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Study of in-service training of volunteer non-professionals teaching in a special religious education program

Mary Vernon Gentle

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A STUDY OF IN-SERVICE TRAINING
OF VOLUNTEER NON-PROFESSIONALS
TEACHING IN A SPECIAL RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION PROGRAM

by
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A DISSERTATION
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Education
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At the Cardinal Stritch College
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1974
This dissertation has been approved for the Graduate Committee of The Cardinal Stritch College by

(Advisor)

(Reader)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS........................................... iii
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES.......................... vi

CHAPTER

I. THE PROBLEM............................................. 1
   Introduction
   Statement of the Problem
   Justification of the Study
   Limitations of the Study
   Definition of Terms
   Research Hypothesis

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.......................... 7
   Introduction
   Is There a Responsibility to Train Teachers
   in General Catechetics?
   Is There a Responsibility to Train Teachers
   in Special Religious Education?
   Is There a Responsibility to Train Volunteer
   Non-Professionals?
   Is There a Difference Between the Discussion
   Approach and Lecture Approach?
   Summary

III. PROCEDURE............................................ 26
   Statement of the Problem
   Population of the Study
   Procedure and Treatment
   Summary

IV. INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA....................... 32
   Results of the Questionnaire
   Summary
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Comparison of the Lecture Group and the Discussion Group Scores on the Pretest .......................... 28
Table 2: Comparison of the Lecture Group and the Discussion Group Scores on the Posttest ......................... 33
Table 3: Comparison of the Lecture Group and the Discussion Group Scores on Tests 1-12 ............................ 35
Table 4: Comparison of Scores of the Lecture Group and the Discussion Group for Three General Topic Areas .............. 37

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Graphic Representation of the Mean Scores of the Lecture Group and the Discussion Group on Tests Administered During Experimental Period ..................... 36
CHAPTER I

The Problem

Introduction

"Catechetical training is intended to make men's faith become living, conscious, and active through the light of instruction."\(^1\)

With this statement to the Bishops of the world, the participants in the Second Vatican Council challenged all who are engaged in bringing the Good News to the People of God.

If the purpose of catechesis is to make the faith of a man a "living" reality, then the function of the catechist in the growth and development of the faith of others becomes evident. Man is said to meet Jesus through the sacred ministry and also through individual members of the faithful who have a duty to give witness.\(^2\)

It becomes the function of the catechist to act as "Interpreter of the Church among those to be instructed." This is an awesome duty which carries


\(^3\) Ibid.
with it a concomitant responsibility on the part of those dedicated and entrusted with the mission of spreading the Word.

Statement of the Problem

The Council Fathers stressed that care should be taken to train catechists for their mission "so that they will be thoroughly acquainted with the doctrine of the Church and will have both a theoretical and a practical knowledge of the laws of psychology and of pedagogical methods." This could be said to apply even more to the training of catechists working in special religious education of the mentally retarded. While interest has been engendered over the past decade in the education, rehabilitation, and vocational guidance of those individuals who are mentally retarded, it could be questioned whether progress has been made to assist them in their development as Christians—Christians who are "recepients of what the Church offers and contributors to the Church by virtue of the positive attitudes they stimulate in others."

5 National Apostolate for the Mentally Retarded, Preamble to the Constitution of the National Apostolate for the Mentally Retarded.
It is obvious that catechists selected for this delicate mission to the handicapped should be soundly prepared for their duties. In order that they may give effectual religious education to those who are mentally retarded, they should have mastered the methodology for communicating religious truths and have a sufficiently thorough knowledge and understanding of the Message they are to transmit and the psychology of their pupils.

It is the purpose of this study to investigate the comparative effectiveness of two distinct methods of training catechists--one a lecture approach, the other a discussion approach, in order to explore which approach is of greater value to the catechist, who is a volunteer non-professional, in terms of the amount of information that can be conveyed and attained.

Justification of the Study

"Since the catechist stands between God's Message and man as a prophetic mediator between the two,"6 the question of preparedness and ability of the catechist is an important and valid point for consideration. If the catechist is to be the "Mediator," it is the responsibility of the person selecting and training him to be aware of the best and most efficacious approach toward training.

The two approaches under consideration in this study are the discussion and lecture approaches. These were selected because of the frequent implementation in training programs and because of the simplicity with which they can be initiated and maintained.

Limitations of the Study

The number of volunteer non-professionals undergoing teacher training was somewhat small. This limited the study to a degree. However, the fact that they were scattered over many miles and responded similarly, led the examiner to conclude that the small number was a reasonably valid indication of performance.

The duration of time might be considered a limiting factor. The study extended over a 12 week period, concentrating for 4 weeks on each particular area: psychology, pedagogy, and theology. The actual time needed for full development of thought in each of these areas is longer than the allotted time. It was the intention of the examiner to observe results of the teachers in each of these areas during the period of time designated as the experimental period.

The study was also limited by the fact that the effectiveness of the teacher training, employing either the lecture or discussion approach, with regard to the actual manner in which the teachers conveyed the material and the responses ensuing from their teaching procedures
was not measureable.

A final limitation is evidenced in the lack of a posttest to measure the difference between the lecture group and the discussion group after a time lapse of one year or more. This information would concretize the validity of findings, if they prove to be similar or identical to the present findings reported in the study.

Definition of Terms

Lecture Approach: The method of teacher training in which the instructor assumes the lead and responsibility for conveying the material to be learned, doing so, strictly through lecturing.

Discussion Approach: The method of teacher training in which all of the participants (instructor and volunteer teachers) have an equal responsibility for conveying the material to be learned and who do so by individual contributions, questions, and comments.

Volunteer Non-Professional: An individual who freely undertakes the tasks generally assumed by a professional, under the direction and observation of a professional person who trains and advises the volunteer in the execution of his tasks.

Catechist: The communicator of religious truth in a program of religious education.

Special Religious Education: Religious education aimed directly at the spiritual development of those who are
handicapped, in this particular study, the mentally retarded.

In-Service Training: Training conducted while the individual is performing the tasks directly related to the subject matter of the training session.

Mental Retardation: "Mental retardation refers to sub-average general intellectual functioning, occurring during the developmental period and associated with impairment in one or more of the following: 1. maturation, 2. learning, and 3. social adjustment."  

Instructional Objective: A statement which describes an intended outcome for the teacher which will be observable and measurable by the instructor.

Research Hypothesis

The null hypothesis of the present study can be stated thus: In the teacher training of volunteer non-professionals as catechists in programs of special religious education for the mentally retarded, neither the lecture approach nor the discussion approach is more effective or of greater value to the volunteer non-professional in terms of the amount of information that can be conveyed.

CHAPTER II
Review of the Literature

The present paper studies the comparative effectiveness of two approaches to teacher training, a discussion approach and a lecture approach, for volunteer non-professionals working in a program of religious education for those who are mentally retarded.

The review of the literature related to the present study deals with the following aspects of the problem: literature relating the benefits of teacher formation in general catechetics; implications for teacher training in special religious education for the mentally retarded; literature relating to the in-service training of volunteer non-professionals working in programs for the mentally retarded; and studies dealing with the question of the discussion approach versus the lecture approach to teaching.

The purpose of this review of the literature can be placed under four main queries leading, ultimately, to the prime question under consideration. These are as follows:

1. Does formation in catechetics, in general, bring with it any concomitant responsibilities for training teachers to fulfill their mission?
2. Does this same responsibility for training teachers find reiteration in programs of special religious education of those who are mentally retarded?
3. Given the fact that volunteer non-professionals are an integral part of an effective program for the mentally retarded, is there any responsibility, on the part of the professionals, with regard to training them?

4. Is there a measurable difference with regard to the amount of material conveyed and mastered in training methods employing a discussion approach compared with training methods employing a lecture approach?

Is There a Responsibility to Train Teachers in General Catechetics?

"In our times, when there are so few clerics to preach the gospel to such great numbers and to exercise the pastoral ministry, the role of the catechist is of maximum importance. Therefore, their training must be so thorough and so well adapted to cultural advances that, as powerful co-workers of the priestly order, they can perform their task as superbly as can be, even though it is weighed down with new and expanding burdens." 1

The faith, prayer, and lived experiences of the teacher involved in religious education is of great value, since the task requires proclaiming to others the Gospel of Jesus, and simultaneously, serving as an example that this "Good News" gives meaning to life. 2 The catechist,


as the "Medium through which the Gospel message is received" acts to comprise a three-fold program: communication of instruction, development of a program of formation and the preparation for initiation.\(^3\) He acts to make catechesis a religious event and draws on the sources of the message of Jesus. He must know the psychology and sociology of those whom he serves and must incorporate the culture of the time, with its dynamism and personalism into his presentation.\(^4\)

The main objective of catechetical formation is stated in the GENERAL CATECHETICAL DIRECTORY:

The summit and center of catechetical formation lies in an aptitude and ability to communicate the Gospel message. This formation requires, therefore, an accurate formation in theological doctrine, in anthropology, and in methodology, geared to the level of knowledge that is to be attained. The formation does not end, however, with the acquisition of doctrinal knowledge. The formation is complete when the catechist becomes competent to select the most suitable method for communicating the Gospel message to groups and individuals who live in circumstances always different and singular.\(^5\)

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Lee stresses the fact that effective religious education is not a "hit-or-miss affair," but rather the result of very careful, deliberate planning. It is not simply pedagogical methods or recipes, but a good directed process of bringing about a certain outcome.⁶

In order to master their difficulties, Hofinger suggests that the catechist is in need of thorough training.⁷ He further indicates, however, that regardless of the difficulties this may introduce, the preparatory training does not suffice. He calls forth the notion of additional training and guidance of the catechist, in-service.⁸ Tobin concurs with him, introducing the notion that in-service training is not only required but evident, due to the "challenge of changing circumstances, needs, and audience levels."⁹ While agreeing fully with the necessity of such

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⁶ James Michael Lee, "Behavioral Objectives in Religious Instruction," Living Light, VII (Winter, 1970), 18; and also:


⁷ Johannes Hofinger, "How to Further Our Lay Catechists," Lumen Vitae, XIV (Spring, 1959), 413.

⁸ Ibid., p. 413.

formation for teachers, Dufaux has an interesting observation, relating to the purpose for such training. He states:

"More and more, it seems, it is becoming necessary to form catechists who are already responsible for catechetical work. There should not be first a time of formation, and then the exercise of responsibility. The two should go together. It is not because someone has undergone a certain formation that he is qualified to be a catechist, but because, in fact, he has certain qualities and therefore needs formation. In other words, it is not the fact of being appointed to a particular post within an institution so much as the actual capability and aptitude being recognized in practice that render a person competent."10

A very definite part of this formation would be the willingness of the catechist to undergo in-service training. His preparation should be such that he will be able to interpret the reactions of each person with whom he communicates in order to "discern their spiritual capacities and choose the means by which the Gospel message can be received fruitfully and effectively."11 This suggests the value of training which takes place at the same time the actual work of teaching is being performed.12

11 Sacred Congregation of the Clergy, General Catechetical Directory, §113, p. 86.
12 Ibid., §112 C, p. 85.
While the topics for in-service training will cover theoretical and pedagogical areas, the "medium is the message." This places special emphasis on the question of who the catechist could be.

The document, To Teach As Jesus Did, points up the fact that:

The effectiveness of voluntary service in religious education programs must be strengthened. Parish leadership should give recognition and moral support to the volunteers engaged in this work, but, more than that, it should provide adequately financed opportunities for their professional preparation and in-service training. Furthermore, these programs, while retaining their distinctive voluntarism, must at the same time be reinforced by the increased use of well trained, adequately paid professionals in key positions.13

In an experiment conducted with high school students, it was adequately demonstrated that they can assist in various roles in catechetics, but need instruction from a professional in the area of religious instruction.14

In summary, the literature seems to reveal the notion that general catechetics is faced with the problem of preparing teachers, competently, for a task that has infinite possibilities. This responsibility for training does not end with initial preparation, but must be continued during


service or on an in-service basis. The teacher, or catechist, be he young or old; professionally employed or otherwise, must be willing to see the need for continued training and rejuvenation in order that he may be able to spread the joy of the Christian message. The responsibility for stimulating and maintaining the recognition of this need rests with the professional who will provide the training.

Is There a Responsibility to Train Teachers in Special Religious Education?

Because...

"Maladjusted children make up no small part of the citizenry ... Catechesis must provide for these young people the possibility of living a life of faith in accordance with their own state ... The peculiar difficulty in performing this task and the necessity of imparting to such young people only the essential elements can give catechesis, in general, the benefits of employing the methods and ways which pedagogical research discovers and makes available for the sake of these young people." 15

The National Conference of Bishops has stated that "the right of the handicapped to receive religious education adapted to their special needs also challenges the ingenuity and commitment of the Catholic community." 16

15 Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, General Catechetical Directory, §91, p. 70.

16 National Conference of Catholic Bishops, To Teach As Jesus Did, §99, p. 27.
Town and Groff have stressed the fact that the success of a program in religious education for the mentally retarded will be in direct proportion to the ability of the teacher. 17

Concurring with that statement, Kowalski points up the fact that the retarded are open to contemporary methods in catechesis but, "the success of these approaches depends, in large measure, on the effectiveness of the teacher, on her knowledge, and use of the elements of catechesis." 18

Bogardus 19 and Palmer 20 emphasize the need for in-service teacher training in order to achieve maximum competency in the area of religious education of those who are mentally retarded.

In her article, dealing with the subject of catechists for the handicapped, Bouts 21 suggests that a teacher be given

theoretical instruction coupled with practical training. She feels that lectures should be given on doctrine, religious instruction of the handicapped, and principles of psychopedagogy of the mentally retarded child, in general.

The special religious education teachers participating in Kowalski's study indicated a strong response in favor of additional training, demonstrating a preference for workshops and consultative services.22

Both Walter McCarthy23 and James McCarthy24 of the SPRED program emphasize the necessity of the teacher to be prepared for his task, but feel that self-preparation, in the spirit of faith, is of major importance in order that the teacher may develop himself personally to the point where he may be able to give to others.

The responsibility of the instructor of teachers of those who are mentally retarded is brought to light in the following passage:

"We must give really effectual help to the catechists of the handicapped. We must also ... try and find specialist catechists and then give them as far as we possibly can, training which is

22 Sister Gabrielle Kowalski, p. 47.


thorough, suited to their needs and lasting. One of these students said to me the other day: 'What faith we must have to carry out this work!' The harder the work, the more solid and penetrating must the training be. We must not think that it is not worthwhile, that all the other 'normal' children, are waiting. Our Lord's words are quite simple: 'I was hungry and you gave me to eat...'. His words are also exacting: Is it enough to throw bread to those who stretch out their hands? To satisfy the hunger of the children of God, must we not help those who will have to know how to break the Bread for the poor? 25

If there is a problem in the training of catechists for those individuals considered "normal," the literature seems to indicate that there is even more justification for exercising concern for the training of teachers for individuals who are mentally retarded. It has been said that those of the "normal" population can make up for poor teaching by searching and researching, for themselves, the topics of concern and interest to them. However, the teacher of those who are mentally retarded may be the only "book" that the individual will ever "read." It is imperative, then, that the teacher be personally oriented in the proper direction and professionally competent to meet the demands of such a responsibility. The problem of training is of prime consideration in catechetics, but it appears to be of paramount importance when dealing with those who are retarded.

Is There a Responsibility to Train Volunteer Non-Professionals?

With the chronic problem of shortage of manpower in the field of mental retardation, the most promising approach to achieving the degree of care considered adequate for the mentally retarded is to shift the thrust of the work load from the trained professional to volunteer non-professionals, in order to "tap major reservoirs of precious human resources" that are presently little utilized. 26

These volunteer non-professionals should work under the close supervision of a professional and should be trained on an in-service basis by the professional. 27 There has been uniform praise for the contributions of these


volunteer non-professionals in succeeding to extend and apply the highly trained skills of the professionals.28

Allen and Morrison29 suggest that task analysis is needed to plan effective pre-service and in-service programs. Fredericks30 agrees, suggesting that such personnel can be successfully utilized if the situations in which they are placed have been somewhat structured and if they are trained adequately.

In addressing the same topic, Davis31 comments that:

"if the intention is to provide structured individual assistance (for the mentally retarded) in some specific area of 'pupil behavior,' it is strongly suggested that a great deal of effort be devoted to classroom planning on the part of both teacher


Michael T. Savino, Ralph C. Kennedy, Stuart A. Brody, "Using the Nonprofessional in Mental Retardation," Mental Retardation, VI (December, 1968), 4.


31 Davis, "Effective Use of Student Volunteers," p. 79
and volunteer, that certain authority be
given to the student in carrying out
individual projects and that frequent
evaluations be conducted."

Theoretic training cannot be separated from practical
experience; therefore, it seems imperative to involve the
non-professional in experiences relevant to their own skills
and to the learning growth of the student. The training
program should provide experiences for the volunteer
teacher that will establish a pattern for ultimate training
responsibility with the child.

Rich, in a survey of administrators of institu-
tions for the mentally retarded, further suggests, from his
results, that a knowledge of mental retardation and ad-
ministrative knowledge are needed concepts for the volunteer.
Specific job skills did not appear to be of major concern
among his respondents, in comparison with the concern they
expressed for the volunteers to be willing and flexible.

32 Alan Gartner, "The Curriculum: Issues in Combining
Theory and Practice in Training Teacher Aides," Journal of
Research and Development in Education, V (1972), 37.

33 Allen and Morrison, "Differentiated Staffing and
the Non-professional: A Need for Educational Personnel
Development," p. 56.

34 John W. Tenny, "Preparing Teachers of Mentally
Handicapped Children," American Journal of Mental
Deficiency, LVII (1954), 569.

35 Thomas A. Rich and Alden S. Gilmore, "Volunteer
Work with the Retarded," Mental Retardation, II (1964),
233-234.
Volunteers, however, need to be trained or else suffer limitations in their effectiveness. The necessity of training programs for volunteer non-professionals on an in-service basis has been advocated by the President's Panel but brings to mind the question as to which method should be used in the conveyance of the material which serves as the substance for the in-service training program.

In summary, the literature stresses the value and necessity of employing volunteer non-professionals when working with individuals who are mentally retarded, in order to extend the teaching ability of the professional to greater numbers on a more individualized basis. The need was reiterated, for the volunteer to be trained on the job so that the duties that are his can be dealt with in the presence of the professional handling the training sessions. An actual pattern or plan for training was not made available through the research and leads to the question of which method for training is the most effective, in terms of the amount of information that can be conveyed in a short amount of time.

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36 Savino, Kennedy, Brody, "Using the Nonprofessional in Mental Retardation," p. 6.

Is There a Difference Between the Discussion Approach and the Lecture Approach:

The effectiveness of the lecture and discussion approaches has often been compared. McKeachie hypothesizes that:

"Since discussion offers the opportunity for a good deal of student activity and feedback, it could, in theory, be more effective than the lecture method in developing concepts and problem solving skills. However, since the rate of transmission of information is slow in discussion classes, we would expect lecture classes to be superior in helping students acquire knowledge of information."

Eglash's study demonstrated that there was no significant difference between the performance of the two groups on final examinations or on achievement tests several weeks after the course. However, Spence and Husband concur in their findings that while there was no significant


40 R. B. Spence, "Lecture and Class Discussion in Teaching Educational Psychology," Journal of Educational Psychology, XIX (1928), 462.

difference between these two groups, the lecture approach was non-significantly superior. This might be explained by the findings of Ruja\textsuperscript{42} who demonstrated that the lecture approach was superior to the discussion approach as measured by a subject-matter mastery test.

Contrary to these findings, Bane\textsuperscript{43} suggests that while there is no significant difference between the approaches dealing with immediate recall, there is a great difference in delayed recall in favor of discussion.

Substantiating the argument in favor of the discussion approach, Woodruff\textsuperscript{44} states that "the most satisfying classes are those in which most of the class time is spent in open discussion." He feels that discussion is better for "working over"\textsuperscript{45} concepts which have been presented. The main channel of instruction is said to be discussion; lecture is the means for setting up the discussion.\textsuperscript{46}


\textsuperscript{43} C. L. Bane, "The Lecture Versus the Class Discussion Method of College Teaching," School and Society, XXI (1925), 300-302.

\textsuperscript{44} Ashahel D. Woodruff, Basic Concepts of Teaching, (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1961), p. 140.

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., p. 141.

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., p. 145.
Gorman, in utilizing a combination of lecture and discussion in varying degrees, found no significant difference among his groups in the learning outcome, either factual or understanding, or in the interest shown in the course. But the proportion of students taught with equal amounts of lecture and discussion, who were satisfied with the combination of the teaching methods used, was significantly greater than the proportion of students taught mainly by discussion.

He also found that brighter students, who were taught mainly by the lecture method did significantly better on the section of the general examination which tested for general understanding, than did the brighter students in the other sections.47

The preceding studies focus, primarily, on aspects of the learning process rather than on other outcomes. The following two studies seem of interest. Bloom48 played back tapes of classroom activities to groups of college students. He asked them to recall what they were thinking about at the time. It was found that students in the lecture group in comparison with those in the discussion group, reported


significantly more thoughts classified as "irrelevant" or "simple comprehension," and fewer thoughts related to "self," "other persons," and "problem-solving." However, there was no significant difference in attempts to apply the material or evaluate and consider its meaning.

From the results of Butler's study of the lecture and conference techniques as devices for teaching human relations to business executives, it was concluded that the conference method was more effective than the lecture method for teaching human relations.

Despite the many findings of "no significant difference" in effectiveness between the lecture approach and the discussion approach, those studies which have found differences suggest interesting reasons for the demonstrated dissimilarity. In only two studies was one method found superior to the other on the measure of knowledge of subject matter; both of these favored the lecture method. In all of the other experiments finding significant difference, favoring discussion over lecture, the measures were other than final examination or test knowledge.

It seems that the only conclusion to be drawn from the literature is that when one is asked whether a lecture approach is better than a discussion approach to teaching, the appropriate reply is the counter question, "For what goal?"

Summary

In this chapter, related literature was reviewed with emphasis on teacher training in general catechetics and implications for the training of teachers for special religious education of those persons who are mentally retarded. The notion of utilizing volunteer non-professional personnel was reviewed, with respect to the responsibility that such a program would demand with regard to training, and the question of two methods of training was studied, the discussion approach and the lecture approach.
CHAPTER III
Procedure
Statement of the Problem

The problem of the study is to investigate the comparative effectiveness of the discussion approach versus the lecture approach in the in-service training of those engaged in religious education of the mentally retarded, in order to ascertain which approach is of greater value to the volunteer non-professional in terms of the amount of information that can be conveyed.

Population of the Study

The study was conducted with 30 high school juniors and seniors (22 girls and 8 boys) from four cities in the Diocese of Birmingham, Alabama and the Diocese of Mobile, Alabama, over a 14-week period. Age, I.Q., and sex were not considered variables in the study. However, in order to insure comparability, all of the subjects satisfied certain common criteria with regard to age, level of academic achievement, experience and/or knowledge of mental retardation.

The volunteer teachers, both boys and girls, ranged in age from 15.6 years to 17.0 years and had achieved an academic standard of eleventh or twelfth grade in school. All of the volunteers were in college preparatory courses. None of the high school volunteers had any previous training.
or experience in the area of mental retardation, but they seemed to be interested in learning as much as possible.

Procedure and Treatment

The 30 volunteer non-professionals were divided into 6 groups of 5 participants each. Three subgroups formed a larger group receiving a discussion approach to in-service training; the remaining 3 subgroups composed a larger group receiving a lecture approach. Each of the groups of 5 participants were treated individually, employing the method particular to their respective larger group.

The participants met on a regular weekly basis as part of an in-service teacher training session for volunteer teachers participating in a program of religious education for the mentally retarded.

A pretest was administered the first week of the experiment to determine the fact that no significant difference existed between the two larger groups with regard to the amount of previous knowledge they had concerning the general topics to be covered throughout the training sessions. The pretest was adapted from the tests developed by Hahn and Raasch and taken in one sitting.

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The scores on the pretest revealed that among the 30 volunteers, there was a critical ratio of 1.4. This score substantiated the fact that no significant difference could be determined between the two groups. Therefore, the hypothesis that there was no significant difference between the two groups could be accepted.

Table 1 represents the scores of the two groups as they functioned on the pretest.

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF THE LECTURE GROUP AND THE DISCUSSION GROUP SCORES ON THE PRETEST (L-15, D-15)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>T-Ratio</th>
<th>Conf.Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For 12 subsequent weeks, the following procedure was employed for both groups:

A) The volunteer teachers were given a handout introducing the material that was to be covered for the next training session.

B) The following week, the volunteer teachers were given an instructional objective, according to the Mager formula,\(^2\) prior to the initiation of

the training session. The instructional objective facilitated an awareness, on the part of the examiner and the student volunteers, of what would be expected of them immediately after the lecture or discussion, depending on the method being employed for their respective group.

C) There ensued, for a period of 20 minutes, either a lecture presented by the examiner to the same group each week, or a discussion initiated either by the examiner or by one of the participants in the group, on the topic scheduled for the training session.

D) At the end of the time designated by the examiner (20 minutes), the lecture or discussion ceased, and a test was administered. The material tested was alluded to in the handout. However, it was the opinion of the examiner that additional instruction or insight was needed in order to attain the criteria of 90% accuracy set down in each of the instructional objectives.

E) The tests were collected and kept, without being scored, until the end of the experiment. This measure was taken in order to prevent the possibility of introducing the experimenter
bias variable because of knowledge of which group was succeeding and which group might possibility be in need of assistance.

F) The volunteer teachers were then given the material for the next training session, and the format, as described, was continued for the subsequent 11 weeks.

G) A general posttest, identical to the pretest given the first week of the experiment, was administered the final week.

H) The teachers were asked to complete a brief questionnaire which called for their individual opinions of the method which had been employed for their teacher training sessions. These were collected and evaluated by the examiner.

I) The test material was corrected, scored, and computed to note possible differences which could be attributed to the utilization of one of the methods employed. These results will be discussed in Chapter IV.

Summary

This study was concerned with a comparison of two methods of training volunteer non-professionals, a discussion approach and a lecture approach, to ascertain the effectiveness of these approaches with regard to the amount of information that can be conveyed. Having explained the
purpose of the study, the population and the procedure were discussed. Treatment of the two groups was outlined, and tools for measurement were explained.
CHAPTER IV
Interpreparation of the Data

The main purpose of the study was to explore whether there is any significant difference, in terms of the amount of information that can be conveyed, between the lecture approach and the discussion approach in in-service teacher training of volunteer non-professionals participating in a program of religious education for the mentally retarded.

The population of the study consisted of 30 high school juniors and seniors divided into a lecture group and a discussion group. Initial testing, in the form of a pretest, provided data to substantiate the fact that no significant difference existed between the two groups with regard to the amount of previous knowledge they had concerning the general topics to be covered during the training sessions. Over a 12-week period, the volunteer teachers were tested immediately following each training session. The final week of the experiment, a posttest was administered. The data was submitted to statistical analysis computing each of the following: the mean, standard deviation, standard error of the mean, the difference between the means, and the t-ratio for each test. Quantitative and qualitative appraisal of these findings will be discussed in the present chapter.
Comparative data from the posttest for the lecture and discussion groups are depicted in Table 2. The results of the posttest gave rise to evidence suggesting the superiority of the lecture approach over the discussion approach to training non-professionals. The lecture group had a mean score of 86.4 with a standard deviation of 5.9 and a standard error of 1.6; while the discussion group had a mean score of 70.7 with a standard deviation of 16.8 and a standard error of 4.5. The 4.7 difference between the means yielded a t-ratio of 3.3. This is significant, in favor of the lecture method, when 2.048 is the measure taken for confidence at the .05 level.

TABLE 2
COMPARISON OF THE LECTURE GROUP AND THE DISCUSSION GROUP SCORES ON THE POSTTEST (L-15, D-15)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEST GROUP</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>DM</th>
<th>T-Ratio</th>
<th>CONFIDENCE LEVEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POSTTEST</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>86.4</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>70.7</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Upon referring to the pretest scores demonstrated in Table 1 in Chapter III of the present study, observation should be made of the fact that both groups evidenced improvement on the posttest. However, a marked improvement
was evident in those groups employing the lecture method to teacher training. This fact is represented in Figure 1 depicting, graphically, a comparison of mean scores of both the lecture group and the discussion group as they performed throughout the experimental period.

Comparative data from Test 1 through Test 12 for the lecture and the discussion groups are illustrated in Table 3. Examination of the Table reveals that there was a non-significant difference in scores on four of the sub-tests. Note should be made of the occurrence of this non-significant difference between the methods for Tests 1, 3, 5, 7. These tests dealt with the definition and causes of mental retardation, general characteristics of the mentally retarded, steps in the presentation of a lesson, and elements of communication. The remainder of tests, eight in number, showed evidence of a significant difference in favor of the lecture method. The degree of significance ranged from a t-ratio of 2.2 for Test 9 to a t-ratio of 3.4 for Test 11.

It was the intent of the examiner to divide the teacher training material to be dealt with during the training sessions into three general areas containing four discussions each: those dealing with psychology, pedagogy and theology. (The instructional objectives, handouts, and tests for each topic can be found in the Appendix.)
Fig. 1: Graphic representation of Mean Scores of Lecture Group and Discussion Group on Tests Administered during the experimental period.

Test Group

Test 8
Test 7
Test 6
Test 5
Test 4
Test 3
Test 2
Test 1
Pretest
Posttest

Discussion Group

Test 8
Test 7
Test 6
Test 5
Test 4
Test 3
Test 2
Test 1
Pretest
Posttest

Lecture Group
**Table 3**

COMPARISON OF THE LECTURE GROUP AND THE DISCUSSION GROUP SCORES ON TESTS 1-12.
(L-15, D-15)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEST</th>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>T-Ratio</th>
<th>CONFID. LEVEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>.05 n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>69.3</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>78.7</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>-6.9</td>
<td>.05 n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.05 n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.05 n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>.05 n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>85.3</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>.05 n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>85.3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>.05 s.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It should be observed that there were scores suggesting the existence of significant differences in favor of the lecture approach throughout the section dealing with theology (Tests 9-12). Two sessions out of four for both the psychological and pedagogical sections indicated that no significant difference resulted because of implementation of either method.

Taking the composite mean scores for each of the three general topic areas (psychology, pedagogy, theology), there can be observed in Table 4 the existence of significant difference in favor of the lecture method prevailing throughout the entire period of experimentation. This suggests that the lecture approach served the volunteer non-professional teachers effectively, even though there was evidence demonstrating no significant difference for four individual sessions.

**TABLE 4**

**COMPARISON OF SCORES OF THE LECTURE GROUP AND THE DISCUSSION GROUP FOR THREE GENERAL TOPIC AREAS (L-15, D-15)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>MEAN</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>DM</th>
<th>T-Ratio</th>
<th>CONFID. LEVEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psych.</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>89.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedag.</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>86.4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theol.</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results of The Questionnaire

There was unanimous agreement among the participants in the lecture group that the method employed for their teacher training was effective. The following comments are taken directly from the questionnaires to substantiate this reaction:

"I personally think that the lecture method taught me more than any other method could. It was interesting, concise, and informative, and I think I learned something."

"I think it worked very well. If I didn't understand the sheet passed out it would be explained. I think this method should be used quite often, because it makes it very easy to learn and remember."

"I liked it because the material was presented clearly and could be understood and remembered more easily. The lecture was organized or outlined well and I liked the way it was given. There wasn't too much superfluous material. It might have been nice to have a question and/or discussion after the lecture."

The final comment suggesting the incorporation of question and answer session was reiterated by two other volunteer teachers:

"It (lecture approach) is a good method and I feel that I learned from it. However, maybe a question and answer period would help clarify things, if that is allowable."

"I really felt that I learned a lot from the teacher training sessions. The only thing that I wish is that we had had an opportunity to ask some questions."
Among the participants of the discussion group, there was division as to their personal reactions to the method of teacher training. Seven of the volunteer teachers seemed satisfied; one was satisfied with the qualification that lecture prior to the discussion would be better. However, the remaining seven volunteer teachers expressed dissatisfaction. The range of their comments extended from praise to total denial of the method employed:

"I liked it (discussion method) because we had a chance to ask questions, if we didn't understand. We can relate each lesson to our own child, and ask questions, too."

"I learned what I had to learn, but I feel that it was more difficult to do it than it would have been with a lecture method. I feel a method combining the lecture and discussion methods would be the most effective way of teaching."

"I liked the relaxed atmosphere of the discussion method, and I think it helps the teachers to know each other better. I think, however, that the lecture method would be more effective. Sometimes in the discussion, the blind would be leading the blind. At other times, the discussion would not get around to everything. The most effective method of teaching would be a lecture covering the main points and then a discussion on the lecture."

Summarizing these reactions, it could be concluded that there was greater satisfaction among the volunteer teachers utilizing a lecture approach than among those teachers utilizing a discussion approach in their
in-service training sessions. Members from both groups suggested a combination of the methods for effective teaching.

It is the conjecture of the examiner that the degree of success attained by the lecture group could be due, in part, to the serious atmosphere which pervaded each teacher training session. The formality of the situation appeared to have a direct and positive effect on the volunteer non-professionals. This effect was marked by a "business-like" attitude on the part of the young people participating in the group. In contrast, the discussion group was much more informal. This situation led to delay in initiation of the training session, very often. Due to the element of time interjected in the study, the training sessions was often terminated before the material of the session could be fully expounded. It could be questioned whether or not the atmosphere of seriousness, or lack of it, attributed in any way to the amount of information that was conveyed and to the degree of achievement demonstrated on the tests.

Summary

According to the data reported in this chapter, the null hypothesis, stating that there is no significant difference between the lecture approach and the discussion approach in the in-service teacher training of volunteer non-professionals working in a program of special religious
education for those who are mentally retarded, is rejected. Difference in posttest scores favors the lecture group.
CHAPTER V

Summary and Implications

Problem

The purpose of this study was to explore the effectiveness of two approaches to teacher training, a lecture approach and a discussion approach, for volunteer non-professionals working in a program of special religious education, in order to ascertain which of the methods is of greater value to the volunteer non-professionals in terms of the amount of information that can be conveyed.

Population

Thirty high school juniors and seniors (22 girls and 8 boys) participated in the study. The volunteer teachers ranged in age from 15.6 years to 17.0 years and had achieved academic levels of eleventh or twelfth grade in college preparatory courses. None of the participants had any previous training or experience in the area of mental retardation, but they all seemed to demonstrate an interest in learning as much about the field as possible.
At the initiation of the experimental period, all of the participants were given a pretest which demonstrated the fact that there was no significant difference among the subjects with regard to their previous knowledge of the material to be dealt with during the twelve teacher training sessions.

The volunteer non-professionals were divided into 6 groups of 5 participants each. Three of the groups were trained utilizing a lecture approach; the remaining three groups were given a discussion approach to their in-service teacher training.

Treatment of The Data

The data was collected by means of the following instruments: 12 subtests following the training sessions, a posttest and a questionnaire, both of which were administered the final week of the experiment.

The data from each of the subtests was submitted to statistical analysis computing each of the following: the mean, the standard deviation, standard error of the mean, the difference between the means and the T-ratio for each test. Appraisal of the computed data served to substantiate the existence of a significant difference at the .05 level of confidence in favor of the lecture method. This difference was observable in 8 out of the 12 subtests. Consideration of the computed test scores
for each of the general areas (psychology, pedagogy, and theology) suggests the fact that utilization of the lecture method also yielded a significant difference above the discussion methods throughout the experimental period. Analysis of the scores for both the lecture group and the discussion group as each performed on the posttest demonstrated the superiority of the lecture method. Thus, it can be concluded that the data from the various tests employed as the instruments for this particular study substantiate the suggestion of implementation of the lecture method in the in-service teacher training of volunteer non-professionals participating in a program of special religious education.

The unanimity of favorable responses on the questionnaire of those participating in the lecture group suggests that they met with general satisfaction during their training sessions. One member of the lecture group and several members of the discussion group expressed a desire to combine the two methods during subsequent training sessions. While the discussion method was criticized by some members of its group, no one demonstrated any disapproval of implementation of the lecture approach.
Implications and Observations

From the evidence presented in the previous pages, it would seem that the lecture method does have a significant effect on the conveyance of information in a teacher training session for non-professionals working in a program of special religious education.

It is the query of the examiner whether or not the nature of the material being taught had any significant effect on the success of the lecture method. Because the material was new to the subjects, it would be questioned whether or not there was a need to convey the material by means of a lecture approach since the possibility of discussing the topics was limited to the information on the handouts distributed prior to the sessions.

Observable in the results of the test scores on the sacraments (Test 11) is the fact that this session seemed difficult for all participants. This led the examiner to question the backgrounds of the participants. Though the theological implications were not "new," they might possibly be considered a departure from general thinking. The scores could also be attributed to the level of difficulty of the test with regard to the expectancy of the examiner. These facts, though (noted especially) in Test 11, seemed to be evidenced throughout the entire section dealing with theological topics (Tests 9-12).
It should be noted that the examiner felt more comfortable with the lecture group. This might be based on the fact that the examiner knew that a sufficient amount of information was being conveyed to satisfy the goal of each session. The responsibility for communicating the information rested with the examiner, and it was carried out. However, in the discussion group, which was much more leisurely in atmosphere, the examiner felt tension from time to time when a radical departure from the topic occurred or when informality prevailed to the point where little information was being presented due to individual comments based on personal reactions.

Suggestions for Further Study

1. That the present study be replicated employing an opportunity for testing retention of information after a period of a year or more.

2. That a similar study be conducted, using in conjunction with it a scale to determine effective teaching, to ascertain whether in-service teacher training by the lecture method or discussion method has any bearing on the performance of the volunteer non-professionals in the teaching situation.

Summary

Research pertaining to the in-service teacher training of volunteer non-professionals working in a program of special religious education is very limited. The present
The investigator's concern with this problem is an attempt to explore the subject and to ascertain if a particular method of in-service teacher training is successful in communicating information considered necessary for non-professional catechists of those who are mentally retarded.
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Documents


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APPENDIX
Answer True (T) or False (F) to the following statements:

1. Mental retardation is defined in terms of IQ scores.  
2. Most retarded children can be identified at birth.  
3. Educable retarded children are usually recognized as being retarded at an earlier age than trainable.  
4. There are wide differences in the rate of learning among the retarded.  
5. The history of the Christian Church is characterized by continual efforts to help the retarded.  
6. The religious training program is usually unable to develop acceptable outward behavior among the retarded.  
7. Most retarded children are so badly impaired they will never need a special program because it would not profit them.  
8. Some learning characteristics of the retarded seem abnormal because they persist at a later age than among normal children.  
9. The teaching of formal prayers and parts of the liturgy should be basic for all children in special classes.  
10. Lessons commonly contain aims, motivational devices, procedures, and evaluations.  
11. To prevent confusion among the retarded children, the teacher should select reinforcing activities of the same general type for each lesson.
12. The term, behavior management, implies using negative disciplinary methods.

13. Operant conditioning requires punitive actions when the child opposes the ideal behavior desired by the teacher.

14. Retardation is usually due to a single factor, but we usually cannot determine the exact nature of the factor.

15. Generally, the moderately retarded child's interests will correspond to those of other children his age.

16. The most obvious disability in the retarded is in the area of social development.

17. Restricted language ability is a characteristic of most retarded children.

18. Individual lesson plans determine for the teacher the long-range plans and objectives of the teaching program.

19. Programs of religious education for the retarded require the extensive use of equipment, such as: projectors, records, Language Masters, etc.

20. Undesirable behavior occurs more frequently among the retarded than among normal children of the same age.
1st Week:

Given an approved definition of Mental Retardation, you must be able to define mental retardation in your own words and answer, with at least 90% accuracy, the questions on the posttest regarding the definition, as given.
WHAT IS MENTAL RETARDATION?

Before an effective discussion of mental retardation can be initiated, the term itself must be defined. "Retardation means slowness in progress or development." Mental retardation means slowness in mental or intellectual progress or development. The mentally retarded person has unusual difficulty in learning. He has trouble applying what he does learn to everyday life and in adapting to the ways of the world. The following is an approved definition of mental retardation accepted by the American Association of Mental Deficiency:

Mental retardation refers to subaverage, general, intellectual functioning which originates during the developmental period and is associated with impairment in adaptive behavior.*

In order to understand the definition, the terms contained in it must be further defined:

subaverage - refers statistically to performance which is greater than one deviation below the population mean of the age group involved on measures of general intellectual functioning.

general intellectual functioning - the performance on one or more of the various objectives tests developed for the purpose.

developmental period - the upper age limit of this period is approximated for practical purposes at 16 years.

impairment - deficiency in one or more of the three aspects of adaptable behavior (learning, maturation, social adaptation) warranting the need of the individual for professional services and/or local action as a mentally retarded person.

maturation - sequential development of self-help skills of infancy and early childhood such as sitting, crawling, standing, walking, talking, habit training and interaction with peers.

learning - refers to the ability to acquire knowledge as a transfer from experience; evident in academic situations.

social adjustment or adaptation - the degree to which the individual is able to provide for himself independently in the community and in profitable employment, as well as his ability to meet and conform to other personal and social responsibilities and standards set by the community.
Summary: With this definition, MENTAL RETARDATION would be descriptive of the present status of the individual with regard to intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior.

Each mentally retarded person is an individual. His limitations and possibilities depend upon the degree of his retardation.

The President's Panel on Mental Retardation* divided mental retardation into four levels--measured by the person's ability to learn and to apply what he was learned to everyday life.

MILDLY RETARDED
1. Make up the majority of the retarded
2. Have a mental age of from 8 years to just under normal
3. Can learn to read and do simple arithmetic with special education
4. Are usually self-sufficient as an adult

MODERATELY RETARDED
1. Can learn words and simple sentences
2. Have a mental age of from 3-8 years
3. Can learn basic habits and skills and do simple work under sheltered conditions
4. Are seldom self-sufficient

SEVERELY RETARDED
1. Can learn daily routine, only
2. Reach a mental age of less than 3 years
3. Can usually learn to walk and speak a few simple words
4. Need continuing direction and supervision

PROFOUNDLY RETARDED
1. Make up a very small percentage of the total number of mentally retarded persons
2. Are often not able to walk or talk
3. Show basic emotional responses and respond to others
4. Usually need continuous care as they are incapable of self-maintenance.

The definition and the degrees of mental retardation mentioned and described above should equip you with a basic notion of what mental retardation is--at least to the extent that we are able to write about it.
MENTAL RETARDATION POSTTEST

NAME CENTER NEW TEACHER EXPERIENCED TR.

Complete the following definition of mental retardation using the correct words chosen from this list:

modified intellectual
subaverage mental
adaptive impairment
devmental growth
discrepancy

Mental retardation refers to _______general_______
functioning, occurring during the _______period and
associated with _______behavior.

Fill in the blanks with one of the following:

President's Panel learning
maturation moderately retarded
social adjustment severely retarded
retardation mildly retarded
profoundly retarded American Association

1. _______ means slowness in development or progress.
2. _______ refers to the ability to acquire knowledge as a transfer from experience.
3. The _______ usually need continuous care as they are incapable of self-maintainence.
4. The _______ can learn basic habits and skills and do simple work.
5. The _______ divided mental retardation into 4 levels measured by the person's ability to learn and apply what he has learned.
6. _______ refers to sequential development of self-help skill of infancy and early childhood.
7. The _____________ make up the majority of the retarded.

8. The degree to which the individual is able to provide for himself individually is the measure of his _____________.

9. The _____________ can learn to walk and speak a few simple words.
2nd Week:

Given 7 general causes of mental retardation in the general population, you must be able to list five general causes, in writing, and answer the questions on the posttest with at least 90% accuracy.
WHAT CAUSES MENTAL RETARDATION?

Just as there are varying degrees of mental retardation, so are the causes of mental retardation many and varied.

Mental retardation may occur from either internal or external factors. Many of its causes are yet unknown, and it is impossible to explain all of the factors involved in mental retardation.

Mental retardation often results from prenatal causes. Infections or poisons in the mother’s system during pregnancy (a common example of which is German measles, inadequate oxygen supply to the unborn, or nutritional problems of the mother) may all result in mental retardation.

Many people have the impression that all mental retardation is hereditary. Some types of mental retardation do appear to result from hereditary causes—chromosome abnormalities. Authorities, however, recognize heredity as the cause of only a few types of retardation. Parents of above average intelligence with no history of mental retardation in their families may have a retarded child.

Some causes may occur at birth or during early childhood. Infections of the Central Nervous System (CNS) during infancy, injuries to the brain at birth, head injuries in childhood, and abnormal growth of the brain, may all result in retardation. These conditions cause the disorganization of the CNS, leaving the brain unable to receive and/or send complete messages.

In some cases of mental retardation, resulting from organic causes, it has been possible to devise effective preventive action. Good examples of such prevention include the discovery of the RH blood factor incompatibility in newborn infants, remedied by transfusions or complete changes of blood supply. Dietary changes to overcome faulty blood chemistry in babies (the metabolic disorder in phenylketonuria PKU) has also been devised to prevent retardation.

Emotional disturbances in a person with normal potential can cause another form of internal retardation. When a person becomes overwhelmed by his emotional problems, he may block his ability to learn and will therefore function at a retarded level.
Many retarded children come from more disadvantaged classes of society. Their retardation results from a lack of stimulus. These children lack not only many of the material necessities of life but also the opportunities and motivation to learn. Deprivation of opportunities for learning intellectual skills, childhood emotional disorders interfering with learning, or obscure motivational factors, make it impossible for many young people to develop properly.

Another cause, also related to poor living conditions, is unfavorable health factors. These may include inadequate health care for the infant or child or for the mother during pregnancy. Poor nutrition while the child is growing may be another factor.

All of these factors make it clear that many cases of mental retardation are directly related to poor environments. Correction of these basic living conditions is necessary to prevent an increasing amount of mental retardation.

DETECTING MENTAL RETARDATION

The early detection of mental retardation is often vitally important in the treatment of the condition. Distinct physical handicaps at the time of birth make a diagnosis of mental retardation much easier. Lack of these handicaps, however, may delay the detection of mental retardation until the child has begun school. In the preschool years some signs of mental retardation may become obvious:

1. Slowness in development
2. Lack of a child's normal curiosity and desire to investigate.
3. Marked slowness in being able to walk and talk, crawl, sit up, hold things and recognize people

Not all children develop at the same rate, and slowness in one of these areas does not always mean mental retardation. An alert physician can tell when certain signs may mean mental retardation and can institute a testing program to check for retardation. If mental retardation is not diagnosed until the child enters school, the teacher is often the one who must detect the situation or condition. The child may show certain signs:

1. Constant failure in school subjects
2. A lack of proper judgment
3. Inability to follow simple instructions
4. Inability to keep up with classmates

When the teacher recognizes some or all of these signs, together with the school nurse, she may counsel with the parents and suggest that the child be examined by a physician and then by a psychologist. Tests will then be employed to determine if a child is retarded and if so, the kind and level of retardation. These tests cover nearly every aspect of the child's background including his family, health, intelligence, and emotional makeup. These tests are administered and evaluated by specialists.
CAUSES OF MENTAL RETARDATION POSTTEST

NAME________________ CENTER________________ NEW TEACHER EXPERIENCED TR.____

List five of the seven general causes of mental retardation in the general population:

1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________
3. ____________________________
4. ____________________________
5. ____________________________

After reading the following statements, decide whether they are true (T) or false (F):

1. ___ A mildly retarded child can always be detected before entering school.
2. ___ Profoundly retarded children are usually discovered at birth or very soon afterwards.
3. ___ Some cases of mental retardation can be arrested through medical treatments or surgery or dietetic measures.
4. ___ Environmental conditions at work within a child can prevent proper responses and therefore lead to a false assumption of mental retardation.
3rd Week:

Given the general characteristics of retarded children, you must be able to compare and contrast the retarded child with the "normal" child in the following areas:

- physical development
- social development
- emotional development
- psychological development

This will be done by answering the questions on the posttest with at least 90% accuracy.
GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF RETARDED CHILDREN

Is there a "typical" retarded child? I think not! There is a wide variance among these children as there is among all children. However, there are certain characteristics that they have that set them apart. These will be considered now.

Those who are mentally retarded have limited intellectual functioning. This is the condition that defines them as mentally handicapped and "different" from the general population. However, even within this characteristic there is a wide variance of intellectual abilities.

Retarded children are said to be slow in acquiring and performing developmental tasks. They do not crawl, walk or talk at the time expected for such activities. Even in their play activities they are often behind taking longer to move from independent play to group play.

The physical development of the retarded child may exhibit a discrepancy. Very often there will be no delay in growth; however, in some cases the child may be 2-4 years behind or, in cases of profound mental retardation, may not grow at all.

Dependence upon adults for support and decision making for a longer period of time is evidence of a lag in social development.

Many retarded children have a lower tolerance for frustration and difficulty in controlling their emotions. Many are easily distracted, hyperactive, and have short attention spans. General difficulty in coping with the stresses of life lead to a noticeable difference in emotional development.

The above are the general way in which retarded children differ from the so-called "normal" child. However, one of the greatest crimes that can be committed against them is to consider these characteristics as final and label them likewise. Those individuals who are retarded are DYNAMIC. Therefore, programs for their education and habilitation should be likewise.
THERE IS A COMMON GROUND WHICH ALL CHILDREN SHARE--
ALL HAVE THE SAME BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS.

What are these needs?

1. The need to be loved--the kind of love that takes time
to share--a love that is determined to find him for the
person that he is, a child with a potential.

2. The need to be respected--respected as a member of his
family and his community--not at the verbal level but
at the emotional level--an acceptance of himself for
the person that he is.

3. The need to be successful--the need to go to school in
terms of his own standards, rather than according to the
standards of adults. This is not a "watered-down" suc­
cess or type of education, but one geared to meet his
needs and prepare him for the type of life he will
encounter with success.

Meeting these needs is crucial but not easily done. The
degree to which they are met is largely dependent upon our
attitude toward these children. The result of our attitudes
will affect the way they react to their environment. The
way they react to their environment is going to affect us
and, again, determine, to a degree, our reaction to them.
It is like a wheel with acceptance at the hub.

What is acceptance?

It is not permissiveness, being lazy; it is not adopting a
"hands-off" policy. Acceptance is learning to live with
the situation or condition in which we find ourselves, and
at the same time, building a framework or reference within
which to operate. Acceptance is possible with belief and
faith in the dignity and worth of the individual.

Dr. Paul Benoit said:

"It is sickly sentimentality to exult
over mental retardation as if it were
a good in itself. But it is perfectly
human to rejoice over the existence of
an individual who is retarded, because
such a person represents reality, and
hence can be an object of will or
desire for both man and God. Neither
God nor man wants retardation for its
own sake, but God and man want and
value the mentally retarded person."
To accept these children, to give them emotional support, to teach children of God so that they can take their place in the community, is in keeping with the true concept and belief of the dignity of man.
After reading the following statements, decide whether they are true (T) or false (F):

1. It can be said with certainty that there is as wide a variance among individuals who are mentally retarded as there is among all individuals.
2. The most obvious disability in the retarded is in the area of social development.
3. There are wide differences in the rate of learning among the retarded.
4. It can be supposed that mentally retarded children are delayed in growth at all stages of their physical development.
5. Retarded children are said to be slow in acquiring and performing developmental tasks.
6. The social development of an individual is evidenced by the degree to which he depends on others for support and decision making.
7. All retarded children have a lower tolerance for frustration and difficulty in controlling their emotions.
8. Programs for education and habilitation of the mentally retarded need not be dynamic.
9. There is a common ground which all children share—all have the same psychological needs.
10. Our attitudes rarely affect the way others react to their environment.
4th Week:

Given the general learning characteristics of retarded children, you must be able to list 5 general characteristics in writing, and be able to answer the questions on the posttest with at least 90% accuracy.
LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MENTALLY RETARDED*

Conflicts between the mentally retarded child's intellectual abilities and the demands of the school situation often manifest themselves as difficulties in the learning process. These general difficulties can be seen in the characteristic behavior such as: the tendency to oversimplify ideas; the lack of ability to generalize and transfer what has been learned; limitations in incidental learning; short attention span and/or short memory.

One of the intellectual characteristics attributed to the mentally handicapped child is his tendency to do comparatively better with concrete ideas than with abstractions. For example, when asked to define an object, the retarded child usually does it in terms of its use. Thus, "an orange is to eat;" "a book is to read."

The retarded child also tends to oversimplify ideas related to social learning. The child may be able to recite classroom rules and yet be unaware of what they mean.

A lack of transfer of knowledge from one experience to another is often seen as a characteristic of retarded children. Just because one round, red object is a ball does not necessarily mean that the round, blue object is also a ball--at least to the handicapped individual. This fact demonstrates the necessity of teaching the child, specifically in each situation, trying to make the transfers with and for him as much as possible.

A reduced ability to generalize or transfer is noticeable when it is observed that the child has considerable difficulty in seeing the common features of two similar situations separated in time and space. He may have a grasp of the rules governing behavior in the cafeteria line, but three hours later, he may storm through the bus line of other children to get to his favorite seat--without seeming to understand the relationship between the two situations.

The mentally retarded child's limited ability to learn incidental information indicates that the teacher cannot take for granted that the child will acquire information simply because it is immediately in his presence. If, for example, a teacher is trying to develop the concept of "2," this may be done by having the child hand over two objects many times, e.g., 2 red balls, 2 green blocks, 2 blue sticks, etc. He may understand 2 at the end of the lesson, but he will be unable, very often, to tell the
difference between the ball or the stick, or even
distinguish the color. So, when instructing, the teacher
must know what MAIN idea is to be communicated and what
peripheral ideas that the child should acquire.

A characteristic phenomenon in the learning
behavior of the retarded child is short memory. Although
the retarded seem to have a knack for losing what they ac­
quire shortly after they learn, there is more than ample
evidence to demonstrate that new learning which is prac­
ticed often and in a variety of circumstances is as stable
over time as is learning for other people. It should be
pointed out that practice is NOT repetition. One can
repeat an action but fail to practice it or perform it
better.

It is traditional to ascribe to the retarded "short
attention spans." It should be recalled that duration of
attention span may be related to the extent to which the
child comprehends or is interested in what is going on
around him. Most of us have become involved in situations
that are beyond our comprehension or of little interest to
us. We, in such circumstances, doodle, read ads, study
people or doze. The mentally retarded person just fidgets,
pokes others, hums or daydreams. With a lack of attention
it should be remembered: attending behaviors are inextri­
cably related to motivation, reward, and fatigue; and the
presence of inattention is a signal to examine what might
be changed to increase attention. It is not a signal to
stop teaching.

The most important constructive characteristic of the
retarded child is that HE CAN LEARN. He has a potential to
profit from learning if we take into account all of the
characteristics listed above and consider the intensity to
which they exist within each child. But, even more important
for the teacher to remember: HE CAN LEARN IF WE CAN LEARN
HOW TO TEACH.
LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS POSTTEST

In the spaces below, list 5 general learning characteristics that are said to be found among the retarded.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

After reading the following statements, decide whether they are true (T) or false (F).

1. ___ There are wide differences in the rate of learning among the retarded.
2. ___ Some learning characteristics of the mentally retarded seem to be abnormal because they persist at a later age than among normal children.
3. ___ Low frustration, negative attitudes toward learning and self-devaluation are direct results of the lower intellectual development of the retarded.
4. ___ Limited attention span is an indication of brain damage.
5. ___ Acceptance, security, and successful learning will help reverse the failure pattern and negative feelings that develop toward learning.
5th Week:

Given the basic plan for the presentation of a lesson, you must be able to list the 3 major steps in the presentation of a lesson, in writing, and answer the questions on the posttest with at least 90% accuracy.
PRESENTATION OF A LESSON

The goal of every religion lesson is to find the best method of sharing the knowledge, understanding, and love of the faith. In order to accomplish this, the lesson must be prepared in advance. The most efficient, concise, and effective method of presenting a lesson is embodied in the following steps: PREPARATION, PRESENTATION AND EVALUATION.

Each lesson must have a definite aim prior to the steps listed above. The aim in every lesson will incorporate the definite statement of the objective of the particular lesson being taught. What is the child to learn from this lesson?

When the aim has been established in the mind of the teacher, next it is necessary to prepare the mind of the child to receive what is being taught. The first step of the lesson plan, then, is to lead up to the new idea by recapping what the child has already learned about the topic. This could be done by questioning or a discussion.

The purpose of the discussion is to arouse the curiosity of the child and stimulate his interest through an appeal to the imagination and the emotions and thus motivate him to learn. This step directs attention to what is to be taught that day. It also reveals how much knowledge he possesses and how much more knowledge must be furnished concerning a particular lesson.

The presentation is the second step of the lesson plan. It is the most important because actual teaching takes place here. In presenting the lesson, narratives and visual aids are used. These appeal to the senses of the child through the use of concrete objects directly connected with the particular aim of the lesson.

With the matter placed before the child, the teacher endeavors to go deeper into the doctrine by explanation, organization and clarification of the idea. This is done with the child not for him.

In the evaluation step, the teacher finds out how well he has taught the lesson and how much the child has learned and retained. Great care must be taken in this area since retarded children sometimes just mimic words that they do not understand. At this time the teacher will also get a clear idea of what portion of the lesson has to be re-taught.
Evaluation also entails the application of the truth taught to the actual life of the child. This involves the use of an activity that will help to make the lesson a reality in the daily life of the child. It is the success of this step that will measure the success of the entire religion program, for religion for all of us must not be just knowledge, but a way of life, a reason for living.

The steps mentioned above should be thought through by the teacher before the lesson and DURING the lesson. They are distinct in their objectives but inter-related so closely that the absence of one would mean the incompletion of a day's work.
PRESENTATION OF A LESSON POSTTEST

NAME____________________ CENTER________________ EXPERIENCED TR.________________

In the space provided below, list the three major steps in the presentation of a lesson?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Tell whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F):

1. ____ Lessons commonly contain aims, motivational devices, procedures, and methods of diagnosing or evaluating.
2. ____ To prevent confusion among retarded children, the teacher should select reinforcing activities of the same general type for each lesson.
3. ____ Individual lesson plans determine for the teacher the long-range plans and objectives of the teaching program.

Identify which step is being described in the following situations or examples:

1. ____________ The story of Jesus feeding the people is read slowly and distinctly, retold and organized with the child.
2. ____________ The child, teacher, and two others go to a room for a small "tea party."
3. ____________ The teacher asks the child to point to the things in the picture that God made, then asks, "What did God make for you?"
4. At the initiation of the lesson the child is approached with the statement of the teacher: "last week we talked about light; do you remember what we said?"
6th Week:

Given the 10 steps in self-preparation for teaching, you must be able to list at least 7 steps, in writing, and answer the questions of the posttest with at least 90% accuracy.
SELF-PREPARATION FOR TEACHING*

Steps in preparing a lesson:

1. Know the one concept that you want to teach. Go over the idea in your mind, putting yourself in the place of the child—think of his size, age, interest, etc. Withhold judgement on the material to be used in the lesson until you have considered the concept more fully.

2. Write down three key ideas which you think are expressed in the concept. One word may be enough—or a phrase.

3. Go over the concept in your mind again, considering your child's abilities and concerns.

4. Research available material on the concept, keeping the child in mind. List the main ideas that you find.

5. Combine your list (step #2) with the list obtained through research and select the approach that you want to take to communicate the one concept. (This may be the result of a local event, special knowledge that you obtain, your child's abilities, etc.)

6. Spend ten minutes thinking about the material. You can do this while you are working, riding, talking it over with someone.

7. Gather materials for your lesson: ideas, stories, articles or pictures from magazines. Try to have a story applicable to the child for every concept that you want to present. Use material close to the actual life situation of your child. Occasionally humorous or suspense-filled stories will get the point across.

8. Consider how this week's work fits into last week's. Go over what you did the last time that you met the child.

9. Decide how you will begin the lesson, and how you will end the lesson. With both older and younger children, it seems good to begin the lesson with some reference to last week's work. This helps give continuity to the classes. With younger children (3-9), it seems best to end class with an activity, story, or song that relates closely to the lesson of the day. With older children you might try to end with an activity that will tie in with next week's lesson. If the child is able to retain this idea from one week to another comprehension is almost assured.
10. Spend another ten minutes reflecting over the approach for the week as well as the overall goal that you have for the child. Check to see if you have the materials that you need or the material that you are sure will be available in class.

... AND YOU SHOULD BE READY !!!
SELF-PREPARATION POSTTEST

NAME____________ CENTER____________ NEW TEACHER____________ EXPERIENCED TR.____

In the space provided below, list seven of the ten steps in self-preparation:

________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

After reading the following statements, decide if they are true (T) or false (F):

1. ____ A teacher should select activities of the same general type for each lesson, in order to prevent confusion among the children.

2. ____ In choosing materials, the teacher should select those close to the actual life situation of the child.

3. ____ A period of time is necessary immediately before teaching in order to allow the teacher to make an attitude change.
7th Week:

Given the elements of communications techniques you must be able to answer the questions on the posttest with at least 90% accuracy.
COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES*

Communication is the key to successful teaching. How clearly the message is transmitted and how completely it is received determine whether or not the lessons are really learned.

Essential to communication is the readiness of the receiver to grasp the message. He must have the natural experiences on which to build the supernatural ones.

One of the greatest mistakes to be made is to assume that retarded children have had the same experiences that all children have had. Their behavior, appearance or intellectual limitations may have excluded them from many activities.

Those of normal intelligence and mental ability absorb approximately 75% of what they hear. We could assume that retarded children absorb even less than that. Because of this, the teacher must be careful in the choice of words (figures of speech). Religious truths expressed this way will be meaningless.

Teachers should use sentences that are short, stated in the positive, and expressing only ONE idea. Quantitative expressions and comparisons should be avoided, e.g., say "God loves you" rather than "God loves you more than anyone else."

Too much talk is not good. Generally, the children have a deficiency in comprehending the spoken word. Say what you have to say and then STOP. Give the concept time to sink in. We must learn that being quiet with the children is not a thing to be feared. Often the quiet times are the times of real assimilation.

Self-expression on the part of the child should be a goal of teaching. Self-expression is essential to normal development and a lack of acceptable form of communication can indicate or cause a disturbed personality. Very frequently the children have speech handicaps. We must accept this. It is our obligation to make the children secure and able to walk into a room without fear. If speech is totally absent, gestural or postural responses should be accepted.

In teaching, we must be careful of humor. In general, mentally retarded children fail to see absurdities. This is due to their inability to transfer and see
relationships. Laughing at what they say may be inter-
preted by them as laughing AT them. This sort of 
interpretation can hurt.

In any lesson, the method employed from time to 
time will include questioning. Here we must be cautious 
for there is a hierarchy of questioning that must be 
considered.

Initially require the person to repeat what has 
been said with prompting. Reduce this very gradually. 
This technique fastens the child's attention on the con-
cept being taught. Then, while repeating some of the 
factual material, pause and let them "fill in the blanks."

The next stage in questioning is the factual level. 
These are what, who, and where inquiries. This tests grasp 
and retention of the material, and is said by some to be the 
highest level that most retarded individuals attain.

However, stimulate for why and how questions. Skill 
in asking questions and patience will gradually lead the 
child to a point where the response may come. Do not 
eglect this level out of the assumption that it is unat-
tainable for the child. This level of questioning requires 
the internalization of the concept. This is what we are 
trying to evaluate. The why and how of things is the real 
dimension of a fact. So it must be attempted by both 
teacher and child.

The attitude of the teacher is an undefinable thing. 
The total person of the teacher speaks to the child. The 
expectations of the teacher determine how much the child 
learns. Eliza Doolittle in MY FAIR LADY said, "The differ-
ence between a lady and a flower girl is not how she behaves, 
but how she's treated." The sociologist Robert BiersteJidt 
explains it this way: "I am not what I think I am, and I am 
not what you think I am. I am what I think you think I am." 
Your manner will convey to the child hope and possibility. 
Your attitude will say, "I know you can learn." Of course 
he can, and he does.

You are the chief communicator of religious truth 
to the retarded. These principles should serve as a guide 
to facilitate the truths to be conveyed.
The following statements are incomplete. Fill in the blanks using the appropriate word.

1. ________ is the key to successful teaching.

2. Before learning can take place a child must have the ________ experience on which to build the supernatural one.

3. ________ on the part of the child should be a goal of teaching since it is essential to normal development.

4. In teaching we must be careful of ________ since children who are mentally retarded have difficulty in transferring and seeing relationships.

5. The ________ of the teacher determines how much the child will learn.

Tell whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F):

1. Figurative speech is effective when working with a retarded child because it holds his attention.

2. Excessive use of speech is not good when working with a retarded child.

3. The "fill-in-the-blank" type of question serves to fasten the child's attention on the concept being taught.

4. The "how and why" level of questioning is unattainable for a retarded child and should therefore be avoided in order to prevent frustration.

5. The factual level of questioning tests the grasp and retention of the material being conveyed.
8th Week:

Given the basic concepts underlying behavior management, you must be able to identify the major components and answer the questions on the posttest with at least 90% accuracy.
Even the best teacher will occasionally face problems in teaching. For a better understanding of the behavior problems that may occur, let us consider some of the causes of unacceptable behavior.

One goal of any teaching program for retarded children is good social adjustment. Adjustment refers to behavior that furthers a pupil's growth and helps him adapt to new situations. In trying to aid the retarded child, one often encounters behavior that works against this goal. The same is true of behavior of all pupils--retarded, normal or gifted. BUT undesirable behavior occurs more frequently among certain groups such as the retarded.

Their unacceptable behavior is not always willful misbehaving. Some types of behavior may be the result of neurological damage. Brain-damaged retarded children may therefore need special understanding of their behavior problems.

Unacceptable behavior may also occur or result from a teacher's unreasonable requirements. To expect a moderately retarded pupil to "act his age" may be expecting the impossible. The teacher who fails to realize this may make unreasonable demands upon the child's behavior. In these cases what appears to be willful misbehavior may actually be behavior beyond the child's present ability to control.

Of course retarded children WILL and DO misbehave, and some teachers mistakenly tolerate misbehavior thinking that the child has no control over his actions or that restrictions will psychologically damage him. THIS IS AN ERROR.

It is generally agreed that while the behavior of retarded persons may seem extreme, it is NOT the direct result of the retardation. The chief reason for the misbehavior seems to be the frequent failure experiences of the mentally retarded. The frustration resulting from continued failure may cause a person with low intelligence to become aggressive, to resort to immature behavior, or to react with other types of undesirable behavior. Such actions interfere with the individual's social adjustment and may disrupt the group.

If the mentally retarded are to make the proper social adjustment, two basic personality needs MUST be met--the need for security and the need for adequacy. Frequent
failure causes the child to give up easily or not try at all. Misbehavior resulting from failure will be best prevented by bringing about an accepting classroom atmosphere and introducing activities in which the individual can experience success.

The art of handling the child's behavioral responses to obtain good social adjustment has been called discipline or behavior management. This includes not only the negative disciplinary aspect but more important, the positive implication of helping the child adjust by emphasizing alternative behavior in place of the behavior deemed unacceptable.

The first principle to be regarded in an effort to control behavior requires the establishing of limits. If the child is CLEARLY shown what he is allowed to do he will not be as inclined to test to see what "he can get away with."

The second principle has to do with the behavior the teacher may TOLERATE even though he does not approve of it. Not infrequently, a retarded person will be experiencing a new situation, or going through a particular "stage," or is subject to an illness; and these prompt him to behave in ways that are unacceptable. The wise teacher will tend to overlook such behavior, knowing it is very hard to change and is usually temporary.

The third suggestion for control is that of INTERFERING with the behavior in progress. This can be done with a verbal direction, posture or gesture on the part of the teacher that tells the child to STOP.

The fourth principle proposed for controlling behavior is that of PREVENTIVE PLANNING. Better planning of activities, emphasizing successes, varying materials and activities can help prevent unacceptable behavior.

The actions we consider traditionally as disciplinary allow for only alternative: punishment. ALL possibilities should be exhausted before taking this resort. Punishment differs from other methods in that it is a conscious attempt to produce an experience that is unpleasant for the offender. However, the decisive factor in punishment is not what the teacher does with or to the child but what the child does with the punitive experience.

OPERANT CONDITIONING, a method used with the retarded, suggests giving a reward for each action that brings the child closer to acceptable behavior. Shaping behavior through the use of rewards is a method as old as teaching
itself. It is apparent why a method employing success experiences would work well with the retarded. While learning is taking place, the teacher is taking care to reverse the failure pattern and meet the need for security and accomplishment. The consistent, careful use of the method can make the child's view of the whole learning process more positive; and it can help make life a happier, richer, and more satisfying experience for him.

The two main aims of operant conditioning are to reinforce desired behavior and to weaken the unacceptable. Whatever the reward it must be one for which the learner has a REAL desire. To the extent that the reward is something he truly prizes, the individual will tend to repeat the reinforced behavior later in comparable situations.

As the desired behavior is learned, social rewards will gradually replace physical rewards. After the behavior is discouraged by simply not rewarding it.

The reward for appropriate behavior should be given as soon as possible after the child has performed the desired behavior. When praise is called for, the teacher will give it in a few words and with a pleasant voice. In the case of a moderately retarded child, the tone of voice and the simple phrase (using the child's name) will assure him that you are praising him.

Various techniques can help forestall situations in which behavior problems might develop. Well-planned activities with varied methods and materials, firm but friendly handling of the group, work geared to the individual's interests and abilities, and fixed rules that are known to the child, all will work to decrease the chances that anyone will be guilty of unacceptable conduct.
BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POSTTEST

NAME ___________________________ CENTER _______ EXPERIENCED TR. ___

In the following sentences, fill in the blanks choosing the appropriate term:

operant conditioning
interference
establishing limits
preventive planning
toleration

1. _____ involves the development of activities stressing successes.
2. _____ suggests giving a reward for each action that brings the child closer to acceptable behavior.
3. _____ of the misbehavior may be the only resort that a teacher has until the new experience has worn off or the "stage" passed through.
4. _____ involves clearly defining for the child what is allowed.
5. _____ is achieved with a verbal direction, posture or gesture on the part of the teacher that tells the child to stop.

******

Decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F):

1. ____ Undesirable behavior occurs more frequently among the retarded than among normal children of the same age.
2. ____ Operant conditioning requires punitive actions when the child opposes the ideal behavior desired by the teacher.
3. ____ The term, behavior management, implies using negative disciplinary methods.
4. Unacceptable behavior may occur or result from a teacher's unreasonable requirements.

5. Some teachers mistakenly tolerate behavior that is unacceptable, thinking that the child has no control over his actions or that restrictions will psychologically damage him.
9th Week:

Given the basic rationale for the instruction of the mentally retarded in religion, you must be able to state in writing and in explicit terms, your reason for "caring" and be able to answer the questions on the posttest with at least 90% accuracy.
RATIONALE FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF THE MENTALLY RETARDED IN RELIGION*

The mentally retarded individual has long been the object of the charity of the Church. For centuries, Christian belief was the shield that stood between him and destruction or abuse from a society that could find no reason for his being alive at all.

Even in the enlightened 20th Century, the questions are seriously asked, "Why should we teach religion to retarded children? What use is it to them?"

The answer rests, first of all, on the theological premise which stresses the universality of Christianity. No period of history, no group of people is excluded from its influence. If we really believe that Christ wishes to make Himself available to every person, then we realize that Christ accepts people as they really are; and some people are mentally retarded.

God understands, far better than we, the problems these persons bring to the learning situation. But He still wants them to come to Him. Religious instruction makes this union possible. Christ didn't say, "Let the SMART little children come to Me..." His invitation was unlimited.

The psychologist would provide a second reason for teaching religion to the mentally retarded. The aspects of the human person--body, mind, emotions, soul--are intermingled so thoroughly that we cannot think of them separately. We think of a man as a man. His intelligence, or lack of it, is only one aspect of the person he is.

The Christ-event need not be grasped by the intellect alone. Salvation is more than an idea. If this is so, and of course it is, then Christianity is attainable, even for those whose ability to take in ideas is limited. Actually, few persons, even persons of superior intelligence, approach religion in an entirely intellectual way. The correlation between what is known and what is believed is not a perfect one.

The moralist might object to religious instruction of the mentally retarded on the basis of their lack of ability to commit sin. This position might be stated as, "Why bother? These people can't sin. Their souls are saved automatically once they are baptized."
Automatic salvation is a comfortable thought, but not a very logical one. To deny the retardate the capability of sinning, is to deny him the ability to make decisions; to choose right from wrong; love from failure to love. Anyone who has lived or worked with these persons knows that this is simply not so.

When the little boy who is retarded hits his little sister and runs away, he knows very well that he is doing wrong. The profoundly retarded person is capable of selecting some special friends and making an affectionate response to friendship offered. While full knowledge and complete understanding may be lacking, certainly enough remains to justify the conviction that the mentally retarded person is capable of sinning, and is capable of growing in grace.

It might be asked, "But, can the retarded really learn religious truths?". Yes, of course he can. The retarded can learn, because he has learned. All of us have had the experience of watching a retarded child unfold the newness of a religious thought—maybe not in word but in the response that he gives with his smile or with the deep look in his eyes.

Why should we teach religion to retarded children? Of what use is it to them? These children should receive the Good News because:

1. Christ wants them to. God accepts them as they are and loves them as they are, even when they are mentally retarded.

2. Mental development is not necessarily proportionate to spiritual capacity, and Christianity can be grasped even by those with limited intellectual powers.

3. Though complete understanding may be lacking, most retarded children are capable of knowing good and bad; of making choices. They can fail in love and they can grow in love, and they need religious instruction to help shape their decisions.

4. They should be taught what they are capable of learning; they have proved repeatedly that they can learn religious truths.
Learned theologians, the mentally retarded will never become, as will few of the rest of us. However, their understanding that religion is something that you can do something about has been demonstrated frequently.

Abbe' Bissionier, who teaches retarded children in Paris, sums up the answer to the question, "Why teach religion to the retarded?" in this way:

"Let such children approach the Lord...and let us not be among those who try to keep them from Him. Let us believe in their worth, in their reason for being. Let us know, in one word, how to love them as God Himself loves them, He who has reasons for allowing their life, for maintaining their presence amongst us, on our earth and in His Church, of which they are also members."
In the space provided below, state in explicit terms YOUR rationale or reason for "caring" enough to teach religion to children who are mentally retarded.

Those individuals who are mentally retarded should receive religious instruction because:

If additional space is needed to complete your answer, use the reverse side.

Decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F):

1.  ____ The mentally retarded individual has long been the object of the charity of the Church.

2.  ____ The history of the Christian Church is characterized by continual efforts to help the retarded.

3.  ____ Mental development is not proportionate to spiritual capacity.

4.  ____ The correlation between what is known and what is believed is not a perfect one.
5. Because complete understanding is lacking, most retarded children are incapable of knowing good and bad--of making choices.

6. The mentally retarded can learn religious truths.
10th Week:

Given a general overview of the religious concepts to which the mentally retarded should be exposed, you must be able to answer the questions on the posttest with at least 90% accuracy.
Life is what religion is all about. Jesus came to show men how to realize their potential for human living. He came to help them to understand life in all its strengths, its weaknesses, and purposes. He continues today, to give men His Spirit—the Spirit of life, of truth, and of love. Within the human community, and particularly through the community of believers, the Spirit of Jesus enables men to tap the deep sources of human vitality and to penetrate the mystery of life. The aim of religious education is to open the Christian to the life-giving and life-clarifying activity of the Spirit of Jesus.

Authentic religious growth is influenced by, keeps pace with, and is integrated into one's overall human development within a given culture. The Second Vatican Council urged Christian education to allow, continually, the light of the Gospel to play upon cultural and technological advances. It is apparent that time has brought with it a new challenge. Cultural changes are taking place of which we must be aware. Personalism, for example, is on the incline. This notion builds man as creator and end. In order to communicate religious truth, the teacher must be aware of the world in which and into which the children being taught are emerging.

We must remember that we are educating for the future—not for the past. This demands of the teacher the responsibility of keeping abreast with developments in doctrine. This is not to suggest that what was taught previously was or is incorrect, but to remind us that the reality of the truth, though constant, is still seeking new means of expression with the changes of time.

Vatican II has said that the goal of religion is to make "man's faith become living, conscious, and active through the light of instruction." With this directive in mind, it is easy to see that the thrust of a relevant program of religious education must be toward the life experiences of the individual participating in the program.

In order to facilitate instruction, the psychological development of the child must be taken into consideration. It must be realized that children learn in a concrete way. They must be given the opportunity to experience and search which brings about discovery and reflection, before the process of inference and interpretation can come about.
This is to say that experience "is the best teacher." and the first stage in the process of learning which is seen in the application of a truth to an individual's life situation.

For this to be possible, the gifts God has given to us should be used as the basis for study. God expresses Himself via creation—people and things—His Son acting through us.

We should try to view the child and his world in a manner similar to the following sketch:

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>God's World</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My World</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.V.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

Everything in the individual's world must be seen as belonging to God and to Him. It is the task of the teacher to lead the child to an experience of Jesus and in doing so to praise of the Father. This brings about a sort of "cross-fertilization" process. We experience life and in doing so, we experience God. This experience of God enhances our appreciation of life and this in turn makes us more aware of God's love, and so on.

The religion lesson must move with the rhythm of life in the experiences of the communities to which the child belongs. Each lesson should encourage reflection, expression and PRAYER, within the context of meaningful experiences in the life of the child. Exploration and an appreciation of what it means to be alive, to share, to build, to play, to love, to suffer, and to be with others are essentials in the lessons to be learned. The experience of Jesus and other Christians, past and present, can help the child to understand his own experience and to live a richer, fuller human life. Hopefully, the living of such a life will bring about in the child a desire to spend time—perhaps long moments,
for a child—reflecting on the goodness of Jesus and the
goal of his own life. This will be the initiation of a life
of prayer that the child will take with him from the lesson
to the times, present and future, when he is alone, re-
jected, and fearful.

We must realize that we have to give—that we are
invited to a relationship of love which means that we are
not only given to, but required to give of ourselves to
the degree to which we are able. This is true of all
Christians—ourselves and those whom we teach.

At all times, we must recall that God comes to us
through Scripture, Liturgy, and Doctrine—but He also comes
to us through people and through things. These are the
notions that we, as teachers of religion, are privileged to
entrust to the children.
Complete the following statements using the knowledge and information acquired during the training session as well as your own experience.

1. The aim of religious education is ______________________

2. In order to communicate religious truths, the teacher must be aware of ______________________

3. The basis for the curriculum or course of study in religion should be ______________________

4. Each lesson of religion should encourage the child to ______________________

5. God comes to us through ______________________
11th Week:

Given material regarding the sacramental life of the mentally retarded, you must be able to answer the questions on the posttest with at least 90% accuracy.
In every life there are moments of great sensitivity. They may be experiences of great joy or great sadness. Our lives seem to flow between such moments. We draw strength from such moments, and they enable us to deal with the present situation. The same thing applies in the spiritual life. Great moments of faith and love enable us to carry on in times of dryness and aridity. The powerful and visible moments of faith and love in the Christian Community are called sacraments. This is more obvious in some sacraments than in others, e.g., weddings, anointing of the sick, priesthood. But it is equally true of all sacraments. The difference lies in our preparation and response. You will be preparing the individual with whom you are working for a certain moment and at the same time you will be showing him or her how to respond to God's love—how to live out the call to love.

To speak of the sacraments is to speak of love. It would be possible to deal with how to express love or how to respond to love. The sacraments could be taken as a unit or they could be viewed individually. The person you teach may need help in learning how to express or how to respond to love. He may need help with only one sacrament at this particular time of his life. Therefore, we will consider those sacraments which are of more immediate interest to most of the individuals that come to us. As needs present themselves, more in-depth discussion of the other sacraments can be handled.

The child whom you teach was born with defects that society recognizes as abnormal. Yet, in the eyes of the Church, the child is a person, one with inalienable rights—one who has a priceless dignity and who deserves to be welcomed into the Christian Community. The liturgy of welcome or initiation begins through the sacrament of Baptism, by virtue of which the child is brought into the Christian Community. The child who may be excluded to a degree by many other communities is chosen as more than worthy to belong to Jesus and to the community of believers. It all begins in the sacrament of Baptism, and by it, the child is made even more special because he is given the preeminent means of growth—a new life in which he can excel—the life of God's love within him. God's love is always "GIVEN," no one earns it and so the child has been chosen to receive a gift—a gift that no human power could confer or equal. The child has been called to be a friend of Jesus with all that such friendship involves.
Being a Christian means being concerned with life--with living as a human being in today's world. Christianity involves far more than a knowledge of doctrines and commandments; it is concerned with living. Christ was more than the Truth; He was also the Life and the Way. Baptism brings the child into the Christian Community and, therefore, more intimately into the human community.

In the Eucharist, the child is invited to share in the banquet--a banquet which foreshadows the heavenly wedding feast. The Eucharist is food--not ordinary food--it is special. The Eucharist is Jesus, Himself, who is the Bread of Life. The Eucharist is special and desirable because it is Jesus. This is the essential notion necessary for the reception of Holy Communion. Receiving Eucharist is a way of being close to Jesus, of being united with Him. Deep understanding and love will come gradually. By your attitude and the frequent reception of the Eucharist, the child will be helped to this understanding and love now and for years to come.

The rites of initiation into the Christian Community involve more than the washing at Baptism and the feeding at Eucharist. There is also the sealing which takes place in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Originally, this sealing with the Spirit was linked to Baptism. Later, in the Latin Rite, it assumed a separate place especially with infant Baptism. In more recent times, there is a move to illustrate more clearly its link with Baptism combining the idea of initiation and preparation for the witness of Christian life.

If there is a need in the world today, it is the witness of Christian lives by those who are handicapped. People have become so concerned with problems, so serious, so determined to be materially successful. The world is concerned with productivity and efficiency. The older we get, the more enslaved we become in this race to no where. How wonderful it is to come in contact with handicapped people who have come close to Jesus and have been sealed with the Spirit. In their Christian living, they bring to us a flower of hope--a hope that man's heart can still respond to love.

When you enter into the world of the handicapped, you will be amazed to find yourself entering upon a world of great simplicity and great love. This is more surprising with those who are older, since they are usually more disfigured and have been deeply wounded. Yet love is evident and you will see it and share in it if your hearts are open and simple. The child will begin to know the things that
please and those that aggravate. The choice of such actions is directly related to the conscience that he has or is forming. Conscience is something that develops; it is acquired through the experience of growing up in contact with other people. See how important the teacher becomes as the model upon which the child will base many choices? With the subject of conscience and being able to choose, we think of the sacrament of Reconciliation (confession or Penance). The sacrament is not of absolute necessity in all cases. The Church only obliges those who are guilty of mortal sin to receive the sacrament. Also, a person who never sinned, could not receive the sacrament. He would not be lacking anything in his spiritual development because of "missing" a sacrament.

Reconciliation celebrates the sacrament of God's forgiving love. The child can make a choice, and, therefore, is capable of making a choice for evil or for a lesser good. In doing this, the child may not have serious moral guilt, because of a limited intellectual capacity, but, at the same time, he may have a great need for forgiveness—a great need of being accepted and helped to make the correct choice. This will be a long process, and it will usually be late teens before the child receives this sacrament. Group nonsacramental celebrations of forgiveness are ways of introducing the child to the Father in Heaven who forgives him.

We have been considering the children whom we teach—but what has been said could have been said about any child whether retarded or not. The child is not an I.Q. score, a label, or a poster picture. He is a child. It is the role of the religious educator to help the child feel safe—safe enough to look outside of himself and see what is really there, and even more to feel safe enough to be able to look inside himself and accept the thoughts and feelings that he has. Because of exclusion from the outer world, a retarded child may have an inner world that is very rich. Growth in the spiritual life will be determined by acceptance, not just of the outer world, but also of the world within.

Just as we are, the retarded child is learning to accept his humanity. It was to this humanity that Jesus came. To each one of us He left a legacy. The legacy was the powerful moments of His presence in the sacraments.
Complete the following statements using information gained in your training session:

1. The Sacraments are ____________________________.
2. Being a Christian means being concerned with ________.
3. The essential notion necessary for the Reception of Eucharist is ________________________________.
4. The rites of initiation into the Christian Community are ________________________________.
5. One of the basic needs in the world today is the witnessing of the individual who has been ________.
6. Conscience is acquired through ____________________________.
7. Reconciliation celebrates the sacrament of ________.
8. The Church obliges the sacrament of Penance only when ________________________________.
9. Growth in the spiritual life will be determined by ________________________________.
10. Jesus' legacy to us is ____________________________.
12th Week:

Given a rationale for use of adapted liturgy with the mentally retarded, you must be able to state, in writing, and in explicit terms, a reason for having a "special" Mass, and be able to answer the questions on the posttest with at least 90% accuracy.
RATIONALE FOR THE USE OF ADAPTED LITURGY WITH THE MENTALLY RETARDED

"The liturgy is the outstanding means by which the faithful can express and manifest to others the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the Church" (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy #2). Through the liturgy, which is the public worship of the Church, comprising all of the sacraments and the breviary, the work of our redemption is exercised.

In looking at the definition we can see that the need for participation is implied in the words "the faithful can express their lives." This is to say that each person brings to the time of worship his own self and takes from it a deeper meaning of his life in Jesus.

Participation is an element that must be taken to mean action. The decree on the liturgy states that "Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebration which is demanded by the very nature of liturgy." (#14)

In order to achieve the full and active participation that is desired, it is necessary that the celebration takes into account the psychology of those who are participating in it. Again, we can refer to the Council Fathers who encouraged that "the rites should be distinguished by a noble simplicity; they should be short, clear, and unencumbered by useless repetition; they should be within the people's powers of comprehension, and normally should not require much explanation" (#34).

It is Jesus' wish that the celebration of the Eucharist, the greatest liturgical celebration, be carried out "in memory of Me." Jesus knew that we would need Him and He promised to be with mankind in this special way--all of mankind. Salvation is for all men--all are invited to the wedding feast.

The Mass, as liturgy, fulfills what has been stated above. It is an enactment of our belief in Jesus and in His Church. It calls forth a manifestation of this belief from those celebrating by involving them, actively and consciously, in a rite that is simple and within their powers of comprehension.

A "special" Mass, adapted to the needs of participants who are mentally retarded, reconfirms what the Mass,
as liturgy, is in fact. It allows, through minor adjust-
ments, for the limited ability of the participants and
permits them to express their faith in Jesus in their own
way--actively and consciously.

The Church desires that the faithful, when present
for the liturgy, should not be present as strangers or
silent spectators. But through prayers that are appropriate,
gestures and songs that are in keeping with the age and
abilities of the participants, that each person be encour-
aged--even desire to be part of the celebration at hand,
because it MEANS something to him.

The importance of the liturgy in the life of the
Christian is evidenced in the words of the Council Fathers
who said that "the liturgy is the summit toward which the
activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is
the fountain from which all her power flows" (#10). It is
right that all who believe in Jesus should come together
to be with Him in praise of the Father, to eat of the Lord's
Supper, and to be one. This is the right of all of the
faithful and the right of the faithful who are mentally re-
tarded. Their "handicap" does not mean that liturgy is
unimportant to them. Rather, it means that the Christian
Community is called to bring the message--the same message--
to them in a WAY that is adjusted to their needs--a WAY THAT
IS SPECIAL.
In the space provided below, using information obtained in your training session, state a rationale for the use of an adapted liturgy that will be convincing and one that is based on fact rather than feeling.
The following are references for the various training sessions which have been presented:


QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME __________________ CENTER ______ METHOD ______________

Please complete the following questionnaire using knowledge based on your own personal feeling and the experience you have had during the past twelve training sessions. You will be expected to return this questionnaire next week or complete it after the next training session in your center.

1. I like the method of teacher training employed.  ____________
   did
   did not
   would
   would not

2. I have preferred another method of teacher training.  ____________
   would
   would not

3. I like to continue being trained in this fashion.  ____________
   would
   would not

4. I feel that I learn from this method.  ____________
   did
   did not

5. My personal reaction to the method used is:  __________________________
   __________________________
   __________________________
   __________________________

Any additional Comments:  __________________________
   __________________________
   __________________________

(Signature) __________________________