was seen in how they communicated with each other. The little girl who cried most of the time, did not cry any more; the little boy who was anti-social, participated in lessons and games; and the children who had no friends, had someone to talk to and play with. Each child made social adjustments compatible with their developmental level.
CHAPTER III
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary.—Our society has become more kindly toward and interested in the mentally retarded child. The educable mentally retarded are defined as those persons with intelligence quotients of from fifty to seventy-five, the trainable mentally retarded as persons with intelligence quotients of from twenty-five to fifty and the custodial as those with intelligence quotients below twenty-five. About two percent of the school age population are educable mentally retarded.

The teaching methods used with the educable mentally retarded are the same methods that good teachers in regular classes use. The classes for educable mentally retarded children are housed in elementary and secondary schools. The classes are generally organized as self-contained with one special teacher.

Other patterns of organization are being used to meet teacher-shortage and knowledge explosion. One such pattern is team-teaching. Team-teaching is a plan for organizing and assigning members of a school staff in which two or more staff members are responsible for cooperatively planning and carrying on the classroom activities and educational experiences of a group of pupils.

This organizational pattern has not been used where classes of educable mentally retarded children have been included until recently in the Atlanta Public Schools System.
It is much too early to give an authoritative evaluation on team teaching. Research and literature will have to gradually accumulate and testimonials will have to dominate the published articles.

Considerable effort must be made to measure the more significant targets of team-teaching, such as increasing the pupil's thinking ability through small group study; developing the ability to discuss with others; building his sense of responsibility for his own education through independent study; allowing the pupil to move at his own pace by giving him more individualized instruction. Experimentation in regular classes on achievement between control groups and experimental groups shows no significant difference in achievement. It is expected that the same will hold true for educable mentally retarded children.

No final judgement can or should be made on team-teaching in any class until evaluations are carried out. There is a great resistance to change to new and better ways of teaching children, but we must innovate or stagnate.

**Evolution of the problem.**—During the latter part of the school year 1965-66, it was noted that there were more children who needed the services of the special class than there were classes or space for more classes. There was no other space available for extra classes in the school facility. After much planning, the Department of Services for Exceptional Children suggested a method that would meet the needs of these children and solve the space problem. This method was an organizational pattern called team-teaching. This new class was to be one of several in the city set up on an experimental basis.
Statement of the problem.—This study was designed to describe the organization of the team-teaching unit for educable mentally retarded children and the operation of the class for the purpose of gaining new insights into team-teaching and to formulate hypotheses about the use of team-teaching in classes for the educable mentally retarded in the future.

Purposes of the study.—The purposes of this study were to:

1. Gain new insights into team-teaching as it is used with the mentally retarded.

2. Develop hypotheses about the future use of team-teaching with educable mentally retarded children.

3. Serve as a possible aid in teacher training sessions for potential team-teachers of the educable mentally retarded.

4. Serve as a possible format for further experimental research.

5. Present sample of the materials used in the class.

Research design.—The research design was exploratory. Its main purpose being "to gain familiarity with a phenomenon or to achieve new insights into it, often to formulate a more precise research problem or to develop hypotheses."¹

The method used to collect data was the technique of unstructured observation in the form of participant observation. In this form of observation, the observer took on the role of a member of the group and participated in its functioning.

Procedural steps.—The following procedural steps were taken:

1. Literature related to the problem was surveyed and summarized.

¹Settliz et al., op. cit., p. 50.
2. Material concerning the organization and operation of the team-teaching unit in the educable mentally retarded class at the James L. Mayson Elementary School was compiled and presented in narrative form, complemented by tables according to the purposes of the study.

**Summary of related literature.**—Team-teaching and its related elements of non-gradedness and flexible scheduling, have the potential to help education solve its most pressing problems - rising enrollments, teacher shortage and rapidly increasing knowledge. It can provide an environment in which all students' needs are more effectively met than in the conventional classroom; it can facilitate individual instruction; and it can permit better use of teachers' talents and educational technology in passing on the vast amount of knowledge available today.

Team-teaching has been defined as an organizational device which encompasses all aspects of the teaching-learning experience. It is a plan for organizing and assigning members of a school staff in which two or more staff members are responsible for cooperatively planning and carrying on the classroom activities and educational experiences of the pupils. Conditions which are necessary to ensure that team-teaching will be effective are cooperative planning, material support, adequate preparation of the teachers and a climate of administrative support.

The commitment to team-teaching in the United States is substantial. It has spread over twenty-four states. The extent of its enthusiasm within the teaching profession itself cannot be estimated.

The commitment to team-teaching in the regular classroom and its enthusiasm has not spread to the special classes for the educable mentally retarded. There is evidence that some team-teaching is being done in classes for the trainable mentally retarded and the educable
mentally retarded in Atlanta, Georgia.

The objectives of education have been achieved in regular classes where team-teaching was used. Since the objectives of education are much the same for all children, it is possible for team-teaching to be a good pattern to use with the educable mentally retarded.

Instruction in an educable mentally retarded class is done at the developmental and readiness level of the children. Grouping is necessary to accomplish this and team-teaching is concerned with grouping and making better provisions for individual pupils. The best and most advanced methods of organizing a school program should be used to educate all children.

There is no research available on team-teaching in an educable mentally retarded class, but it is believed that all of the research about team-teaching can be related to educating the mentally retarded. A survey was made by the National Education Association on the use of team-teaching in the elementary school. It showed an increase in the use of team-teaching on all levels. Since this is true, it is probable that team-teaching will eventually spread to classes for the educable mentally retarded.

Model classes that have been set up in the Atlanta Schools System are in a sense the foundation for the future of educating the mentally retarded. Many research studies are sure to follow this beginning.

**Findings.**--Observations in the team-teaching class for educable mentally retarded children resulted in these findings:

1. Organization of the class was highly feasible in order to conserve space and to meet the needs of all the children who needed the service.
2. The children learned in spite of any difficulties in organization, where the team-members were concerned.

3. The teachers in this team were not compatible in teaching methods, discipline and child growth and development principles.

4. The methods of teaching and materials used were those used by other teachers.

5. Teacher-principal conferences were held when agreements could not be met by the team members.

6. The contact with many teachers helped most of the children to become better adjusted emotionally and socially.

7. Evaluation sessions were set up to discuss the work of the pupils, their attitudes and behavior and the experiences planned for the pupils.

Conclusions.--The following conclusions have been drawn:

1. The team-teaching organizational pattern can be used effectively in the class for the educable mentally retarded.

2. Children will learn in any situation where good teaching methods are employed.

3. The behavior and attitudes of the children are affected in a positive sense.

4. The flexibility of scheduling is advantageous to the total education of these children.

5. Working with the many teachers in the team did not affect the emotional and social adjustment of the children.

6. Team-teaching can be the answer to the space problem that most schools face.

Implications.--These implications are found to be warranted from the observations in the team unit:

1. More thought should be given to the team-teaching organizational pattern as a method of solving some of the school's problems.
2. Planned experimentation in team-teaching with educable mentally retarded children should be undertaken in the near future.

3. Teachers used as team members should be carefully chosen and trained in group practices.

Recommendations.--The following recommendations are hereby made:

1. That in-service courses on team-teaching be instituted so that trained teachers will be available when they are needed.

2. That neophyte teachers of the educable mentally retarded be allowed to visit model classes for observational purposes.

3. That effective criteria be used in selecting teachers used in the model classes.

4. That more model classes for the retarded be set up in other places.
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Books


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APPENDICES
APPENDIX I

DRAWING OF THE ROOM USED FOR TEAM UNIT
APPENDIX II

SAMPLE ARITHMETIC LESSON
Pennies - Nickels - Quarter

A Quarter

How many? ______ pennies = 1

1 ______ = ______ cents

How many? ______ nickels = 1

1 ______ = ______ nickels

A quarter = ______ nickels = ______ cents
APPENDIX III

SAMPLE READING LESSON
The A B C's

Finish the alphabet.
Write the missing letters on the lines.

a _ c d
e g i _ l _ n o p _
r _ t u v _ x _ z .

The Alphabet

Write the letters on the blocks in the barn. Look at the alphabet letters below.

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

Write the alphabet on the lines.

Name _____________________________

Name _____________________________
APPENDIX IV

SPELLING PUZZLE
Spelling Puzzle

Across
1. My ___ is Mary.
4. i + at - a-
6. i0
7. his - h-
10. Write a few in art
11. Bird
12. 

Down
2. - h-
3. a - n-
5. A ___ shows ___.
8. s + b-
9. l + b-
11. got - t.
APPENDIX V

SAMPLE ENGLISH LESSON
Every line of a poem begins with a capital letter.

Write the first word of each line. Begin with a capital letter.

(mary) _______ had a little lamb,
(it) _______ fleece was white as snow,
(and) _______ everywhere that Mary went,
(the) _______ lamb was sure to go.
(it) _______ followed her to school one day,
(that) _______ was against the rule;
(it) _______ made the children laugh and play,
(to) _______ see the lamb at school.

Name ____________________________

(fun) _______ the teacher turned him out,
(but) _______ still he lingered near;
(and) _______ waited patiently about,
(till) _______ Mary did appear.
(then) _______ he ran to her, and laid
(his) _______ head upon her arm,
(as) _______ if he said, "I'm not afraid;
(you'll) _______ keep me from all harm!"

Name ____________________________
VITA

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