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MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN SECONDARY READING CLASSROOMS

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One outcome of federal, state or district funding of reading programs has been the development of a competency based curriculum with the inclusion of a classroom management system. This management system is the structure for the implementation of the goals, guidelines and behavioral objectives of the program. Each program with its management system is developed and written by teachers in consultation with school and/or district level cooperation.

The management system in use in the secondary reading classroom should also reflect the teacher's theoretical approach to the teaching of reading. The teacher needs to know what approaches are soundly based in research and how to go about selecting an approach which fits into his teaching style and methodology. The management system would then be a natural outgrowth of a well defined theoretical base. The system therefore would not be randomly selected from samples available and artificially implemented in the classroom.

The teacher's management system and the district's management system do not need to be mutually exclusive. The selection of structural components from each system can reflect the teacher's position and the district's position at the same time.

A Wholistic Approach

The purpose of this paper is to present a management system which reflects a wholistic (reading-language arts) approach to the teaching of reading. Only the management system and the wholistic approach will be discussed. The suggested materials for the teaching of reading both teacher made and commercially prepared which are listed on the sample contract are not discussed due to limited space. However the teachers in the program did use traditional reading materials in a carefully controlled wholistic approach in an innovative setting in the teaching of reading. They avoided assigning individual practice of a hierarchy of skills. The management system and wholistic approach was developed and implemented in an ethnically mixed urban junior high school over a period of four years.

Teachers and researchers who espouse the wholistic approach, view reading as a unitary act. The act should not and cannot be subdivided into bits and pieces of a hierarchy of reading skills. Rather it incorporates the various natural linguistic systems of the reader into a wholistic interrelationship of the graphophonic, syntactic and semantic cues of graphic language.

Reading strategies should involve the students' natural internal tendencies to reconstruct meaning from the writer's written message. In performing this process the student utilizes his natural predicting, confirming and comprehending strategies. These strategies are utilized in listening, reading, writing, and oral language activities through cooperative teacher planning between the classroom and the reading laboratory situation.

Wholistic (reading-language arts) strategy lessons are then based on the diagnostic assessment of individual needs of the students. Diagnostic assessments include the *Reading Miscue Inventory*, criterion referenced tests, standardized reading tests, and informal diagnosis. Contracts and record keeping can then be devised for each individual student in the classroom and reading laboratory with compliance with any existing federal, state or district guidelines.

A Wholistic Management System

The following management system was implemented in a Title I reading/English program at Charles Maclay Junior High School in Los Angeles. The Title I program, involving five seventh and five eighth grade classes, focused on the wholistic approach. This approach was selected after careful assessment of the students' reading status which indicated a need to strengthen their graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic cue systems in all the language arts (reading, writing, oral language and listening). The management system became an integral part of the reading/English program for each Title I student.

The teachers agreed that a successful wholistic reading program must implement three goal areas. These goal areas would be personalized through the implementation of the affective and cognitive areas of growth. Three cognitive-affective goal areas were identified and developed to: (1) provide for reading, both for pleasure and information; (2) provide for personalized skill development in listening, reading comprehension, writing, and oral language; and (3) improve the students' attitudes toward themselves, each other, and the school.

In order to meet these goals efficiently, a complete management system was devised. The management system includes: (1) a reading/English classroom/reading lab rotation schedule, (2) reading lab contracts, (3) goals and objectives for lab and classroom, and (4) pupil profile charts.

Classroom/Reading Lab Rotation Schedule

The reading/English classroom and reading lab management system is based on a five-week rotation, see Chart 1. The reading/English classrooms, of approximately 30 students, are divided into two groups of equal size. The 15 students in Group I go to the reading lab four days during Week 1 and four days during Week 2. Friday of each week is spent with the entire class in the classroom. The students in Group II follow the same schedule of going to the lab during Weeks 3 and 4 while Group I remains in the classroom.

CHART 1

	Week 1 & 2		Week 3 & 4		Week 5
	M-Th	Fr	M-Th	Fr	M-Fr
Classroom A CGAI CGAII	CGAII	CGAI CGAII	CGAII	CGAI	CGAI CGAII
Classroom B CGBI CGBII	CGBII	CGBI CGBII	CGBI	CGBI CGBII	CGBI CGBII
Reading Laboratory	CGAI CGBI	Lab Closed	CGAII CGBII	Lab Closed	Lab closed for new contracts and Learning Center Production

CGA = Classroom Group A

CGB = Classroom Group B

During Week 5 all 30 students remain in the classroom. On the following Monday the rotation begins again with Group I. The lab is closed on Fridays to allow time for correcting students' work and is closed during Week 5 to provide time for preparing new contracts and new learning stations.

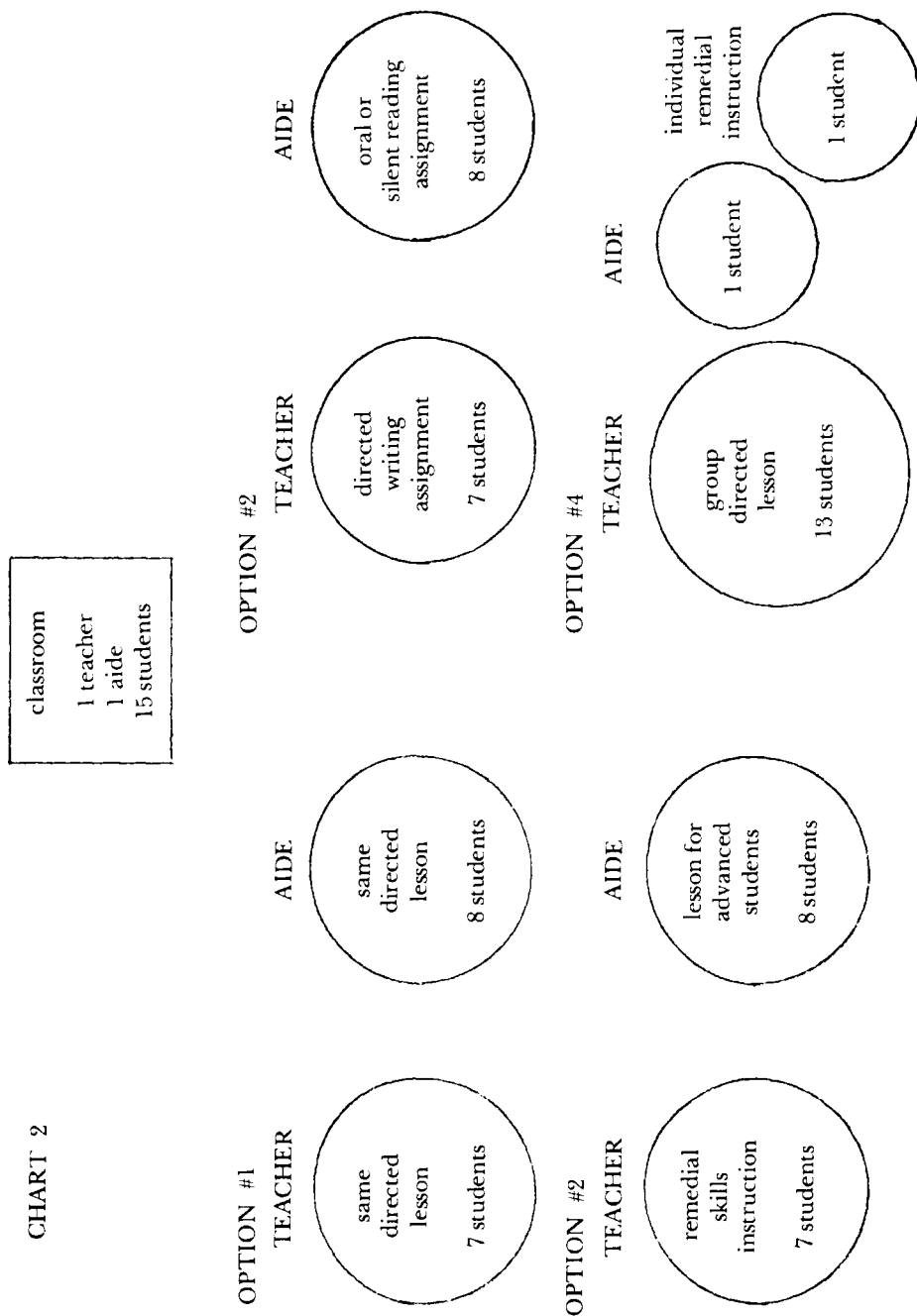
Classroom Organization

On the days that the student remains in the classroom he/she works with approximately 14 other students, a teacher and a teaching assistant on individualized reading, skill development, vocabulary, spelling, reading comprehension, writing and any other special project the classroom teacher has devised. As previously stated, Friday is spent with the entire class in the classroom. This day can be used for unit testing, introduction of new material, review, group presentations, etc.

Record keeping of daily attendance, classroom grades, and reading level grades are the responsibilities of the classroom teachers. The reading laboratory teacher gives her reading lab grades to the classroom teacher at the end of each 5-week period to be incorporated into the student's total grade.

This rotation system, Chart 2, offers the classroom teacher many op-

CHART 2



tions for managing the classroom. Some special advantages for the teacher and the student develop as a result of this management system.

1. The teacher may group students in various ways within one classroom.
2. The teacher can work with small groups of students giving her the opportunity to watch students work and to observe their thought process in operation. This enables the teacher to see mistakes in progress, thereby allowing her to make instant corrections.
3. The teacher plans her lessons for a two-week block of time which fits the time one group is in the lab. This lesson is repeated once again for Group II. By doing this, the teacher's preparation time is minimized.
4. The teacher has more time to deal with individual differences between students.
5. Student work can be immediately corrected for instant feedback.
6. Students have a choice of personalities. They don't have to work with the same person everyday. The teacher and teaching assistant alternate working within the groups.
7. The student has a two week period of time to intensively work through a unit. This gives the slower student a better chance to advance at his own rate.
8. Students can read both for pleasure and for information during a concentrated period of time.

Reading Lab Organization

Thirty students are in the lab at one time, approximately 15 seventh graders and 15 eighth graders. The responsibility for personalized skill development is with the lab teacher. In the lab, each student works on a personalized contract based on skill areas. Students are given their first contract based on the results of the *Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test*. Subsequent lab contracts are based on the student's achievement on the completed contract. Eighth grade students are given a contract based on work completed in seventh grade. The lab is staffed by the reading coordinator and two teaching assistants. Additional help is provided by ninth grade tutors.

The basic management tool in the lab is a student contract. Since the program's philosophy is wholistic in nature, each contract covers various skill areas incorporating listening, reading, writing and oral language activities. Student contracts are monitored and revised as students become more proficient. The materials covered in the contract are arranged in various learning centers so the students move around the lab from one center to another as directed on the contract. Correcting of work is done by the lab teacher and the teaching assistants and is done, as often as possible, as soon as the student completes the assignment.

The contract provides a detailed schedule of the student's work and progress over the two week period spent in the lab. Each contract, Chart 3, contains important information and instructions for the student, as well as for the teacher. The contract, as indicated by letter, provides:

CHART 3

Name _____ Contract # _____ Period # _____ Teacher _____

SKILLS TO BE LEARNED

7th Grade	Main Idea	Word Attack Sentence Analysis	Comprehension	Creative Writing	Creative Expression	Survival Skills	Multicultural Listening	Root Words
Specific Skills	*		Book	Unit				
Reading Practice Program		*	Unit	Lesson				
Match Challenge Feedback Spark			*					
Newsab			*	Blue	Green			
Tell a Tale				*				
Word Pictures				*				
What's In a Label?		Do		Exercise	*			
Business Letters		Write		Letters	*			
People Understanding People							*	
Nonsense								
Monsters								*

How did I do on each exercise? ***** Excellent Good, Fair Poor								
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Possible Points	20							
Earned Points								

ABSENCES _____ EXTRA CREDIT _____

- A. A list of all skills covered on that contract
- B. A list of learning stations
- C. Instructions to the student about levels of difficulty and amount of work to be done
- D. The order in which students should go from one station to the next
- E. A self-evaluation column
- F. A grading column.

After the student completes the contract, the lab teacher and teaching assistants correct the student's work, give a grade to the contract, and give the grade to the classroom teacher who incorporates it with the classroom grades for report card grading purposes. (The classroom teacher is responsible for all official attendance taking and for all final grade recording.) A new contract is written for each rotation period.

Some special advantages exist in the contract system of organizing a reading lab and are as follows:

1. Students have an element of choice while following a structured contract. Each station can provide a selection of activities from which the student can choose.
2. Different learning styles can be accommodated in the same classroom. Students working at different stations can be using different approaches to learning.
3. Students can vary the order in which they finish their assignments. A student need not strictly follow the order of the contract, but can alternate one assignment with another.
4. The teacher using the contract has essentially made a lesson plan for all of the students which will cover a four-week period of time. This requires much concentrated planning at one point, but then frees the teacher for individual work with the students and gives her more time to plan future learning stations.
5. The various skill areas incorporated in teaching reading from a wholistic viewpoint can be presented to many students at various ability levels at the same time.

Goals and Objectives, Pupil Profile Chart

Since the reading program is wholistic and language arts based and incorporates both cognitive and affective areas of growth, the goals and objectives (skills) to be taught reflect this basic theoretical wholistic approach. These goals and objectives for the reading program are developed cooperatively among the classroom teacher and reading laboratory teacher. These lists of goals and objectives are a part of the overall daily planning of strategy lessons and the 5-week overview. Lesson plans for the classroom and the reading laboratory contract are devised and coordinated so that they compliment each other.

In addition to the goals and objectives for the program, individual pupil profile charts are kept in the reading lab. All of the skills taught in the

classroom and lab are recorded on the pupil profile chart, thus keeping a two-year progress report on each student.

Conclusion

There are advantages of incorporating the wholistic approach to teaching reading into a management system. This approach enables many students of many different abilities to study and become more proficient in the areas of listening, comprehension, writing and oral language. The students are better able to receive well-balanced reading instruction and will begin to see the reading process as a "whole." As they achieve success they begin to feel more positive toward themselves, each other and the school. While working as a united team which shares talents and skills, teachers in both the classroom and reading lab can successfully coordinate this wide spectrum of skills into a meaningful program.

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