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TOOLS FOR THE STUDY AND DIAGNOSIS OF CLASSROOM LEARNING ATMOSPHERES

by

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Introduction

A model of classroom interaction in which the teacher tells and the pupils listen, or in which the teacher asks and the pupils answer is too simple. Learning does not occur merely because of the teacher's presentations. Rather, it occurs as a resultant of the interplay of the teacher's behaviors and many other forces. Classrooms are settings in which a complex pattern of social and psychological interrelationships occur constantly. While the teacher may not be able to control all these interrelationships, he should understand them. Also, he should plan and execute ways of modifying them if he is to create and maintain a classroom environment that supports learning.

The tools presented here focus on diagnosing some of the important social and psychological factors in the classroom. They are drawn from an on-going program of research at the Center for Research on Utilization of Scientific Knowledge of the Institute for Social Research, at the University of Michigan. Major topics

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in this program have been classroom interpersonal relations, mental health, and effective learning of academic subject matter. Data have been gathered from several hundred classrooms through the use of diagnostic tools dealing with classroom sociometric structures, individual and group standards toward learning, significant environmental forces influencing both teachers and pupils, as well as the nature of the pupil-teacher interaction. Some teachers studied these data, related them to their own classrooms, and developed plans for altering their teaching methodology to improve the learning climate. As part of such efforts, many of the research instruments originally designed for the study were adapted by some teachers, and additional ones were created by other teachers.

The purpose of this pamphlet is to share the instruments that have proved useful in diagnosing the classroom learning atmosphere and to describe in some measure how the data obtained may be recorded, interpreted, and used. This pamphlet is one of a series designed to serve as resources for teachers who are interested in examining and improving the mental health and learning environments of the school. The first, Solving Interpersonal Problems in the Classroom, describes a problem-solving sequence involving (1) diagnosis, (2) analysis and explanation, (3) taking action, (4) evaluation, and (5) making corrections, as a useful approach to solving classroom interpersonal problems. Illustrations of how teachers have engaged in each of these phases are provided. This pamphlet, Tools for the Study and Diagnosis of Classroom Learning Atmospheres, describes the nature and possible uses of a variety

of instruments that may be helpful in the diagnostic and the evaluation phases of the problem-solving sequence. The third, Role Playing in the Classroom, focuses on one teaching innovation which seems to offer substantial rewards for teachers who are attempting to deal constructively with problems of interpersonal relations.

Teachers who use these pamphlets should understand that there are recurrent public objections to invasion of the privacy of pupils and their families. Some public efforts have been made to restrict testing and questioning in the public schools. These efforts were expressed recently in the United States Congress in the form of a proposed rider to be attached to funds under A Vocational Education Act. The bill provided funds for "A program for testing students . . . Provided, that no such program shall provide for the conduct of any test or the asking of any questions in connection therewith which is designed to elicit information dealing with the personality, environment, home life, parental, or family relationships, economic status or sociological or psychological problems of the pupil tested."

Fortunately, this restrictive rider was finally omitted, but it was omitted in large part because of an earlier procedural rule which made it appear that the rider was superfluous. In the opinion of psychologists close to the effort to defeat the rider, the intent of the rider apparently was not rejected; an earlier rule was considered to implement part of the intent, and hence the rider was seen as unnecessary.

Teachers and others sophisticated in concepts of mental health know the important relationship between personality and social factors on the one hand and utilization of intellectual potential on the other. If the schools are to help our children maximize their abilities and become effective citizens, teachers must know much more about their pupils than merely their current IQ's and their achievement levels in various academic areas. The tools presented here are designed to help teachers achieve such knowledge, understandings, and insights.

Like all complex tools, they must be used with skill and understanding. The person using them must have a professional orientation to the ethical responsibility he assumes. The confidential nature of personal and family information obtained from pupils must be guarded and respected by the teachers as carefully as if they had taken a Hippocratic oath. Like the physician, the teacher has an obligation to use such information only for the benefit of those he serves. Conversely, he should obtain only that information which is likely to help him enhance the pupil's learning experience and personal development.

Chapter 1

SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS IN THE CLASSROOM

Social relationships among pupils in a classroom are important to the teacher, because pupils who feel comfortable with their peers are likely to utilize their academic abilities more fully than those who do not. Research findings suggest that classroom atmospheres which are associated with certain kinds of social relationship patterns provide considerable emotional support, a condition which allows a greater number of pupils to develop a high level of both self-esteem and academic excellence. These findings show, specifically, that the pupil who has friends among his classroom peers will enjoy better mental health and will learn more effectively than the pupil who has few friends or who is actively disliked.

Furthermore, when the pattern of friendliness in a classroom is diffuse, so that almost every member is "most liked" by some other member, pupils tend to have positive feelings toward themselves, perceive the school situation favorably, and make good use of their intellectual potentials. On the other hand, when the pattern of liking in the group is narrowly focused and the structure is such that one sub-group of pupils is most popular, another sub-group is most unpopular, and the rest of the pupils have few, if any, friends, many pupils tend to have negative

feelings toward themselves, perceive school unfavorably, and make poor use of their potentials. If, as these findings indicate, successful human relations facilitate a pupil's achievement in academic tasks, the teacher should do everything possible to enhance the emotional support a pupil receives from his peers, not only because good interpersonal relations is a value in itself, but also because it contributes importantly to the school's subject matter goals.

When a teacher is considering the social relations in his classroom, he might ask:

Which pupils are not liked by their peers? Why does this seem to be the case?

Which pupils hold the most influence in the group? How do they come to have the power?

Which pupils are perceived by their peers as good competent students? On what cues do they base their judgments?

Ways to Study Social Relations in the Classroom

The examples below indicate ways in which a teacher can ask pupils about their feelings toward their classmates and obtain data to diagnose the friendship relationships in his classroom.

Research evidence indicates that everyone forms positive and negative feelings about his associates, and this needs to be accepted matter-of-factly as a part of living together. It is natural, not bad, to have negative as well as positive feelings. Anyone who claims to have only the same positive feelings for everybody is being quite defensive and needs to be supported to give the information requested. It is likely that a few pupils may not

have permitted themselves to accept their negative feelings about others. It is a real help for them to see this kind of task treated in an objective, routine manner. The introduction to the following questionnaire is designed to achieve this.

It is suggested that the teacher read aloud to the class the top paragraph of the questionnaire and make sure everyone understands the confidential nature of the task. Pupils should be seated to permit privacy.

In preparation for this activity the teacher should compile an alphabetic list of all members of the class, with a number in front of each name. The list should be duplicated and a copy given to each pupil so that he can refer to and mark on it while working. Pupils should record classmates' numbers rather than names. This saves a lot of writing and makes the form more private.

The teacher will want to work out some procedure for collecting the sheets or having them dropped in a box on his desk, rather than having them passed forward in customary fashion.

Teachers may want to use the forms as they are set up in the sample, or they may prefer to add or change questions to fit special needs. Probably it will be most useful to prepare and duplicate a form tailored to the needs of each classroom. In any case the teacher should remember to have each pupil write down the date, his number, and class on every form he fills out.

Date _____
 Pupil No. _____
 Class _____

HOW I FEEL ABOUT OTHERS IN MY CLASS

Everybody has different feelings about everybody else. We like some people a lot, some a little bit, and some not at all. Sometimes we think it is not proper or polite to dislike other people, but when we are really honest about it we know that everyone has some negative feelings about some of the people he knows. There are some people you like a lot and some you don't like. There are some people who like you a lot and some who don't like you at all. If the teacher knows the way you really feel about other members of your class, he can often plan things better. (Each pupil is given a class list with names of all the pupils and numbers next to each name.)

1. Which 3 persons in this class do you personally like the most?
 Using your class list with names and numbers, write the 3 numbers below, and write a few words telling why you feel that way.

	<u>Pupil's Number</u>	<u>Why do you like each one?</u>
Like most	_____	_____
Like next most	_____	_____
Like third most	_____	_____

2. Which persons do you personally like the least? Write the numbers in the blanks, and write a few words about what makes you feel that way about each one.

	<u>Pupil's Number</u>	<u>Why don't you like each one?</u>
Like the least	_____	_____
Like next least	_____	_____
Like third least	_____	_____

3. How many people in this class would you say you know pretty well?

_____ all of them
 _____ all but a few
 _____ more than half
 _____ about half
 _____ less than half
 _____ only a few

4. How many people in this class would you say you like quite a lot?

- _____ all but a few
 _____ more than half
 _____ about half
 _____ less than half
 _____ only a few
 _____ no one

5. Are there other young persons your age, or younger than you, or older than you, who are not in this class, but whom you like just as much or more than you like anybody in this class? Yes _____ No _____

If you answered "yes," please fill in the right spaces below.

Same age as I

Why do you like each one?

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Older than I

Why do you like each one?

Name _____

How old? _____

Name _____

How old? _____

Name _____

How old? _____

Younger than I

Why do you like each one?

Name _____

How old? _____

Name _____

How old? _____

Name _____

How old? _____

In addition to liking and disliking, there are other important types of social relationships in the classroom. For instance, pupils attribute to each of their classmates a level of social power or ability to influence others. Pupils also assess the competence, cooperativeness, or helpfulness of their classmates.

Pupils make such judgments early in a school year and often maintain these judgments, particularly if no attempts are made to change them. The teacher who wishes to make constructive changes in the classroom atmosphere should make frequent reevaluations of the nature of the relationships in his classroom in order to determine the effectiveness of his change efforts. The following examples are appropriate for such diagnosis.

Date _____
 Pupil No. _____
 Class _____

THE PEOPLE IN MY CLASS

It is a job of teachers to find ways to make school life more interesting and worthwhile for all the students in the class. This form gives you a chance to give the teacher confidential information that will help him to plan to help each pupil. There are no right or wrong answers. The way you see things is what counts.

1. Which 3 persons in this class are most often able to get others to do things? Using your class list, write the number of the pupil you select and then write a few words telling why he or she is able to get others to do things.

	<u>Pupil's No.</u>	<u>Why are they able to get others to do things?</u>
Most often	_____	_____
Next most often	_____	_____
Next most often	_____	_____

2. Which 3 persons in the class do the girls most often do things for?

	<u>Pupil's No.</u>	<u>Why do they do things for these persons?</u>
Most often	_____	_____
Next most often	_____	_____
Next most often	_____	_____

3. Which 3 persons in the class do the boys most often do things for?

	<u>Pupil's No.</u>	<u>Why do they do things for these persons?</u>
Most often	_____	_____
Next most often	_____	_____
Next most often	_____	_____

4. Which 3 persons in this class are most cooperative with the teacher and like to do what the teacher wants the class to do?

	<u>Pupil's No.</u>	<u>What do they do?</u>
Most cooperative	_____	_____
Next most cooperative	_____	_____
Next most cooperative	_____	_____

5. Which 3 persons in this class most often go against the teacher and what she would like the class to do?

	<u>Pupil's No.</u>	<u>What do they do?</u>
Most going against	_____	_____
Next most going against	_____	_____
Next most going against	_____	_____

6. Which 3 persons in this class do you think could make the biggest improvement in their school work if they wanted to?

	<u>Pupil's No.</u>	<u>Why don't they do better?</u>
Could improve most	_____	_____
Could improve next most	_____	_____
Could improve next most	_____	_____

7. Which 3 persons in this class do you think show the most ability to learn new things that are taught at school?

	<u>Pupil's No.</u>	<u>Why?</u>
Best learner	_____	_____
Next best learner	_____	_____
Next best learner	_____	_____

8. Who would you most like to be, if you couldn't be yourself, but had to be somebody else in this class?

	<u>Pupil's No.</u>	<u>Why?</u>
Who would you most like to be?	_____	_____
Who next would you most like to be?	_____	_____
Who next would you most like to be?	_____	_____

At times a teacher may want to relate the questions used to some specific action. For example, if a teacher would like data to use in organizing work teams or planning seating arrangements, he might ask direct questions relevant to such an action, as for example:

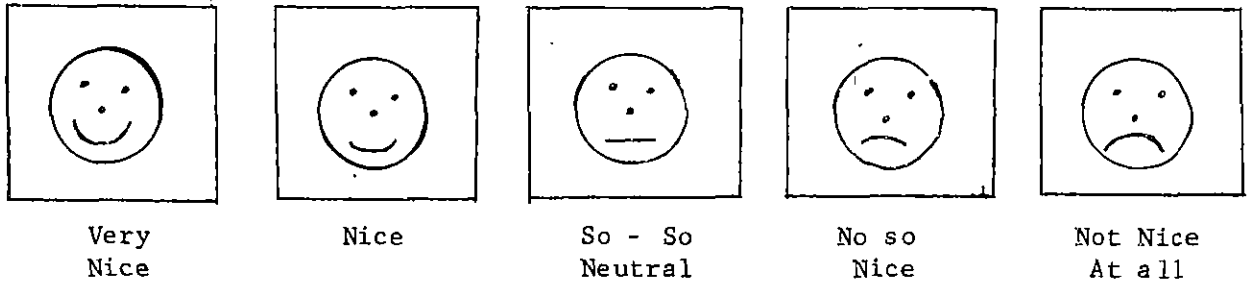
Which three persons in this class would you most
like to sit next to in school?

Such questions should not be asked, however, unless the action is actually planned.

Variation for Lower Elementary

Research has shown that it is valid and worthwhile to use sociometric tools for groups of children as young as kindergarten age. Such children often have already formulated their feelings toward and evaluations of their peers. Educational modification is often needed to influence these feelings in a positive direction, to improve the mental health of certain pupils, and to increase the effectiveness of teaching procedures. Since these children usually cannot read very many words, the typical group administration procedures are not possible. Various modifications substituting pictures for names have proved effective. One approach which was recently used by a teacher of very young children required a mounted photograph of each child. These were typical small school photos. At the same time faces were drawn

on five plastic freezer boxes, as shown below, to illustrate five degrees of positive to negative feelings.



Each child, working privately, sorted the pictures and put them into the appropriate boxes according to the way he felt about each person. He was questioned about the reasons for his feelings about those of his classmates whose pictures he put in the extreme boxes. The teacher who used this method reported that selected sixth graders had been taught to do an effective and confidential job of testing the children individually and recording their responses. In addition to testing the children, these sixth graders analyzed the data by constructing matrices and targets of the type described below.

Analyzing the Data

After the data are collected, they may be tabulated in various ways depending upon the problems one is trying to solve. A basic kind of tabulation which gives, perhaps, the greatest amount of information for the least effort, is to construct a matrix with as many rows and columns as there are pupils in the class. Each row contains the outgoing choices of pupils (identified by numbers 1, 2, etc.). The columns contain the choices

received. As shown in the sample below, prepared for a class of 16 pupils on the liking dimension, positive choices are indicated by "1" and negative choices or rejections by "-1." For simplicity, first, second, and third choices are all indicated in the same way.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1		1			1		-1				1			-1		-1
2	1				1		-1		1				-1			-1
3	1				1			-1			1		-1		-1	
4		1			1		-1		1					-1		-1
5	1			1				-1			1			-1		-1
6		1		1			-1				1			-1		-1
7		1							1		1			-1	-1	-1
8				1			1		1				-1	-1		-1
9		1		1			-1				1		-1		-1	
10		1			1		-1				1		-1	-1		
11		1			1			-1	1				-1		-1	
12	1							-1	1		1		-1			-1
13			-1	1	1						1			-1		-1
14				-1	1			-1			1		-1			1
15	1			-1	1				-1		1		-1			
16			-1		-1				1		1		-1		1	
Total +	5	7	0	5	9	0	1	0	7	0	12	0	0	0	1	1
Total -	0	0	2	2	1	0	6	5	1	0	0	0	10	8	4	9

Figure 1
MATRIX FOR SOCIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

By adding the total number of positive and negative entries in each column, one can see the choice pattern at a glance.

Inspection of this matrix shows a classroom which is rather narrowly focused, with a few very popular pupils, several who are quite unpopular, and others who have few if any friends among their classmates. Pupil 11 is clearly the "star" of the class, with 12 positive choices and no negative choices. Pupils number 2, 5, and 9 are also highly liked, although one pupil dislikes number 5 and another dislikes number 9.

On the negative side, pupils number 13 and 14 both are substantially disliked, with 10 and 8 negative choices respectively, and no positive choices. They might be thought of as the scapegoats of the class. Pupil number 16 is also strongly disliked, with 9 negative choices and only 1 positive choice. Pupils 6, 10, and 12 may be thought of as isolates, for they are mentioned by no one, either positively or negatively.

In many cases, as shown by the matrix, the choices are mutual. For example, pupil 1 chose pupils 2 and 5 as "best liked" pupils, and pupils 2 and 5 similarly chose pupil 1. Numerous mutual negative choices are also apparent, as for example, between 3 and 13, 4 and 14, and 9 and 15. In these cases the pupils have made their feeling toward each other clear enough to be recognized and reciprocated. But in some cases opposite feelings are expressed toward each other. For example, pupil number 7 names 2 as best liked, while 2 names 7 as least liked.

Findings such as these challenge the teacher to try to change perceptions and feelings.¹

A separate matrix might be prepared for each dimension (i.e., liking, influence, cooperation, etc.) or the various dimensions might be recorded in different colors on the same basic sheet.

To summarize the data from a matrix and point it up more graphically, the target method is useful. To construct a target, draw four concentric circles as shown below.

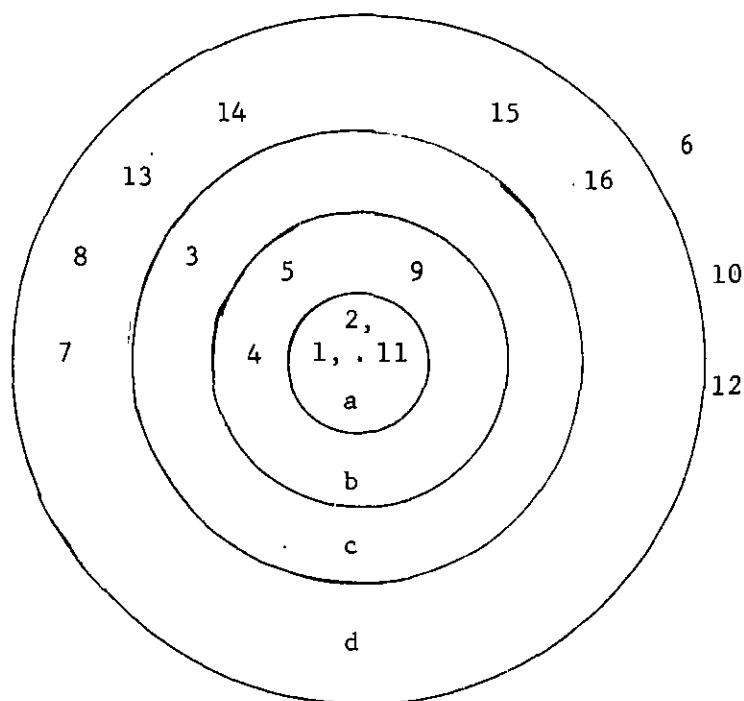


Figure 2

SOCIOMETRIC TARGET

¹For help in planning remedial action, see: Schmuck, R. and Chesler, M. Solving Interpersonal Problems in the Classroom. Inter-Center Program of Research on Children, Youth and Family Life, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, 1963.

In the center circle or bullseye (a) place the numbers of the pupils who receive four or more positive choices and no negative choices. In the outside ring of the target (d) place the numbers of those pupils who receive four or more negative choices or rejections and one or no positive choices. Place the numbers of the neglected pupils outside the whole target. In the ring next to the bullseye (b) place the numbers of those pupils who are more liked than disliked, even though they are not highly chosen. In the next ring (c) place the numbers of the pupils who are more disliked than liked. In Figure 2, the data shown on the matrix (Fig. 1) have been recorded on the target. In recording pupils on the target, different colors might be used for girls and for boys in order to show at a glance whether one sex has higher sociometric status or whether both are about equal.

Another method of organizing sociometric data is through the preparation of a series of overall maps or sociograms, in which each individual is represented by a small circle, and the circles are connected by lines to show the types of choices expressed. A simple way to prepare a sociogram of a total class is to arrange the class in circular fashion on a large sheet of paper, each pupil being represented by a small circle containing his number. Then lines are drawn between the circles to represent choices according to the following convention:

solid line: positive choice

dotted line: negative choice

An arrow head is used to point toward the person chosen. Where there is a mutual choice, there is an arrow head at each end of

the line. Colored lines can be used, too, to include more information or to clarify a sociogram. The sociogram shown in Figure 3 represents a class of 15 pupils who were asked to name the person or persons they would most like to sit next to in school, and the person or persons to whom they would least like to sit next. In this case there was no attempt to make them give a specified number of choices. Numbers 1 through 8 in the diagram represent girls, numbers 9 through 15 represent boys.

In this class there is a rather clear split between boys and girls, with only one girl, number 5, expressing a positive choice of a boy, number 15, and no boys who make positive choices of girls. Among the girls, number 3 is the most popular, with five positive choices, three of which are mutual. Moreover, this girl has no negative choices. According to the questionnaires on which the sociogram was based, there are no pupils who would dislike sitting next to her, and none whom she rejects. In sharp contrast to this is girl number 8, who is rejected by three boys and two girls. She herself rejects three of these pupils, and the one pupil whom she does choose positively, number 2, rejects her. This appears to be a girl who is in trouble from the standpoint of her interpersonal relations and who needs help. Another person who might be in need of help is 14, who made no choices himself and was chosen by no one. Pupils 4 and 11 were also unchosen by any of their peers. The pattern of choices for pupil 13 suggests that he has one good friend, 12, but that he is otherwise rather disliked.

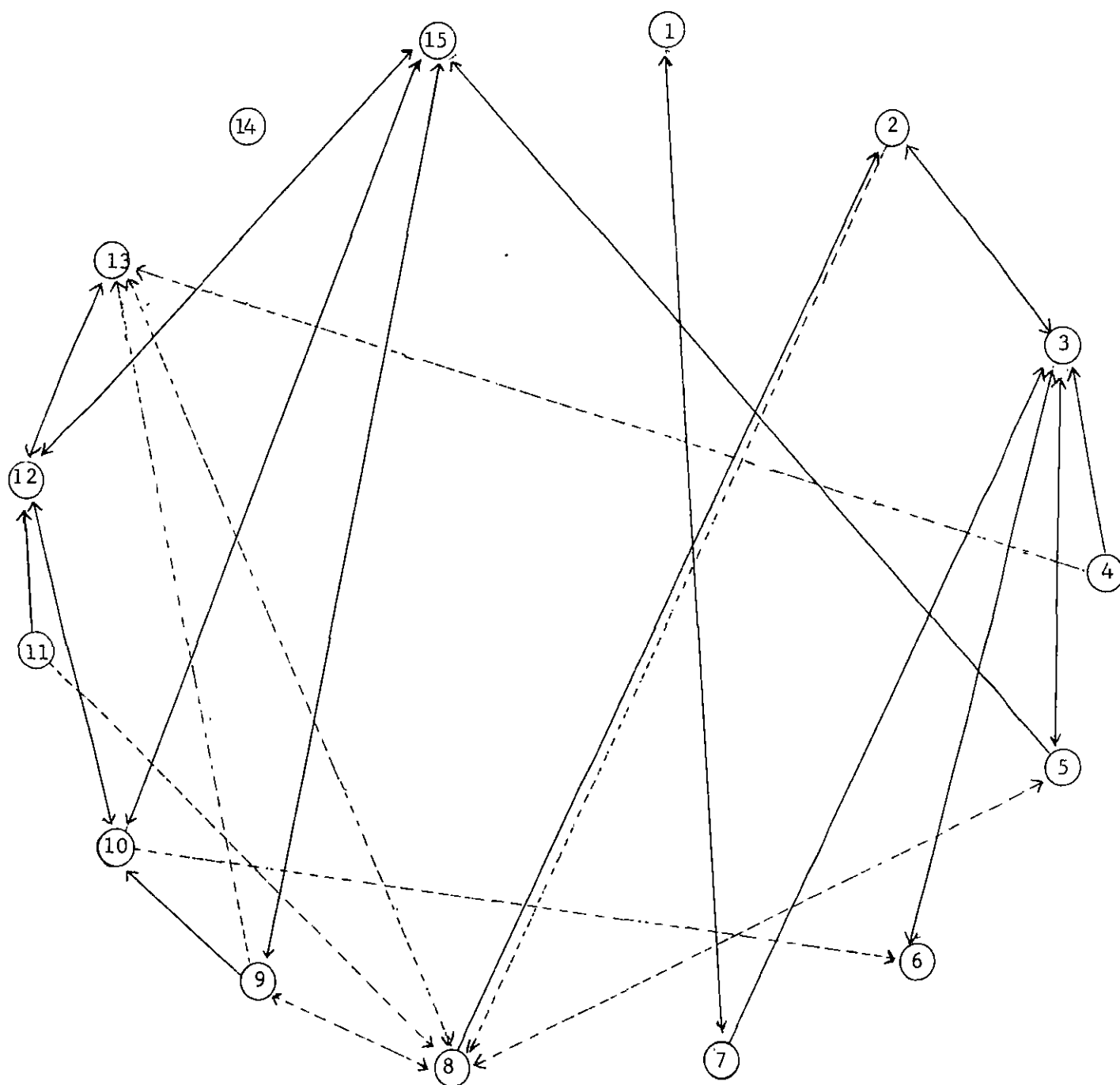


Figure 3

SIMPLE SOCIOGRAM

To show the structure more clearly, the teacher refined this initial diagram so that the mutual positive choices were close together, as shown in Figure 4.²

In this figure, the degree of social distance is approximated by the length of the lines. To prepare this type of sociogram, one would start with the most highly chosen people and then enter the clusters of mutual choices. Some juggling around may be necessary to get a clear picture and minimize the crossing of lines. In this sociogram, the boy-girl split shows up clearly, particularly in regard to positive choices. A clique-like structure appears, too, with pupil 3 a star among the girls and pupil 15 among the boys. It is interesting to note that boys 10, 12, and 15 constitute a close knit in-group, each one choosing and being chosen by the other two. Boys 9 and 13 are on the periphery, each being tied to the core group through one other clique member (9 through 15, and 13 through 12). Among the girls, the structure is even more sharply focused on number 3, who has mutual ties with three girls and is chosen by two additional girls. Standing alone, unchosen either positively or negatively by anyone, are 4, 11, and 14. Pupil 14 appears more aware of his

²For more detailed information on the construction of sociograms, see: Jahoda, M., Deutsch, M., and Cook, S. Research Methods in Social Relations, Part Two: Selected Techniques. New York: Dryden Press, 1951. pp. 563-569. Jennings, H. H. Leadership and Isolation. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1943. pp. 104-111.

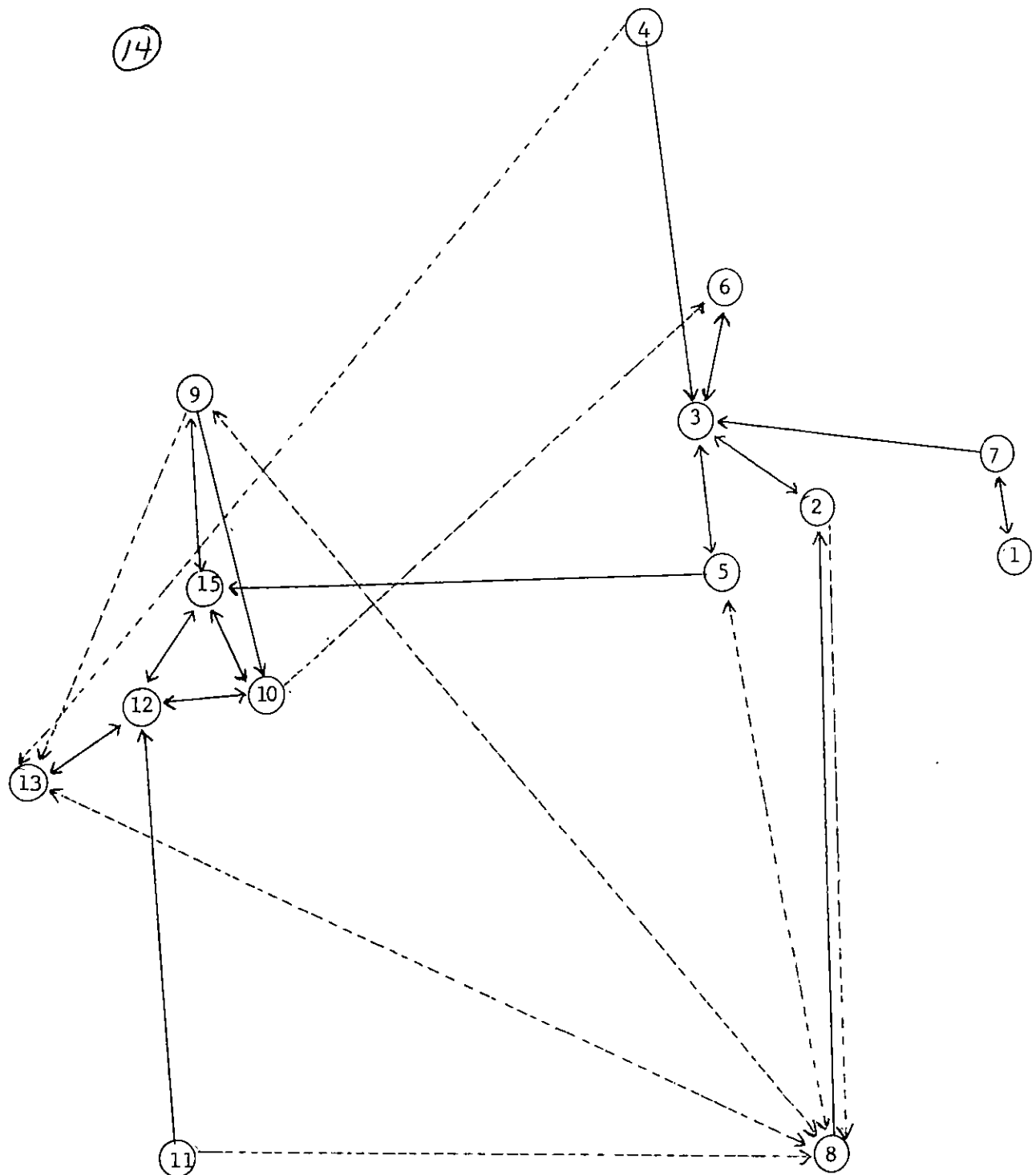


Figure 4

SOCIOGRAM SHOWING SOCIAL DISTANCE

isolation than are 4 and 11, for he does not even express any choices. Pupil 8, and to some extent pupil 13, stand in a scapegoat position in relation to their classmates.

A sociogram such as that shown in Figure 4 contains no more information than the simple sociogram (Fig. 3), but, when the factor of social distance is included, the class structure is apparent at a glance. A sociogram of this type is particularly useful in narrowly focused groups, for stars and scapegoats stand out conspicuously. In diffusely structured classrooms, which, as was noted earlier, are more desirable from the standpoint of mental health, there would be little difference between a simple sociogram and one showing social distance.

Instead of preparing a matrix, a target, or a sociogram, a teacher might find it easier merely to make tallies on the alphabetic name list of his class, recording after each name the number of positive and negative choices a person receives on each of the dimensions being studied.

Using the Data

Data obtained through the tools presented above and analyzed on a matrix or sociogram, or in some other way, are useful in answering a number of questions. For example:

Perhaps the teacher wants to know who needs special help in improving his interpersonal relations because he is rejected or ignored by his peers. By looking at the sociogram or data sheet, the teacher can spot those pupils with a high number of negative choices and those with no choices. These

are the pupils who may need special assistance, either from the teacher himself or from some other source. Some action suggestions will be found in the last section of this chapter.

Perhaps the teacher would like to know which high-influence boys and girls are also liked by their peers. Working from the matrix or from a tabulation, one can make a list of boys' names starting with the most liked at the top and going down to the least liked, and a similar list for girls. A second list can be made to show the most influential boys and girls. The two lists can then be checked to see who are near the top of both lists for each sex. These, clearly, are the leaders in the eyes of the class.

The teacher may want to go further and see whether these influential, well liked pupils are seen as good students and cooperative with the teacher, or whether some of the most influential pupils in the class are perceived as being against school work. A list showing ratings for cooperation, compared with the lists already made, will give this information.

Perhaps a teacher is thinking about grouping pupils so that certain ones can have a good influence on their peers. The "whom I want to be like" questions may show which good pupils might be the most constructive models for some of the poorer and less motivated students.

Perhaps a teacher wants to know which pupils are over chosen and which are under chosen. Since pupils are asked on these tools to make three positive and three negative choices, it would be expected that each pupil would receive from two to

four choices if the choices were evenly distributed. How many pupils receive one or no choices; how many receive a large number of choices? Information like this is sometimes very surprising to the teacher. The target method described above is useful for such an analysis.

Some particularly interesting insights may come from looking for positive, high status pupils who are respected and liked by hostile, disliked, or unmotivated pupils. This may give clues for finding some peer helpers with whom a teacher can work as key persons in helping pupils who need help, but who are hard for a teacher to reach directly. Peer helpers in the classroom may be used in various ways. Pairs of children may be formed to work on specific tasks, such as drilling on spelling words, or correcting arithmetic papers. Teams of two or three may work cooperatively on projects such as sharing their reading interests with each other, or preparing a report. Some classes have surveyed the range of resources represented by each of the pupils in the class and have designated a panel of experts who stand ready to be of help to any pupil requesting it. A forthright arrangement with a high status pupil to give support to a child who is experiencing difficulties will often be productive. It should be kept in mind that the "helper," no matter how capable, is likely to need some assistance from the teacher in developing the strategy or skills to be an effective assistant.

These illustrate the kinds of questions and the range of problems which data of this sort can help solve. Some of the most fruitful interpretations will come from comparing the data obtained from the sociometric tools with information gained through the use of other tools in the tool kit, such as attitudes toward school, toward self, and toward the teacher.

Example of How One Teacher Used These Instruments

A sixth grade teacher at a school in a middle class neighborhood became concerned over the apathy and disinterest of her pupils. She felt they needed to develop more involvement in their studies and more interest in school. She also felt that the pupils should have more responsibility for sharing in making the rules of the classroom. Before starting on any new program, however, she wanted to find out why so many students in the class tended to be apathetic and disinterested in their studies.

The teacher decided to use some sociometric questions. She administered the questions about liking (HOW I FEEL ABOUT OTHERS IN MY CLASS) and those on influence and cooperation (THE PEOPLE IN MY CLASS). The administration took about 30 minutes. Later the teacher analyzed the data, tabulating it as shown in ~~Figure~~ ^{Table} 1. She put the pupils' numbers down the left side of the page and the sociometric categories across the top. She left some columns empty so that she might add further analyses next to the first tabulations. Then, in each square, she put the number of choices received by each pupil. In this way, her raw data were put into workable form.

Table 1
SUMMARY OF SOCIOMETRIC CHOICES

	Pupils	Like Most	Like Least	Influ. Girls	Influ. Boys	Influ. Gen.	Coop.	Uncoop.
B O Y S	1	3	2	1	1	2	2	4
	2	0	15	0	0	0	3	1
	3	5	2	1	2	3	2	7
	4	1	7	0	1	1	3	2
	5	0	13	0	0	0	3	1
	6	6	1	1	4	5	1	7
	7	7	1	0	4	4	2	6
	8	0	10	1	1	2	1	2
	9	8	0	1	6	7	1	4
	10	0	9	0	0	0	2	1
G I R L S	11	3	1	1	0	1	5	1
	12	3	0	1	0	1	4	2
	13	12	0	3	2	5	3	6
	14	0	7	0	0	0	4	1
	15	13	1	6	2	8	2	4
	16	10	0	7	1	8	2	3
	17	0	4	2	0	2	5	0
	18	0	3	1	0	1	6	2
	19	9	0	6	1	7	4	3
	20	0	4	1	1	2	5	3

Her first inspection of the results shed some light on the classroom apathy she was trying to change. In the first place, the data from the liking and influence questions indicated that there was a small, highly liked and influential elite among both boys and girls. As shown in the table, pupils numbered 6, 7, 9, 13, 15, 16 and 19 constituted this highly chosen elite. At the same time, a small group of boys (numbers 2, 5, and 8) and one girl (number 14) appeared to be scapegoats for the others. Many of the pupils were in neither the elite nor the scapegoat group, especially pupils 17, 18 and 20. They were largely neglected by the others, and consequently were hardly involved in classroom or school matters, although they were seen as being rather cooperative with the teacher.

Further, she found that those pupils who were influential tended to be seen as uncooperative with the teacher. She found this out by tabulating the choices given for the influence question next to those choices given on the uncooperative question. Note, for example, that boys numbered 6 and 7 are among the most influential and the least cooperative. Also, among the girls, pupils 13, 15, and 16 are influential and rather uncooperative.

These findings gave the teacher crucial information about her class. She now had a diagnosis which would provide the basis for action.

Some Action Suggestions

Detailed consideration of remedial action is beyond the scope of this pamphlet, but a few suggestions might be made. The teacher can approach remedial action in at least four ways.

First, he can try to influence his pupils to expand the variety of individual differences which they perceive as acceptable. An effective approach to this is to develop an inventory of the resources of class members, showing that everyone in the class has some skill or knowledge to offer in different situations. Then, by getting all class members into cooperative activities, as a whole or in subgroups, in which these resources and assets can be used, group standards of what is desirable or of value can often be changed and broadened.

Second, a teacher can often do a great deal to change the pattern of interpersonal relations in his classroom through different kinds of grouping and work assignments designed to place the neglected or rejected pupil in a more favorable light. Pupil participation in planning and carrying out classroom activities can be helpful in improving a child's skill level and in changing the way he is perceived by his peers.³

Third, he can work on getting subgroups to relate productively and positively to each other in the classroom. When subgroups are antagonistic so that there is a schism in the class, the teacher

³This and many other suggestions are elaborated in Solving Interpersonal Problems in the Classroom, cited in footnote 1.

is challenged to reduce this schism and try to unify the group. Often it is possible to change the relationship between two antagonistic subgroups to wholesome competition, which leads to psychological development.

Fourth, the teacher can work directly with rejected or neglected individuals. Perhaps through friendly talks with the pupil or his parents the teacher can help him correct certain characteristics or behaviors which are contributing to lack of acceptance by his peers. In his discussions with the pupil, the teacher can often make use of the reasons other pupils give for their rejection of him. Frank, friendly discussions, in which the pupils knows that his confidences will be respected, can often be very helpful.

Role playing offers many possibilities for constructive action for work on both the individual and the group level. It is particularly useful in improving a person's understanding of the feelings of others and in improving social skills.⁴

In working with a disliked child who seems unable to develop a positive relationship with his peers, the teacher's first aim might be to help him develop positive relations with the teacher, and then expand these to members of his peer group. A combination

⁴ Much helpful material on role playing, why and how to use it in the classroom, together with a variety of role-playing situations, will be found in Role Playing in the Classroom, by Mark Chesler and Robert Fox. Inter-Center Program of Research on Children, Youth and Family Life, Institute for Social Research, The University of Michigan, 1964.

of individual work with a pupil outside of class and work in the class by enlisting the help of class leaders is often an effective approach. For the child whose isolation or rejection is the result of shyness and lack of social initiative, poor personal hygiene, or similar reason, the problem can usually be handled by the classroom teacher. On the other hand, the isolated or rejected child may have serious problems beyond the scope of remedial action on the part of the teacher alone. In such cases the teacher will want to utilize whatever pupil personnel services are available and appropriate, such as visiting teacher, counselor, or school psychologist. In some cases, referral to a child guidance clinic may be desirable.

As social relationships in a classroom are improved, academic achievement can be expected to increase and the over-all job of the teacher will be accomplished more effectively.

Chapter 2

. ASSESSING THE CLASSROOM LEARNING CLIMATE

Teachers assume that a pupil's motivation to participate in classroom activities is critical for his academic learning. They often assume, too, that this motivation is determined largely by the attitudes and influences of family members and persons in the neighborhood. They know that these influences, which are exerted on a child in his preschool years, become part of the personality which he brings to the classroom. As the pupil enters the classroom, for instance, he brings feelings about school achievement, a level of aspiration about academic matters, and a conception of his competence as a pupil. Some pupils bring tendencies toward dependency or toward independence; some are friendly, others hostile and defensive; some are introverted or perhaps even withdrawn, others are expressive and charming. In short, when the child arrives at school he already has certain personality characteristics which affect his behavior in the classroom and which are associated with various thoughts, feelings, and motives related to classroom work.

Although these early home and neighborhood influences are very important, the classroom climate also affects a pupil's academic motivation. The term classroom learning climate refers to the nature of interpersonal relationships in the classroom. These interpersonal relationships, that is, each pupil's feelings about his peers and his teacher, are extremely important in his motivation to participate

in classroom activities. A climate which provides emotional support, encouragement, and mutual respect, for instance, is conducive to high self-esteem and to the utilization of academic abilities. Without supportive classroom relationships, pupils often lack interest in learning, and consequently the dual educational goals of academic learning and mental health are difficult to achieve.

Furthermore, pupils do not learn much unless they feel involved and interested in what they are doing. Teachers often overlook the importance of a pupil's attention and involvement, carrying out their teaching activities in the usual way regardless of pupils' feelings and reactions. To help them become more aware of these feelings and reactions, some teachers have found it useful to obtain information from their students about the students' perceptions of their teaching. After receiving such data the teacher may then be able to alter his classroom methods in order to enhance pupil motivation and learning.

In this chapter classroom tools are presented which may be of some aid to the teacher who is attempting to diagnose either the classroom learning climate in general or pupils' reactions to specific learning experiences. Two general types of questions are appropriate. The first type includes questions which directly measure a pupil's perceptions of his own motivation to learn, the classroom climate, or of a lesson he has recently experienced. Such questions are very easy to employ. They can be scored rapidly and are easily interpreted. The second type of question measures a pupil's reactions to learning experiences and classroom climate more indirectly. Such questions typically assess pupil perception,

feelings, and motives by the so-called "open-ended" technique. In answering "open-ended" questions, the pupil composes his own answer in contrast to his checking one of several alternative or multiple choice answers on the direct questions. "Open-ended" questions usually elicit rich and meaningful responses.

The major difference between direct and indirect questioning is represented in the following example. If we assume that the teacher wishes to measure how involved and interested a pupil is in classroom activities she might compose a direct question such as:

When I'm in this class I ----- (check one)

- _____ (1) usually feel wide awake and very interested.
- _____ (2) pretty interested, not very bored.
- _____ (3) interested, kind of bored part of the time.
- _____ (4) not very interested, bored quite a lot of the time.

By counting the number of pupils who chose each alternative, the teacher has an indication of the degree of interest in the class. The indirect counterpart would be simply:

When I'm in this class I _____

In the indirect or "open-ended" question, the pupil is invited to complete the unfinished sentence in his own words. Then the teacher prepares categories for recording the various answers of his pupils, selecting categories which are relevant to the information the teacher would like to obtain. By counting the number of pupils who answer in each category, and by studying the answers qualitatively,

the teacher can obtain a rather good picture of classroom climate. More information on evaluating and coding incomplete sentences will be found in Chapter Eight.

In attempting to assess reactions to more specific learning, teachers typically make use of quizzes, tests, and recitations. Important questions to which teachers often want answers are, "Did the pupils feel free to participate in the learning activity?" "Was it clear to them why we did that activity?" "How many felt lost by the rate we were moving?" and "Who felt the need for extra help?" These questions about academic experiences as well as others about the classroom learning climate can best be answered by using brief classroom tools.

Since questions about classroom learning climate involve reactions to the teacher, he must be careful to develop pleasant associations to filling out diagnostic tools and to reduce fears of reprisals for frankness. Some teachers, thinking that their pupils may feel restraints in answering questions which are critical of the teacher, tell their pupils not to sign their names. However, valuable data for the teacher are lost by following this completely anonymous procedure. Some teachers have appointed a committee of respected pupil leaders to collect and tabulate the responses and to make a report to the class. Other teachers encourage their pupils to be frank and to use this opportunity constructively. Such teachers show that they will be objective about the facts and are genuinely interested in doing something about the findings.

One classroom tool to assess classroom climate is made up of direct questions and is entitled, Classroom Life. This tool was constructed to give the teacher an overview of his classroom climate in a very brief period. The instrument can be administered in five to ten minutes and the forms for the whole class scored in fifteen. If the pupils are skilled enough to read it themselves, the teacher can pass it out, give the brief directions, and ask his pupils to fill it out honestly and quickly. In a classroom in which the pupils can not read very well, the teacher can pass out the form and have the pupils follow along as he reads the items out loud.

Date _____
Pupil No. _____
Class _____

CLASSROOM LIFE

Here is a list of some things that describe life in the classroom. Circle the number of the statement that best tells how this class is for you.

Life in this class with your regular teacher _____

1. has all good things.
2. has mostly good things.
3. more good things than bad.
4. has about as many good things as bad.
5. more bad things than good.
6. has mostly bad things.

How hard are you working these days on learning what is being taught at school?

1. Very hard.
2. Quite hard.
3. Not very hard.
4. Not hard at all.

When I'm in this class I _____

1. usually feel wide awake and very interested.
2. pretty interested, kind of bored part of the time.
3. not very interested, bored quite a lot of the time.
4. don't like it, feel bored and not with it.

How hard are you working on school work compared with the others in the class?

1. Harder than most.
2. A little harder than most.
3. About the same as most.
4. A little less than most.
5. Quite a bit less than most.

How many of the pupils in this class do what the teacher suggests?

1. Most of them do.
2. More than half do.
3. Less than half do.
4. Hardly anybody does.

If we help each other with our work in this class the teacher _____

1. likes it a lot.
2. likes it some.
3. likes it a little.
4. doesn't like it at all.

How good is your schoolwork compared to the work of others in the class?

1. Much better than most.
2. A little better than most.
3. About the same as most.
4. Not quite as good as most.
5. Much worse than most.

How often do the pupils in this class help one another with their schoolwork?

1. Most of the time.
2. Sometimes.
3. Hardly ever.
4. Never.

How often do the pupils in this class act friendly toward each other?

1. Always.
2. Most of the time.
3. Sometimes.
4. Hardly ever.

The answers to these ten questions can be tabulated easily by the teacher. One piece of paper can be divided into six equal parts across. Then, on the left side of the paper the numbers one through ten can be written consecutively. The teacher can make tabulations of responses to each of the ten questions on this one page. He will want to inspect both the general classroom responses and those of subgroups or individuals who are deviant from the rest of the class.

Another tool utilizing direct questions is entitled My Teacher. The pupil is given a list of teacher characteristics and asked to check any changes that he would like to see the teacher make.

Date _____

Class _____

MY TEACHER

Pretend that you could have your teacher change in some way. Please mark the way you would like to have your teacher in this class act by checking the box that best tells how you would like him to be.

	<u>Much more</u> than he does now	<u>A little</u> <u>more than</u> he does now	<u>The same</u> as he does now	<u>A little</u> <u>less than</u> he does now	<u>Much less</u> than he does now
1. Help with work					
2. Get angry					
3. Make sure work is done					
4. Ask us to decide					
5. Act friendly					
6. Make us behave					
7. Trust us on our own					
8. Make us work hard					
9. Show that he understands how we feel					

Experience with this tool indicates that it is of significant assistance to teachers. Pupil anonymity is required, however, because of the "sensitive" and personal nature of some of the characteristics. Furthermore, the teacher is interested in considering for possible change only those practices which many pupils disfavor.

Some of these direct items will be more useful to the teacher than others. For instance, the teacher may strongly hope that his pupils assist each other in their school work. He may have as one of his goals cooperation through peer tutoring and small study groups. If the teacher finds that many of his pupils feel that he does not like it very much or at all that they assist one another, he will be able to see where more work is needed in putting his ideas across to the pupils. Further, if the teacher knows how each pupil has answered he will be able to see which ones are misjudging their academic skills by how each compares himself with the other pupils. Such data may help the teacher to identify those pupils who need more reality confrontation to change their inaccurate self-perceptions as pupils.

Another way in which the teacher might communicate his thoughts and feelings to the pupils is for him to answer some of the same questions which are answered by the pupils. For instance, he could answer some items from Classroom Life such as, "How many of the pupils in this class do what the teacher suggests?" "If we help each other with our work in this class the teacher . . . ,"
 "How often do the pupils in this class help one another with their schoolwork?" and "How often do the pupils in this class act friendly toward each other?" His answers could be presented to the pupils

and compared with theirs. This could stimulate discussion and help to clarify pupil perceptions of the teacher's attitudes.

An item such as: "Life in this class with your regular teacher" will not render very specific information for the teacher. It may be useful to get general responses at first but these are only meaningful if they are supported by additional information. "Open-ended" questions can be used to advantage at this point. The teacher who finds that his pupils tend to perceive some "bad" things about the classroom may try to find out more about these by using the following two indirect questions.

Some of the best things about this class are _____

Some of the worst things about this class are _____

Answers to these questions will represent some of the most salient positive and negative criticisms of classroom life. Sometimes, however, it is better to ask questions which are mid-way between the very direct ones described above and "open-ended" questions. Such questions are indirect in that the pupil supplies the answer, but they are direct in that they ask the pupil to think in a focused fashion about some aspect of the class. When using such questions with young pupils, the teacher may ask them to act as though they are detectives in search of clues. With older pupils the teacher might point out that social scientists are really detectives of human behavior and that they can be like these scientists in studying their own classroom. The tool which might be used in such a fashion is entitled *Clues about Classroom Life*

Date _____
Pupil No. _____
Class _____

CLUES ABOUT CLASSROOM LIFE

In order for members of a classroom and their teacher to get the best ideas about how they would like to make life more interesting and important for everybody in the class, each person needs to contribute his or her ideas about what needs to be changed and improved. What things happen that shouldn't happen? What ought to happen but doesn't? Try to imagine you are a detective-observer looking for clues of a "good day" and a "bad day" in your class. Jot down what you might look for or might see to answer these questions. ...

What are some clues of a good day in our class? What things happen that are signs of a good day?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What are some clues of a bad day in our class? What things happen that are clues that class is not going the way it should?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What are some things that should happen a lot more than they do to make it a better class for learning and having fun?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Answers to these questions should help the teacher to understand classroom climate from the pupils' points of view. A few other "open-ended" items which may assist the teacher in diagnosing individual reactions to academic matters are the following incomplete sentences: "Studying is _____," "Homework is _____," "This school _____," "My schoolwork _____," and "Learning out of books is _____."

The teacher can rate the answers on a scale ranging from very high attraction to very low. Furthermore, he can put the answers of each pupil together in a cluster to get some measurement of how consistent a pupil is about his attitudes toward school and academic issues. A pupil with high attraction to school answered in the following way:

Studying is a chance to learn what you need to know.

My school work is a lot of fun.

This school is my idea of a good school.

Homework is important to do.

Learning out of books is fun and I learn a lot.

In contrast, a student quite alienated from the school answered:

Studying is a waste of time.

My school work is very dull and boring.

This school is awful.

Homework is something I hate.

Learning out of books is not a good way to learn.

The teacher who uses these incomplete sentences may be able to judge the positivity or negativity of his pupils by treating

these examples as the two extremes. Perhaps the teacher might use five categories, very positive, somewhat positive, neutral, somewhat negative and very negative, and rate each completed sentence accordingly. Then he could compute an average score for each pupil in order to learn how involved each one feels in academic matters. More information about evaluating sentence completions will be found in Chapter Eight.

For purposes of mutual clarification of the teacher's and pupils' points of view, the teacher might also answer a few of the "open-ended" items. He could prepare his own lists of "clues of a good day," "clues of a bad day," and "things that should happen a lot more than they do." After the pupils have had a chance to complete their lists and these have been tallied and organized into categories, the teacher could present his list and lead a discussion about the similarities and differences between the lists and the reasons for them. Such discussions will encourage more openness and spontaneity in other classroom activities.

Example of how One Teacher Used Direct Measures of Classroom

Climate and Pupil Motivation

A fifth grade teacher decided to try to make use of some direct measures of climate and motivation in his classroom. He felt that many of his pupils lacked motivation to take the initiative in academic learning. For instance, most classroom discussion was teacher dominated, with pupils taking very little part. Furthermore, pupils showed little excitement or real interest in participating in classroom activities. Although he tried very

diligently to stimulate the pupils out of their apathy, the pupils seldom introduced new topics representing their interests and concerns. The teacher decided to collect some data on his pupils to see which ones were most apathetic and why. He used the series of questions listed above under the title Classroom Life.

The following patterns emerged as a result of analyzing the results. The pupils generally agreed that most of "the pupils in the class do what the teacher wants them to do." The data indicated also that the pupils felt that their teacher "doesn't like it at all if we help each other with our work in class." The results of these two questions were contradictory to the teacher's point of view. Evidently, the pupils were harboring thoughts about the inappropriateness of working together from previous classroom experiences. The teacher did want his pupils to work together and to help one another. However, he had obviously not made this point clear to the pupils and had not been successful in instructing the pupils in ways of cooperating in the classroom.

Another result indicated that some pupils tended to differ from the majority on their answers to the first question on classroom life, "Life in this class with your regular teacher." Most of the pupils answered one of the first three alternative answers, "has all good things," "has mostly good things," and "more good things than bad." About five pupils, however, answered "more bad things than good." These same pupils when asked, "When I'm in this class I _____" answered "not very interested, bored quite a lot of the time." The teacher was surprised to find two pupils

in particular in this group of five whom he had considered to be quite interested in classroom activities. He decided to work more closely with these five under-motivated pupils.

Other results indicated that the teacher was putting some of his goals across to the pupils, but that he was not so successful in regard to other goals. Most of the pupils answered that they were working "quite hard" on learning. They also answered that they were working "about the same as most" in reply to the question, "How hard are you working on school work compared with the others in the class?" These results were interpreted by the teacher as meaning that the pupils, as a group, really had as a norm that they should all work at a rather high level. On the other hand, all of the pupils answered "hardly ever" and "never" to the question, "The pupils in this class help one another with their school work." The pupils' perceptions that their teacher did not want them to help one another must have been part of the reason for the pupils' low level of academic involvement and group interaction during discussion.

These results motivated the teacher to take constructive actions in clarifying for the class what were misperceptions of his goals. He did want the pupils to interact and to collaborate. This he planned to make explicit, both in statement and action. Using the direct measures proved helpful to this teacher in diagnosing a situation which both he and the pupils had misjudged.

Examples of How Another Teacher Used Indirect Measures

A high school English teacher used some indirect questions to measure her pupils' academic motivation. She felt that her students often were not really involved in their reading and class discussion. Several years before this, under similar circumstances, she had tried some role-playing of plays the class was studying. At that time, the role-playing was unsuccessful. The class was confused and the teacher became agitated. Her experience was quite fruitless and frustrating. However, several years after the unfortunate attempt, she decided to try it again. This time the role-playing went fairly well, but the teacher wondered if the students were really as interested and involved as they appeared to her to be. She administered the classroom diagnostic tool entitled, "Clues about Classroom Life."

The teacher chose to administer the "clues" questions so that she could see how many times the role-playing was chosen by the pupils as (a) clues of a good day, or (b) clues of a bad day, or (c) a thing that should happen more often. The results indicated that role-playing was nominated by 85% of the pupils as a clue of a good day. Ten per cent of the pupils viewed it as a clue of a bad day, while five per cent did not include it in either list. Further she found that among the 85% who enjoyed dramatic acting in the class, over 75% wished it would happen more often.

The teacher was encouraged from these data to continue the role-playing. Her observations of the pupils' motivations were accurate. They were enjoying the role-playing. At the same time she knew which pupils did not especially like dramatic acting.

This information led her to seek reasons for these pupils' dissatisfactions and to utilize them in the role-playing in ways which might increase their involvement in it.

Tools for Diagnosing Specific Learning Experiences

Sometimes teachers wish to diagnose their pupils' reactions toward specific learning experiences. Such questions are called Post-Class Reactions and might be organized as follows:

Date _____
 Pupil No. _____
 Class _____

Post-Class Reactions

1a. How do you feel about how much you learned today?

Don't think I learned much	Learned a little bit	Learned quite a lot	Learned a lot today
-------------------------------	-------------------------	------------------------	------------------------

b. Please write why you feel this way _____

2a. How clear was it why we were doing (refer to some specific activity?)

Very clear to me	Pretty clear to me	Not so very clear	Not clear at all
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b. What do you think is the reason we did what we did? _____

3a. How much did you feel lost during this class period?

Never lost at all	Lost a couple of times	Lost quite a few times	Lost most of the time
----------------------	---------------------------	---------------------------	--------------------------

b. What made you feel lost? _____

4a. How often did you feel you wanted some extra help during this class period today?

Wanted help quite a few times	Wanted help several times	Wanted a little help once or twice	Never wanted any help
-------------------------------------	------------------------------	--	--------------------------

b. What kind of help did you want? _____

5a. How often did you see somebody else needing help during our class period today?

Saw somebody needing help a lot	Saw somebody needing help quite a few times	Saw somebody needing help a few times	Never saw anybody needing help
---------------------------------------	---	---	--------------------------------------

b. How could they be helped? _____

6a. How do you feel about your participation in the discussion this last period?

Feel very satisfied	Feel fairly satisfied	Not very satisfied	Not satisfied at all
------------------------	--------------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------

b. Why did you feel this way? _____

7a. How did you feel about what the teacher did in this last class period?

Very satisfied	Pretty well satisfied	Only a little satisfied	Not satisfied
----------------	--------------------------	----------------------------	------------------

b. What makes you feel this way? _____

These are a sample of the kinds of questions teachers have found helpful. Some teachers have the pupils tabulate the results. This can be done by instructing the pupils to tally the total number of persons marking each position on the scale. Often, it is also fruitful to have another group of pupils reading the replies to the "open-ended" questions, trying to find some information that might be useful in improving classroom procedures. Discussion of both the scale results and the answers to the "open-ended" questions generally lead to a growth of joint responsibility for improvement of classroom procedures.

Example of How One Teacher Used Post-Class Reactions

A junior high school English teacher felt that her students passively accepted academic tasks and carried out the assignments but failed to get very involved. She used post-class reactions to check her impressions and to learn what classroom procedures caught the students' interests and which ones were boring to them. She decided to try several practices and to get the pupils' reactions to each. For instance, for three days she tried lecture and direct questioning (practice #1), for another few days she engaged the pupils in more active discussion by having the pupils lead their peers in discussion (practice #2), and finally for another few days she tried extensive role playing and creative writing (practice #3). Each day during this period of experimentation, she used the Post-Class Reactions given above, omitting question 6.

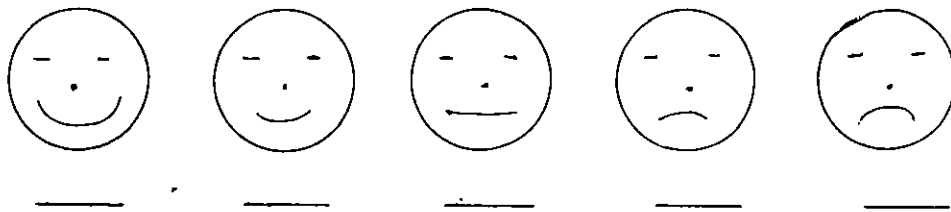
With these data the teacher was able to compare the three teaching practices from the points of view of the pupils. She also wanted the pupils to make direct comparisons of the three methods.

After trying out the three practices she reminded the pupils of each of them and asked them to compare the benefits and inadequacies of each. She did this by using a "paired comparison method." For each question she asked the pupils to tell whether practice #1 was better than #2, whether #2 was better than #3, and finally whether #1 was better than #3. Her questions involved how much was learned, the clarity of the lesson, feelings of being lost during learning, and feelings of needing extra help.

Her own observations of what the pupils seemed to be learning were confirmed by the results of the questionnaires. Methods 2 (active discussion with pupils leading their peers) and 3 (role-playing and creative writing) were most effective during the early phase of getting the pupils involved and interested in the topic. The more direct approach (Method 1) seemed to work better after the pupils were interested in the subject and willing to listen to the teacher more carefully.

Post-Class Reactions for Early Elementary Grades

Teachers of very young pupils must use fewer written words in getting post-class reactions from pupils. One technique for learning the feelings of young pupils is to use a scale represented by faces. The teacher asks the pupils to put an X under the face which shows how he feels. The faces are as follows:



The teacher might ask the pupils, "How did you feel about the things we did the last period?" Or he might be more specific, asking the pupil to show his feelings about the spelling lesson or the reading book.

Some teachers tabulate the findings on the black board immediately and hold brief discussions about why some (who are anonymous) marked the unhappy faces and how they might make the next class period better.

Other teachers tally the responses for their own information and then make special effort to interest the pupils who marked the unhappy faces. Both methods have proved useful to the lower elementary teacher.

Summary

The classroom climate, which refers to the nature of interpersonal relations in the classroom, affects a pupil's academic motivation. In this chapter, classroom tools are presented which diagnose both the classroom learning climate in general and pupils' reactions to specific learning experiences. These tools should be helpful to the teacher who is attempting to improve his pupils' interest and participation in classroom learning activities.

Chapter 3

PUPIL NORMS ABOUT CLASSROOM LIFE

We know that teenagers are often more anxious to conform to the expectations of their peers than they are to those of adults, be they parents or teachers. There may be such high consensus as to what these peer standards are, and so much group pressure to enforce them that all members of the group behave in accordance with the standard. Therefore, for example, the seventh grade girls wear white sweat socks and flats; and the seventh grade boys never let themselves be seen in "serious" conversation with a girl.

Similar agreements are developed by social groups at all age levels and relative to many different areas of life. In some cases, sub-groups may establish standards that are different from those accepted by the larger group. For example, a close-knit group of five underachieving boys in a sixth grade classroom may be in agreement that doing well at school work is not worth the effort; that the teacher is not to be respected for her knowledge, or for her teaching skills, but only to be feared for her authority; that achieving well in school is "sissy"; that aggressive, physical assertiveness is a good way to gain the admiration of one's peers. Knowledge of such standards is important to the teacher, even if they are rejected by most of the class. Of course, such standards would be especially significant

if sociometric evidence regarding the power structure in that classroom revealed that this small group of boys was highly influential within the class.

Such a situation might give rise to another kind of question--is there a difference between the publicly accepted standard and the standard held individually by each child? For example, the pupil may say, "Most kids in this class think school work is too hard and that school is no fun," but will assert that he, personally, "likes school and feels the teacher is giving him reasonable assignments." Yet a tabulation might show that nearly all pupils in the class like school. They are inaccurate in their perception of the standard held by others. It is possible that such a perceived group standard, even though inaccurate, is quite potent in influencing pupil behavior.

The teacher who has reliable data about these standards held by the classroom peer group is in a better position to work with the group on learning tasks than is the teacher who is unaware of them. So a teacher may well ask such questions as:

Is it "the thing to do" in my classroom to cooperate with the teacher, or does group approval go to the pupil who obstructs, diverts, or embarrasses the teacher?

Do pupils think the teacher is "for them" or "against them"?

Is it OK to ask another pupil for help in this classroom?

Is it a good idea to work hard on school work in this classroom, or is it better to do just enough to "get by"?

How accurate are individual children in perceiving the group norms?

To what extent do individual pupils agree with the perceived group norms?

Is the teacher accurate in perceiving the norms held by the pupils about classroom life?

Do pupils think their teacher supports or differs in his thinking from the pupil-held norms?

One way to get answers to some of these questions is to construct an instrument listing a series of possible norms; then ask pupils to indicate how many of the class agree with each. For example:

Date _____

Pupil No. _____

Class _____

HOW THIS CLASS THINKS

DIRECTIONS: School classes are quite different from one another in how pupils think and feel about school work, about one another, and about teachers. How do you think this class (your classmates) feel about the following things? Put a check in one of the boxes under "How Many Think This Way?" for each of the statements below.

How Many Think This Way?

	Almost every- one in the class thinks this	Many pupils in the class think this	About half in the class think this	Some pupils in the class think this	Only a few in the class think this
1. It is good to take part as much as possible in classroom work.					
2. Asking the teacher for help is a good thing to do.					
3. It is good to help other pupils with their school-work (not including tests.)					
4. Schoolwork is more often fun than it is not fun.					
5. Our teacher really understands how pupils feel.					

The form can be used as shown above, or the teacher might add other statements appropriate to his particular classroom situation which he would like to explore.

In order to make comparisons with individual pupil norms, the same instrument can be used with minor modifications in the directions and in the headings:

HOW DO YOU (YOURSELF) THINK ABOUT THESE THINGS?

DIRECTIONS: Put a check in the box which tells how you feel about each of the statements below.

	I agree almost always	I agree more than I disagree	I agree as often as I disagree	I dis- agree more than agree	I dis- agree almost always
1. It is good to take part as much as possible in classroom work.					
2. Asking the teacher for help is a good thing to do.					
3. Etc.					

Asking the pupil for personal data about his own feelings raises questions about anonymity. Some children are likely to respond more truthfully if they know their answers will not be traced to them and possibly influence the teacher's attitude toward them. The How This Class Thinks instrument might be used without having pupils identify themselves. But use of How Do You (Yourself) Think About These Things? depends upon knowing which pupils responded in what ways on both instruments. One way in which this problem has been handled has been to involve the pupils as partners in the diagnostic plan, and then to have each pupil create a code number know only to himself which he then uses on all his questionnaires. It might be the last four digits in his telephone number or the numerical equivalent of the day and the month of the child's birth.

Of course, data will be a great deal more useful to the teacher if it can be related directly to the individual children concerned. Even the most sensitive areas can be handled with increasing directness as the teacher and his class become confident of each other's trustworthiness based on satisfactory experiences with the use of the data. Some suggestions of ways to "feed back" data to the class members will be made at the end of this section.

The pupil's perception of how well the teacher agrees with the standards of the peer group can be ascertained by making another modification in the headings and directions of the same basic instrument described on preceding page.

HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR TEACHER FEELS?

DIRECTIONS: Put a check in the box which tells how you think your teacher feels about each of the statements below.

	She would agree almost always	She would agree more than disagree	She would agree as often as disagree	She would disagree more than agree	She would disagree almost always
1. It is good to take part as much as possible in classroom work.					
2. Asking the teacher for help is a good thing to do.					
3. Etc.					

The teacher can register his own ideas about these aspects of classroom life by completing the second instrument (How Do You (Yourself) Think About These Things?) in the privacy of his own desk or at home, prior to looking at the results from pupils.

Example of How One Teacher Used These Instruments

A fifth grade teacher had her class complete these instruments on classroom norms, saying to her pupils, "I'd be interested in finding out how people in this class think about some of the things we do together in this classroom. While we could just talk about your ideas, a better way to start might be to give each of you an equal chance to record your personal ideas on paper. Then we can discuss them later. I have prepared some materials that will make it easy for you."

The administration took about 30 minutes. While the pupils were filling out their forms, she completed the instrument, How Do (Yourself) Think About These Things?, and then proceeded to tally the data from the pupils. She recorded the total frequencies with which each response was checked, using a blank copy of the instrument. Then she drew a box around those categories which showed the central tendency or average response. (Technically speaking, she used the "median" or middle frequency. Since there were 21 pupils responding, the eleventh pupil, counting from either end of the distribution, would be the middle or median pupil.) The teacher put a box around the median point. This is how her summary sheet looked:

Table 1

HOW MANY THINK THIS WAY?

	Almost every- one	Many	About half	Some	Only a few
1. It is good to take part as much as possible in classroom work.	2	15	4	0	0
2. Asking the teacher for help is a good thing to do.	7	9	1	4	0
3. It is good to help other pupils with their school- work (not tests)..	4	5	6	2	4
4. Schoolwork is more often fun than it is not fun.	2	5	10	2	2
5. The teacher really under- stands how pupils feel.	8	6	6	1	0

It appeared that there was high agreement that three of the standards were an accepted part of the group life of that classroom:

1. It is good to take part as much as possible in classroom work.
2. Asking the teacher for help is a good thing to do.
5. The teacher really understands how pupils feel.

Standards 3 and 4 were accepted by a good share of the pupils, but there seemed to be much more disagreement. In fact, a few pupils clearly indicated they thought these were not accepted by the group:

3. It is good to help other pupils with their school-work (not tests).
4. Schoolwork is more often fun than it is not fun.

Thus, the teacher gained some idea of which of the positions listed in the questionnaire were, in fact, accepted norms in her classroom.

Now, how about the way in which individual pupils in the classroom related to the norms of the group? Did they think the teacher held the same expectations for the class as the class held for itself? The teacher organized the data to gain information about such questions by relating each pupil's response on How This Class Thinks to the average response in the class (as shown in Table 1). If a pupil responded to the first statement ("It is good to take part as much as possible in classroom work") by checking "about half" the class feels this way, while the class as a whole checked "many," the pupil was one category off toward the right side of the scale. The teacher assigned this pupil a -1 score. If another one checked "almost everyone" he would be one category

off the class average toward the left side of the scale and would be assigned a +1 score. The average response for the second statement, "Asking the teacher for help is a good thing to do," covered two categories, "almost everyone" and "many." Thus, individual pupils could deviate only by answering "about half" (score = -1), "some" (score = -2) or "only a few" (score = -3).

It was possible, by using this simple scoring technique, for the teacher to record the data regarding each pupil's accuracy in predicting the group norm. Her table (Table 2) looked like this: (Note that a blank means that the pupil was entirely accurate in predicting the group norm. If a pupil's judgement of the group norm is more positive than the actual norm, his score is shown with a + in front of it. If his judgement is more negative than the actual norm, his score is preceded by a minus sign. If a pupil failed to answer a question, a question mark would be shown on the data sheet).

Table 2

PUPIL ACCURACY IN PREDICTING GROUP NORMS

Statement about Life in the Classroom					
Pupil	Good to take part	Good to ask teacher	Good to help others with schoolwork	Schoolwork more fun than not fun	Teacher really un- derstands how pupils feel
1.	-1	-1			-1
2.		-2		-2	-1
3.			?		-1
4.				-2	
5.					
6.					
7.			-2		
8.					
9.		-2	+1	+1	-1
10.					
11.	-1				
12.	-1			-1	
13.					
14.	+1		+1		
15.		-2	-2		
16.	-1	-2	-2	-1	-2
17.	+1		+1	+1	
18.			-2		-1
19.					-1
20.					
21.			+1		

The teacher was able to make several observations about accuracy upon study of her data sheets.

Pupil #16 was the least accurate in predicting the group norms. He failed to predict what the majority of the group felt in 5 out of 5 cases.

In general, pupils #1, 2, 9, 15, 16, 17 and 18 were least accurate.

Pupils #5, 6, 8, 10, 13 and 20 were most accurate. They predicted the group standard correctly every time.

Similarly, Table 3 was prepared to show the extent to which each pupil agreed with the group norm by comparing responses to the instrument How Do You (Yourself) Think About These Things? with the data in Table 1.

Table 3

INDIVIDUAL PUPIL AGREEMENT WITH GROUP NORMS

Statement about Life in the Classroom					
Pupil	Good to take part	Good to ask teacher	Good to help others with schoolwork	Schoolwork more fun than not fun	Teacher really un- derstands how pupils feel
1.					-1
2.	-1		-1	-2	
3.				-1	-3
4.	+1		-2		
5.	+1			+1	
6.			-1		-1
7.	+1		-2	+1	
8.	+1		-2	+1	
9.	-3		-2		-1
10.				+1	
11.			+1		
12.	+1	-1		+1	
13.	+1				
14.				+1	
15.					
16.			-2		-1
17.			-2	+1	
18.				+1	
19.	+1			+1	
20.	+1				
21.	+1			-1	

The teacher was able to conclude some things about individual pupil agreement with the group norm from this table:

Pupil #15 agreed with the group norm in every case.

Pupil #9 differed most from the group norms. He disagreed in 3 out of 5 cases, and by as much as 3 categories.

Pupils most in agreement with the group norms were #1, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 18 and 20.

Pupils who disagreed with the norms in 3 out of 5 cases were # 2, 7, 8, 9 and 12.

Table 4 compares the pupil judgments on the instrument How Do You Think Your Teacher Feels? with the group norms tabulated in Table 1. Thus, if a pupil thinks the teacher holds a particular standard in the same way the pupils in the class hold it, there will be a blank in Table 4. If he thinks the teacher is more positive about the standard than is the class, the discrepancy will be shown with a + preceding it.

Table 4

DEGREE TO WHICH PUPIL THINKS TEACHER AGREES WITH GROUP NORMS

Statement about Life in the Classroom					
Pupil	Good to take part	Good to ask teacher	Good to help others with schoolwork	Schoolwork is more fun than not fun	Teacher really un- derstands how pupils feel
1.		-2			
2.		-1	-1		-3
3.	+1		+1	+1	
4.			-2	+1	
5.	+1		+1	+1	
6.	+1	-1	-1	+1	
7.	+1		-2		
8.	+1		-2	+1	
9.	-3			-1	-1
10.				-2	-3
11.	+1				
12.	+1				
13.	+1				
14.	+1		+1	+1	
15.	+1			+1	
16.	+1		-2		
17.	+1		-2	+1	
18.	+1			+1	
19.	+1		+1	+1	
20.	+1			+1	
21.	+1	-1	+1		

This table indicates that pupils think the teacher is somewhat unrealistic about work in the classroom. For example:

- a. Nearly all the pupils (16 of 21) thought their teacher would "almost always" think that it is good to take part in classroom work, while the peer group standard was a step below this (i.e., "many" pupils think taking part is good).
- b. Half the pupils (11 of 21) thought their teacher believed almost always that school work is fun, while they felt only about half the class thought school work was fun.

Pupils #2, 9 and 10 think that the teacher would disagree almost always with the proposition that she "really understands how pupils feel." They are highly atypical, since nearly all the other pupils think the teacher and the pupils are in agreement; at the other extreme of the scale: the teacher almost always understands how pupils feel (Table 1).

Four pupils (#1, 2, 6 and 21) judged that the teacher felt less positive than the pupils about pupils asking her for help.

Seven pupils (#2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 16 and 17) thought the teacher felt considerably less positive than did the class itself about whether it's good to help others with school work.

These observations stimulated the teacher to make some plans to improve her classroom situation. Here are a few of the steps she took.

She had already involved the class in discussion about group standards and how they become important along with the teacher in influencing the way pupils respond to classroom activities. So, she

proceeded to share with the class the tabulations in Table 1. The table was placed on the blackboard and pupils were encouraged to give their interpretations of the data.

Since most lack of clarity existed around the idea of whether it's good or not to help others, the teacher first examined her own thinking about cooperation vs. competition in learning. She concluded that she had been overly concerned with individual achievement, with "each person doing his own work," primarily as a grading technique. She arranged for a class discussion around the topic, "When and how can we help each other learn?" As a result, additional opportunities for cooperative learning were provided in the structure of the classroom: seats were grouped in two's and three's; rules were developed governing "talking" which permitted sharing among study partners during work periods.

A special effort was made by the teacher to reach pupils #1, 2, 6 and 21 (Table 4) who were not clear that she considered it good to ask teacher to provide help. She tried role playing to get at some of the feelings they had toward asking adults for help, and some of the problems adults have in giving help.

So that there might be more communication among pupils as to the group standards, a steering committee was set up to give leadership in improving the classroom. The committee observed classroom operations, discussed implications, and brought recommendations to the class once each week.

SUMMARY

The beliefs and values held by members of a classroom group are important in determining the effectiveness of learning in that group. If the group standards or norms of what is good or not good are congruent with the teacher's own values, work in the classroom is likely to be much smoother and more efficient than when there are misunderstandings and conflicting values. When there is close agreement among the teacher's values, the pupils' perceptions of these values, the pupils' own values, and their perceptions of the values of the class as a whole, learning is greatly facilitated. This chapter presents tools for determining these perceptions and values and shows how one teacher used this information to improve the learning climate of her classroom.

Chapter 4

PUPIL-TEACHER INTERACTION

A teacher's behavior in his classroom is a continuing process of interaction with his pupils. At times the interaction is so complex and subtle that the teacher may be unaware of certain aspects of it. Thus a discrepancy often exists between a teacher's goals and his actual behavior in the classroom. Similarly, there is likely to be a marked discrepancy between a teacher's perceptions of his behavior in the classroom and his pupils' perceptions of that same behavior. When such a situation exists, the teacher's classroom practices are not contributing effectively to the accomplishment of teaching objectives. A teacher may, for instance, wish to be seen as a warm and friendly person in order to help the pupils feel comfortable, but the pupils may see his behavior as threatening or punitive. In such cases, classroom atmosphere and events are influenced more by unconscious factors than by the teacher's conscious philosophy of education.

Some teachers are aware of the danger of discrepancies between goals and actual practice and are attempting to learn more about them through the help of another teacher or an "objective observer" who observes a class period, or through obtaining pupil reactions, or by tape recording and listening back to selected classroom sessions. By studying data on how a teacher actually has behaved in the classroom, a teacher can learn what he is really doing in class and can then evaluate this behavior in terms of its

contribution to his teaching objectives, and whether what he intended to do is actually taking place. Tools for studying teacher behavior in terms of pupil-teacher interaction are presented in this chapter.

Because the classroom is a different psychological setting for each of its participants, a complete analysis of the dynamics of classroom activity requires information from all points of view. The tools below include ways of collecting data on an hour of classroom time from each pupil's point of view, as well as from that of an observer who is "disinterested" in the activities of the classroom participants. In the case of pupil perceptions, the teacher may be interested in knowing how each of his pupils viewed an hour of instruction. Here are some examples of items he might use.

Date _____
 Pupil No. _____
 Class _____

PUPIL PERCEPTIONS OF A CLASS PERIOD

Think about the last hour of class. About how much time would you say was spent in each of the following activities? Draw a circle around the answer you think is right for each one.

How much time? (Circle one)

The teacher talking to the whole class--
 telling, answering, or asking something. a lot some a little none

The teacher talking to individual pupils--
 telling, answering, or asking something. a lot some a little none

Pupils talking to the teacher--telling,
 answering, or asking something. a lot some a little none

Now think about what you yourself did during the last class period. Write in the number you think is right (Make the best guess you can).

My teacher told, answered, or asked me things _____ times

I told, answered, or asked my teacher things _____ times

I told, answered, or asked other pupils things _____ times

During the last class hour, my teacher told, answered, or asked me things:

- check a. _____ more than most other pupils.
 one b. _____ a little more than most other pupils.
 c. _____ a little less than most other pupils.
 d. _____ less than most other pupils.

I volunteered to say things or do things during the class hour:

- check a. _____ more than most other pupils.
 one b. _____ a little more than most other pupils.
 c. _____ a little less than most other pupils.
 d. _____ less than most other pupils.

When my teacher told, answered, or asked me something, it was:

- check one
- a. ☐ only about my work.
 - b. ☐ mostly about my work, but a little about my behavior.
 - c. ☐ mostly about my behavior, but a little about my work.
 - d. ☐ only about my behavior.

When my teacher told, answered, or asked me something, he or she was:

- check one
- a. ☐ very pleased.
 - b. ☐ satisfied.
 - c. ☐ somewhat dissatisfied.
 - d. ☐ quite dissatisfied.

In addition to obtaining pupils' perceptions of the teacher's practices, the teacher could have an objective observer collect data on classroom interaction. Such data should assist the teacher in judging how realistic the pupils' perceptions are. Material collected by an observer can also provide useful clues as to how a teacher might increase his teaching effectiveness. Often, a teacher does not know what aspects of his behavior are confusing or disruptive; moreover, he may be ignoring a particular section of his class or reacting quite differently to certain pupils. Several observational systems have been developed for the purpose of reflecting back to the teacher his behavior during a given classroom period.

One method of observation classifies behavior first on the basis of the classroom participants. Three general categories are used: teacher to whole class; teacher to individual pupil; and pupil initiating remarks to the teacher. Within each of these major categories, the action is classified as to whether it is work oriented or oriented to social behavior and social control. Finally,

the specific type of behavior is identified. The following outline shows this classification and gives the definition for each type of behavior.

I. Teacher to Whole Class

A. Work

1. Telling and Giving Information - Transmitting fact, opinion, etc., directly to whole class about subject matter or related areas of classroom interest.
2. Giving Directions - Telling the class what to do, or how to do a particular piece of work.
3. Asking and Indirect Probing - Trying to get information from the class or posing questions to whole class regarding classroom work.

B. Social Behavior and Social Control

1. Positive - Indicating to whole class that its social behavior and control have been "good."
2. Neutral - Giving directions or information with no evaluation implied.
3. Negative - Indicating to whole class that its social conduct is not "good."

II. Teacher to Individual Pupils

A. Work

1. Positive - Rewarding comments directed to an individual pupil about an aspect of his work.
2. Neutral - Comments or questions which are neither rewarding nor punishing directed to an individual pupil about an aspect of his work.
3. Negative - Punishing comments directed to an individual pupil about an aspect of his work.

B. Social Behavior and Social Control

1. Positive - Rewarding comments directed to an individual pupil about his social conduct in the class.
2. Neutral - Comments or questions which are neither rewarding nor punishing directed to an individual pupil about his conduct in the class.
3. Negative - Punishing comments directed to an individual pupil about his conduct in the class.

III. Pupils to Teacher

A. Work

1. Dependent and Asking Questions - Pupil remarks which either show dependency on the teacher or are questions about work which is to be done.
2. Contributions - Pupil remarks which add something to on-going class assignment. Elaboration - helpful comments.

B. Social Behavior and Social Control

1. Complaints - Pupil remark which is a complaint about conduct of other pupils in the class.
2. Attention Seeking - Pupil remark aimed at getting attention from the teacher, the pupils, or both.

A format for using these categories in classroom observation is given on the next page.

Teacher or Class _____ Date _____ Time _____

I. Teacher to Whole ClassA. Work

1. Giving infor- mation	2. Giving Direc- tions	3. Asking; Probing
-------------------------------	------------------------------	-----------------------

B. Social Behavior and Social
Control

1. Posi- tive	2. Neu- tral	3. Nega- tive
------------------	-----------------	------------------

II. Teacher to Individual PupilsA. Work

1. Posi- tive	2. Neu- tral	3. Nega- tive
------------------	-----------------	------------------

B. Social Behavior and Social
Control

1. Posi- tive	2. Neu- tral	3. Nega- tive
------------------	-----------------	------------------

III. Pupils to TeacherA. Work

1. Dependent	2. Contributions
--------------	------------------

B. Social Behavior and Social
Control

1. Complaints	2. Attention Seeking
---------------	-------------------------

The observer proceeds by checking one of the categories for each unit of behavior observed. A unit of behavior is defined as one complete statement in one of the categories, while a new unit of behavior is designated as one complete statement in a category different from the preceding.

Whenever an individual pupil is communicated to by the teacher or initiates a statement to the teacher, his or her sex is recorded in the appropriate behavioral category. The recording symbols used are 1 (one verbal unit for whole class), 0 (one verbal unit for a girl), and X (one verbal unit for a boy).

An observation check sheet with all of the above categories is used by the observer for a five minute period. At the end of every two of these five minute periods (every ten minutes), another form is filled out by the observer which designates the methods of participation used during the previous ten minutes. This form is shown below and requires about one minute to complete. The methods of participation include such phenomena as lecturing, listening, looking, practicing, being tested, discussion, etc. For each of these the observer notes whether the activity was done by the total class, small groups of pupils, or individuals working apart from the rest of the group.

The form is as follows:

Teacher or Class _____ Date _____ Time _____

What method(s) of participation have been used for the last ten minutes?
(check all appropriate items)

	<u>Total class</u>	<u>small groups</u>	<u>individuals</u>
1) lecturing, listening, looking, etc.	_____	_____	_____
2) practicing, oral drill, trying out	_____	_____	_____
3) being tested, quizzed	_____	_____	_____
4) game, contest, competing	_____	_____	_____
5) discussion	_____	_____	_____
6) reading, studying	_____	_____	_____
7) writing	_____	_____	_____
8) creating and making	_____	_____	_____

COMMENTS: _____

The following example shows data collected during a five minute period in a high school retail business class. The teacher was introducing the pupils to simulating a retail store in class. The observation check sheet looked like this.

I. Teacher to Whole Class

A. Work

1. Giving information	2. Giving Directions	3. Asking; Probing
///		

B. Social Behavior and Social Control

1. Positive	2. Neutral	3. Negative
		/

II. Teacher to Individual Pupils

A. Work

1. Positive	2. Neutral	3. Negative
00	0000X XX00 000	X0

B. Social Behavior and Social Control

1. Positive	2. Neutral	3. Negative
	X	XX

III. Pupils to Teacher

A. Work

1. Dependent	2. Contributions
0000X XX0X0 0	0X0

B. Social Behavior and Social Control

1. Complaints	2. Attention Seeking
X	X

The data indicate that, for the most part, this teacher was telling and giving information; he reacted in mostly a neutral way to individual pupils and evoked mostly dependency responses from the pupils. Furthermore, the data indicate that the teacher reacted toward more girls than boys, but received behavior from the same number of boys and girls. These data were of considerable interest to this teacher since he thought that he was often rewarding his students for correct responses, instead of the neutral behavior he actually displayed. He thought, also, that he was evoking quite a few contributions from the pupils, whereas during this five minute interval only a few students made contributions.

A teacher might use this type of observation in his class by enlisting the help of a colleague as an observer. After the data are collected he can tabulate them in various ways, depending on what he is trying to learn about his classroom behavior.

For instance:

Perhaps he wants to know what proportion of behaviors are aimed at the whole class and what proportion are directed to individuals. Or he might want to know how much time he spends giving negative comments related to social control or to work. Perhaps he wants to know how much dependency the pupils are displaying. To learn this, he can compare the number of dependency responses from pupils with the number of contributions from pupils. Moreover, perhaps he wants to see how the pupils have perceived what he has done. He can compare what the observer has seen with what the pupils have perceived. For instance, do

the pupils and the observer see his behaviors as positive, see him as being satisfied with the pupils, or do the pupils and the observer see things differently? If there is a discrepancy in perceptions, the teacher might ask why. Why, for example, do the pupils sometimes see him as dissatisfied when he is trying to show satisfaction?

Another important thing to look for is whether or not a teacher is behaving differently toward girls and boys. Often differential relationships with the two sexes occur quite unconsciously. Our research indicates that teachers often indicate more satisfaction with girls than with boys.¹

Perhaps he wants to know which kind of teaching behavior, direct or indirect, is most effective. He can find out about this by trying to be direct for a week or so, telling and giving information as well as giving directions, and then being indirect for a comparable period of time, using indirect probing. Then, by means of instruments presented in Chapter 2, he can evaluate how well each of the teaching procedures worked out as far as the pupils were concerned.

Another system of classroom observation, called Interaction Analysis, was developed by Flanders.² As described by

¹Schmuck, R., and Van Egmond, E., "Sex Differences in the Relationship of Interpersonal Perceptions to Academic Performance," Psychology in the Schools, January, 1965.

²Flanders, Ned A. INTERACTION ANALYSIS IN THE CLASSROOM, A MANUAL FOR OBSERVERS. The University of Michigan School of Education. Revised Edition, January, 1964.

the author, his system "is particularly concerned with analyzing the influence pattern on the teacher."³ In it, a series of acts is recorded in terms of predetermined concepts related to control of the students' freedom of action. Interaction Analysis "consists simply of observing, recording, and counting events as they occur. The usefulness of such a simple procedure will depend on congruence between the purpose of observing and the nature of the categories. Thus the proper application of Interaction Analysis begins by identifying the purposes of observation clearly and then designing a set of categories that fits the purposes. Only rarely will an existing set of categories be appropriate."⁴ Teachers should feel free to change or develop categories to meet their particular needs. Experience has shown, however, that the categories presented here, as well as those in the method of observation described above, are useful in most classroom situations.

Flanders' system has ten categories. Seven involve teacher talk and two involve student talk. The tenth category is assigned to pauses, short periods of silence, and talk that is confusing or noisy. The categories are described as follows:⁵

³Ibid. p. 1.

⁴Ibid. p. 30.

⁵Ibid. p. 5.

Teacher Talk -- Indirect Influence

1. Accepts Feelings: accepts and clarifies the feeling tone of the students in a non-threatening manner. Feelings may be positive or negative. Predicting or recalling feelings are included.
2. Praises or Encourages: praises or encourages student action or behavior. Jokes that release tension, not at the expense of another individual, nodding head or saying, "um hm" or "go on" are included.
3. Accepts or Uses Ideas of Student: clarifying, building, or developing ideas suggested by a student. As teacher brings more of his own ideas into play, shift to category five.
4. Asks Questions: asking a question about content or procedure with the intent that a student answer.

Teacher Talk -- Direct Influence

5. Lecturing: giving facts or opinions about content or procedure; expressing his own ideas, asking rhetorical questions.
6. Giving Directions: directions, commands, or orders to which a student is expected to comply.
7. Criticizing or Justifying Authority: statements intended to change student behavior from nonacceptable to acceptable pattern; bawling someone out; stating why the teacher is doing what he is doing; extreme self-reference.

Student Talk

8. Student Talk -- Response: a student makes a predictable response to teacher. Teacher initiates the contact or solicits student statement and sets limits to what the student says.
9. Student Talk -- Initiation: talk by students which they initiate. Unpredictable statements in response to teacher. Shift from 8 to 9 as student introduces own ideas.
10. Silence or Confusion: pauses, short periods of silence and periods of confusion in which communication cannot be understood by the observer.

Each of these categories designates a particular kind of communication event. There is no scale implied by the numbers assigned to the categories.

About every three seconds, the observer decides which category best represents the communication events just completed. He writes this category number down while simultaneously assessing communication during the next period, and continues at a rate of 20 to 25 observations per minute, keeping his tempo as steady as possible. His notes are merely a sequence of numbers written in a column, top to bottom, so that the original sequence of events is preserved. Occasionally marginal notes are used to explain the class formation or any unusual circumstances. When there is a major change in class formation, communication pattern, or subject under discussion, a double line is drawn and the time indicated. At the end of an observed session, the observer writes

a brief description of each separate activity period indicated by the double lines, including the nature of the activities, the class formation, and the position of the teacher. He also notes any additional facts that seem pertinent to an adequate interpretation and recall of the session.

Interaction data gathered by this method can be tabulated and used to answer many different questions, particularly by comparing the number of times selected behavior categories have occurred.

Perhaps a teacher wants to know how direct or indirect he really is in his teaching. This can be done by comparing the number of times he behaves in categories 1, 2, 3, and 4 (indirect) with the frequency of behaviors in categories 5, 6, and 7 (direct). Moreover, he can check on the pupils' responses to each of these general types of teaching by seeing the kind of behavior each of these elicits, that is, the frequency with which a particular kind of teacher action is followed by category 8 or by category 9. It is likely, for instance, that student initiated responses follow indirect influence more often than direct influence. It is also true that teacher behaviors falling into category 3 (Accepts or Uses Ideas of Students) as a response to student responses encourages more student talk, especially in category 9.

Perhaps a teacher wants to know how often he criticizes the pupils or justifies his authority compared to how often he praises or encourages them. He can find this by comparing the frequency of behavior in categories 7 and 2. Of course the

number of times the teacher justifies authority or praises pupils is not high, so this comparison may often be difficult to make.

Perhaps he wants to know if he ever builds or elaborates on what a pupil has presented, or if he is skillful in asking questions which lead to pupil initiated responses. Categories 3 and 9 provide data to answer these questions.

Perhaps he wants to know how much silence or confusion there is during a period when he is attempting to present some new ideas to the class. Category 10 gives him this information.

He can obtain answers to these and many other questions by using one of the above observation inventories. The following example shows how each of these methods can be adapted to the needs of a particular classroom.

Example of How One Teacher Used Classroom Observation

A fifth grade teacher decided that she wanted to find out more about the way her teaching appeared to the pupils. She began by assessing the classroom learning climate by using some of the tools presented in Chapter 2. She was surprised to discover that many of the pupils did not feel involved in what they were supposed to be learning and that they were not clear on what they were expected to do. Naturally, she became concerned about these responses and looked for ways of improving her teaching performance. She hoped to communicate her lesson material to the pupils with increased clarity and to increase the pupils' motivations to learn.

After mustering up some courage, she asked one of her colleagues to observe her during a teaching hour. The two teachers

talked this over with the principal who was willing to fill in for the teacher-observer while she was observing in her colleague's classroom. The two teachers decided to use the first observation schedule described above.

After the first hour, it was clear to the observer that the fifth grade teacher spent most of the session telling and giving information to the whole class (Category IA1 in the outline presented above). Although it appeared to the observer that everything was clearly stated and presented, it was obvious to her, at the same time, that many of the pupils were not following. One recommendation which the observer made was that the teacher address individuals more often, using both direct and indirect probing to reinforce key points and to get a continuing feedback on the effectiveness of her communication. Another thing that the observer noticed was that the teacher addressed girls more than boys. The boys were left out and played around even though the teacher was not always aware of this. A check on the early data this fifth grade teacher had collected about reactions to learning experiences indicated that the boys were much less involved and less motivated than the girls.

At this point, the teacher embarked on some new attempts to involve and motivate more pupils. She attempted to do this by calling on individual pupils more than she had in the past and on being more conscious of her reactions to boys in the class. She also decided to have the pupils work in small groups sometimes so that each of them would have a greater opportunity to participate and to become involved in classroom work.

After several weeks, she decided to ask her colleague to come back to the class to observe her performance once again. This time, it was clear to the observer that changes had occurred. Most obvious changes were that the teacher addressed individuals more often and gave more support to the boys than she had done previously. At the end of the hour, the observer collected data from the pupils on their reactions to the learning tasks. Compared to the results collected earlier in the semester, these data indicated that the pupils were much more involved, more attracted to classroom tasks, and more excited about their academic learning.

About a week later, the teacher-observer approached the fifth grade teacher and engaged her in a conversation about the improvement she had observed. The observer now wanted to be observed. She was able to see the benefits of observation and knew that she, too, could improve in certain areas of teaching. The fifth grade teacher agreed to observe the observer. This experience indicated how helpful and how contagious observation and feedback can be.

Example of How Another Teacher Used Classroom Observation

A high school English teacher felt that the academic involvement of his students was very low in most of his classes. Moreover, he was concerned over the inability of his students to retain the content they had studied earlier in the course. As a consequence of some discussions with colleagues, he decided to hold class discussions with students on what would help them in retaining their studies. He also decided to plan a curriculum sequence with the students. Notwithstanding these efforts, class morale,

involvement in studies, and the retention of content still did not increase very much. With a sense of some frustration the teacher asked a colleague to observe several of his classroom planning sessions. Both teachers decided to use Flanders' Interaction Analysis during these sessions.

The results of two hours of classroom observation were enlightening to the teacher. The observer found that the teacher was interacting mostly in categories 5 (Lecturing), 4 (Asks Questions), and category 6 (Giving Directions). Student comments, in the main, were those which fall into category 8 (Student Talk -- Response). The most typical pattern of interaction occurred in the sequence of categories 4 (Asking Questions), 8 (Student Responding), followed by a series of 5's (Lecturing), and back to 4 again, etc. Such sequences occurred very often. The teacher was raising questions about ways of approaching the next week's academic work. The students were responding to these questions with their ideas; whereupon the teacher would drop the student's remarks and immediately present his own approach by lecturing. At the same time, the teacher's behaviors seldom fell into categories 1 (Accepts Feeling), 2 (Praises or Encourages), and 3 (Accepts or Uses Ideas of Student), while the pupils hardly ever initiated their own thoughts spontaneously (Category 9). Finally, as each observed hour crept by, category 10 (Silence or Confusion) occurred more often.

The observer and the teacher spent a lot of time discussing these results. At first, the teacher found them very difficult to understand, and tried to find fault with the categories. As these

discussions continued, the teacher overcame this defensive attitude and began to see some of the reasons why his teaching behaviors were leading to low student involvement. He was not giving the students a chance to express their feelings, concerns, and ideas. Moreover, he seldom praised and encouraged his students or based his remarks on their contributions. Although his goals were to involve his students more and to help them retain more content, his classroom behaviors were not reflecting or leading to these objectives. Discussions with the observer would have been improved, in fact, if the teacher had made his objectives clear to the observer before using Interaction Analysis.

The teacher found it difficult to change his classroom behaviors immediately with his present classes. After all, the students now expected him to act in certain specific ways. He made an effort to accept feelings, to praise and encourage, and to accept student ideas. However, it was not until the next semester with another group of students that he was able to put his new insights into practice. Interaction Analysis had helped in forcing him to clarify his objectives and in finding some behavioral means for accomplishing them.

Summary

As almost any experienced teacher will recognize, discrepancies often exist between a teacher's intentions and his behavior in the classroom as it is perceived through the eyes of his pupils or as it is seen by an objective observer. The observational methods presented here provide a means by which a teacher can see what he is actually doing, so that he can take constructive action to make his classroom behavior contribute maximally to his teaching objectives.

Chapter 5

THE PUPIL'S PERCEPTION OF HIMSELF

Man's search for an understanding of himself and his efforts to achieve a "self" which meets certain standards of desirability are as old as history. In recent years the self has become an object of scientific study rather than of speculation and reflection; many educators and psychologists have recognized it as a central concept essential to an understanding of personality. A brief review of some aspects of the self and its development is important for effective use of the tools presented in this chapter.

What is a Self Concept and How Does It Develop?

A self concept¹ is a person's view of himself, the most complete description that an individual is able to give of himself at any particular time. In some recent research on the self concepts of elementary school children, Bledsoe and Garrison refer to the self concept as "one of the most vital areas of human growth." These authors continue: "An individual's perception of himself may well be the central factor influencing his behavior. ... The self is involved in social reactions; it operates in the service

¹Although some writers make certain distinctions between self concept and self-perception, the terms here are used synonymously.

of need satisfaction, particularly in the enhancement of the self or in relation to self-esteem; it is a vital force in effective adjustment."²

When a child first comes to school, he brings a self-concept with him. He was not born with it, but he has been developing it as one part of the process of growing up. It will continue to develop during his years in school and the teacher has an important part in this development. A self concept develops largely through a person's interactions with people who are important to him. These people are first his mother and other members of his immediate family, and later his peer group, his teacher, and other members of the community. His feelings about himself are, initially, a reflection of his parents' feelings about him. Research has shown that there is a significant relationship between parents' evaluation and acceptance of their children and the way the children regard themselves and are regarded by their peers.³

²Bledsoe, Joseph C. and Garrison, Karl C. The Self Concepts of Elementary School Children in Relation to Their Academic Achievement, Intelligence, Interests, and Manifest Anxiety. The University of Georgia, College of Education, Athens, Georgia. Sept., 1962. pp. 1-2.

³Studies relevant to this are: Serot, N. M., and Teevan, R. C., "Perception of the Parent-Child Relationship and Its Relation to Child Adjustment," Child Development, 32, 1961, pp. 373-378, and Luszki, M. B., and Schmuck, R. A., "Pupil Perceptions of Parental Attitudes Toward School," Mental Hygiene, (in press).

Self concepts, then, start to develop early, and they develop to a great extent through the perceptions and evaluations of others; we see ourselves the way we think others see us. These evaluations are often only slightly influenced by a person's actual characteristics. For example, many people who, by objective standards, are quite good-looking consider themselves unattractive, while others who are not at all well-endowed physically hold themselves in high esteem.

Why Should a Teacher Be Concerned with His Pupils' Self Concepts?

There are at least four reasons why a teacher should be concerned with his pupils' self concepts. First, the self concept is a good indicator of mental health. In the process of growing up, a major goal for the child is the development of a sense of personal worth--recognition and respect for himself as an individual. This sense of personal worth, or one's self-esteem, is a major aspect of personality organization, and the way a person sees himself is an important indicator of his degree of mental health. Although negative self-esteem is almost always an indicator of stress, tension and poor mental health, a positive self concept (as measured by the tools presented below) may not necessarily mean good mental health. A positive self concept indicates, generally, a person who respects and accepts himself and recognizes both his assets and his shortcomings, but occasionally it indicates a person who is highly defensive. Such a person, when asked to describe himself, may over-evaluate his assets and minimize his shortcomings, thus presenting himself as close to "ideal." He does this through denying or suppressing threatening aspects of himself. His self-evaluation is unrealistic and he may be labeled by other pupils as "conceited." But when the self concept

is both positive and realistic, it is an indication of mental health. A child with this kind of self concept has confidence and is able to fulfill his capabilities.

Second, the way a person feels about himself is an important determinant of his behavior toward others. The child or adult who holds negative feelings about himself tends to hold negative feelings toward others. The child who is constantly criticizing and finding fault with others feels, perhaps subconsciously, that he himself is not much good. Those who like and respect themselves tend to be positive in their attitudes toward others and to get along better with their associates than those with negative attitudes.

Third, if a pupil has a low sense of self-esteem in a particular area, he is likely to consider himself a failure in that area. A likely course of action, then, is to try to escape. If school self-esteem is low, for example, a pupil is apt to slip into unproductive daydreams or misbehave when he is in school and to leave school as soon as possible. Through his inappropriate behavior in the classroom and the associates he chooses outside of school, he is seeking situations and companions where he can see himself in a favorable light and thus build his self-esteem. Pupils whose school self-esteem is low are on the road to becoming school dropouts unless corrective action is taken.

Fourth, the self concept is rather easily accessible to normal change and planned alteration. The self concept is learned, and the teacher and others associated with the child participate

in this learning and changing process. Yet studies show that the change is often in the wrong direction. For example, a recent study by Morse, Bloom, and Dunn at the University of Michigan showed that 88% of third graders felt "pretty sure of themselves," but only 66% of eleventh graders showed similar self-confidence. The same study found rather wide self-dissatisfaction. Forty-four percent of the eleventh grade pupils studied often wished they were someone else, and 25% of all the pupils, third through eleventh grade, felt that things were all mixed up in their lives and had a low opinion of themselves. These findings refer to their lives as a whole, of which school is only a part, but findings regarding school self-esteem suggest that the school is failing to contribute to the development of a positive self concept. For example, 84% of the third graders were proud of their school work, but only 53% of the eleventh graders had such feelings. In the lower grades, 93% felt they were doing the best work they could, while only 37% of the oldest pupils felt that way. The authors continue: "Regardless of their achievement quotients and the fact that the failures tend to drop out, the pupils who remain in school come to feel that they are doing inadequate work. Again, over half of the young pupils say that they are doing as well in school as they would like, but only twenty-two percent of the eleventh graders feel this way. About forty percent of pupils at all ages often feel upset in school; with regard to achievement twenty percent say their teacher makes them feel 'not good enough.' And these items stay virtually the

same with age. Over forty percent report they often become discouraged in school, and this increases with age from twenty-two to forty-three percent."

The authors conclude: "While neither the self picture nor the school self-esteem is pleasant, the school self appears to be the more negative. Whatever else we have done, we have communicated a sense of personal failure to many of our pupils. In general, the longer we have them, the less favorable things seem to be."⁴ Findings like these point to a serious trend when we view them in terms of mental health and school dropouts, particularly when we recall that these are the pupils who have not dropped out of school.

For these reasons, then, teachers should be concerned about their pupils' self-perceptions, to learn what they are now and to strive to change them in more positive directions.

Things Teachers May Want to Explore

Teachers may want to know early in the school year how each of their pupils sees himself. Questions such as the following are likely to come to mind.

Does he think of himself generally in positive or in negative terms?

⁴Morse, W. C., Bloom, R., Dunn, J., Characteristics of School Classroom Environments over Time. University School Research Project (U.S. Office of Education Research Grant #04632), School of Education, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. 1964. pp. 88-89.

Is his self-percept a rather global one which is either mostly good, or mostly bad, or is there differentiation according to various areas? An example of the latter is the boy who knows he is good in athletics but recognizes he has trouble with academic subjects, particularly English, as compared to the person who over-confidently feels he can do almost anything, or the timid one who fears failure in anything he undertakes. If the self-percept is one in which there is differentiation among various areas, the teacher immediately has some guidelines for developing an action program to raise the self-esteem by building on and trying to extend the positive aspects. If self-esteem is low in all areas, the task is more difficult.

Measuring Self-Perceptions

Teachers are often able to make rather good informal appraisals of their pupils' self-perceptions by listening to their talk and observing behavior--in the classroom, with peers on the playground, and in private talks with the teacher. By noting whether a pupil's comments about others are mostly positive, mostly negative, or in between, and how these compare with the way he presents himself, important insights can be obtained into his personality. Often, however, more tangible and specific measures of self-perceptions are desirable.

Such measures of pupils' self-evaluations can be obtained both directly and indirectly. The following is an example of a rather direct type of measure.

Look at the circles below. Suppose that each circle stands for a different kind of person. Each person has different amounts of things you like and don't like. Circle 1 has all pluses (+) in it. This stands for a person who has only things about him you like. Circle 9 has all minuses (-) in it. This stands for a person who has only things about him you don't like. The other circles have different amounts of pluses and minuses. These circles stand for people, some of whom have more things you like than don't like, and some of whom have more things you don't like than things you like.

[illegible]

A somewhat indirect measure, and one that gives more qualitative material, is the Sentence Completion Test. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight. In this test, three sentence stems, widely separated by other types of items, relate to a pupil's self-evaluation. A few representative responses, obtained by a sixth grade teacher, give the flavor of the kind of data produced by this test.

Pupil A, a confident, well poised girl, wrote:

When I look in the mirror, I feel satisfied.

Sometimes I think I am quite mature for my age.

When I look at other boys and girls and then look at myself, I feel good because I have so many friends.

Pupil B, in contrast, reticent, cringing, unsure of himself, stated:

When I look in the mirror, I wonder how anyone could like me.

Sometimes I think I am the most backward person in the class.

When I look at other boys and girls and then look at myself, I feel different and ugly.

Pupil C felt between these extremes. He said:

When I look in the mirror, I see if I look all right.

Sometimes I think I am not very good in some subjects but good in others.

When I look at other boys and girls and then look at myself, I feel better than some and not as good as others.

To get a quantitative score, this teacher graded each positive response as 3 (illustrated by answers given by Pupil A), the neutral responses as 2 (illustrated by answers given by Pupil C),

and the negative responses as 1 (illustrated by answers given by Pupil B). Some pupils, of course, were positive on one item and neutral or negative on another. The teacher added the scores for each sentence and divided the total by the number of sentences answered. The resulting measure she called a "Self-Esteem Index" and used it to help identify the pupils who were high, medium, or low in the way they felt about themselves. Research has shown that there is a rather close relationship between such an index obtained from sentence completions and the rating obtained from the positive-negative diagrams in which pupils rate themselves in relation to their classmates.⁵

In addition to the three sentence stems used for the index, the sentence completion test presented in Chapter Eight includes other sentences which give valuable qualitative information about the way pupils see themselves. For example, the stem, "If I should fail in school," often gives indications of a pupil's feelings of confidence or lack of confidence about his school endeavors. Other stems included in the test which are likely to yield useful diagnostic material relating to the self are:

If I could be someone else I _____.

My teacher thinks I am _____.

I am best when _____.

I am happiest when _____.

⁵Luszki, M. B., and Schmuck, R. A., "Pupil Perceptions of Parental Attitudes Toward School," Mental Hygiene, (in press).

What I like to do most is _____.

Most of all I want to _____.

I often wish _____.

In the test, these stems are separated by other stems designed to elicit different types of material.

How a Teacher Studied the Self-Perceptions of Her Pupils

In a sixth grade classroom the teacher studied the self-perceptions of her pupils as revealed on the Sentence Completion Test, and related these findings to other information about them. Taken as a whole, there seemed to be little relation between high self-esteem and high school achievement, but when she analyzed the class on the basis of sex and race, she found interesting differences. Among the white girls there was a clear relationship between self-esteem and school achievement. This was true, also, for the Negro boys, but there were too few of them in the class for much significance to be attached to this finding. The white boys, however, were divided equally between high and low self-esteem, but all except one were low achievers. Whether or not they were making appropriate use of their abilities in school work appeared to make no difference in the way they evaluated themselves. The teacher concluded that other values took priority over academic achievement in their self-evaluations. Poor school achievement did not appear to lower their self-esteem.

An opposite situation was found among the Negro girls. All of them, and there were five in the class, showed a low level of

self-esteem, despite the fact that three were achieving at a high level.

These findings raised important questions in the teacher's mind. Was she working selectively with different segments of her classroom group to produce these differences? Or were such results to be expected in this particular age group and culture. She was concerned about the pupils with low self-esteem, for she knew the undesirable effects from the standpoint of mental health of a negative self-image.

She looked first at the Negro girls, since all of them showed low self-esteem. In the hope of obtaining some clues of how she could help these pupils, she studied their sentence completion responses. First was a girl who was slightly above average in intelligence and achieving at a creditable level. Her responses regarding school were highly positive, except for the expression of some dislike for homework. She said, "Most of all I want to finish school," and wrote, "This school is like home to me." Her opinion of her teacher's attitude toward her was positive: "My teacher thinks I am smart in working problems." But her opinion of herself was negative, as indicated by such responses as: "When I look in the mirror, I think I am ugly." "Sometimes I think I am going to get in trouble." "When I look at other boys and girls and then look at myself, I feel that I don't have things that I think I should have."

For this girl, school appeared to be one of the better aspects of her life, but the teacher recognized that she might

be more supportive than she had been, not in relation to academic work, which seemed to be going well, but in relation to her peers, giving the girl opportunities to present herself in a favorable light before her classmates.

For another Negro girl, the problem was more serious. Although she was of average intelligence, she was achieving at a low level and her attitudes toward school, herself, and her family were all highly negative. She said, "When I look in the mirror I don't see nothin' but an ugly messed up face," and "When I look at other boys and girls and then look at myself, I feel like I am not as good as them." There were indications, too, of confusion about her own identity, for she said, "Sometimes I think I am adopted but my mom says I am not--but I am not like other kids." Her other responses were consistent in indicating feelings of aloneness, inferiority, and depression. A child such as this one has problems beyond those which can be handled by the classroom teacher, and referral was made to a child guidance clinic.

The teacher was sufficiently familiar with the literature on race relations to realize that it is not unusual for a Negro child to "inherit" an inferior caste status, and as a result to acquire negative self-esteem. This is influenced by many factors over which a teacher has no control, but she determined to do as much as she could within the classroom to put the Negro children in a favorable light and try to raise their level of self-esteem. She saw the problem as somewhat similar to one she had encountered several years previously. She had learned through experience that

when a child is different from the majority or is actually handicapped, his acceptance by his peer group and his own self-esteem can often be enhanced by helping the other pupils to understand the difference or the handicap. In the case she recalled, it had been a child who had worn leg braces. By giving the children some understanding of how the braces worked, why they were necessary, and later by letting the child himself tell the class how he had learned to use them to walk again, he had become almost a hero in the eyes of his peers, rather than a person to be shunned and looked down upon.

Why couldn't the same general approach be used to enhance the status of minority group children, she asked herself. She resolved to try and decided on a dual approach. First, she would try to place Negroes, generally, in a favorable light by emphasizing Negro contributions and achievements wherever such material could be introduced appropriately into class work. Second, she would do what she could in the classroom to help these particular pupils appear favorably in the eyes of their peers. She would also be more alert to giving positive feedback, not only to these girls, but to all the pupils with low self-esteem.

Another problem uncovered by the data was the low achievement of the white boys, which appeared unrelated to self-esteem. Here she felt she needed to learn more about the kinds of things that were important to them. What values regulated their conduct, perhaps without their awareness? What were the values overtly accepted by their peer group? Were the latter congruent or conflicting with the values which the child brought to class and

with the teacher's value system? Such questions may never be answered fully in ordinary classroom activity, but an awareness that differences exist is a long step forward in understanding the child whose behavior, attitudes, or background is somewhat different from that of the majority, or who is a chronic low-achiever.

In working with the white boys, she wanted to know first what sorts of things were related to self-esteem. What were the things they valued highly, and what gave them prestige in the eyes of their peers?

This posed a challenge to get more fully into the boys' world and try to introduce classroom materials and methods relevant to their values. For example, "flaking off into space" was something she had heard the boys talking about rather often. Perhaps she might try to introduce some materials related to space exploration and show, indirectly, the necessity of education and high level technical training in order to be a "space man." Such efforts, she felt, might increase their interest in school and thus help in changing values to the point where school achievement would have a more important place in their self-percepts than it appeared to have at present.

Other Ways of Studying Self-Perceptions

There are many other ways of studying pupils' self-perceptions. One means is through compositions in which a pupil describes the kind of person he is and the kind of person he would like to be.

Another useful instrument is the following "Self Concept Scale," developed by Bledsoe and Garrison.⁶

⁶Op. Cit. p. 192.

Date _____
 Pupil No _____
 Class _____

There is a need for each of us to know more about what we are like. This is to help you describe yourself and to describe how you would like to be. There are no right or wrong answers; each person may have different ideas. Answer these according to your feelings. It is important for you to give your own honest answers.

Think carefully and check the answer that tells if you are like the word says Nearly Always, About 1/2 the Time, or Just Now and Then. In the second column check the answer if you would like to be like the word says Nearly Always, About 1/2 the Time, or Just Now and Then.

THIS IS THE WAY I AM

THIS IS THE WAY I'D LIKE TO BE

Nearly Always	About 1/2 the Time	Just Now and Then		Nearly Always	About 1/2 the Time	Just Now and Then
_____	_____	_____	Friendly	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Obedient	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Honest	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Thoughtful	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Brave	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Careful	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Fair	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Mean	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Lazy	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Truthful	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Smart	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Polite	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Clean	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Kind	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Selfish	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Helpful	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Good	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Cooperative	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Cheerful	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Jealous	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Sincere	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Studious	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Loyal	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	A good sport	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Useful	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Dependable	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Bashful	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Happy	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	Popular	_____	_____	_____

Other teachers have used lists of descriptive adjectives and phrases on which pupils are asked to mark in one way those which are most like themselves, and to mark in a different way those least like themselves. The psychological literature, too, is full of personality and personal inventories, but these are generally more appropriate for use by school counselors and psychologists than by teachers.

Summary

Regardless of the method used to obtain it, pupils' self-perceptions are valuable data for the teacher, for they serve as a guide to the kind of feedback and treatment appropriate to the various pupils in the class. It is of utmost importance for the teacher to create a climate favorable to the development of a healthy concept of the self. One of the most significant contributions a teacher can make to the mental health of his pupils is to help the pupil identify the sort of person he really is, to make a realistic self-appraisal, recognizing his strong and his weak points, and then to help him improve the weaknesses.

This implies that the teacher, too, must have a healthy--realistic and positive--self-image. To be able to take a positive view of his pupils as persons, he must first have a positive view of himself. If he feels inadequate or has an unrealistic concept of himself, his pupils' self concepts are likely to be adversely affected.

Positive, realistic self concepts can be equated with good mental health. The pupil who is mentally healthy feels he is liked, valued, and accepted by his classmates, describes

himself in favorable terms, and feels he is a part of the classroom group. His perceptions of the classroom are relatively free from distortion, and he is adequate to meet both the formal learning requirements and the social relations demands of the classroom. Such positive, realistic, self-perceptions are major goals toward which teachers should strive.

Chapter 6

FORCES OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL WHICH INFLUENCE THE PUPIL'S LEARNING

What the child does in school is obviously dependent upon more than the events of the classroom or those activities within the child's day which are in some measure under the control of the school. Within the pupil's life the school is only one of the forces impinging upon him, and causing him to be the kind of person he is. Figure 1 calls attention to some of the other possible forces:

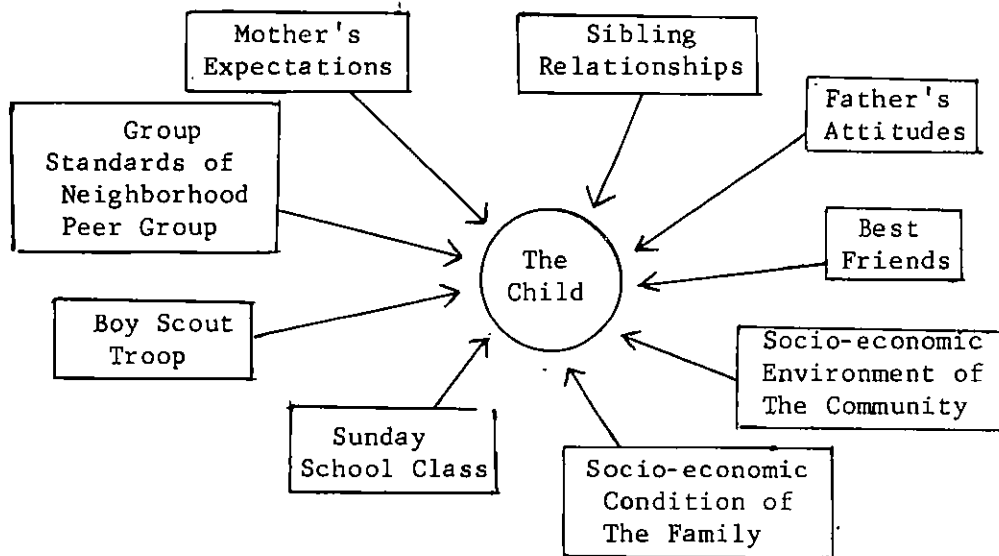


Figure 1

SOME FORCES WHICH INFLUENCE THE CHILD

The values, the expectations, the accepted ways of behaving for each of these significant other groups or individuals in the

child's world will each take its place in the field of forces within which the teacher hopes to exert some influence.

Along with the diagnostic approach followed by the teacher in examining aspects of the pupil's within-school life, it would seem most appropriate that means be discovered to learn as much as possible about these out-of-school forces. It will be recognized, of course, that the purpose is not so much to launch a direct attack on problems that may be a part of the child's out-of-school environment as to gain a clearer understanding of the forces impinging upon his in-school behavior.

Teachers concerned with improving a child's motivation for learning may want to gather data on such questions as:

1. What is the importance of school for the child among the activities within his total day?
2. What is the importance of the teacher compared to other persons in the pupil's life?
3. What attitudes about education and about the school does the child gain from his family and from his neighborhood?
4. What activities in the pupil's out-of-school life may be competing with school-centered activities for his time, energy, and emotional commitment?

Ways to Gather Information About the Pupil's Out-of-School Life

Some information about a pupil's home background may be gathered from existing school records. Records should be utilized where possible so that classroom time may be used for gathering information which is more difficult to obtain. If data such as the following are not available, a simple questionnaire may be filled out by the child during the beginning days of school. The following questionnaire was developed by a 4th grade teacher to meet this need.

Date _____
 Pupil No. _____
 Class _____

GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH YOU

Your teacher needs to know more about you. The answers you give to the questions on this paper will help me to get acquainted with you. We will not talk about your answers in class.

I will read each question first and then you can answer the question.

Some questions can be answered by making a circle around one of the words: YES, NO, SOMETIMES. If you make a circle around the word YES I will know that you mean to say YES to the question. A circle around NO tells me you say NO to the question. If your answer is SOMETIMES, just circle the word SOMETIMES.

Other questions can be answered by writing in your answer on the blank lines following the question.

1. Write your name, address, and telephone number:

Your name _____

Your address _____

Your telephone number _____

2. If you have brothers or sisters:

- a. Write the names of your brothers:

_____ How old? _____

_____ How old? _____

_____ How old? _____

- b. Write the names of your sisters:

_____ How old? _____

_____ How old? _____

_____ How old? _____

3. If any of your brothers or sisters have grown up and left home, put a circle around the number in question 2 showing their age.

4. Which of the people listed below live with your family?
(Please check)

_____ Mother
 _____ Father
 _____ Stepmother
 _____ Stepfather
 _____ Other adults

How many adults, altogether, live in the same home with you? _____

5. Does a "sitter" stay with you when your mother and father
are away from home? YES NO
- Is it the same person all of the time? YES NO
- Is it someone inside your family? YES NO
- Who is it? _____

Many children find themselves frequently having to make the adjustment to a new school because their families have moved from place to place. Information about the pupil's previous school attendance may be obtained in a manner such as the following:

Think back to the time when you first started going to school. In the blanks below write the name of the city or town, and the state where you went to school at each grade that you have finished so far. (If you did not change for two or more years, use ditto marks to show that it was the same city or town, and state.)

Did you go to kindergarten? YES NO If you did not, skip the line marked kindergarten and start with the first grade.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>City or town</u>	<u>State</u>
Kindergarten	_____	_____
First grade	_____	_____
Second grade	_____	_____
Third grade	_____	_____
Etc.	-----	-----

Other children may have jobs after school. For some this is a constructive opportunity for developing responsibility and becoming independent. For other pupils, the out-of-school work may be a heavy burden, restricting opportunities for interaction with peers, interfering with study, or creating physical fatigue. Some questions that may be asked to gain information about these matters include the following:

Date _____
 Pupil No. _____
 Class _____

What regular duties to you have at home other than jobs for which you are paid? _____

Do you have a job or do part time work for pay?
 YES NO

If yes, please check:

_____ Under 5 hours a week, average
 _____ 5 to 9 hours a week, average
 _____ 10 to 14 hours a week, average
 _____ 15 to 19 hours a week, average
 _____ 20 or more hours a week, average

If yes, do you work:

_____ For your family?
 _____ For someone else?
 _____ For both family and someone else?

If for someone else, please give the name of your employer _____

What, exactly, do you do on your job? _____

What are your hours of work? _____

The GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH YOU instrument may very well include some questions about parents. Suggestions are presented in the next chapter on "Parent Influences on School Adjustments."

Data which go beyond the objective facts may prove to be particularly helpful to the teacher in his attempt to understand the out-of-school forces which influence the child. Some notion of how things are perceived by the child is needed, since the child acts on the basis of his perceptions. One approach to finding out about the importance to the child of the various forces in his life is to ask him to place them in rank order. The following instrument entitled, PARTS OF YOUR DAY, might serve such a purpose:

Date _____
 Pupil No. _____
 Class _____

PARTS OF YOUR DAY

A regular week has several different parts, in which a pupil does different things. Some parts of the day seem more important for the pupil than do the other parts.

Which part of your day seems most important to you?

Put a number "1" in the column under "Importance" beside the part of the day which seems most important to you. Then put a number "2" beside the part of the day which seems next most important to you. Put a number "3" beside the part of the day which seems next most important; a number "4" beside the next; a number "5" beside the next; and a number "6" beside the part of the day which seems least important to you.

	<u>Importance</u>
Life in this class	_____
Things you do in school which are not part of the regular class.	_____
Life at home	_____
Doing things with playmates after school	_____
Clubs and groups outside of school with regular meetings (with adult leaders)	_____
Doing things by myself alone	_____

The items listed above are more suited for elementary children.

An adaptation for secondary pupils might include a list such as the following:

	<u>Importance</u>
Life in this class	_____
Life in other class periods	_____
Other school activities which are not classes	_____
Life at home	_____
Social life with friends--on our own, away from home and school	_____
Clubs and groups outside of school with regular meetings (with adult leaders)	_____
Doing things by myself alone	_____

Modifications of the PARTS OF THE DAY instrument may be made to explore other dimensions of the pupil's feelings about the forces in his life. The above instrument asked for responses in terms of importance. The question might be asked, "In which part of your day do you feel the happiest?" Or one might ask, "In which part of the day do you feel you are learning the most things?"

The PARTS OF THE DAY instrument is focused on the child's life situations. A parallel type of instrument might be devised which focuses on the people who form a part of the child's life. An example, entitled TALKING WITH PEOPLE, is presented below:

Date _____
 Pupil No. _____
 Class _____

TALKING WITH PEOPLE

During a regular week you spend a great deal of time talking with various people both in and out of school. Here is a list of some of the people in your life. Some of these people you talk to more than others and you often talk about different things.

Which people do you talk to about the most important things?

Put a number "1" in the column under "importance" beside the name of the person(s) with whom you talk about the most important things. Then put a number "2" beside the name of the person(s) with whom you talk about the next most important things. Put a number "3" for the next person(s); a "4" for the next; a "5" for the next; and a "6" for the person(s) with whom you talk about the least important things.

	<u>Importance</u>
My close friend(s) in this class	_____
Others in this class	_____
My mother	_____
Friend(s) <u>not</u> in this class	_____
My father	_____

Adaptations of the 'TALKING WITH PEOPLE' instrument may also be made to explore other dimensions of the relationship of the pupil with the people in his life by asking the questions, "With which people do you feel happiest when you talk with them?" and "Which people do you feel you learn most from by talking with them?"

In addition to finding out how important the various parts of the pupil's life space are as seen by him, the teacher may wish to ascertain just how relevant some of these people are to the kind of

work the child is doing at school. The question may be asked, "How satisfied are they?" The instrument might take the following form:

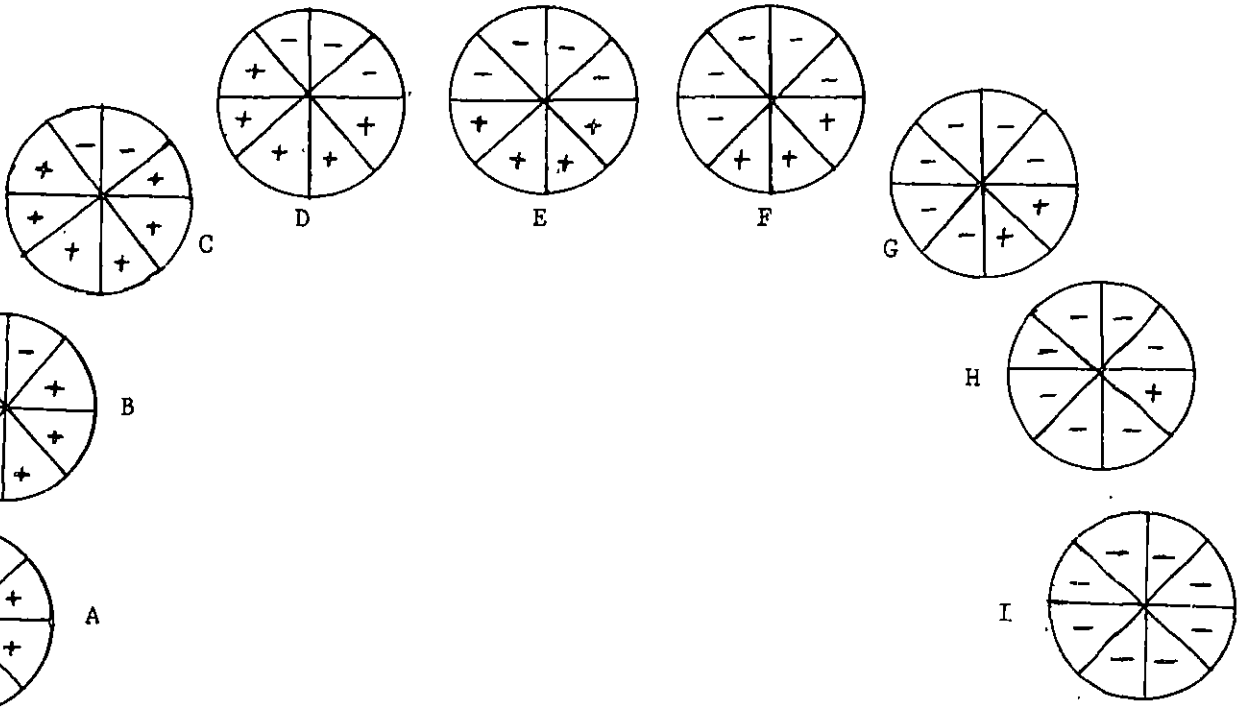
<p style="text-align: right;">Date _____ Pupil No. _____ Class _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HOW SATISFIED ARE THEY?</p> <p>How satisfied do you think these people are with your schoolwork? Put a check in the box which tells how satisfied you think they are with your schoolwork.</p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">They are very satisfied</td> <td style="text-align: center;">They are pretty well satisfied</td> <td style="text-align: center;">They are not too satisfied</td> <td style="text-align: center;">They are not sat- isfied at all</td> <td style="text-align: center;">They don't really care</td> </tr> </table>						They are very satisfied	They are pretty well satisfied	They are not too satisfied	They are not sat- isfied at all	They don't really care
They are very satisfied	They are pretty well satisfied	They are not too satisfied	They are not sat- isfied at all	They don't really care						
1. My close friend(s) in this class										
2. Others in this class										
3. My mother										
4. Friends <u>not</u> in this class										
5. The teacher in this class										
6. My father										
7. How satisfied am I with myself?										

Some very interesting information can come from the child by asking him how he thinks the important people in his life see him. An instrument designed to discover whether the child sees these people as thinking of him in positive or in negative terms is presented on the following page, entitled, **HOW THEY SEE ME.**

HOW THEY SEE ME

Date _____
 Pupil No. _____
 Class _____

Just as each part of the day is filled with plus, zero, and minus things; in a similar way each one of us as a person is made up of things we like and things we do not like so much. Below are a number of different circles showing persons with different amounts of plus and minus things about them. Which of these circles comes closest to the way you see yourself? Write the letter of the circle which most resembles you right here _____.



In the blank following each question, write the letter of the circle which you think each of the persons mentioned would pick for you.

1. Which circle do you think your closest friend would choose to describe you? _____
2. Which circle would the teacher in this class choose? _____
3. Which circle would the principal of your school choose? _____
4. Which circle would your mother choose? _____
5. Which circle would the boys or girls you spend most time with choose to describe you? _____
6. Which circle would your father choose? _____

Another way to study the pupil's feelings about the life-space forces which affect him is to ask him how he would alter, if he could, the amount of time he spends in various settings. An instrument designed to elicit these feelings may be called 'CHANGING THE PARTS OF YOUR DAY.

Date _____ Pupil No. _____ Class _____				
CHANGING THE PARTS OF YOUR DAY If what you do in a regular week day could be changed by you, how would you change the parts of your day? Put a check in the box that shows how you would change the parts of your day.				
	A lot more time	Some more time	A little less time	A lot less time
1. Life in this class				
2. Things you do in school which are not part of the regular class				
3. Life at home				
4. Doing things with playmates after school				
5. Clubs and groups outside of school with regular meetings (with adult leader)				
6. Doing things by myself alone				

For high school pupils the list of parts of the day might be modified slightly: (1) Life in this class, (2) Life in other class periods, (3) Other school activities which are not classes, (4) Life at home, (5) Social life with friends--on our own, away from home and school, (6) Clubs and groups outside of school with regular meetings (with adult leaders), and (7) Doing things by myself alone.

Recording and Analysing the Data

Much of the information gathered about the out-of-school influences on the pupil's life will be useful to the teacher in working with the individual child, rather than with the group. For example, the completed GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH YOU instrument would probably be filed by the teacher for future reference in the pupil's individual folder. If the teacher finds it valuable, a frequency count of responses to such questions as out-of-school work, or number of different schools attended can serve to give some notion of the importance of these forces upon the class as a whole.

The PARTS OF YOUR DAY and 'TALKING WITH PEOPLE' instruments may be interpreted more easily if the pupil's response can be compared with the class average. One high school teacher accomplished this by preparing a tally sheet and entering each pupil's response as follows:

PARTS OF YOUR DAY
"Importance"

	Rank Order							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1. Life in this class	3	6	3	2	2	3	1	20
2. Life in other class periods	0	2	4	4	3	3	4	20
3. Other school activities	2	1	4	6	2	4	1	20
4. Life at home	3	4	3	2	2	3	3	20
5. Social life with friends	5	4	3	1	6	1	0	20
6. Clubs and groups outside of school	2	0	1	4	2	3	8	20
7. Doing things by myself alone	5	3	2	1	3	3	3	20
Total	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	

He was then able to draw several conclusions about his class. First, individual pupils varied considerably with regard to which parts of the day carry high or low importance. For example, three pupils ranked "Life at home" of greatest importance; three ranked it of less importance than all other aspects of their life space included in the instrument. Five pupils considered "Doing things by myself alone" to be of highest importance; three considered it of least importance.

Further, "Social life with friends away from school" seemed to be of special importance to many in the class. Very few of the pupils in this class considered it unimportant.

"Life in this class" on the whole, also ranked as an important part of the pupils' total life. Moreover, "Life in this class" was

considered somewhat more important than that in other class periods in the school day. This information may reflect the true state of affairs, or it may be that pupils responded favorably just because they wanted to please the teacher. The teacher will, therefore, want to be somewhat cautious in his interpretation of these data. It might be possible to collaborate with other teachers in the school who have these same pupils in class, gaining their interest in a parallel study of the learning climate.

This teacher discovered a little more about the state of affairs by analyzing the results of his CHANGING THE PARTS OF THE DAY questionnaire. He tallied it as follows:

CHANGING PARTS OF YOUR DAY - Class #1

	A lot more time	Some more time	Same time as now	Little less time	A lot less time	No time at all
1. Life in this class	1	1	14	3	1	-
2. Life in other class	1	4	8	4	2	1
3. Other school activities which are not classes	9	2	4	2	1	2
4. Life at home	6	4	5	3	-	2
5. Social life with friends - on our own, away from home and school	12	6	2	-	-	-
6. Clubs and groups outside of school with regular meetings	3	3	7	1	2	3

Thus, it appears that although many pupils rank "life in this class" of high importance relative to other parts of their day, almost no one in the class would want to see more time given to the class activities. They would like to increase the time available for independent social life, other non-class school activities, and life at home. One might explain this apparent satisfaction with the state of affairs in the classroom as a normal reaction to the "work" part of the day. On the other hand it is interesting to examine the summary made by another secondary school teacher in the same building and to find that while the pupils' desire to increase time spent in some other aspects of the day exists in both classes, in this second class over one-third of the pupils would like to increase the time spent "in this class."

CHANGING PARTS OF YOUR DAY - Class #2

	A lot more time	Some more time	Same time as now	Little less time	A lot less time	No time at all
1. Life in this class	6	6	11	5	2	-
2. Life in other class periods	1	9	8	6	2	3
3. Other school activities which are not classes	9	2	4	2	1	2
4. Life at home	6	4	5	3	-	2
5. Social life with friends	12	6	2	-	-	-
6. Clubs and groups outside of school	3	3	7	1	2	3

One teacher gained some clues about the home pressures on his pupils regarding their academic work by analyzing the data from HOW SATISFIED ARE THEY?

HOW SATISFIED ARE THEY?

	They are very satisfied	They are pretty well satisfied	They are not too satisfied	They are not satis- fied at all	They don't really care
1. My close friend(s) in this class	9	6	2	1	2
2. Others in this class	4	5	3	2	6
3. My mother	2	5	9	4	-
4. Friends <u>not</u> in this class	3	4	1	-	12
5. The teacher in this class	11	4	3	2	-
6. My father	3	7	6	3	1
7. How satisfied am I with myself?	7	9	3	1	-

It appears that the mothers and fathers are considerably more anxious than the teacher about their son's or daughter's performance; mothers tend to be seen as more dissatisfied than fathers. The pupil perceives the pressures for academic performance coming from home more than from the teacher. He is not as satisfied with his own performance as he thinks the teacher is. He sees his close friends as being more satisfied than he himself is, but not to the extent the teacher is.

Again, the impact of these data is increased upon discovery that these conditions do not exist in every classroom.

Summary and Conclusions

A teacher's knowledge about some of the pressures and influences which the various parts of each pupil's life are exerting on his classroom behavior would seem to be essential for planning an effective educational experience for every pupil. Various methods for obtaining such knowledge are suggested. An obvious first step in utilizing such information is the opportunity it gives to show the pupil that the teacher understands his situation. If "facts" obtained by the teacher and the way these "facts" are perceived by the pupil are incongruent, and if the teacher feels the pupil's perceptions are in error, the teacher may be able to help change the pupil's perceptions so that they are more realistic. If, for example, discrepancies exist between a child's school performance as the teacher knows it to be and the way the pupil thinks it is perceived by his parents, a three-way conference of parents, pupil, and teacher may be helpful. Diagnostic information such as is suggested in this chapter, should be valuable to the teacher as he plans parent conferences and special work with individual pupils.

Chapter 7

PARENT INFLUENCES ON SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT

Teachers know well the important effect parents' attitudes and home conditions have on the child. They have found again and again that when the values of the family and the school are contradictory, the pupil's school work suffers. If a child feels that his parents don't care about his school life, he, too, is unlikely to care and is apt to become an underachiever and a behavior problem in the classroom.

Since parents' attitudes are so crucial to good school adjustment, the teacher should know something about his pupils' families. This is particularly important in the beginning of the school year when the teacher has a new group of pupils. He may wonder about such questions as:

Who live in the home with the pupil?

What kind of work does the father do?

Is the mother employed outside the home? If she is, what kind of work does she do?

Is anyone at home when the child returns from school?
If so, who?

What magazines, newspapers, and books are there in the home?

What does the child do when he gets home from school?

When and under what conditions does he do his homework? Does his mother or father ever help him or offer to help?

Are there excessive demands made upon his time which interfere with schoolwork or with needed play activities?

The purpose of such questions is to obtain a clearer understanding of the child's background and of his parents' attitudes and values. Particularly for younger pupils, the home situation and the parents' attitudes are among the most important forces outside the school which affect the pupil's learning.

Much information about the home background and the influences which parents are exerting can be obtained through informal contacts with pupils and parents, and some factual material can usually be obtained from school records. Teachers who have the time may even wish to visit some of the homes. But it is often desirable to use some special tools in order to obtain from all the pupils as clear a picture as possible of the parents' influences on school adjustment.

As part of the teacher's effort to gain general information about his class at the beginning of the school year, as described in the preceding chapter, a number of questions about parents and home life might be added to the GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH YOU instrument.

For example, it is often helpful to have some information about the father's occupation. In addition to the direct interest it may have, it has been found that father's occupation gives a fairly reliable estimate of the socio-economic level of the family. To be used for such purposes, however, the data need to be gathered more carefully than by just raising the question, "What does your father do?" The following series of questions are suggested:

Where does your father work? _____		
What is the name or title of his job? _____		

Does he have a "boss" or supervisor?	YES	NO
Does he have any people working under him? That is, does he supervise or is he in charge of the work of other people?		
	YES	NO
If yes, about how many? _____		
What exactly does he do on the job? _____		

With many mothers employed away from the home, it is often important to learn something about the mother's occupation. Such questions as the following may serve:

Does your mother have a job in addition to taking care
of your home? YES NO

If your answer is yes, please answer the following:

- a. Does she work full or part time? (Please
check)

☐ She works full time.

☐ She works part time.

- b. Where does she work? _____

- c. What is the name of her job? _____

- d. What exactly does she do on the job? _____

Is your mother usually at home when you get home from
school? YES NO

At times a teacher may want to categorize or code occupational information in order to get an overall picture of the class or to compare it with other classes. Many different occupational scales or classifications will be found in the literature, but despite attempts to define the categories objectively, it is often difficult to discriminate between some of them. Classification is frequently a matter of judgment, and considerable information may be needed to make a correct judgment. For this reason, rather detailed questions, such as those given above, are recommended.

Occupational scales range from as few as three categories to as many as 14 or possibly more, depending upon the purpose and the

degree of refinement desired. Some investigators use U.S. Census categories; others develop categories to suit their particular needs. For most classroom purposes, a classification of occupations into three major categories is sufficient. When a more detailed breakdown is used, there are likely to be so few cases in most of the categories that the classification is of little value. A categorization which has been found useful within the classroom and also in comparing classrooms is the following:

- I. Jobs requiring extensive training and experience, and involving heavy responsibility. e.g., Persons in professions which require at least four years of college; proprietors, managers, and others in high positions of responsibility in large business and industry; high ranking public officials, etc.
- II. Jobs requiring a moderate amount of training and/or technical skills and abilities. e.g., Semi-professional personnel, such as those in fields requiring two years of college, proprietors and office managers of small businesses; most white collar workers; police and firemen; skilled mechanics--journeyman level; farmers, etc.
- III. Jobs requiring little or no training or experience. e.g., Semi-skilled and unskilled workers; persons in lower level clerical and sales jobs such as grocery store clerks, shipping clerks, etc.; helpers to skilled craftsmen; assembly line workers; day laborers, domestic help, etc.

The educational level of parents is also of interest. Often it is closely related to occupational status, but there are numerous cases where the combination of occupational and educational information gives a much better picture of the parents than either kind of information alone. The following questions may elicit educational information in a useful form.

How far did your father go in school? (Please check):

- ☐ Went to grade school
- ☐ Went to high school
- ☐ Graduated from high school
- ☐ Went to college: How many years? _____
- ☐ Graduated from college
- ☐ Went to school beyond college
- ☐ Don't know

How far did your mother go in school? (Please check):

- ☐ Went to grade school
- ☐ Went to high school
- ☐ Graduated from high school
- ☐ Went to college: How many years? _____
- ☐ Graduated from college
- ☐ Went to school beyond college
- ☐ Don't know

To get a pupil's view of the home situation, the assignment of a composition to be written in class on "My Day," or "A Day at Home" is often useful. Teachers who have done this successfully accompany the assignment with specific items and questions. These would vary depending upon the grade level and the particular information the teacher would like to obtain. The following outline suggests a number of aspects of the home situation, any one or more of which might be used for a short composition as an English assignment.

1. My family

Who are the people who live at home with you?

Tell something about them.

Whom do you talk to most at home? What kinds of things do you talk about?

2. Our house

Tell something about your house.

What do you do to help take care of it? Do you have any chores or responsibilities around the house or yard?

Where do you sleep? Do you have any roommates? Who? Where do you study? Who else is in the room with you when you are studying?

3. Getting up in the morning.

Do you like to get up?

When do you get up?

Do you get awake on your own, or does somebody wake you?

Who? How do you feel when you first get up? How long does it take you to get dressed?

Who fixes breakfast?

What do you usually have for breakfast?

What is your favorite breakfast?

4. Schoolltime

When do you leave home for school?

How do you get to school?

Tell something about your day in school.

5. After school

Where do you go after school?

With whom do you usually do things?

What do you do?

About what time do you usually get home?

Who is usually at home when you get there?

What do you like best after school?

6. Homework

Do you have homework most of the time?

If you do, about how much time do you have to spend on it?

Where do you do it?

When do you do it?

What are other people in the family doing when you are studying? Are any of them in the same room with you?

7. Evening and bedtime

What TV programs do you watch? Which do you like best? Why?

What else do you do in the evenings?

What time do you go to bed on school nights?

The use of incomplete sentences is another means of obtaining a child's impressions, feelings, and attitudes in regard to many areas of his life. Sentence completions are discussed as a multidimensional classroom tool in the next chapter. Two sentence stems in the test suggested the are useful in ascertaining the pupils' conceptions of their parents' attitudes toward school. These stems are:

When I talk about school, my mother_____

When I talk about school, my father_____

These are widely separated on the test by items dealing with different subject matter. If similar sentence stems are placed close to each other, pupils are likely to repeat the same answer.

A few representative answers to these two stems give the flavor of the kind of responses obtained. One boy wrote, "When I talk about school, my father is proud of me," and "...my mother is always helpful." Contrast him with the child who replied, "...my father says he is not interested," and "...my mother asks how many bad things did you do in school."

Qualitatively, such replies give a useful impression of the way a child feels about his parents' attitudes toward school. Not only do they show whether the parents' attitudes are seen as positive or negative, but they also may reveal feelings about the parents' orientation toward school. Some parents, for example, are seen by

their children primarily as giving affective support and approval, others are seen as offering help, still others are perceived as emphasizing academic achievement. A few are seen as threat oriented, with pressure for improvement of grades--or else!

Quantitatively, the replies lend themselves to rating on a scale ranging from strong approval, affective support, and interest in what the pupil has to say about school (e.g., "says I'm doing fine," "is pleased with my school work," "enjoys hearing about school"), to a relatively neutral attitude (e.g., "sometimes listens," "doesn't mind," "is sometimes interested, sometimes not") to a clearly negative, hostile attitude ("gets mad," "complains about the money I need to get an education," "says I'm not going to pass").

In a 6th grade classroom the teacher categorized the responses on these two sentence stems on the basis of whether they were positive or supportive, neutral, or non-supportive or negative. She was pleased to find that many more parents were seen as supportive of school than non-supportive, but there were some who were clearly seen as negative, and there were a fair number falling in the neutral category. Moreover, some families were split, with the mother supportive and the father not, or vice versa.

She included a number of other stems which often brought out responses related to the parents' attitudes, but she did not attempt to code them quantitatively. One was:

If I should fail in school _____

One major group of completions of this sentence related to the anticipated consequences at home of such an event. These included statements that the parents "would be very mad," or "disappointed,"

that they would withdraw privileges or administer other kinds of punishment, or that they would force remedial action, as for example, "my parents would make me work harder than ever."

Other stems were designed to reveal something about the relationship with each parent, the child's place in the family, and the conditions under which he is happiest. Altogether, the test this teacher used contained 46 stems. It is included in complete form in Chapter VIII.

Recording and Using Data on Parents' Attitudes

As a guide for further work, this sixth grade teacher set up a roster of her class on which to record the sentence completion data and relate it to their achievement level--high (indicated by H) or low (L). She also made her own evaluation of whether the parents were positive (indicated by +), neutral (indicated by 0), or negative (indicated by -) in their attitudes toward school, based on whatever information was available to her--contacts with the parents themselves, school records, experience with older siblings, comments by other teachers, etc. She then coded the pupils' responses to the two sentence stems, "When I talk about school, my mother (father) . . . , "classifying them as positive (+), neutral (0), or negative (-). The form she used, with entries for the 25 pupils in her class, is as follows:

1	2	3		4	5
Pupil No.	T's evaluation of parents' interest in school	<u>SENTENCE COMPLETION DATA</u>		Pupil's Achievement Level	
		Pupil's perceived attitude of: Mother	Father		
1	-	0	-	L	
2	+	+	+	H	
3	-	+	+	H	
4	+	+	+	H	
5	0	+	0	L	
6	+	+	+	H	
7	-	0	0	L	
8	0	+	+	H	
9	-	0	0	L	
10	-	0	+	L	
11	-	-	0	L	
12	-	+	0	L	
13	+	+	0	H	
14	0	+	+	H	
15	+	-	+	H	
16	+	+	+	H	
17	+	-	-	L	
18	+	+	0	L	
19	-	0	0	L	
20	-	+	+	L	
21	+	+	-	H	
22	-	0	0	L	
23	+	+	+	H	
24	-	+	no father	L	
25	0	+	0	L	

In this analysis the teacher used material from only 2 of the 46 incomplete sentences which the pupils had answered, but she used all the answers for a more qualitative type of study, to get an impression of the child as a person. In doing this she was careful not to draw definite conclusions. She recognized the danger of projecting her own feelings into the sentence completion responses and reading too much into them, yet she felt they did increase her understanding of her pupils.

In going over her chart, she was surprised at first to see that she had completely misjudged the parents of two of her pupils (pupils 15 and 17). Both couples were well educated people who had told her they expected their children to go to college and seemed to be very much "school oriented." She had rated them "plus." Yet the children had completed the sentences in ways such as the following: "When I talk about school, my mother says she is too busy to talk to me now," and "...my father keeps on reading the newspaper." This kind of discrepancy between the parents avowed interest in school and the child's perception of lack of interest brought to mind some research (Serot and Teevan)¹ which showed that a child's conception of his relationship with his parents is not necessarily related to his parents' conception of the same relationship. It also showed that the child's conception of his relationship with his parents was a crucial factor in his adjustment. This made her put more weight on the sentence completion data (columns 3 and 4) than on her evaluation of parents' attitudes (column 2). It suggested, too, that she might have to use a different approach with those parents whom she had rated positive but whom their children

¹Serot, N.M. & Teevan, R.C., "Perception of the Parent-Child Relationship and its Relation to Child Adjustment," Child Development, 32, June, 1961, pp. 373-378.

rated negative than she would with those parents rated negatively by both herself and the pupils.

She also found another kind of discrepancy between her rating and the attitude revealed by the sentence completions. In two families, where the parents had less than an eighth grade education, she had felt the parents had no interest in school, yet the children completed the sentences with such statements as "likes to listen" "wants to know," and "is proud of me." The teacher concluded that she had failed to understand these parents, who came from such a different background from her own. Instead of their lacking interest in school, they were primarily awed by it and were embarrassed and uncomfortable in the unfamiliar surroundings, but they wanted "school learning" for their children.

One rather disturbing finding was that ten fathers and six mothers were rated neutral on the basis of the sentence completion response (e.g., "listens sometimes," "doesn't care," "is only interested sometimes," "says things were different when he went to school"). The teacher felt that these parents in the neutral category were really negative, that by being uninterested or ambivalent in their attitudes toward school they were nonsupportive of their child's school life.

As a guide for future work the teacher made what she headed "Exploration and/or Remedial Action List," with pupils' names grouped under the following categories.

Mother supportive, father neutral or negative
(pupils 5, 12, 13, 18, 21, 25)

Father supportive, mother neutral or negative
(pupils 10, 15)

Both parents neutral or negative
(pupils 1, 7, 9, 11, 17, 19, 22)

Her list included 15 names, a surprising number in a community she had thought of as school oriented. It was a rather alarming discovery, for the teacher was aware of research which showed that pupils who feel their parents are interested in and supportive of their school life make a more positive adjustment to school than do pupils who perceive less parental support, particularly at the lower grade levels. They have higher achievement, more positive attitudes toward school, and a more healthy level of self esteem, relationships which she observed in her own class, too.²

She headed the list as she did because she felt her first step was further exploration. She could not "judge" a home on the basis of a child's response to two incomplete sentences. But she could and did use these responses to point to where some exploration should be done. She held parent conferences, made a few home visits, and enlisted the help of the visiting teacher. Where additional information about a home suggested that some changes were desirable, she was able in most cases to establish a positive enough relationship with the parents to help them assume more supportive roles in relation to their child's school life. She also used her material as the basis for a PTA meeting, at which there was a lively discussion of how parents can show interest in the child's school life and what parents can do to make the child know they are interested.

²Luski, M. B. and Schmuck, R., "Pupil Perceptions of Parental Attitudes Toward School," Mental Hygiene, (in press).

At this meeting many ideas were brought out of ways in which parents can "support" a child's school endeavors. These were stated in the form of questions which parents might ask themselves to help evaluate their performance in this area. Three types of support were identified, as indicated in the following list.

1. Intellectual support

Are reading and reference materials available in the home?
Do the parents encourage the child to use them and show him how to do so?
Do parents discuss and share ideas and information?
Parents can learn from their children as well as children from their parents.

2. Emotional support

Are parents easily available to talk with their children when the children want to talk?
Do parents show interest in what the child is doing in school and what he is learning? What are some of the ways to show interest?

3. Social support

Does the child bring his school friends home?
Do parents encourage recreational and "character building" activities, such as little league baseball, school clubs and organizations?
Do parents respect his rights and his privacy, recognizing his needs to be an individual as well as a member of the family?

The teacher found most of the parents eager for information and guidance, because their lack of support stemmed largely from their failure to understand child behavior, or from their being so busy they were not aware of the problem.

In the case of one set of parents, she felt the negative feelings toward the child and toward school were so deep rooted that she could not enlist their cooperation. These parents she referred to the visiting teacher, in the hope that the visiting teacher, with special training and more time for such work, could try

to understand and alleviate the nonsupportive attitudes. It was clear that the job of understanding and interpretation was a mutual one--to interpret the school to these parents and to interpret these parents to the school. When she made the referral to the visiting teacher she was aware that she had as much to learn in understanding parents of very different cultural background from her own as the parents had in understanding the school. Both she and the visiting teacher also recognized that they must be careful not to put further pressures and strains on what might be already a difficult home situation. In some extreme cases it will be necessary for the Visiting Teacher (or the regular teacher if there is no Visiting Teacher) to make referral to the appropriate community agency for psychiatric, psychological, and/or social work evaluations and help.

As she worked on the problems within her classroom, she knew she could not hope to be fully successful in changing the attitudes of all parents. Another kind of action, then, was to help children understand their parents better. Role playing provided a useful tool for helping a child deal with his parents' attitudes toward school, particularly as a springboard for discussion of why parents might not be too interested in school and how pupils can help "educate" their parents.

She also recognized that there are some pupils who like school and do well in school despite lack of support at home. Many such cases can be attributed to positive child-teacher relationships. Diagnostic findings indicating lack of home support for school work presented her with a dual challenge: (1) to attempt to change the attitudes and behavior of parents through various means, and (2) to

help compensate, through her work and relationships with the children, for negative home influences, so that a child is able to develop a sense of personal worth and self-fulfillment in the classroom.

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter presents various techniques by which a teacher can study his pupils' perceptions of their parents' attitudes toward school. It also describes how one teacher used the data so obtained to help the parents develop more positive attitudes toward school and to understand their children better. But not all parents can be changed in the desired direction, and children of such parents present a special challenge to a teacher. If parents are nonsupportive of school, there is a particular need for teacher respect, acceptance, and support. Some educators feel that the teacher can be the "good parent," both in terms of her attitudes and the time spent with the child. Consistency of attitude and realistic standards which are firmly adhered to are important with such children. For those who come from cultural backgrounds different from the majority of the class, the teacher should try to find the child's particular skills and the contributions he can make because of this background. These can be used to put him in a good light in relation to the other pupils.

Other educators feel that the substitute parent role is not necessarily the most constructive relation for a teacher to have toward children whose parents are nonsupportive of school. Many children whose home background is school-alien receive ample love and emotional warmth at home but there is lack of understanding of the school and its activities. The main need of such a child is a

teacher who will stand by him and respect him as a person, someone on whom he can depend.

These two points of view, the teacher as the "good parent" and the teacher who respects the pupil as a person and who provides a stable, predictable environment, are, in a sense, complementary and are characteristics of a good teacher. If the teacher gives the child support and respect, recognizing him as a unique individual, she can go far in overcoming adverse home influences.

Chapter 8

INCOMPLETE SENTENCES A MULTIDIMENSIONAL TOOL FOR CLASSROOM DIAGNOSIS

Incomplete sentences, or sentence completions, referred to in Chapters 5 and 7, provide a useful means of obtaining a child's impressions, feelings, and attitudes regarding many areas of his life. The responses elicited by incomplete sentences are often extremely useful clues which may be followed up by observations, conferences, interviews or other means.

A sentence completion test is flexible, in that it can be of varying length (from about 10 to 50 items for elementary school pupils), it can be designed to tap different areas (e.g., family and home, attitudes toward school, attitudes toward self, aspirations, etc.), and it can be given varying degrees of structure. Some sentence stems may give the pupil wide latitude in what he writes. Examples of such stems are:

Children _____

When I _____

Other stems are structured in such a way that responses are limited to a particular area or even a single dimension. For example, the following stem generally elicits characteristics which children value in the classroom peer group:

The kind of pupils I like most are _____

The two stems discussed in Chapter 7:

When I talk about school, my mother _____

When I talk about school, my father _____

are also highly structured items, producing responses which can be coded along the dimension of positive to negative affect.

Experience indicates that the most effective incomplete sentences blank is one which uses varying degrees of structure and taps several different areas. Stems which are parallel in structure or related to a particular area should be scattered throughout the test, for if those which are similar in form or subject matter are close to each other, pupils are likely to repeat the same answer or become stereotyped in their replies. Language used in the stems must be familiar to those who are asked to complete the blank. The wording must be unambiguous; it is necessary to be particularly alert to avoid words which have one meaning in standard English and a quite different meaning in slang. Also, the wording should be such that the stem calls for a response which is meaningful and important to the respondent. Note the following two stems:

The best things about this class are _____

The worst things about this class are _____

These are good stems, because the meanings of best and worst are clear. They are good, also, because things presents considerable latitude. An analysis of replies to these stems shows that responses tend to fall into four major categories: teacher, peers, learning, and socio-emotional emphasis. Finally, the use of the plural, things, permits the pupil to list as few or as many items in the best and the worst categories as he wishes. Marked differences have been found among classrooms in the total number of best and worst aspects of the class that are listed.

The Incomplete Sentences Blank presented below has been used in a large number of classrooms from the third to the twelfth grade, for both diagnostic and research purposes, with excellent results. Teachers will generally find it more satisfactory to copy and use this form than to try to develop special forms for their particular classrooms. The form might be shortened, however, by omitting stems which tap areas in which a teacher is not interested. If new stems are added, some pretesting is suggested to avoid two main pitfalls of sentence completions: 1) stems which tend to elicit the same reply from most people and hence fail to discriminate among pupils, and 2) stems in which the stimulus is so vague that there are no common themes or dimensions in the replies.

Incomplete Sentences are easy to administer in the classroom, if the pupils can read and write. Experience with the form presented here indicates that practically all pupils in the fourth grade and many third grade pupils can perform the task satisfactorily, if the recommended administration procedure is followed.

Test Administration

A period of from 45 minutes to one hour should be allowed for administration of the Incomplete Sentences Blank to elementary school pupils. Twenty to thirty minutes is generally ample for pupils at higher levels, even though they tend to write longer and more complex responses. The following introduction is suggested.

Today you will be given a paper with a number of sentences that are started but are not finished. You are to finish them to tell how you really feel. What you write is confidential.

Your teacher is the only one who will see your answers. I want your personal and private answers, for they will help me to understand you better and to understand the class as a whole. Everybody's answers will be different. This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. Just write the way you really feel.

Then distribute the forms and have the pupils fill in the identifying information at the top of the page. If pupils have been assigned a code number (as was suggested in Chapter 1) they may prefer to use this rather than to write their names.

When the heading has been filled in, continue by reading the instructions on the form (see page 8-6) and go over the two examples carefully.

If there are some pupils in the class who you feel will have difficulty in reading the sentence stems, seat them where you can read the sentences to them with least possible disturbance of the rest of the pupils. If a pupil does not understand a sentence stem, work with him individually, repeating the stem and telling him to fill in the rest. Do not suggest any ways in which it might be completed, but if necessary refer back to the examples at the beginning of the Blank and read them again. Do not use any other examples.

If a pupil asks, "Is this the right answer?" the reply should be: "Whatever you want to say. There are no right or wrong answers. Finish each sentence to tell how you really feel."

Particularly at the third grade level, teachers may permit pupils to request help in spelling by raising their hands. It should be made clear, however, that this is not a spelling test and that the

only reason for asking for spelling help is to be sure that a reply will be understood. If a pupil cannot write well enough to complete the blank himself, either the teacher or a competent pupil-helper can use the blank as an interview schedule and write down the pupil's responses.

Pupils should be seated in such a way as to minimize copying from each other. If copying appears to be going on, say: "I want your personal and private answers. Everybody's answers will be different. This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. Just write the way you really feel. Remember, nobody except your teacher will see what you write."

Sentence stems 21 and 27 refer to "my mother" and 16 and 37 to "my father." If a pupil asks about this, saying he does not have a mother or a father, tell him to put an X through the sentence and leave it blank. Make it clear that all other stems should be answered in a way which completes the sentence. It is sometimes necessary to specify that "Don't know" is not an acceptable answer.

INCOMPLETE SENTENCES BLANK

Code No. _____

Name _____ Date _____
 (Last) (First)

Teacher _____ Grade _____

On the lines below you will find a number of sentences which are started but are not finished. Complete each sentence to tell how you really feel. Let's try an example. Suppose the sentence reads:

A. Today I want to _____

To complete this sentence you might write, "play ball," "get a good grade," "finish my homework early so I can go to a show," or many, many other things, depending on what you really want. Here's another harder one:

B. Compared with most years, this one _____

To finish this sentence you might write: "didn't have as much snow," "was about the same as most years," "was more interesting for me," or many other things to tell how you feel this year was alike or different from most years.

Now start with the first sentence below, telling how you really feel. Do every one. Be sure to make a whole sentence. There are no right or wrong answers. Each person will have different sentences. Hand in your paper as soon as you have finished.

1. Compared with most families, mine _____

2. I am best when _____

3. My schoolwork _____

4. Some day I _____

5. Studying is _____

6. Many times I think I am _____

7. I learn best when _____

8. If someone makes fun of me, I _____

9. Mothers should learn that _____

10. When I look at other boys and girls and then look at myself, I feel _____

11. A nice thing about my family _____

12. Homework is _____

13. When I grow up I want to be _____

14. The best things about this class are _____

15. I get in trouble when _____

16. I wish my father _____

17. Learning out of books is _____

18. If I could be someone else I _____

19. If only teachers _____

20. When I am by myself _____

21. When I talk about school, my mother _____

22. To keep from getting into a fight, you must _____

23. I am happiest when _____

24. Fathers should learn that _____

25. To get along well in a group, you have to _____

26. I can't learn when _____

27. I wish my mother _____

28. Making friends is hard if _____

29. What I like to do most is _____

30. If I should fail in school _____

31. When I look in the mirror, I _____

32. My family treats me like _____

33. In class, working by myself is _____

34. When I am older _____

35. The worst things about this class are _____

36. A mother is nice when _____

37. When I talk about school, my father _____

38. I get mad when _____

39. Most of all I want to _____

40. A father is nice when _____

41. In class, working with others is _____

42. At home I _____

43. I often wish _____

44. My teacher thinks I am _____

45. If I were a parent I _____

46. This school _____

Scoring and Interpretation

Material from the Incomplete Sentences can be used in several ways. In the hands of the school psychologist or other trained clinician the responses, taken as a whole, can be used in evaluating the overall adjustment of a pupil. The content may be analyzed from the point of view of emotional quality, including such factors as positiveness vs. negativeness of attitude and affect, degree of spontaneity or inhibition, intensity of feeling, frankness or evasiveness, etc. An analysis of this sort, however, is a job for the skilled and experienced clinician. If a pupil's responses are quite atypical, a teacher may want to discuss them with a person trained in interpreting psychological test material. Used in this way, the Incomplete Sentences may be seen as a case finding tool to help in the identification of those pupils who would benefit from child guidance services.

The major use of sentence completion data in the classroom, however, is to permit the development of indices relevant to classroom diagnosis. For this purpose, a cluster of selected stems relating to a particular content area is coded quantitatively. One example is the self-esteem index described in Chapter 5, in which stems 6, 10, and 31 are used. Another example is found in Chapter 7, based on stems 21 and 37, where positive, neutral, or negative values are assigned to the pupil's perception of his parents' attitudes toward school. In both of these cases, the stems were coded on a three-point scale, with designations of plus (+), neutral (0), and minus (-). For more accurate coding and greater discrimination among pupils, a five-point scale is recommended, as described below.

Each response to a particular stem is scored on a scale from 1 to 5. The score represents the weight assigned to a response in terms of its rated positiveness or adequacy of adjustment.¹ The important variable to be rated in each instance is on a continuum between what is considered a psychologically healthy attitude or relationship and a psychologically unhealthy one. Healthy attitudes are positive, realistic attitudes expressing feelings of liking for people, school, activities, and the like, or interest and/or participation in these things or activities. An unhealthy attitude is defined as one suggesting hostility, defiance, conflict, overconformity, withdrawal, inadequacy, or the feeling of being disliked or not accepted by others.

Scoring Principles

In general, the better the adjustment which a response indicates, the higher the score assigned to it. For each item, the neutral response is the midpoint on the scale and is scored 3. It is important that this midpoint be kept clearly in mind. There are several types of neutral responses. First are those which are purely descriptive, as for example, "My schoolwork is arithmetic, English, and history," or "Learning out of books is one way of learning." Such responses express neither positive nor negative feeling, and hence are considered neutral. They might, of course, represent a deliberate attempt to be noncommittal or evasive, but determinations of this sort fall in the area of clinical judgment and are beyond

¹The scoring system used is adapted from that presented by Leslie F. Malpass and Forrest B. Tyler in an unpublished paper, "Validation of the Incomplete Sentences Test of School Adjustment."

the scope of this pamphlet. Experience has shown that such factors do not invalidate scoring which is done objectively on the basis of definite scoring criteria. Through the methods described here a good degree of reliability and validity can be obtained.

Other responses are more clearly neutral, or at the midpoint of a scale, as for example, "My schoolwork is average." This indicates neither like nor dislike, good or bad, neither positive nor negative reaction. A third type of neutral response is the ambivalent or compound response, the parts of which approximately balance or cancel out each other, so that the resultant is about neutral, as for example, "Studying is sometimes fun, sometimes not fun."

After the scorer has the midpoint of responses for a particular stem clearly in mind, he must then decide whether the response he is scoring is at that midpoint or whether it is in the positive or the negative direction. If it is positive, it will be scored 5 or 4, depending on how strongly positive it is, a score of 5 being the more positive. If it is negative, it will be scored 2 or 1, depending on the degree of negativity, 1 being the more negative.

Positive responses are those indicating positive attitudes toward school, the self, the family, or whatever aspect of the pupil's life is dealt with in that particular sentence stem. Whether a response is scored 5 or 4 depends on the degree of attraction toward, liking for, positive feeling about, happiness or satisfaction with, hopefulness, or optimism expressed. The two points on the positive end of the scale are described below.

Responses scored 5 are those indicating a good feeling towards others, the family, or the self; liking for or healthy

attitudes about school; interest and/or participation in school activities; realistic attitudes toward regulations and rules; good interpersonal relationships; healthy spontaneity; realistic and positive attitudes toward the future; etc. Some examples are:

- a. This school is a lot of fun.
- b. This school is something I like to attend.
- c. Homework is one of the most important things to me.
I like homework.
- d. Homework is very helpful to me.

Examples a and c above appear somewhat more positive than do b and d, but they are all positive enough to justify a score of 5.

Responses in this category show a feeling of realistic competence, or indicate a healthy outgoingness (but not extreme), express a feeling of being genuinely liked and not simply because of special abilities or possessions, or they show a genuine liking for teachers and peers as people, or a real liking for school and school work. Similar responses, but with slight qualifying aspects, are included in this category. Most humor would be scored as 5.

Responses scored 4 indicate a general or mild satisfaction with, acceptance of, interest in, or liking for the aspect of the pupil's life covered in the stem. A response scored 4 presumes an acceptable adjustment on the part of the respondent. Positive responses with significant qualifying aspects are also scored 4 if the positive statement is only partially balanced off by a negative element, e.g.: "This school is fine, except for some of the kids." Respect (as opposed to liking), "OK," or "all right," and similar responses that are just a little on the positive side of neutral fall into this category.

Neutral responses, scored 3, are described and illustrated above. These may express a neutral attitude, they may represent a combination of positive and negative feelings which approximately balance each other, or they may be purely descriptive. Responses which are essentially a repetition of the stem (e.g., "I get mad when I get mad," or "I learn best when I learn.) are generally scored 3.

The evasive or noncommittal response deserves special note. A pupil may want to avoid any risk by describing his feeling in a way that says practically nothing. Occasional responses of this sort may be scored 3 and otherwise disregarded, but when a pupil gives a large number of such responses, it may prove fruitful to have a special conference with him. The purpose of such a conference is first to try to understand him better as a person and why he needs to be so guarded and cautious, and second to obtain information about whether his general attitude leans in the direction of positiveness or negativeness. In such a meeting, the teacher might say, for example, "You said, 'I learn best when I learn.' Now, can you tell me more about that?" Through such inquiry the teacher may be able to obtain non-neutral responses which will help him in making a better estimation of the pupil's attitudes and classroom adjustment. When such elaborations are made by pupils, the teacher can add them to the form and rescore the items to which they pertain.

Negative responses are those indicating unwholesome or unhealthy attitudes toward school, self, family, peers, etc., and which thus suggest school or personal maladjustment. Hostility,

pessimism, derogation, rebelliousness, lack of success, and non-acceptance are typical or negative responses. The two scores on the negative part of the scale are described below.

Responses scored 2 represent a general but relatively minor degree of dissatisfaction, distaste, or worry, mild feelings of resentment, and other kinds of negative reactions which do not seem to be deep-seated or overwhelming, as for example, "Studying is usually dull," and "My schoolwork isn't much fun." This category also includes negative comments with minor positive aspects; over-conforming behavior; slight to moderate inadequacy and inferiority feelings; achievement solely to please others; and lack of interest and/or participation in school activities.

Responses scored 1 are those which indicate more serious maladjustment or negative feelings. Clearcut and rather strong feelings of inferiority or inadequacy, dislike for, rebellion against, or relatively intense difficulties with school, family, peers, etc., and lack of interest and/or participation in school activities fall into this category. Also included in this category are responses indicating severe conflict or maladjustment: extremely strong resentment, open hostility or sullenness, marked defeatism and social isolation, feelings of worthlessness, active dislike and opposition to teacher, peers, family, school, etc. Some examples are:

- a. Studying is depressing.
- b. My schoolwork is crummy.
- c. My schoolwork gives me the creeps.
- d. This school I hate.

Examples c and d are more negative than are a and b, but they are all sufficiently negative to justify a score of 1.

These are the categories, 1 through 5, which constitute the scoring scale. The definitions given above should provide sufficient guidelines for coding of those stems which a teacher wishes to use quantitatively. There are, however, a few other scoring considerations.

Most important is the problem of omitted responses or those answered with a question mark or "Don't know." Wherever possible it is desirable to return the form for completion of the unanswered items. Where this is not feasible, they are coded 0 and are not included in the computation of an index, as explained below. Incomplete or fragmentary responses are also scored 0 unless there is enough feeling included in the response to permit its positive or negative evaluation. Wherever possible, such responses are scored according to the degree of feeling expressed. For example, "This school doesn't have..." seems to represent at least some mild discontent with school and would be scored 2.

Computing an Index

One group of stems which it is particularly useful to code are those related to a pupil's feelings about school. They are:

- 3. My schoolwork _____
- 5. Studying is _____
- 12. Homework is _____
- 17. Learning out of books is _____
- 46. This school _____

When these five stems are coded according to the principles given above, the total score is obtained and this total is divided

by the number of stems involved, that is, by 5 if all the stems are answered. In other words, the average code value is obtained for this group of stems, and this is designated as the "school adjustment index." The following examples drawn from the sixth grade class discussed in Chapter 7 are illustrative. After each of the sentences is a number showing the way that response was coded.

First is a boy (Pupil 1) whose school orientation, as indicated by his replies, was rather positive. He wrote:

My schoolwork is fun so I get all of it done, as much as possible I can (sic). (5)

Studying is helpful because you learn something useful to you. (5)

Homework is fun but sometimes it is boring. (4)

Learning out of books is a good thing to do but when someone explains it I learn more. (4)

This school is pretty good, but the one I went to last year was better. (2)

Another boy (Pupil 2) was slightly more ambivalent in his feelings about school. His replies suggest that he might profit by some special help from his teacher. His replies provide a good illustration of the importance of using the qualitative as well as the quantitative aspects of Incomplete Sentences.

My schoolwork is good, all but arithmetic. (4)

Studying is a little hard for me. (2)

Homework is all right, but sometimes I don't understand it. Sometimes my Dad don't too. (2)

Learning out of books is fun. (5)

This school is O.K. (4)

A quite negative picture was presented by a girl (Pupil 3), who wrote:

My schoolwork is fair but I hate to do book reports and I
play too much. (2)

Studying is boring for me unless someone is helping me. (2)

Homework is very boring. I hate to stay in the house to
do homework. (1)

Learning out of books is not hard but I could learn more
if the teacher told me. (2)

This school is crappy and I'm leaving it soon. (1)

For each pupil the teacher added together the scores for the five sentences and divided this total by 5 to get the average score of "school adjustment index." The results for the three examples given above are as follows:

<u>Pupil</u>	<u>Total Score</u>	<u>School Adjustment Index</u>
1	20	4.0
2	17	3.4
3	8	1.6

For these three pupils she could have used the total score for comparative purposes just as well as the index, but there were a few pupils who did not complete all five sentences. Because of this the average score or "index" is more useful.

When she compared each pupil's School Adjustment Index with his responses on the two stems dealing with parents' attitudes toward school, discussed in Chapter 7, she found that most pupils who thought their parents liked to have them talk about school had a positive attitude toward school.

Multiple Choice Sentence Completions

An alternative form of sentence completions which is less time consuming and easier for the teacher to score is multiple choice sentence completions. By counting the number of pupils who select each of the different alternatives, the teacher can obtain a picture of pupils' opinions and attitudes on various aspects of school. This form has been used successfully in the third grade as well as at higher levels. It is as follows:

MULTIPLE CHOICE SENTENCE COMPLETIONS

Code No. _____

Name _____ Age _____ Date _____
(Last) (First)

Teacher _____ Grade _____ School _____

On the attached form are a number of sentences that are started but are not finished. Below each sentence that has been started are some different ways that it might be finished. You are to put an X in front of the one that makes the sentence most true for you. There are no right or wrong answers. The way you feel about things is what counts.

Now let's try an example. Suppose the sentence reads:

- A. Today I want to
 ___ play ball.
 ___ get a good grade.
 ___ go to a movie.

Suppose that what you want most today, of the three choices listed, is to go to a movie. To show that this is your choice, you would put an X on the line in front of the words, go to a movie, as has been done in the example.

Are there any questions?

Start with the first sentence below and put an X in front of the one ending that makes the sentence most nearly true for you. Do every one. There are no right or wrong answers. This is not a test. What is right for you would not necessarily be right for somebody else. Put an X in front of the one sentence ending that comes closest to the way you really feel. Hand in your paper as soon as you have finished. Remember, complete each sentence with only one X, that is put an X only in front of the one ending that makes the sentence true for you.

1. My schoolwork
 ___ is a lot of fun.
 ___ is sometimes fun.
 ___ isn't much fun.
 ___ is not fun at all.
2. Learning from books is
 ___ very interesting.
 ___ interesting sometimes.
 ___ sometimes dull.
 ___ very dull and boring.

3. Studying is
___ a lot of fun.
___ sometimes fun
___ not much fun.
___ not fun at all.
4. The best thing about this class is
___ the kids in it.
___ the things we learn.
___ recess.
___ the teacher.
___ the fun we have in class.
5. My schoolwork
___ is very easy for me.
___ is sort of easy.
___ is sort of hard.
___ is very hard.
6. I learn best when
___ I work by myself.
___ I work with a friend.
___ I work in a group.
7. If only teachers
___ would make us work harder.
___ wouldn't make us work so hard.
8. In class, working with others is
___ the best way for me to learn.
___ sometimes good, sometimes not.
___ not as good as working alone.
___ a waste of time for me.
9. My schoolwork
___ is very interesting.
___ is interesting sometimes.
___ is sometimes dull.
___ is very dull and boring.
10. Learning from books is
___ a good way to learn.
___ good, but I can learn more in other ways.
___ not a very good way to learn.
___ not at all a good way to learn.
11. Studying is
___ very interesting.
___ interesting sometimes.
___ sometimes dull.
___ very dull and boring.

12. The worst thing about this class is
___ the kids in it.
___ the things we have to study.
___ the teacher.
___ that we almost never have fun.
___ that we have to stay in school too long.
13. I can't learn when
___ I work by myself.
___ I work with a friend.
___ I work in a group.
14. If only teachers
___ would tell us just what they want.
___ would give us more chance to work things out ourselves.
15. If I should fail in school
___ I'd try to do better.
___ I'd wish I had studied more.
___ I'd feel ashamed.
___ I'd quit school.
16. In class, working with others is
___ a lot of fun.
___ sometimes fun.
___ not much fun.
___ not fun at all.
17. Most of all I want to
___ be rich.
___ be smart and know a lot.
___ have a lot of friends.
___ be able to get others to do what I want them to do.
18. Homework is
___ very interesting.
___ interesting sometimes.
___ sometimes dull.
___ very dull and boring.
19. When I talk about school, my mother
___ does not listen.
___ sometimes listens.
___ listens most of the time.
___ is very interested.
20. I learn best when
___ the teacher helps me.
___ another pupil helps me.
___ someone in my family helps me.
___ I can work it out for myself.

21. In class, working by myself is
___ a lot of fun.
___ sometimes fun.
___ not much fun.
___ not fun at all.
22. If I should fail in school
___ I'd be mad at the teacher.
___ I'd be mad at myself.
___ I'd say it was tough luck.
___ It wouldn't be my fault.
23. Studying is
___ very helpful to me.
___ helpful if there is not too much.
___ not very helpful for me.
___ a waste of time for me.
24. In class, working by myself is
___ very easy.
___ easier than working with others.
___ harder than working with others.
___ very hard.
25. If only teachers
___ would make us behave better.
___ would trust us more on our own.
26. I am happiest when
___ I am with a friend.
___ I am with my family at home.
___ I am alone.
___ I am in school.
27. Homework is
___ very helpful to me.
___ helpful if there is not too much.
___ not very helpful for me.
___ a waste of time.
28. In class, working with others is
___ very easy.
___ easier than working by yourself.
___ harder than working by yourself.
___ very hard.
29. When I talk about school, my father
___ is very interested.
___ listens most of the time.
___ sometimes listens.
___ does not listen.

30. In class, working by myself is
___ the best way for me to learn.
___ sometimes good, sometimes not.
___ not as good as working with a group.
___ a waste of time.
31. This school
___ is my idea of a good school.
___ is O.K. but it could be better.
___ isn't very good.
___ is pretty bad--I don't like it.

It will be noted that this form uses only 17 of the stems contained in the Incomplete Sentences Blank, and that some of the stems which are used are presented with two or three different sets of alternatives. These choices are based on the most frequent responses obtained on the free answer form.

The content of this multiple choice form is closely related to school and school activities. The Incomplete Sentences Blank has a much broader coverage, with stems related to parents and family, future and vocational interests, self percept and degree of self satisfaction, conditions for positive self feeling, and interpersonal relations. It is important for the teacher to consider the area or areas in which she wishes to obtain data and to use the form which is more appropriate, or to modify these forms to suit his particular needs.

Chapter 9

PLANNING AND ACCOMPLISHING CLASSROOM DIAGNOSIS

The preceding chapters have presented tools for assessing a number of different factors related to the learning atmosphere in the classroom. Each of these tools is important in its own right and can be used independently for a specific purpose. From the practical point of view, however, they should be put together in an appropriate package for use by the teacher in his special situation.

A doctor, in diagnosing a patient, selects a few tests and laboratory procedures from among the large number available, choosing them on the basis of their relevance for that patient's history and complaints. It is rare that he selects only one, for he needs data of different kinds which he can integrate in making a diagnosis. In the same way the teacher, on the basis of his knowledge and experience with a class, will feel that certain of the tools presented are more relevant to problems manifested by his current class than are other tools. Like the doctor, he can do a better diagnostic job if he uses a combination of tools than if he uses only one. With an appropriately selected combination he will obtain a variety of data which will permit him to look at the problem from different perspectives. A combination of instruments is more practical, too, for it enables data to be gathered more economically, and the use of a variety of tools helps to maintain a high level of pupil interest.

The teacher will want to plan his program of classroom diagnosis before the academic year begins. This will allow him to utilize the tools at the most opportune times and in the best sequence. Some information about pupils is more crucial early in the year. Other diagnosis is not useful until the pupils have developed into a group or until the class has had time to experience several methods of subject matter learning. Still other tools may be more or less valuable depending on the kind of pupils the teacher has.

Although it is very useful for the teacher to set out a general plan for a year's data collection, the plan should be flexible, and he might also keep in mind a reservoir of techniques for unexpected occurrences. For instance, the teacher in the course of the year may try a new teaching method or curriculum plan. He may be interested in evaluating the effectiveness of the new technique by receiving reactions from the students. Another possibility is that a student or group of students may suggest a new classroom practice and the teacher might encourage them to evaluate its effects. In such a case he will need questionnaires that the students can use, score, and analyze.

Even though the teacher should have a reservoir of diagnostic tools ready at all times, he should also have a general plan for the entire year. For instance, the beginning of the fall term would be a good time to collect information from the students about the forces outside of school that may be influencing them. Diagnostic methods described in Chapter 6 would be used for this purpose. Also, the ways in which a child

perceives his parents' orientations to school would be useful information early in the year. Tools described in Chapter 7 on parental influences on school adjustment could be used here. For both these purposes, the teacher may wish to make use of some of the sentence completion items presented in Chapter 8.

As the year progresses and interaction among pupils increases, the teacher can begin to diagnose classroom processes and pupil relations. Diagnostic methods from Chapters 1,2,3,4, and 5 all should be useful for this purpose. The teacher might use instruments from Chapter 1, Social Relationships in the Classroom, and Chapter 3, Classroom Norms, in combination. By so doing he could get a view of the positivity of peer relationships and the shared attitudes which the pupils have about classroom life. Using one tool without the other, indeed, could be misleading. Positive peer relationships without supportive norms for learning and classroom participation leads to "cohesiveness" about not working and producing. Conversely, supportive norms without positive relationships may not be effective, for even though the students tend to agree about high classroom production standards, they do not feel comfortable in a rather hostile peer group climate. Usually, positive relationships and supportive norms go together but this is not always true.

The teacher would have to plan well ahead to make use of the measures on pupil-teacher interaction described in Chapter 4. In order to collect interaction data, he will need to have another teacher assist him, or he will have to train some students to do the job. The former is preferable, at least the first time the

teacher tries this. The teacher should plan to collect interaction data during class periods when considerable discussion is anticipated. He might also plan ahead to a time when he is consciously trying a new teaching method which involves interaction. Classroom observation during long periods of seat work or subgroup work would of course be inefficient and not allow for the insights afforded when the teacher is communicating with many students.

The teacher can use the tools discussed in Chapter 2, Assessing the Classroom Learning Climate, at many points during the year. Both the general climate and specific pupil reactions may be diagnosed with these tools. The teacher may wish to evaluate the general climate after the fifth or sixth week of school to see if he should make any major modifications in his teaching. He may use the tools for more specific reactions, on the other hand, immediately after trying out a new practice or lesson plan. In either case, tools used to assess the learning climate in the classroom are useful additions to the usual academic testing done by the teacher.

To aid in understanding the personalities of his pupils and to evaluate their mental health, a teacher may want to use the Incomplete Sentences Blank presented in Chapter 8 during the first week of school as part of getting acquainted. By studying the responses to various stems, he is able to learn, among other things, how the child sees himself, how he views his parents' attitudes toward school, how he evaluates his competence as a student, and what are his aspirations for the future. At this time or later, the teacher who is concerned about the mental health of individual pupils may also want to use some

of the other tools described in Chapter 5. If, early in the school year, the teacher can obtain information about the pupil's perceptions of himself and about other aspects of his personality, areas of maladjustment can be spotted and remedial action started immediately.

Keeping in mind that the teacher should have several tools available for use at any time during the year, it is helpful to plan a general program of diagnosis with specific dates: Here is what a sample calendar of diagnostic events might look like:

Sept. 10: Family background information is collected

(Chapter 7).

The teacher appraises forces outside the school which influence the child (Chapter 6).

The Incomplete Sentences Blank is used to obtain a multidimensional view of the pupil (Chapter 8).

Oct. 8: Social relationships data (Chapter 1).

Classroom norms (Chapter 3).

Oct. 22: (Teacher tries a unit involving a lot of interaction)

A teacher-colleague observes (Chapter 4).

Pupils are asked to react to the unit (Chapter 2).

Nov. 19: Self concepts of pupils are assessed again, this time in a direct manner (Chapter 5).

Dec. 8: Three low-achieving, low self-esteem pupils are chosen for a special conference with the teacher. The teacher reviews tools previously filled out by these students.

Feb. 4: (Conferences with parents are the following week)

Pupils' perceptions of parental attitudes toward school are assessed. (Chapter 7).

March 11: The general learning climate is assessed (Chapter 2).

May 13: Social relationships (Chapter 1) and classroom norms (Chapter 3) are assessed again to measure changes during the year.

This calendar of diagnostic events is one general example of a sequence a teacher may wish to follow in using the tools in this pamphlet. There are many other possibilities. One teacher may want to collect data on his pupils' perceptions of their parents' attitudes toward school very early in the fall. In this way he would be able to show parents ways in which they could be more supportive of their child's school activities. Another teacher may wish to assess the general learning climate before he does any testing of the social relationships or classroom norms. Any number of different sequences can be developed. One teacher might start out assessing the self-esteem of his pupils, while another might try to collect data on the experiences the children in his class had last year and what their expectations are for the present year. In any case, the teacher should use the instruments in ways he feels most appropriate to his situation.

One fourth grade teacher, Mrs. X, was aided by the use of some of the tools in the booklet in the following program. Mrs. X hoped to get to know her students well and to obtain immediate reactions from them about specific learning experiences. On the first day of school she told her pupils that it would help her to

become acquainted with them if they would give her some information about their homes and families. She used some of the questions in Chapter 7. She wanted to know about the educational levels of the parents, whether or not the mother worked; and, if so, what provisions there were for the children after school. She hoped to use the information on educational levels in preparing for the parent-teacher conferences that year. In the past, she had assumed that the parents were more sophisticated about the schools than they really were. She decided to have some information about them this time, at least some facts about their educational backgrounds. She also was concerned about the students' life after school. Two years before she had not allowed certain pupils to stay around the classroom after school hours. Of course, most of her pupils did not wish to stay, but a few did. This in itself should have been a clue that these children needed some special assistance. Later, she found that these children had to go home to a vacant house and feared to do this. In the present year she wanted to know about the after-school activities of her pupils so that she would not make this sort of mistake again.

After about four weeks, she presented some of the sociometric questions of Chapter 1 to her students. She said that answers to these questions would help her to know the pupils better. Mrs. X knew how important it was to a child's self-esteem and social adjustment for him to have some friendships. Further, she knew that pupils with low personal esteem tend to dislike school, especially when they do not perform up to their capacity. Furthermore, students with low self-esteem usually do not utilize their

abilities highly. With these things in mind, she felt that it was very important to discover which pupils lacked friends. To these pupils she would try to give special attention and to see that they derived some prestige from their peers at least occasionally.

Along with the sociometric questions, she administered some of the items used to assess classroom norms. Even though Mrs. X felt that she already knew these pupils very well, she was aware of the difficulty of understanding the group feelings of the class. She had had experiences with other classes in which she was surprised to find that the students shared attitudes which were quite different from those she was trying to put across. Since making use of a few questions from Chapter 3 would take so little time, she decided to assess some of the norms in this class.

During that winter, Mrs. X tried the technique of role-playing in one of her units. She had never used it before and so decided to get the students' reactions before continuing. She used questions from Chapter 2. The initial reactions were negative, but Mrs. X still felt there was some merit in role-playing as a technique for learning. She asked a fellow teacher with a free hour to observe her as she introduced and warmed up the students to a second set of role-playing episodes. Together, the two teachers decided to use some of the observational procedures described in Chapter 4. After the second attempt at role-playing, the teacher once again administered a few of the questions from Chapter 2 on reactions to specific learnings.

While trying out role-playing in her classroom, Mrs. X observed that four students were very embarrassed about themselves

and self-depreciating as well while acting in the skits. She decided to ask her class to fill out the Incomplete Sentence Blank as described in Chapter 8. She analysed the results for all of the pupils but took special interest in the sentences of those four students who had difficulty in role-playing. She then planned a special conference with each of these students. Later in the spring, when she gave the entire class some sociometric and classroom norms questions a second time to measure change, she also included the Incomplete Sentence Blank again. This time she did not have enough time to analyse all of the completed sentences so she focused on the self-esteem items. In this way, she was able to see if any change had occurred in the self-perceptions of the students with whom she had done special work as well as the rest of her students.

Mrs. X made effective use of many of the tools in this pamphlet. By planning ahead she used the tools at the most appropriate times and was able to get helpful information from the students on how they were reacting to the classroom group and to her. Of course, she could have used the tools in many other ways. Indeed, the following year she did. Both years were similar, however, in that the questionnaires helped her to achieve closer relationships with more of the students and to raise the school interest and achievement levels of some of them.

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter describes some ways in which the tools presented in this pamphlet might be put together systematically. The teacher is advised to prepare a definite but flexible plan of action for diagnosis before the school year begins. Some of the tools are more appropriate than others for the first week of class. For instance, questions about family and the students' relations with people outside the school can be asked prior to questions about social relationships and norms in the classroom group. The tools for measuring classroom factors do not become relevant until the students have related to one another and have become established as a group.

Other tools should be kept in mind to be used whenever the teacher wants to receive information on how close he has come to reaching his objectives. Such tools are those on classroom observation and assessing learning atmospheres. The teacher is advised also to remain flexible from year to year in using the tools most relevant to the current class. From the variety of tools presented, most teachers will be able to prepare an appropriate diagnostic kit which, if used properly, will be of substantial help.

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