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ECHOES FROM THE FIELD

Joe R. Chapel

The Wisconsin Design for Reading Skill Development is being implemented in the Niles, Michigan, School System in grades K-3. This design has been developed by the Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning, supported in part by funds from the United States Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

The Wisconsin Design for Reading Skill Development represents a systematic attempt to:

- (1) State explicitly the reading skills that, by long standing consensus, are essential for competence in reading,
- (2) Assess individual pupils' skill development status by means of criterion referenced tests with respect to explicitly stated behaviors related to each skill,
- (3) Provide a comprehensive management system to guide grouping for and planning of skill development instruction, and
- (4) Monitor each pupil's progress in the development of specific skills.

The expectation is that the Design will be adapted and/or extended in view of local perceptions, needs, and resources.

The design comprises a number of interrelated components:

- (1) An outline of reading skills and related behavioral objectives;
- (2) Guides to informal individual skill observation;
- (3) Tests for skill assessment designed for group or individual administration;
- (4) Several alternative means for individual and group record keeping;
- (5) A model compendium of published materials for teaching the word attack, comprehension, and study skills;
- (6) A collection of teacher-directed activities and procedures for teaching word attack, comprehension, and study skills;
- (7) Guidelines for directing observations of pupil performance and planning pupil activities in the areas of self-directed, interpretive, and creative reading.

The administrators and teachers in the Niles schools are just getting this program started. In visiting with their personnel it seems apparent that there will be an energetic and enthusiastic effort directed to the success of the venture. We wish them Godspeed and will await with interest reports of their progress.