X's students would go on to first grade classrooms where more traditional reading programs were in use. It cannot be said exactly how these students would have fared had they been placed in classrooms in which the program's use was continued, for that was not to be their fate. What can be said, however, is how they and others who have shared their experience did fare. None of Ms. X's students who had begun the program before or shortly after Christmas, and who were unable to continue its use in first grade were in any lower than the middle reading group of any of the first grade classes in which they were enrolled. And none of these students evidenced any confusion about reading without the sounds.

Ms. X could not know all of these things as she watched her students leave for the last time in June. She could only worry and wonder. But, she could also feel very content about herself as a teacher. She had maintained the view throughout the school year that learning to read should be regarded as a run across a field which all could start and, with help and encouragement, all could finish. She had provided the start and the encouragement. Someone else would, for many of her students, watch the finish. She had had the patience to view the run as something to be enjoyed for its own sake. For learning, as is life, is a journey and not just a destination.

First Grade

(Note: This section assumes the reader is already familiar with the earlier sections of this chapter which relate to Ms. X's classroom.)

In a first grade classroom there are two distinctly different possibilities involving use of this program. The first is that the students or at least a substantial number of the students will have used the Baratta-Lorton Reading Program in their kindergarten year. The second is that their first grade year will bring the students their initial exposure to the reading program. We will consider this latter case first.

When children in the first grade have not been introduced to the reading program in kindergarten, all of the program's activities are presented to the first graders in the same order as was described for Ms. X's kindergarten classroom. Although the program in first grade is presented in the same sequence, using the same five-group rotation patterns and whole class lessons as were used by Ms. X, the results are not the same.

First grade children, on the average, absorb information faster than do kindergarten children. The first graders are a year older, a year wiser and a year more experienced in the ways of school. This added year causes all of the first graders to pass through each level of the program more quickly than would have been true for them a year earlier. This, of course, means that students of Russell's ability put even more pressure on their first grade teacher than Ms. X felt in kindergarten. First grade teachers are always under pressure, however, and they would view the kind of pressure students like Russell exert much differently than would Ms X.

First grade teachers are used to the pressures and responsibilities of having to begin a child's school reading career. The usual pressure they face is caused by students like Anthony, who are not reading up to some mythical grade level standard of achievement. Ms. X did not feel pressured by Anthony, because in kindergarten, Anthony wasn't expected to be able to read. Russell was her source of worry, because he was always ready to go where she had not yet been. Quite the reverse is the case for the first grade teachers using the program.

Although first grade teachers may not know exactly what lies ahead for them and for their faster learners as the children advance through the reading program for the first time, first grade teachers are already experienced at teaching reading to students who learn quickly. If a student passes through the reading program too quickly for them, they know they can, if necessary, switch over to the techniques which have worked for them in the past.

The difference between the kindergarten and first grades is not in the materials used nor is it in the order in which their use is explained to the students. It is, instead, in the advancements made by the students in learning to read. An April assessment for a first grade class composed of students equivalent to those in Ms. X's kindergarten would find an 'Anthony' at three-sound blending or, perhaps even at the phrase level. A 'Denise' would be well into the vowels-only/creative writing level. A 'Russell' would be reading and writing anything available to him within the classroom.

At the kindergarten level, the goal set for Anthony was that he be able to blend two-sound words by the end of the school year. Even though a student like Anthony could be expected to learn faster as a first grader than as a kindergarten student, the goal set for him in first grade would be exactly the same as it was in kindergarten; that he be able to blend two-sound words by the end of the year.

The goal for all of the students in each classroom (kindergarten, first, second, or whatever) is that they learn to read. Learning to blend two sounds together to form a word is the most difficult level of the program. It makes no difference if it takes all of his first grade year for an Anthony to learn how to read two-sound words. Learning to read isn't a race. There are no performance deadlines students must meet if they are to learn. If we help our students and give them the time they need, they will all learn to read.

In the case where a substantial number of students entering the first grade have already used the Baratta-Lorton Reading Program in kindergarten, the students are allowed to continue working at the level at which they found themselves at the end of the previous year. Students new to the reading program in first grade will find themselves surrounded with an abundance of helpers in the form of their more experienced classmates.

Second Grade

(**Note:** This section assumes the reader is already familiar with the earlier sections of this chapter which relate to Ms. X's classroom.)

The same two possibilities exist for the reading programs use in a second grade classroom as existed in the first grade. First, that the students have already used the Baratta-Lorton Reading Program in the previous grade. Second, that the second grade year is to be their first year with the program.

When children in the second grade have already used the reading program in the first grade there is not really a need for the second grade to have access to the full reading kit. Even though the full kit is not needed, it will probably be required, unless the second grade teacher is on excellent terms with a first grade teacher who has a reading kit, and the two teachers together can work out a schedule for sharing the necessary materials.

Most of the children who have used the reading program in the first grade, even as their first contact with the program, will be at or through the vowels-only level of the program by the time they enter second grade. A set of small stamps and a few decoding charts is all the second grade teacher needs to extend the use of the program for these students.

The need for access to more of the kit comes from the students like Anthony who will not be as far along if first grade was their only year of using the program. Students like Anthony may be as far as the phrase or transition level or they may just have begun three-sound blending. Where ever they are, their progress towards becoming comfortable readers will be helped tremendously if they can be allowed to continue their work with the program's activities.

The other possibility for second grade is that none of the students have had any previous experience with the reading program. Since formal reading instruction is traditionally begun in the first grade, students who are asked to begin work with the program in second grade can be assumed to have already begun learning to read using some other system of instruction. It can also be as-

sumed that many of the second graders will already have learned how to read from their first grade experiences.

This, then, presents a unique set of circumstances, since as a further assumption, one might reasonably suppose that in this situation the Baratta-Lorton Reading Program would only be used as remedial instruction for those students who did not learn to read as first graders. The use of this reading program for remedial teaching in second grade is the same as for all grades where some students have already learned to read through a more traditional approach and some have not. This 'remedial reading' is discussed in the Upper Grade Section which follows.

Upper Grades

(**Note**: This section assumes the reader is already familiar with the earlier sections of this chapter which relate to Ms. X's classroom.)

Although the Baratta-Lorton Reading Program is recommended for use in any classroom where children need to learn to read, special attention should be paid to the needs of slower learners when the program is used in classrooms above the first grade level. At first grade and below, everyone in class would naturally be expected to use the reading program and all of its related materials. Some students would, of course, make more rapid progress through the activities, but the trail blazed by these faster students would eventually be followed by all of the other students in the room. The very fact that the faster learners have already made use of a material gives that material credence and acceptability in the eyes of all the learners who are to follow.

When the reading program is introduced for the first time in second grade and beyond, the faster students have already learned to read, and would not, therefore, be expected to use a program whose sole purpose is to teach reading. The higher the grade level at which the reading program is first introduced, the greater the number of students who would already have learned to read. The

greater, too, has become the distance between those who can read and those who have not yet learned.

When the reading program is introduced into a fifth grade classroom, for example, it would be quite obvious to all concerned that the program was meant for the so called 'dummies' in class. By the time children reach fifth grade, the non-learners have usually been subjected to being called all kinds of names designed to remind them that they are not as 'bright' as they should be.

If slower learners are not called names, they may learn the message in more subtle ways. Their books never have the right grade level coding on them. Instead, they use the books the better students used a year or two ago. Their classroom or homework assignments aren't the same as everyone else's. It is obvious to the slow learners that they aren't learning what they are supposed to. It has been obvious to them for every year they have been in school. It is obvious to everyone else around them, as well.

When the Baratta-Lorton Reading Program is brought into a fifth grade class for specific use with those students whom it is best able to help, it has the potential of being immediately labeled in everyone's minds as a 'dummy program'; a program for the kids who are too dumb to learn. The faster students or the students who already know how to read won't touch it, because they don't need it and would not want their reputations tarnished by being associated with it.

The problem is that the slower learners whom the reading program can help, won't want to touch it either. They, too, do not want their reputations tarnished by working with the 'dummy stuff'. Of course these slower learners will have to use the program because they are the ones for whom the program was acquired. But they will not find much joy in using it, because using it will only serve as a public identification of themselves as too dumb to learn the same way everyone else learns.

It is possible to use the reading program effectively in an upper grade classroom, even when the kindergarten and first grade classrooms in the same

school are using the program to teach reading, but it is important that the program be presented in a way that allows its use by the students who really need it to carry with it the necessary status and acceptance which will make this use beneficial.

It is obvious, of course, that the slowest learners in class would not feel badly about using the reading program if everyone else in class were using it as well. But, why should the learning needs of everyone else in class be seemingly sacrificed so that a few students could be made to feel the program they are to use isn't just for their own remediation?

There are three reasons why everyone should be introduced to the program when only a very few actually need it to learn to read. First, many students who can read and even many who can read well are, nevertheless, not particularly good at spelling. It has been shown quite conclusively that children who use this program are much better at understanding how words are spelled than are children who have used any one of a variety of other reading programs. Requiring all students in class to use the reading program is not, therefore, a waste of time for the faster learners. All students can, and do, benefit from the opportunity to become better spellers and more proficient writers.

Second, exposing all students in class to the program means that there will be many more people besides the teacher who can provide assistance to those few students in the room who will use the program to learn how to read. Students who have not learned to read by the fifth grade, are usually quite a burden to their classroom teacher. The teacher would like to provide each non-reader all the help he or she might need, but an upper grade classroom just isn't set up to teach beginning reading. There are too many other things to be taught and too many other students who need to learn what fifth grade is supposed to be teaching them, to allow any upper grade teacher much time to deal with children who can't read. In fact, the farther up the grades a non-reader progresses, the harder it is for the teacher to find time to deal with the non-reader's growing problems. If all the students in an upper grade classroom are

allowed to familiarize themselves with the program, it becomes possible for the non-readers to receive plentiful assistance, without placing any undue demands on the teacher's time.

The third reason why everyone should be introduced to the program is simply to give the program credibility in the eyes of the non-readers for whom it is really intended. The reading program will not slow the learning of the faster students. Even so, speed of learning is not the most important aspect of a child's education. If the faster students are used to help the slower ones feel better about themselves, their time will have been well spent. The end result will be an entire class of students who have learned.

Not all of the techniques for introducing and then using the reading program in an upper grade classroom are the same as those which were employed by Ms. X in her kindergarten classroom. To begin with, in the upper grades the program isn't called a "Reading Program" it is called a "Spelling Program".

The upper grade students who can read will see quite plainly on the kit itself that it is called the Baratta-Lorton Reading Program. It is a reading program when it is used in the kindergarten classroom or in the first grade to teach reading, but in the upper grades, where people already know how to read, it is used to teach spelling. The chalk for the chalkboard in the first grade is used to write different things on the board than the same chalk would be used to write on the board in fifth grade. Learning materials are used differently depending upon the grade in which they are being used.

If this explanation seems a bit far fetched, it is because we already know better. It would also seem far fetched in a fifth grade classroom if the slowest learners in the class were the only ones who used the 'spelling program' to help with their 'spelling'. Since everyone in class, even the obviously good readers, is being asked to use the program, however, then it must be for spelling. Why would the teacher ask even the best readers to use a beginning reading program when everybody knows they can already read? Why, indeed!

When upper grade students are first introduced to their new 'spelling' program the techniques employed are in many ways similar to the procedures used by Ms. X in her kindergarten classroom. The teacher introduces the class to the sounds by reading DEKODIPHUKAN, and the students begin working in heterogeneous groups rotating through the five learning stations. The learning stations are the same used by Ms. X, with the exception that the handwriting activities are usually replaced with spelling activities involving the traditional spelling workbooks already present in the classroom. These similarities only last for a week or two, though, before the class switches to the very different techniques which are employed in upper grades.

Since upper grade students of all ability levels learn much faster than comparable students from lower grades, the introduction of the program is accomplished much more swiftly. The teacher can read more pages from DEKODIPHUKAN each day than would be true in kindergarten or first grade. Much less time needs to be spent reviewing the sounds, since many students will have learned them simply from hearing the teacher read the story.

The five learning stations can be introduced directly, without the need to teach a rotating process first through the use of practice stations. To accomplish the introduction of the stations the teacher may simply explain to the class how the activities at each one of the stations are to be conducted. When all of the stations have been explained, the students may be assigned to their groups and allowed to begin rotating through the activities. Since, initially at least, the groups are to be heterogeneous, there will be students in each group for whom blending the sounds into words is no difficulty at all. This insures the ready availability of help for those within each group who could not catch on to what was expected of them with only a short explanation.

The fact that older students catch on to everything more quickly, especially when they are allowed to share their understandings with one another, is used to advantage in speeding up the presentation of the initial levels of the program. The teacher always has the flexibility of slowing down the presenta-

tion again if he or she finds that the students collectively haven't been able to keep up.

Once the basics of how to work at each station have been learned, the groups should be rearranged so that all of the students who need to learn to read are in a group of their own. All of the students who already read well enough are placed in their own separate groups, as well. The group of students who need to learn to read continue to spend their full reading period rotating through the five learning stations. The students who already know how to read spend about thirty minutes a day using the stations to learn to spell and write creatively.

Actually, the group of students who can already read could be phased out of the program altogether. But, since the program really does improve spelling and since the program leads to extensive amounts of creative writing, most of the upper grade teachers who have used the reading program continue to have even their most able students make use of its activities through the creative writing level.

The group of students that is to spend its whole reading period learning from the program may be made into a single learning group, but this may not always be the best course of action. The actual formation of the slower learners into groups is, of course, a decision to be made by the classroom teacher. The considerations to be brought to bear are: first, how many students are there in the slow group population and second, how well do these students work together.

In some cases, students who have not done well in school over a period of years have managed to pick up a few methods of dealing with their school failures that tend to make them discipline problems in the classroom. Since the slower learners in the upper grades account for more than their fair share of the students who are disruptive in class, it is not always wise to put all of the slower students in the same large group. It is often a better plan to pair

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a disruptive student with a calmer one and allow each group to consist of only two or three members.

Ten or more slower students can be divided into as many as five different learning groups for rotation through the learning stations. It is preferable, however, to keep the groups as large as possible, subject to the students' ability to work well with one another. If the students can work cooperatively, it is preferable to divide the ten students into two groups of five.

In upper grade classrooms where some of the students use the reading program all of the time and some only make use of it for about thirty minutes a day, setting up an effective rotation schedule becomes a challenge. The exact plan put into effect in any particular classroom is up to the individual imagination of the teacher. As an assist in putting imagination into action, though, a description of the plan used by a good number of upper grade teachers follows:

The most common solution to the rotation problem has been to assign one block of time to the slower learners who are using the program and allot a separate block of time to everyone else. The slower learners rotate through the stations for an hour or an hour and a half, spending fifteen to twenty minutes at each station. Everyone else in class spends a separate thirty minute period each day working at only a single station. These second groups of students change stations with the change of days. One group might spend Monday with the picture packets, Tuesday with the worksheets, Wednesday with the stamping activities, and so on. Another group might start with the worksheets, move to the stamping activities on Tuesday, and practice penmanship on Wednesday.

Even though the nature of the use of the reading program in an upper grade classroom dictates that the children using it will have to be divided roughly into readers and non-readers, the program is meant to be used as much as possible in heterogeneous and not homogeneous groupings. This means that even though the students who can already read are to be grouped separately from the

non readers, they should not be separated by ability level within their own groupings. Students who are only medium readers should be working side by side with students for whom reading is a breeze. Groups should formed because they work well together. Even in the lower end of the class, care should be taken to see that the students who have the most trouble learning are paired or teamed with students who can at least make a little sense out of their school work.

A key ingredient in Ms. X's approach to the teaching of reading to her kindergarten children was a belief that 'None of us is as smart as all of us'. Kindergarten has no monopoly on the benefits which can be derived when children are encouraged to work cooperatively with one another. The slower children will be in a different rotational framework than the balance of the students in the room. But if children are encouraged both to help and to seek help from one another, the artificial boundaries formed by the groupings need not be a barrier to allowing the people who know to assist the people who need to know. It is possible for all of our students to learn. 'Possible' translates much more easily into 'actual' when we encourage our children to take responsibility for one another's learning.

The E. H. Classroom

(Note: This section assumes the reader is already familiar with the earlier sections of this chapter which relate to Ms. X's classroom.)

This reading program is ideally suited to meeting the needs of educationally handicapped (E.H.) students. The intention of the program is to meet the needs of these students within the confines of the regular self-contained classroom. There are, however, specific situations in which the E.H. child is not in a regular classroom setting. The following is a description of how to present the program in these cases.

The sequence for presenting the materials in an E.H. classroom is the same as that used by Ms. X in her kindergarten class. The speed with which the students in the E.H. classroom advance through the materials will vary, depending

upon the ages of the children involved and the severity of the educational dif-
ficulties they bring with them to the task. On the average, second grade stu-
dents in an E.H. class advance about as rapidly as did Denise in Ms. X's room.
The average fifth or sixth grade E.H. student, on the other hand, would have
given Russell a fair amount of competition.

The learning groups established in E.H. classrooms should anticipate the
likelihood that the students have not yet learned the social skills necessary
for group cooperation. The groups for the E. H. class should, therefore, be
set up much like the groupings which were proposed for the slower learners in
the upper grade classrooms. All five learning stations should be in operation
at all times. The students should be divided into compatible groups of twos
and threes and, hopefully, an occasional four. Severe problem children should
be in a group of one, but only for as long as it takes the child thus isolated
to be helped to learn how to work well with at least one other person.

If in the unlikely event that there are so many children in the E.H. class
at the start of the year who are not initially able to work well with any of
their fellow students, the reading time should be modified accordingly.
'Modified' means there should be two separate reading times, with half the
class engaged in reading for an hour or so while the other half busies itself
with other studies. When the first half of the class has finished its reading
time, it switches places with the second half and reading begins all over
again. It is unlikely that such measures will be necessary and, if they are
necessary, it is unlikely that they will be in effect for long. However, read-
ing is the most important academic subject in the school day. If it means the
reading period must be doubled in length to insure that everyone has a trouble
free chance at learning, then it should be doubled.

The basic problem with E.H. classrooms is the lack of appropriate models
for learning. In Ms. X's classroom, students like Anthony were surrounded by
examples of learning provided by other children in the group. There was also a
ready availability of others in the classroom who could act as surrogate teach-

ers when Ms. X was not conveniently accessible. In an E.H. class, on the other hand, all of the children were placed there precisely because they were not good at learning. This leaves the children few models besides the teacher for how learning is to be accomplished.

The reduced number of students in an E.H. classroom makes the teacher more readily available, but one teacher to share among all students is not as beneficial as the nearly one to one ratio achieved when a room full of heterogeneously grouped children are allowed and encouraged to assist one another. Although the E.H. students will eventually spread themselves out enough in ability that the slower learners will be able to receive both modeling and assistance from the faster ones, it is particularly important in the early stages of the program that the E.H. teacher be very actively involved in the learning process with all of the students. Until the faster learners in the class begin to provide models for the slower ones, the teacher needs to be everybody's model.
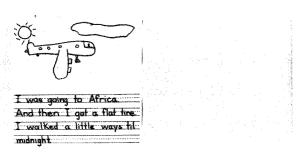
The mere fact of the existence of an E.H. class in a school environment creates special problems for the E.H. students. Quite often everybody in school, including the E.H. students themselves, assumes that being assigned to an E.H. class is positive proof that you are dumb. This is not a difficult problem to counteract within the classroom. Children can easily be persuaded that they have been placed in the room because they are somewhat behind the students in their regular room, and this class is a 'catch up and pass' class. The problem is also possible to counteract outside the confines of the E.H. class itself, but to do so involves a definite public relations effort on the part of the teacher.

It may be assumed that if students at a particular grade level are in an E.H. class which is using the reading program, their regular grade is not using the program. (If the regular grade were using the program, there would usually be no need to pull the E.H. children out of their regular room. They could learn to read as well or better if left in their original classroom environment.) Since no one in the regular grade is using the program, no one besides
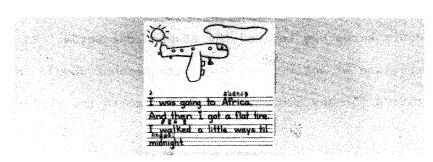
the E.H. students knows how to read the stamped out words. As a supplement to the regular sequence of activities, then, the teacher should introduce modified experience stories for any students who have reached the three-sound level of the program.

To create a modified experience story, the teacher has each child who is at the three-sound level of the program draw a picture. These pictures are much the same pictures Ms. X asked her creative writing students to draw, with one notable exception. When Ms. X had her students create their own pictures and stories, she had them draw the illustrations on one page and include all the written words on another. The pages provided for the E.H. students are set up to allow both the drawings and the words to appear together.

After the pictures have been drawn the teacher has each student, one at a time, describe his or her drawing, as the teacher records the child's words beneath the picture

I was going to Africa
And then I got a flat tire
I walked a little ways til
midnight

The pictures and words are then set aside for a day or two. When the teacher brings them out again, each child, one at a time, is asked to read the words he or she has dictated to go along with the illustration. As each child reads, the teacher notes which words that child has difficulty in remembering. Because the student is being asked to read back the words he or she dictated to go along with his or her own drawing and because the picture appears directly above the words as a reminder of what the words might say, most children are able to read back a good many of the words which they dictated. The teacher stamps out completely (not just 'vowels-only') with the small stamps those words which give a child any difficulty.

I was going to Africa.
And then I got a flat tire.
I walked a little ways til midnight.

The purpose of these modified experience stories is to provide the E.H. student with something which he or she can read aloud to parents and former classmates. The particular modifications introduced are to allow this reading to take place as soon as is reasonably feasible. Words and pictures are placed on the same page, so that the pictures can provide clues as to the words. The child provides both the picture and words so that his or her chance of remembering the words which go along with the picture is greatly increased. The teacher stamps the sounds above each word the child has difficulty in recalling so that the forgotten words have their own separate memory jogger. Children who can blend at least three-sound words can usually make enough sense out of the sounds stamped above their own dictated words to remember the word.

As each child looks on, the teacher stamps the sounds above the words which gave that child difficulty. The pictures and words are then put away for another day or two. When the teacher again takes them out, the child once again is asked to try to read his or her story. The stories which can be read are ready to leave the classroom with their student authors. The stories which cannot be read stay within the confines of the classroom to be read again another day.

The stories which can be read can usually only be deciphered with the aide of the abundant clues which surround them. The pictures, dictated words, and stamps all serve to provide clues which are not present when the same words are encountered in an unfamiliar context. The students who carry these stories home to share with family members, or who read them to a few friends are not yet truly capable of reading just anything which comes their way.

The purpose of the modified creative writing experiences isn't to make readers of the students, because the reading program itself will accomplish

this. The point of the stories is to make as many of the E.H. students as possible _feel_ like they are readers. E.H. students, particularly upper grade E.H. students, need to be able to show themselves, their parents and their friends that they aren't dumb after all. Having a story to read to anybody who wants to hear it goes a long way toward convincing the E.H. student himself or herself that learning is something of which he or she is capable. Upper grade E.H. students are ready to learn, but they can only learn if they believe they can. The stories help create this belief.

Managing Student Behavior in the Classroom

(Portions of this section have been excerpted from MATHEMATICS...A WAY OF THINKING, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1977)

The purpose of this section is to provide a suggested method of classroom control, where the lack of such control has been a problem in the past or is anticipated to be one in the coming year. The system of classroom management described in this section is not an integral part of the reading program itself, but the methods it employs have been found to be highly effective in preparing students to operate in a school environment which stresses self-directed learning.

Learning can only take place in a classroom where the students exercise control over their behavior. Some children come to school already ready to settle down to the task of learning. Some do not. The following description of a plan for managing classroom behavior is one of many possible ways student behavior may be adapted to permit learning to proceed comfortably for all of the students in a classroom. This method had been successful in classes whose potential for student disruption was high and where a substantial number of students considered themselves to be academic failures. It has been used in modified forms in all grades, from kindergarten through sixth.

The system is called a "points system", because points are used to record students' appropriate behavior. The system itself is built on the underlying

assumption that the students in the vast majority of classrooms can be divided into three basic groups.

The first group is composed of students who are ready to do whatever the teacher asks. If they do not understand what they've been asked to do, they are equally ready to sit quietly until the teacher has time to give them additional instruction. Their home environment has so prepared them for school and for accepting the teacher's authority that it wouldn't occur to members of this group to do anything which might offend the teacher in any way. The members of this group rarely, if ever, get into trouble, and always try to complete their work, whether they understand the lesson or not. This group is usually a minority of the students in the typical classroom.

The second group, which is usually in the majority, is composed of students who come to school each day because they are supposed to come to school. They don't come to cause trouble, but they don't come to avoid it either.

The third group, which usually constitutes only a small minority, is composed of what could politely be called antagonistic students. For various reasons, this group does not find school to be an ego building experience. Among very young children, this antagonism can be traced directly to a home environment which failed to get them ready for the social and academic experiences they would encounter in a school setting. For older children, school itself has become a contributing factor. A student who has never earned any praise from a teacher for academic success may, instead, choose to earn the attention of classmates for leadership in other areas. If a student cannot earn recognition for being 'good', he or she might just as well earn it for being 'bad'.

A common pattern in a classroom setting is for the students in the third group to 'act out' in a disruptive manner. This acting out is reinforced by some members of the middle group, who are usually willing to follow a lead. The third group provides the leadership, the second group provides the followers, and members of the first group act as spectators to the teacher-student battle which ensues.

Although the third group might seem the prime area of concern, this is not the group targeted by the points system. Rather, the points system of classroom management is aimed specifically at the second group, which constitutes the majority of the class. If this second group can be encouraged to ignore the leadership offered by the third group, the effect of this third group's disruptive behavior diminishes rapidly.

What often causes the problems in a classroom isn't the initial outburst, but the chain reaction of subsequent outbursts. The thrust of this system of classroom management, therefore, is to stop the middle group from reinforcing the negative behavior of the third group. This does not mean the disruptive behavior of the third group is to be ignored. Rather, the disruptors are to be isolated, so the effects of their behavior can be minimized. The teacher can then deal specifically with their individual difficulties without at the same time having to deal with the problems of a classroom which is out of control.

The points system focuses on six different kinds of behavior. These six behaviors were selected because they were found to be important to the teachers in many of the classrooms utilizing the reading program. Teachers for whom these specific areas are not a concern or who have other areas which need to be dealt with can amend the list appropriately.

The six behaviors are:

1) Starting work promptly.

2) Working diligently.

3) Cleaning up promptly.

4) Using peoples' correct names.

5) Helping others to learn.

6) Tending to one's own business.

1. **Starting work promptly.** When students come into the classroom at the start of the day or after recess they are often excited about something that happened on the school yard, as for example, a fight, or a game, or some gossip. Although students should be allowed to talk to each other, even about

non-school matters, if the class is permitted slowly to unwind from each recess, much valuable learning time can be wasted. For this reason, it is often worthwhile to reward students for coming in and starting work immediately.
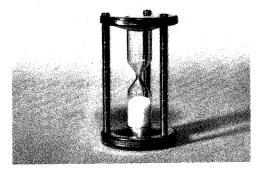
2. **Working diligently.** One student may spend an hour working on a page of problems and get them all wrong. Another student may spend five minutes working on the same problems and get them all right. Who has put more effort into learning? If all students are to feel capable of succeeding, the measure of their efforts should be something other than the number of problems marked right on a given page or the number of picture packets completed at a learning station.

If a student is willing to put in the effort it takes to learn a technique, he or she should not be judged a failure if we, as teachers, have not yet successfully conveyed the technique. The goal is to encourage each student to accomplish the maximum learning of which he or she is capable. For some, this may be a packet or two, for others, even the completion of five or six packets may not be enough. 'Working diligently' is a nebulous phrase meant to emphasize the importance of working hard. By valuing hard work rather than specific output, all students have the opportunity to be rewarded for their efforts.

3. **Cleaning up promptly.** When the teacher decides it is time for the class to stop one activity and start another, as little time as possible should be wasted in the transition. This is particularly important when students are rotating from station to station while using the reading program. When children at one station are not yet ready, the whole class is kept waiting until they have completed their clean-up.

To insure quick clean-up, the teacher announces the time to be allowed for putting things in order and then rewards with points those students who meet the deadline. One minute or three minute sand timers (usually used for timing

the cooking of soft boiled eggs) work quite well to provide a visual image of
how much time is available for cleaning up.

4. **Using peoples' correct names.** Some students' home situations have en-
couraged name calling. Often this may be in fun, but names may also be used to
taunt or tease. At the beginning of the year the teacher should ask each stu-
dent the name he or she would like to be called. That name becomes the only
name which may be used to refer to that person. Any other name is "name call-
ing". No one in class is named "boy" or "girl" or "hey you!" or "Anna
Banana", or even "Teacher". Everyone's correct name is the only name to be
used.

5. **Helping others to learn.** This is a catch-all phrase meant to discour-
age any deliberate act by one student which keeps another from learning. The
importance of being ready to learn and helping other students be ready to learn
should be stressed often. If a student takes a pencil from another student,
the second student is distracted and cannot learn. If a student hits another
student or hides another student's worksheet, these acts, too, prevent learn-
ing. Each student in class is to be encouraged to help everyone else in class.
Occasionally this encouragement may need to be supplemented with discourage-
ment of acts which are counter-productive.

6. **Tending to one's own business.** Some students seem to delight in tat-
tling on their classmates. While specific instances may exist when it may be
necessary to inform on a classmate, these occasions are rare and should be con-
fined to a very narrow set of situations. Tattling is bad for class morale
and, if allowed, leads to the formation of a group of students who seek to win
the teacher's approval by turning in their classmates for the smallest infrac-

tions. A student is justified in reporting another student to the teacher only if the student to be reported has done something which directly affects the reporting student. Any other 'reporting' is not 'tending to one's own business'.

When the teacher has explained the points system categories to his or her students and the points system is in use in the classroom, students may wish to defend an inappropriate behavior or action on their own part by saying, "He did it first!" (meaning someone else started all the fuss). However, in the points system, no distinction is made between who started it and who didn't. No excuses are accepted. Students quickly learn that the teacher considers each of them responsible for his or her own behavior. What other people may have done cannot be used as an excuse for what we, ourselves, do.

There are two reasons for not dealing with the issue of who started something. First, if the teacher accepts as important who started it, then it becomes the teacher's responsibility to hear both sides of the issue and assign blame. This is a time consuming and frustrating process and, in most cases, leaves one or the other of the parties feeling unjustly treated. Second, if the teacher accepts the excuse that someone else started it, the teacher is saying, in effect, that under some circumstances it is permissible to call names, or tease, or hit. Since these behaviors are not acceptable under any circumstance, the fact that someone else did it first is irrelevant.

Responsibility for one's own actions is the single most important notion associated with the categories of the points system. By eliminating the excuse, "She did it first!", the teacher eliminates the support system for those who act out in class. If a student pokes or teases a classmate expecting to get something started, that student quickly finds no one will respond. This lack of response from one's classmates is the goal of the points system and is its most significant effect.

Once the teacher has determined the categories for the points, the time intervals over which the points are to be earned must be decided. Two different

recording sheets may be seen below and on the next page. The first recording sheet is for an upper grade classroom with one morning recess. The second recording sheet is for a kindergarten class.

Names	Start	Work	Clean	Names	Bother	Others	12:50 to 2:00	Start	Work	Clean	Names	Bother	Others	8:15 to 10:30	Start	Work	Clean	Names	Bother	Others	10:30 to 12:50
	1	3	2	2	2	2	Total	1	3	2	2	2	2	Total	1	3	2	2	2	2	Total
Kevin																					
Kim																					
Richard																					
Tina																					
Daryl																					
Rose																					
Mathew																					
Lynda																					
Michael																					
Robin																					
Greg																					
Michele																					
David																					
Lisa B.																					
Bob P.																					
Helen																					
Rhonda																					
Griselda																					
Lisa D.																					
Mildred																					
Julie																					
Denise																					
Bob B.-L.																					
Al																					
Sue																					
Sarah																					
Gia																					
Bill																					
Kris																					

	START	WORK	CLEAN	NAMES	BOTHER	OTHERS	11:00 to 12:00	START	WORK	CLEAN	NAMES	BOTHER	OTHERS	8:00 to 9:00	START	WORK	CLEAN	NAMES	BOTHER	OTHERS	9:15 10:20
	1	3	2	2	2	2	TOTAL	1	3	2	2	2	2	TOTAL	1	3	2	2	2	2	TOTAL
Anthony																					
Betty																					
Carmenia																					
Chris																					
Christine																					
Damien																					
Danny																					
Dawn																					
Denise																					
Eric																					
Joey																					
Lenny																					
Linda																					
Lisa																					
Lonny																					
Maria																					
Michelle																					
Monica A.																					
Monica C.																					
Paul																					
Rachelle																					
Raquel																					
Ricky																					
Russell																					
Sammy																					
Sandy																					
Scott																					
Steve T.																					
Steve W.																					
Tommy																					
Tricia																					

Teachers who have more breaks in their school day should structure their recording sheets so a new recording period begins at the end of each break.

The left-hand column is for the students' names. The six category headings are written across the top of the page in each of the time blocks. Underneath each heading is a number between one and three, representing the number of points a student may earn for behaving appropriately. The actual number of points in each column is based on the arbitrarily assigned weight of importance given by the teacher for the different behaviors. In the recording sheets above, "working diligently" is emphasized and "starting promptly" is not given the same significance. The relative values of each column may be shifted from time to time depending upon the behaviors with which the teacher is most concerned.

Each separate block of time has a column for the total number of points earned. For the record sheets above, twelve points may be earned in each of the three time slots. This means a maximum of thirty-six points is possible on any given day. Perfection is not expected, however, and a good standard to strive for is thirty points out of the thirty-six possible.

The recording sheet is dittoed so that there are enough copies to permit a new record sheet to be used each day.

The reason the students would wish to earn points during the school day is that the points gain them the right to participate in activity time. Activity time is a fifteen to twenty minute period at the end of each school day when the students may make their own choice of whatever they wish to do. Their choices may include such things as drawing pictures, playing checkers with a friend, writing with chalk on the chalkboard, building with the Lego Blocks, or even catching up on some of their school work.

During activity time, the teacher makes available all of the resources of the classroom to the students. The materials available include everything in the room. Old typewriters, puzzles, all kinds of games, looms, yarn, scraps of cloth, building blocks, Tinker Toys, chalk and erasers, View Masters, tape re-

corders, old adding machines, broken clocks to be disassembled, items which might ordinarily have been held in waiting for rainy days, and anything else which is in the room. Flea markets, garage sales and relatives are good supply sources for building up this stock of 'anything' that is available.

Activity time is a very exciting time of the day for the children and all it takes to earn it is just thirty points.

If the points system is to be employed, its use can be introduced as early as the first afternoon of the first day of school. On the afternoon the point system is to be begun, the teacher explains to the students about the activity time they will be having the following afternoon and shows them all of the materials which will be available for their use at that time. When the students are thoroughly excited about the potential of the next afternoon, the teacher explains the points system to them.

It is not expected that all of the children in class will fully understand the relationship between the points they are to earn and the following day's activity time after one brief explanation from their teacher. Most will, however, understand that they need to have thirty points to make it.

The first record sheet in the illustration above has its first block of time from 12:50 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., as opposed to the beginning of the school day. This is because the points earned for each day start accumulating the afternoon of the previous day. Once the teacher finishes explaining the points system, the students are informed that they have already started earning points for the next day. Before they leave at the end of that first day, they are told they have all made an excellent start towards earning tomorrow's activity time.

Throughout the following day, the teacher frequently reminds his or her students that they are earning points in the various categories. As soon as they are given their first assignment, the teacher says, "I am now awarding points to those people who are starting their work promptly." A few minutes later the teacher says, "I am now awarding points to those people who are work-

ing hard." Shortly before the end of the period, the teacher says, "You have three minutes to clean up and return to your desks. At the end of the three minutes I will award points to the people who cleaned up promptly."

Similar statements are made throughout each period: "I can see you are really helping each other learn. I am now awarding points to those people who are helping others learn." "You are making a real effort to call everyone by his or her right name. I am now awarding points those people who have been calling other people by their right names." And so on.

At the beginning of the next time block the teacher praises the students' efforts and reads them their total points from the preceding time block.

During the first few days of school the teacher makes constant reference to the points awarded and reads the point totals regularly. Later, the students are only occasionally informed when the teacher is actually recording points and subtotals are no longer read at the beginning of each time block. Instead, the grand total is read just before activity time begins. As the weeks progress, it is no longer necessary to read totals at all, the teacher simply announces who has earned activity time.

At the start of the year, not all of the students will earn activity time everyday, but it is important that all students earn it at least once or twice during the first week. Some students, particularly those in the upper grades, are so accustomed to failing that they will not expect ever to earn activity time. If they are left with this belief, they will have no reason to try to earn it.

As the students are gaining familiarity with the categories of behavior which earn them points, the teacher may, for a few days, give them reminders before recording the points. These reminders are the teacher's excuse for making sure every student earns activity time sometime during the first week. If a student earns it at least once, that event may be used to help the student earn it again and again. The teacher's goal, stated openly to all students, is for every student to earn activity time everyday.

It is the lack of points and not the teacher that prevents a student from having activity time. The points system, therefore, allows the teacher to tell particular students they cannot have something they want while siding with them in their efforts to achieve it on the following day.

A student who does not earn activity time on any given day has a private talk with teacher about what went wrong. The teacher and the student develop a plan together to help the student earn activity time the next day. They discuss the areas in which the student had difficulty earning points. They then plan how to help the student overcome the difficulties on the next day, with the teacher's assistance if needed.

At the same time the teacher and student develop a plan for helping the student earn activity time the following day, they decide what the student will do in lieu of it this day. If the student wants to sit and do nothing, or work quietly on an assignment, this is acceptable. The 'punishment' comes in not having earned the right to the freedom of choice which activity time represents and not in any specific solo activity to which the student is then assigned.

If a student is angry because he or she hasn't earned activity time, two factors dissipate this anger. The first is the meeting with the teacher to discuss what went wrong and how to correct it. The second is the fact that during this day's activity time the student is already beginning to earn points for the next day's activity time. Each new recording sheet for points begins at the end of the previous day. A student who has failed to earn activity time on one day is already in the process of earning it for the next. This means a student may leave school knowing he or she has already made and excellent start for the following day.

At the start of the year there may be a few students who do not earn activity time everyday. These are the students who have been isolated by the points system itself. It quickly becomes worthwhile for the substantial majority of students to fail to respond to provocation. Those not earning activity time

are, therefore, either the instigators or the students who have not yet learned to control their reactions.

The points system will not eliminate all behavior problems in a classroom. Its purpose is only to isolate the sources of the problems. Once specific students have been isolated, the teacher must work with them individually until they, too, earn activity time on a daily basis.

When all the students begin to earn activity time each day, the teacher unobtrusively stops recording points and begins activity time by announcing everyone has earned it. Occasionally an individual student will have to forego it for an afternoon, but the goal remains, everybody, everyday.

The points system is like a medicine a doctor gives a sick patient. The medicine is used to help the patient recover. As the patient improves the amount of the medicine needed diminishes. When the patient is well, there is no longer any need for the medicine. For the classroom, the points are the medicine. There will be a time when they are no longer needed.

Even though the points system is designed to be phased out, activity time continues all year long. Activity time allows students the opportunity to explore their own interests or examine in greater depth a concept introduced during another period of the day. In addition, activity time allows the teacher the opportunity to observe students at work and at play without being responsible for the learning taking place. Activity time is a beneficial time of day for both the students and the teacher.

Recording points for appropriate student behavior involves observing each student for each category and recording by each student's name the number of points earned. It is important to record points for each student in each time block during the first few days of using the points system, but after the first week, the points may be recorded in a more efficient manner.

Instead of noting which students have earned points in any category, it is simpler to place a small dot in the appropriate square for a student who has

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failed to earn the points. This means, for example, that in the column for starting on time, if all students but one started on time, the teacher would put a single dot in the space of the non-starter rather than record numbers of points earned by everyone else in class.

Although the dots on the record sheet would mean the teacher is actually recording who didn't earn points, all comments to the class should be phrased in terms of who did earn points. The teacher reads aloud how many points each person has earned, and never says how many points anyone failed to earn. Phrased positively, all students in class, even the ones who fail to earn activity time, are earning points.

The psychology behind taking away points is decidedly different from that of awarding points. If each student starts out with thirty-six points and the teacher only keeps track of points lost, the process becomes one of hanging on. Many students fail to earn some points during a day. If points are being taken away instead of earned, those children who slip below thirty can easily make their new goal one of seeing how many points can be lost. It doesn't do much good to the teacher's day to have some of his or her students make a contest out of seeing who can be the first to reach zero. For the same reason, points once earned should never be taken away.

There is a seventh area of behavior which is not included on the points recording sheet. This seventh category is 'fighting'. Fighting is not included on the recording sheet because a student who fights with a classmate is treated as a very special case. Fighting destroys learning. The people directly involved in the fight get too worked up to concentrate on learning. The other children who observe the fight get too excited to learn effectively. The teacher becomes upset. The bad feelings which result can last for days.

Fighting between classmates anywhere, even at home, destroys learning in the classroom. Because it is so serious, if any student fights with a class mate, both students' names are crossed off the points list. This may last as

long as two or three days to demonstrate to all students the severity with which the teacher treats fighting. To add emphasis to the situation, in some cases immediately after a fight between classmates the teacher may refuse to provide the students involved any academic assistance. The rationale for this action is: if the students are not at school to learn, they have no need of a teacher. Fighting with one's classmates is taken as evidence of not being at school to learn.

In schools where fighting among students is common, this harsh approach has proved effective in eliminating inner-classroom battles. No explanations are accepted for the fight.

Fights between students in different rooms in the same school should not affect a person's status on the points list, however, because the teacher can have no control over the behavior of students in other rooms.

A conflict can arise between the teacher's attitude that fighting at school is bad for learning and the attitude of some parents. In some neighborhoods, fighting is assumed to be a necessary way of life. Some students are taught by their parents that in certain situations they must fight. The teacher can avoid a conflict with the teachings of the parents by being sensitive to this reality and stating only that fighting among classmates is bad for learning, not that fighting is bad in all cases.

Within one classroom the teacher can control the environment so that the need to fight is eliminated among that one group of students. Parents who wish their children to be in that classroom will have to modify their stance on fighting accordingly. Fighting and learning cannot coexist.

A points system permits the teacher to redirect the attention of as many students as possible. Once the teacher has their attention, the lessons must convince them they can learn. No system of rewards will help students learn to take control of themselves if the school day causes them to regard themselves as failures.

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