

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT FOR SLOW-LEARNING  
EIGHTH GRADE PUPILS

by *JMS*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY . . . . .	1
Purpose of the Study . . . . .	2
Procedure . . . . .	2
Definitions of Terms Used . . . . .	2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE . . . . .	3
Characteristics of the Slow Learner . . . . .	3
Physical . . . . .	3
Intellectual growth and ability . . . . .	4
Social and emotional adjustment . . . . .	8
Attitudes Toward the Slow Learner . . . . .	12
Teaching Methods Used with the Slow Learner . . . . .	16
Summary . . . . .	19
THE UNIT . . . . .	21
Major Area: Characteristics of a Successful Babysitter . . . . .	22
Major Area: Responsibilities in Caring for Children . . . . .	32
Curriculum Resources Cited in Unit . . . . .	48
Student References Cited in Unit . . . . .	49
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . .	50
Summary . . . . .	50
Recommendations . . . . .	51
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	52

## INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The most widely used approach to curriculum planning today considers the child and fits instruction to his needs. The responsibility of the school is to enable each student to become the best person he is capable of becoming. Often materials and instruction do not meet the needs of the slow learner. Effort needs to be made to improve the instructional approaches with respect to the slow learner.

The slow learner is truly a challenge and responsibility deserving the attention of home economics educators. The subject matter of home economics coincides with many of the greatest needs of the slow learner. No one is better trained than the home economics teacher to help develop the skills necessary for a girl to live wisely in her environment. It is in home economics classes that she learns how to prepare meals for the family and how to keep house properly. She is also taught child care as well as household management.<sup>1</sup>

To date, however, there is limited curriculum material in home economics designed specifically for the slow learner. Thus, the home economics teacher is handicapped when she begins making plans for units and lessons for a class composed of a majority, or entirely, of slow learners.

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<sup>1</sup>Margaret Liggett and Beulah E. Sellers, "Slow Learners," Journal of Home Economics, 54:23, January, 1962.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to develop a unit in child care and development for eighth grade pupils who are slow learners. Curriculum materials were planned but were not tested or evaluated with a group of pupils.

### Procedure

A review of literature, pertinent to the teaching of the slow learner, was made. Periodicals, journals, and other recent publications were the sources of information for identifying characteristics of slow-learning students as well as for investigating current trends and practices for teaching the slow learner. Recent curriculum materials, including state curriculum guides and textbooks, were also reviewed.

A unit of study, "Caring for Younger Children," was developed for a group of slow-learning students. The unit was presented in terms of objectives, generalizations, and learning experiences.

### Definitions of Terms

The only term defined for use in this study is:

slow-learning student. A child who is retarded in rate of intellectual growth as reflected by an IQ of between 75 and 90 on the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test is considered a slow-learning student.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of recent materials concerning (1) characteristics of the slow learner, (2) attitudes toward the slow learner, and (3) teaching methods used with the slow learner will follow.

### Characteristics of the Slow Learner

Physical. Frederick and Ostrom identified the slow learner as the student who is often underdeveloped physically as compared with average or superior students of the same chronological age. Slow learners are commonly a year or two older than superior students of the same grade level. As a result the slow-learner group is often found to be taller and heavier than the average and superior groups of the same grade level.<sup>1</sup>

In matters of health, however, Featherstone found slow-learning children as a group to differ more conspicuously from average children. Defects of hearing, speech, and vision were often present. Diseased tonsils and adenoids, as well as malnutrition were found more frequently in slow learners than in average children.<sup>2</sup>

The slow learner lacks vitality. This is partly due to innate factors and partly due to various postnatal and environmental conditions

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<sup>1</sup>Marilyn Frederick and Carol Ostrom, "The Slow Learner," Illinois Teacher of Home Economics, 7:7, September, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>W. B. Featherstone, Teaching the Slow Learner, p. 4.

which obstructs the child's growth and undermines his energy. He appears to be a child suffering, or who has suffered during his preschool life, not from a single well-defined complaint but from a plurality of minor problems, all contriving to manifest and maintain a lowered state of body vitality.<sup>1</sup>

Intellectual growth and ability. The term slow learners is interpreted as referring to students who tend to show slow growth in their potentiality for learning compared to other students. Frederick and Ostrom place the slow learner between the educable mentally handicapped on the lower end of the intelligence continuum and the average student on the upper end according to the definitions obtained from the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Test:

Superior student	IQ 110- above
Average student	IQ 90-110
Slow learner	IQ 75-90
Educable Mentally Handicapped	IQ 50-75
Trainable	IQ 25-50
Institutional	IQ 1-25 <sup>2</sup>

Featherstone stated, "There is no fixed standard or level of ability below which a pupil must be called a slow learner, but in common practice pupils with an IQ below 91 and above 74 are so labeled."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Frederick and Ostrom, loc. cit.

<sup>3</sup>Featherstone, op. cit., p. 2.

Children with IQ's of 90 and above succeed fairly well while those with IQ's below 75 rarely achieve much success in the regular classroom. Often the slow learner group may be thought of as having a central tendency or average of 80-85 IQ.<sup>1</sup> According to Johnson this group makes up 15 to 17 or 18 per cent of the general school population.<sup>2</sup>

The slow learners' mental retardation is reflected in school by academic performance. They do not and can not learn academic skills at the chronological age at which these skills are taught to most children. They are capable of learning many of these skills when they are older and when they have achieved sufficient mental maturity. They may never be capable of learning some skills and concepts.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, slow learners are slow in their rate of mental growth and retarded in their level of intellectual development as compared to a normal child. It is true that they can learn, but at a slower rate, often with less depth of understanding and poorer retention. They enter school with a lesser degree of skill and ability in one or more areas than the educational curriculum assumes. Since later learning is based to a large degree upon earlier learnings, such a child finds himself in

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<sup>1</sup>Orville G. Johnson, Education for Slow Learners, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup>Featherstone, loc. cit.

<sup>3</sup>Frederick and Ostrom, op. cit., p. 8.



ever increasing difficulty as his school experience continues.<sup>1</sup>

Alexander suggested putting the identified slow learners in a readiness group after finishing kindergarten for more preparation before they enter the first grade. The readiness group would further develop concepts necessary for success at the first grade level.<sup>2</sup>

Learning to read is a problem which confronts the slow learner early in his school career. Until he has had the necessary experiences in reading readiness, he will be handicapped in developing this important basic skill. Because he has difficulties with sentence patterns, he also speaks poorly as compared with the average. Karlin showed concern when he commented, "Keep in mind, the slow learner is capable of learning how to read but not perhaps at the rate at which children of normal or higher IQ's can."<sup>3</sup> Teachers need to plan programs for them. Reading ability often stops at the third or fourth grade level. Slow learners need help beyond this point in mastering reading skills associated with growth in school and in gaining appreciation of reading for pleasure.

Shankman, investigating the development of reading achievement growth from grades four to nine, found that intelligence had a low but

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<sup>1</sup>Newell Carlyle Kephart, The Slow Learner in the Classroom, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Feullette Alexander, "Not Quite Ready for the First Grade," Texas Outlook, 50:27, December, 1966.

<sup>3</sup>Robert Karlin, "Reading Skills for Slow Learners in Junior and Senior High School," The Clearing House, 35:281, January, 1961.

positive relationship to reading achievement. There was a significant difference in reading from year to year, and a more substantial relationship between reading and language than between reading and intelligence.<sup>1</sup>

One of the greatest difficulties of the slow learner is reasoning. Reasoning involves the higher mental processes of clarification, revision, rejection, and selection.<sup>2</sup> These higher complex mental operations are too difficult for the slow learner; consequently, he cannot do abstract thinking. Poor reasoning makes him slow.

The slow learner is also less imaginative, less able to foresee consequences, and may jump to conclusions without adequately thinking through all of the possibilities. In spite of this he differs only in degree, however, from the average student in his capabilities.

Failure to transfer ideas makes it difficult for the slow learner to view beyond the immediate in time and place. For this reason he cannot maintain interest if results are deferred or intangible. A shorter span of attention and a narrower scope are evident.

Since the slow learner has difficulty in seeing the relationship between ideas he tends to memorize subject matter. Yet memorization is

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<sup>1</sup>Florence Vogel Shankman, "An Investigation of the Development of Reading Achievement Growth from Grades Four to Nine," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 46:363: February, 1963.

<sup>2</sup>Featherstone, op. cit., p. 7.

an arduous task. Sufficient time is needed at spaced intervals for adequate memorization. The slow learner finds that what he has learned by rote, he is unable to transfer to a practical situation.

Social and emotional adjustment. Differential rate of intellectual growth of the slow learner affects his adjustment in other areas. School is associated with failure for many slow learners. For this reason they often do not make much effort to accomplish anything, for experience has taught them that they will probably fail. Some drop out of school and try to find other means to success.<sup>1</sup> Dropouts characteristically show a below average IQ or low academic aptitude.<sup>2</sup> Shea emphasized, "Today more slow learners stay in school, thus the school needs to provide for them."<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, there are some slow learners who find security in the routine of school. A few are actually leaders in school activities, in sports, and in community projects. Thus, the school may be reaching them at their level and meeting their needs.

Feldhausen and Kleusmier found that children of low IQ may show greater anxiety or generalized fear than children with higher IQ because

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<sup>1</sup>Frederick and Ostrom, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

<sup>2</sup>Merle B. Karnes, "The High School Drop Out," A New Look at the Vocational Purposes of Home Economics Education, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup>Varian M. Shea, "How Should We Provide for the Slow Learner," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 37:80-82, April, 1963.

of their limited intellectual capacity to evaluate the threat or danger in objects, situations, or people that confront them. This level of anxiety may be an indication of the successes which the child experiences. If anxiety is greater in children whose achievements in reading, arithmetic, and language are lower, then lack of success may be associated with the generalised fear response.<sup>1</sup> The hope of success and fear of failure as aspects of needs for achievement were measured by Clark, Teevan and Ricciuti. They found that students at the extreme ends of the continuum had lower achievement scores than students in the middle of the continuum.<sup>2</sup> Failure and fear may thus be unavoidable conditions confronting the low IQ groups. Possibly the anxiety of the fear of failure affected this group to have less successful achievement.

Slow learners have the same basic emotional needs and characteristics as all students. They have the same need for belonging, affection, conformity, and understanding.

It is widely believed that slow learners, as a group, have poorer personalities and are less well adjusted than average or bright pupils, but there is little conclusive evidence to support such a belief. Studies

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<sup>1</sup>J. D. Feldhausen and N. J. Klausmier, "Anxiety, Intelligence, and Achievement in Children of Low, Average, and High Intelligence," Child Development, 33:409, 1962.

<sup>2</sup>Russell Clark, Richard Teevan and Henry N. Ricciuti, "Hope of Success and Fear of Failure as Aspects of Need for Achievement," The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 53:186, September, 1956.

on the adjustment of groups of slow learners compared with bright groups, employing such devices as the Maller Personality Sketches, indicated that the bright pupils were a little better adjusted and the slow learners a little less well adjusted than normal. The differences, while statistically significant, were small. There were statistically significant differences in favor of the slow group in the attributes of self-distrust, physical timidity, dependence, and deference. The bright group significantly differed in the attributes of ability to make friends, leadership, rivalry, concentration, initiation of social activity, zest, sympathy for friends, dominance, self confidence, creativity, curiosity, courage, self-defense, and playfulness.<sup>1</sup>

In personality characteristics closely associated with or dependent on intellectual capacity, the bright youngsters will excel over the slow learners. This would evidence itself in creativity, dominance, curiosity, and achievement. But in such qualities as selfishness, kindness, obedience, dependence, deference, and exhibition, which are rooted primarily in the affective life, "slow learners are not barred from achieving entirely satisfactory degrees of goodness."<sup>2</sup>

Behavior problems, such as aggressiveness, frequently associated with the slow learner group are not due to organic causes but rather to continual frustration and unsatisfactory experiences which pupils

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<sup>1</sup>Featherstone, op. cit., pp. 5-6.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

meet in school.<sup>1</sup> Featherstone felt that it is a misconception to consider every slow-learning pupil a presumptive delinquent.<sup>2</sup> The opportunities for and the stimuli to delinquency are more often present in the environment of slow-learning pupils than is the case with brighter pupils. The former group tends, by and large, to live in the less favored communities, particularly in the larger cities. Low income, poor housing, poor home management, inadequate play and recreational facilities, and often poor schools appears to make up a reasonably homogeneous pattern of circumstances surrounding the slow-learning pupil. Thus, slowness alone is not the reason for delinquency.<sup>3</sup>

The slow learner is emotionally insecure. Aggressiveness or withdrawal are types of behavior which often result from demands which cannot be met by him and severely damage his ego status. Frederick and Ostrom felt the slow learners were cognizant of the fact that they did not learn rapidly and they were also aware of being unable to succeed in a highly competitive academic situation.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>New York Bureau of Home Economics, Home Economics Education, Syllabus for a Comprehensive Program, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup>Featherstone, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Frederick and Ostrom, op. cit., p. 9.

### Attitudes Toward the Slow Learner

The success or failure of the slow learner in the learning program greatly depends on the attitudes of his teachers, his parents, and his peer group. All school personnel who work with the slow learner would find the following suggestions made by Buska valuable:

(1) We must accept the slow learner as part of our school systems. . . . We must realize that many behavior problems arise from their inability to meet the demands placed upon them in the regular class room. (2) The slow learner must learn the need to respect himself and accept both the teacher and the school. Much more emphasis must be placed on what he can do rather than what he cannot do. (3) The slow learner must be accepted by his family. This requires conferences with his parents to explain the child's capabilities. (4) The curriculum must be adjusted to fit the pupil's needs. The teacher must vary her presentation in order to captivate the interests of the slow learner. She must be alert to any special interests or abilities of the slow learner and help to develop these assets. The teacher's goals should include the development of the social maturity of the child in order to help him find his place in society.<sup>1</sup>

A genuine understanding of and concern for pupils who are slow learners is essential for the teacher according to Calhoun.<sup>2</sup> Cobb considered the attitude of the class as being dependent on the attitude and the skill of the teacher. If the students like the teacher they will be motivated and do more conscientious work.<sup>3</sup> An unhappy, uninterested slow

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<sup>1</sup>Howard Buska, "How to Meet the Problems of the Slow Learner in the Junior High School," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, 45:66, April, 1961.

<sup>2</sup>St. Ann Emma Lou Calhoun, "Help for the Slow Learner," School and Community, 52:19, February, 1967.

<sup>3</sup>Marion Macdonald Cobb, "Characteristics of Slow Learners," The Clearing House, 35:346, February, 1961.

learner may withdraw within himself to a degree that is wasteful of the school's facilities and emotionally destructive to the student.<sup>1</sup> Further, the student may possibly express his frustration and hostility in ways that interfere with the educational progress of a class. Need, success, and practice are essential for effective learning with the slow learner.

The importance of the role of the teacher with the slow learner was stressed by Ferry:

Every child and adolescent needs a teacher who understands him--his aspirations, his interests, his abilities and his short-comings. It is important that the 'slow-learners' be assigned to teachers who have the personal qualities and professional equipment to make their school experiences as pleasant and as educative as possible. If he comes into daily contact with a teacher who discourages and humiliates him, who gives him tasks beyond his comprehension and ability to perform, the net result will be frustration and the development of an antisocial personality. On the other hand, sympathy and understanding may have a permanently helpful influence upon the development of the slow-learner's personality. Slow-learners will eventually grow to maturity and take their places in the world. What places they take and how they fit into society will be determined, to a large extent, by how they have reacted to the school environment and to the teacher. A calm, poised, sympathetic teacher is an absolute necessity.<sup>2</sup>

Buska thought the junior high school could offer appropriate courses and the social and vocational guidance that could lead to a

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<sup>1</sup>Mary Mark Sturm and Letitia Welsh, "Let's Find Satisfaction in Our Slow Learners," Illinois Teacher of Home Economics, 3:367, Winter, 1959.

<sup>2</sup>Winnie C. Ferry, "To Study One Method of Teaching the Slow-Learners in Clothing I Construction Classes in Lockport Township High School," unpublished Master's thesis, p. 8.



satisfactory adult life in the community. Slow learners have a tendency to marry early. Possible courses for them may deal with home management, grooming practices, child care, budget procedures, letter writing, good work habits, job responsibilities, and acceptance of supervision.<sup>1</sup>

Mahan discussed the importance of schools providing the link between school and vocational success. He said that programs should be planned to adequately prepare the slow learner for gainful employment when he completes his formal education.<sup>2</sup>

Acceptance by his family helps in the adjustment of the slow learner. Kough and DeHaan stressed that parents need to accept his academic record as indicative of his capabilities rather than laziness.<sup>3</sup> They should also be receptive to the school's evaluation of his accomplishments and capabilities. In a study of parental awareness of retardation made by Meyerowitz it was found that parents felt their child was better than the school indicated. This attitude resulted in rejection of the school by the parents. Meyerowitz concluded that the lack of parental awareness of educational deficiency hampered

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<sup>1</sup>Busks, *loc. cit.*

<sup>2</sup>Thomas W. Mahan, Jr., "The Slow Learner: Fact or Excuse," *The Education Digest*, 31:16, November, 1965.

<sup>3</sup>Jack Kough and Robert F. DeHaan, "Helping Slow Learners," *Helping Students with Special Needs*, 2:14-155.

the teacher in achieving any great degree of success when working with the slow learner.<sup>1</sup>

Acceptance by classmates is considered important in the success of the slow learner. A study by Terrell and Stevenson concerning the effectiveness of normal and retarded peers as reinforcing agents revealed that the mentally retarded child is rejected and isolated by normal peers.<sup>2</sup>

Many factors in the class environment contribute to the success or failure of the slow learner. Krupa observed a group of slow learners placed in a speech class of mixed ability students. He noted that these students soon experienced a feeling of belonging and began to socialize with the other students. The class was relaxed and the subject content was within the slow learner's comprehension. Krupa concluded that the experience helped enhance the slow learner's self-concept.<sup>3</sup>

Nonpromotion of slow learners is more widely practiced than is acceleration of gifted students. More boys than girls are held back.

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<sup>1</sup>Joseph H. Meyerowitz, "Parental Awareness of Retardation," American Journal of Mental Deficiency, 71:643, January, 1967.

<sup>2</sup>Catherine Terrell and Harold W. Stevenson, "The Effectiveness of Normal and Retarded Peers as Reinforcing Agents," American Journal of Mental Deficiency, 70:281, November, 1965.

<sup>3</sup>Thomas J. Krupa, "Slow Learners in a Special Speech Class," The Clearing House, 35:351, February, 1961.

Reading vocabulary and spelling achievement are the most important determiners of whether or not a child is promoted to the next grade.<sup>1</sup> Research has shown that a child tends to achieve somewhat better if he is promoted regularly with his age group; a child needs to be with a socially and physically like group.<sup>2</sup>

#### Teaching Methods Used with the Slow Learner

The type of curriculum and the teaching practices employed with slow learners will vary with the individual school system. Each school will determine its own procedure as to grouping, grading, and conditions for promotion.<sup>3</sup> Realistic programs can be offered for these children in the regular classes or in special classes. In either situation, attention needs to be given to objectives, methods, and materials of instruction as well as to the needs, abilities, and interests of slow learners.<sup>4</sup> "Equal opportunity for each student does not mean identical opportunity," wrote Perry, "Forcing the slow learner to do work which they cannot do is just as wrong as forcing superior students to do

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<sup>1</sup>Herbert J. Klausmeier and William Goodwin, Learning and Human Abilities, p. 518.

<sup>2</sup>David H. Russell and J. Cecil Parker, "Ways of Providing for Individual Differences," The Education Digest, 19:35, March, 1964.

<sup>3</sup>Ostrom, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

<sup>4</sup>Featherstone, op. cit., p. 23.

repetitious things they already know how to do."<sup>1</sup>

The slow learner will make desirable progress in a classroom with a teacher who sets expected standards of achievement within his range. Immediate and clear goals and a slowed classroom pace were suggested by Sturm and Walsh.<sup>2</sup> Smith and Voelcker recommended limiting the amount of reading for the slow learner. They also emphasized that ample guidance be given for even the simplest learnings.<sup>3</sup> Additional suggestions for the provision of a desirable classroom climate by the teacher were:

Encourage achievement by frequent deserved praise.

Encourage a sense of accomplishment through assignment of fixed responsibilities for class procedures and routines.

Provide a calm, orderly, classroom climate.

Have infinite patience, a sustaining sense of humor, and faith in the knowledge that slow learners want to learn and do learn.<sup>4</sup>

Developing materials and presenting subject matter to slow learners in a meaningful way is a challenge to educators. Various authorities agree on the importance of designing curricula material

<sup>1</sup>Ferry, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>2</sup>Sturm and Walsh, op. cit., pp. 367-370.

<sup>3</sup>Lois Smith and Pauline Voelcker, "Characteristics of Slow Learners," Illinois Teacher of Home Economics, 3:308, 1959-1960.

<sup>4</sup>New York Bureau of Home Economics, log. cit.

within the range of the slow learner's abilities for optimum growth. The most recent and most comprehensive guidelines to planning for the slow learner were stated in the curriculum guide for home economics for the State of New York. The recommendations were:

Plan experiences that are built around real life problems and that can be immediately put to use in everyday living.

Plan firsthand experiences such as field trips, pupil demonstration, sociodrama, dramatization, meal preparation and serving, observation of children to supplement textbook lessons.

Use a multisensory approach to a lesson through actual materials, objects, models, films, filmstrips.

Provide short step-by-step demonstrations, followed immediately by pupil activity or practice.

Provide opportunities for repetition of an idea and practice in different forms.

Recognize that theory discussions must be short and lead to a specific activity, with frequent stops to review or clinch the essential points.

Give short, definite assignments that are of real value as preparation for a specified task or as the result of a previous experience.<sup>1</sup>

In Education for the Slow Learning Child, Ingram summarized planning to meet the needs of slow learners by saying:

. . . Education must be suited to life's interests and needs, to the child's mental, physical, and social development, and to individual and group growth; that it must provide for development of personality, for practical mastery of the tool subjects, for a wide variety of activity and experiences, and must carry over to life outside of school.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>New York Bureau of Home Economics, *loc. cit.*

<sup>2</sup>Christine Ingram, Education for the Slow Learning Child, p. 209.

### Summary

Pupils with an IQ between 75 and 90 are classified as slow learners. As a group, slow learners differ physically from their peers only by degree. A slow developmental rate causes them to be slow in learning intellectual things. Since educational progress depends upon sequential learning, the slow learner meets failure early in his school experience and each year falls further behind classmates with higher IQs. Socially and emotionally these students have the same basic needs as other pupils. Although the slow learner may present emotional and behavioral problems in school, these difficulties are the result of the various problems faced because they are slower to learn.

The attitudes of the slow learner's teachers, parents, and peer group have an important influence on the degree of success attained from the school learning program. Many authors stressed the importance of acceptance of the slow learner as an individual. Attitudes of the school system are reflected in procedures of grouping, grading, and conditions for promotion, as well as through course offerings and the characteristics of teachers chosen for working with the slow learner. The learning environment is conducive to the degree the slow learner will respond to the learning program. Successful experiences in the classroom will promote desirable educational growth and equip the slow learner with skills needed to help them take their place in society.

The slow learner will make progress in a classroom under the guidance of a teacher using teaching methods and materials adjusted to his needs and abilities. It is necessary for the teacher to present learning situations geared to his level of conceptualization so that success is possible. A slow learner will make optimum growth in school when curriculum materials are planned to fit his needs and are used in a climate conducive to learning.

## THE UNIT

The unit developed for this study was planned for slow-learning eighth grade girls enrolled in homemaking for the first time. The assumption was made that the areas of grooming, manners, and food preparation would have been taught prior to the planned unit.

The unit "Caring for Younger Children" is divided into two major areas: characteristics of a successful babysitter and responsibilities in caring for children. Criteria used in developing the learning experiences can be found on page eighteen.

The following sequence is used to present the unit: outline for the major area followed by objectives, generalizations, and learning experiences for each emphasis within the area of study. Listings of curriculum resources and student references cited will be found at the end of the unit.



## CARING FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

Major Area: Characteristics of a Successful Babysitter

Emphasis I: Personal qualities

- A. Enjoyment of children
- B. Dress and grooming
- C. Manners
- D. Health practices

Emphasis II: Employment responsibilities for child care

Major Area: Characteristics of a Successful Babysitter

Emphasis I: Personal qualities--Enjoyment of children

Objectives

Understands the benefits of babysitting include learning about children, and understanding self better, as well as earning money in an enjoyable occupation.

Understands and shows appreciation for special characteristics needed by persons who work with children. (1, p. 18)<sup>1</sup>

Generalizations

The babysitting job offers benefits in addition to the money earned. (5, p. 17)

The special traits which help a person work well with children may be developed through study and work experiences. (1, p. 18)

It is easier to make friends with children if one knows what interests them and what they enjoy. (6, p. 167)

Learning Experiences

Divide into groups and discuss reasons for babysitting.

Discuss and list in note books the benefits of babysitting.

Read "Getting Along with Children" and "Characteristics of a Successful Sitter," in pamphlet, Sitting Safely. Look for qualities of a babysitter.

Listen to talk by a parent on qualities a person who works with children should have. Discuss and ask questions in regard to the importance of these traits.

Discuss desirable qualities in persons who work with children. Examples:  
 love of children  
 enjoyment in working with children  
 some understanding of child development and behavior  
 patience  
 ability to communicate with children

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<sup>1</sup>Numbers hereafter will correspond with references in the selected curriculum resources on page 48.

GeneralizationsLearning Experiences

Divide into groups and decide on suggestions for problem:

A new family has moved into Mary's neighborhood. They have a daughter, Betty, who is five years old. How could Mary go about making friends with the little girl? (6, p. 167)

Major Area: Characteristics of a Successful Babysitter

Emphasis I: Personal qualities--Dress and grooming

Objectives

Identifies standards of dress and grooming desired of a babysitter.

Generalization

Personal appearance is one of the first things noticed by an employer when a person applies for a job.

Learning Experiences

Discuss impression made on employer by personal appearance. Decide on dress and grooming appropriate when taking care of children.

Fill out a grooming chart. Rate own grooming habits by checking "always" or "could improve." Think of ways to improve personal appearance. Example of items:

- I take a bath, shower, or wash all over every day.
- I brush my teeth at least twice a day. My hands are clean.
- I keep my hands away from my face.
- I take good care of my nails.
- I wash my hair at least once every week.
- I try to prevent body odor.
- My shoes are cleaned, brushed, or polished.
- I try to have good postura.

Discuss the following situation. Decide which girl received which letter and the possible reasons.

Bessie and Sue each wanted a job on Saturday morning babysitting. They heard that a child care center needed help. Each decided that she would apply.

GeneralizationLearning Experiences

Bessie was the first to be interviewed. Since the wind had mussed her hair on the way to the child care center, she took out her comb and began to fix her hair-do while the nurse asked her some questions. She knew she had a spot on her blouse, but she thought no one would notice it if she slumped in her chair a bit. The attendant gave Bessie a form to fill out and while she was thinking about some of the questions she began to bite her nails.

Sue came in as Bessie finished. Her hair was neat, protected by a scarf. She took off her head scarf carefully and put it in her purse. She had on a clean, pressed blouse and her suede shoes were neatly brushed. Her skirt hung straight. She had filed and polished her nails the night before; then, just before she left school, she had scrubbed her hands well.

The next day each girl received a letter. One started this way: "I am happy to inform you that you may begin work at the child care center this Saturday." The other started: "I am sorry to inform you that the job at the child care center has been filled."

Major Area: Characteristics of a Successful Babysitter

Emphasis I: Personal qualities--Manners

Objectives

Identifies standards for manners which contribute to employability as a babysitter.

Understands the importance of a business-like manner for being a desirable employee.

Generalization

Showing good manners when applying for a babysitting job contributes to employability.

When the babysitter uses good manners in caring for children, she sets a good example for them.

Displaying good manners when caring for children contributes to being a successful babysitter.

Learning Experiences

Work in small groups to decide on manners when looking for work.

For example:

- being on time
- chewing gum
- acting your age
- friendliness
- introductions
- conversation

Discuss and write on black board desirable manners for a babysitter. List in notebooks.

Role play a telephone conversation of a girl accepting a babysitting job; of a girl refusing a babysitting job. Discuss and suggest other things that might have been said.

Major Area: Characteristics of a Successful Babysitter

Emphasis I: Personal qualities--Health practices

Objective

Understands importance of good health practices when working with children.

Generalization

Following good health and sanitation practices when working with children contributes to the health and well-being of everyone involved.

Learning Experiences

Decide on characteristics a healthy person should exhibit.

Discuss desirable health practices to use when babysitting. Examples:  
 hands clean  
 use of handkerchief  
 food preparation clean  
 toilet practices  
 eating habits

School nurse talk about the importance of desirable health and sanitation practices for individuals. Nurse answer questions raised by pupils.

Major Area: Characteristics of a Successful Babysitter

Emphasis II: Employment responsibilities for child care

Objectives

Knows what the person who cares for children is expected to do.

Realizes ethics involved in the area of child care.

Generalizations

Knowing the responsibilities of a babysitter contributes to employability.

A mature attitude is helpful when facing the responsibilities of caring for children.

Caring for children is a real job that needs preparation.

Learning Experiences

See film "ABC's of Baby Sitting."  
Write in note books do's and don'ts for a babysitter.

Read in Sitting Safely, "Responsibilities of Sitters and Parents."

Discuss qualities expected of a mature babysitter:  
willingness to learn and to work cooperatively  
promptness  
honesty  
loyalty  
dependability  
accuracy  
respect for others  
maturity to meet unexpected situations  
courtesy

Interview mothers who hire babysitters and list responsibilities they expect of a child sitter. Discuss. (3, p. 42)

List on chalk board responsibilities class members have had in care for children. Discuss.

Discuss articles which may be needed on the job such as:  
flash light  
detailed instructions  
important telephone numbers  
names of next door neighbors  
name and address of nearest relative (2, p. 173)



GeneralizationsLearning Experiences

Plan a memo sheet of things a babysitter would need to know at a job.

Role play situations which may arise for a babysitter. Examples:

acceptable way to answer phone and take messages

desirable way to answer door and greet visitors

when to invite a visitor into house  
information to find out from parents

Discuss types of activities in which babysitters may engage while children are asleep. (2, p. 173)

Discuss how stories can spread and why it is important not to tell personal information in regard to babysitting that might lead to gossip.

Review responsibilities of babysitters.  
know when you are expected to arrive at child's home and when parents will return

have information about bedtime, curfews, interests, needs, habits, and fears of each child

know how to reach parents, family doctor, police and fire departments, neighbor and relative

know location of household exits and vital equipment

inform your parents of your location, phone number, and transportation plans

know how to safely belt windows and doors

determine system of house rounds to check children at sleep

GeneralizationsLearning Experiences

know if visitors or telephone calls  
are expected

make house safe of harmful objects

keep children at play within vision

## CARING FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

Major Area: Responsibilities in Caring for Children

Emphasis I: Helping a child live happily

- A. Forming good habits and routines
- B. Providing positive guidance

Emphasis II: Providing physical care

- A. Feeding a child
- B. Clothing and dressing a child
- C. Planning for rest and sleep
- D. Bathing and grooming a child

Emphasis III: Protecting a child

- A. Preventing accidents
- B. Handling emergencies

Emphasis IV: Providing play activities

- A. Guiding a child in play activities
- B. Selecting materials for play activities

Major Area: Responsibilities in Caring for Children

Emphasis I: Helping a child live happily--Forming good habits and routines

Objective

Realizes the importance of guiding children into good habits and routines.

Generalizations

Good habits are encouraged and reinforced by setting of good examples for children and by helping children to understand the importance of such habits. (1, p. 45)

Children develop self reliance and independence by security gained from using good habits and routines.

Learning Experiences

Buzz session on routines for children. For example:

bedtime  
mealtime  
dressing

Discuss importance of forming good habits for cleanliness, eating, safety, grooming, and manners.

List desirable habits which should be learned early.

Discuss how good habits and routines will help develop a child's independence and ability to assume responsibility.

Decide what babysitters can do to promote good habits and routines in children. For example:

be patient  
let child help himself  
observe child's daily schedule

Major Area: Responsibilities in Caring for Children

Emphasis I: Helping a child live happily--Providing positive guidance

Objectives

Aware of reasons for different behavior in children.

Knows that children are individuals with different abilities, interests, and actions.

Understands that poor behavior can be avoided and knows ways to avoid unpleasant actions.

Understands a child needs to be loved and accepted at all times.

Generalizations

Children learn through their interactions with their environment.

Understanding reasons for different behaviors will help a babysitter gain skill in handling children.

Using positive guidance while caring for children helps in promoting their good behavior.

Many unpleasant actions occur when the child is overtired, hungry or ill.

Showing a child he is liked even when his behavior is not desirable enhances his feeling of acceptance and belonging.

Learning Experiences

Read Talk with Baby and Babies Touch Taste, and Learn.

Identify ways of showing affection and acceptance of children.

View film "Helping in the Care of Younger Children." Discuss.

Discuss importance of children's questions and their answers.

Discuss reasons a child may display unpleasant actions. Identify ways to prevent these before they occur.

Summarize: "Does a child always know he is doing something wrong?"

Identify examples when a child does not know when he is doing wrong.

GeneralizationsLearning Experiences

Discuss guidance methods in creating a happy atmosphere for children. Consider when help should be given to a child.

Establish reasons a babysitter should not spank a child.

Dramatize a more positive approach to the following situation that shows acceptance of a child's feelings but redirection of them.

Marcella (age 4) tries to pull the baby out of mother's arms while she is feeding it. Mother to Marcella, "Why can't you act nice and sweet to your little brother? Go to your room until you can be a good girl." (3, p. 51)

Study and analyze specific examples of behavior problems prepared by the teacher.

React to some typical problems babysitters may face:

- a child hits another child
- a child does not want to go to bed
- a child does not eat his food
- a child takes another child's toy away
- a child demands all of the babysitter's attention

Decide on positive ways to guide a child.

Major Area: Responsibilities in Caring for Children

Emphasis II: Providing physical care--Feeding a child

Objectives

- Recognizes and uses equipment necessary for feeding children.
- Identifies eating habits typical of children of different ages.
- Understands methods of preparing foods for children of varying ages.
- Knows how to prepare nutritious meals for children while baby-sitting.
- Knows how to make meal time a happy time for a child.

Generalizations

Foods are prepared by different methods depending on the age of the child.

Children eat with different methods at different ages.

Childrens' food served in a simple, attractive and tasty manner makes mealtime happy.

Feeding problems are minimized by a pleasant attractive mealtime atmosphere. (12, p. 174)

Learning Experiences

Read parts of Infants Nutrition, Modern Methods of Preparing Baby's Formula, and Sitting Safely. Teacher lead discussion and guide students in answers on foods for children of different ages and serving food to children.

List foods to feed children at different ages including differences in preparation. Demonstrate preparation of simple foods. Practice by students.

Study menus for 5-month-old child, 14-month-old child, a toddler, and a three-year-old child. Evaluate for nutritious value, palatability, and attractiveness.

Examine equipment used for feeding children.

Demonstrate how a baby's bottle should be heated. Each girl practice placing a bottle in a pan of water and testing the temperature of the milk. Using a doll demonstrate: position for feeding, burping, lifting and holding. Girls practice in groups.

GeneralizationsLearning Experiences

Review importance of cleanliness and sanitation:

- use of clean dishes
- separate drinking glasses
- towels and washcloth
- washing hands before eating and after going to toilet
- washing fruit before eating

List ways a child can help himself when eating. Discuss ways of making mealtime pleasant.

Role play situation problems on making mealtime a pleasant time.



Major Area: Responsibilities in Caring for Children

Emphasis II: Providing physical care--Clothing and dressing a child

Objectives

Understands that children at different ages require different kinds of clothing.

Selects clothing when dressing a child desirable for the weather and activity.

Displays correct procedures while dressing a child.

Assumes responsibility for dressing a child while babysitting.

Generalizations

Kinds of clothing for children are determined by age, weather, and activity.

Clothing with self-helps can help a child gain independence in dressing.

Allowing a child to dress himself helps his physical, mental and emotional growth.

Correct and consistent procedure in dressing gives security to the child.

Encouraging a child to dress himself requires patience.

Learning Experience

Examine exhibit and pamphlets on clothes for a child.

Discuss safety precautions when handling a child.

Demonstrate and practice:  
folding diapers  
diapering a baby doll  
dressing a small child

List clothes which are easy for a child to use and discuss why they are important.

Find pictures of suitable clothing for children; mount and tell why the clothing is suitable. Consider age, weather, and activity.

Bring and display some self-help garments which are worn by a child. Examine these garments noting some of the following self-helps which are used:

few buttons of medium size  
loose buttonholes  
slide fastenings  
front openings  
back drop slots.

Major Area: Responsibilities in Caring for Children

Emphasis II: Providing physical care--Planning for rest and sleep

Objectives

Understands the importance of comfortable sleeping conditions.

Knows the amount of sleep children require at different ages.

Provides clean and comfortable sleeping conditions for children at bedtime.

Recognizes and develops qualities to make bedtime a pleasant time for children.

Assumes responsibility of caring for a child while he sleeps.

Generalizations

For a child a pleasant association with going to bed gives a feeling of security and helps overcome fears.

A relaxed atmosphere is conducive to going to sleep.

The amount of sleep needed by a child depends upon his age.

Small children will sleep better in comfortable sleeping conditions.

A child needs some attention while he is asleep.

For sleep, children wear simple, comfortable and easy to-put-on clothes. (2, 175).

Learning Experiences

Read on amount of sleep needed by children. Discuss.

Relate recent experiences class members have had when putting children to bed.

Interview mothers to discover the sleeping habits of young children using guide questions such as:

What amount of sleep do different age children require?

What is the effect of too little sleep upon a child?

What arrangements are made for a restful sleep?

What type of activity does the child have just before bedtime?

What does a babysitter do to prepare a child for a nap?

Discuss ways of making bedtime a happy time.

GeneralizationsLearning Experiences

List desirable activities which a child should participate in before bedtime, such as:

- read a story
- sing a song
- color
- play quiet games

Practice several songs and reading of a bedtime story.

Discuss reasons a child does not want to go to bed.

Teacher read with students the following story. Discuss the question, "Was this the right thing to do?" Explain answers.

Barbara's married sister, June, came home to visit for two weeks. With her she brought her new baby, Jack. It was a very exciting time, and everyone in the family thought Jack was cute even though he didn't have any hair. However, Barbara began to worry because every afternoon about 3 o'clock Jackie would whimper and cry. No matter what Barbara would do, the baby kept on crying. She knew he had been fed, that he was warm and dry, but still he cried for about half an hour. The crying worried her, so she would pick Jackie up immediately and rock him until he fell asleep. (4, p. 111)

Write a paragraph telling the responsibility of a babysitter while a child sleeps.

Major Area: Responsibilities in Caring for Children

Emphasis II: Providing physical care--Bathing and grooming a child

Objectives

- Recognizes equipment needed for bathing a baby.
- Selects proper equipment to use when bathing a child.
- Assumes responsibility of bathing a child when babysitting.
- Uses calm, gentle and secure handling when caring for a baby.
- Guides children to help themselves when bathing.

Generalizations

Developing proper procedures when bathing and grooming a baby makes bath time easier and more enjoyable for the baby and babysitter.

Calm, gentle, and secure handling provides comfort for a child.

Proper equipment adds to a babysitter's and child's enjoyment at bath time.

Learning Experiences

Cut out pictures of equipment used for bathing children from magazines and post on bulletin board.

Students set up a display of equipment for a baby's bath.

Examine and discuss use of the equipment.

A mother demonstrate:  
 getting ready for baby's bath  
 bathing and grooming a baby  
 bathing and grooming a small child

Divide into groups and practice washing hands, face, and body on doll.

Plan ways to make bath time pleasant for children.

Major Area: Responsibilities in Caring for Children

Emphasis III: Protecting a child--Preventing accidents

Objectives

Identifies dangers in a child's environment.

Understands sources of dangers in a child's environment and is able to keep him safe.

Knows how to prevent accidents when babysitting.

Recognizes safety precautions to observe while around younger children.

Generalizations

Accidents can be prevented by an alert babysitter who is watchful for potentially harmful situations or activities.

A babysitter can teach children good habits by setting an example.

The main responsibility of a babysitter is to keep the child happy and safe.

Learning Experiences

Read resources Formula for A Child's Safety and "Safety Tips" in Sitting Safely to understand safety in a child's environment.

Organize buzz session concerning dangers in a child's environment.

Discuss good safety practices for children. List in notebook.

List and discuss safety and protective practices for children:  
 crossing streets  
 approaching pet  
 eating habits  
 dangers in house

Make a display of items which are dangerous to have around small children such as:  
 poisons  
 matches  
 medicines  
 scissors

Major Area: Responsibilities in Caring for Children

Emphasis III: Protecting a child--Handling emergencies

Objectives

Becomes aware of what to do in case of an accident.

Recognizes an ill child and knows procedures to follow.

Understands the responsibility of practicing desirable safety and health habits when caring for children.

Generalizations

Planning what to do in case of emergency will help the babysitter to do the right thing.  
(2, p. 173)

It is necessary that babysitters be able to contact appropriate help quickly in emergencies.  
(2, p. 173)

Establishment of good health practices can lead to prevention of health problems.

Learning Experiences

List some of the symptoms of illness in children.

Establish when it is necessary to notify a parent or doctor.

Plan and record in note books what a person would do when babysitting if the child suddenly becomes ill.

Discuss what students would do if an accident occurred. Examples:  
a severe head bump  
an arm or leg injury from a fall  
choking on a small object  
a cut or burn that seemed serious  
a small cut or burn (4, p. 127)

Determine simple first aid procedures.

Discuss importance of practicing good safety and health around children.

Major Area: Responsibilities in Caring for Children

Emphasis IV: Providing play activities--Guiding a child in play activities

Objectives

Understands when and how to guide a child in play.

Understands the importance of play for children. (9, p. 54)

Gains skill in guiding children's play activities.

Generalizations

Play is one way through which children learn. (1, p. 54)

Children's play contributes to their physical, mental, emotional, and social development. (1, p. 54)

A balance between freedom of play and definite limits to insure safety promotes children's well-being. (1, p. 54)

Guidance of play activities requires alertness to provide for both safety and enrichment for the children. (1, p. 54)

Learning Experiences

Teacher guide reading in Play and Your Child's Development, Play Games with Baby, Babies Look and Learn.

Discuss the importance of toys in a child's physical, mental, emotional, and social development.

Study essentials of effective guidance for play activities of small children. (3, p. 53)

Discuss ways babysitters can help children in their play.

Interpret, "Play is as important to a child as work is to an adult."

Discuss ways babysitters can help children in their growth and development through play.

Watch children at play in neighborhood or home. Summarize observations and cite examples how play contributes to acceptable behavior. Examples:  
 sharing  
 taking turns  
 cooperating  
 respect for belongings of others  
 (3, p. 52)

GeneralizationsLearning Experiences

Play with children at home or in neighborhood. Pupils tell how children played and how they guided them in play.

Use situation examples for planning how a babysitter can guide a child in play at different times. Discuss when a child should be given help in play. Example:

Bill and Susie are playing in the sand box. Bill picks up a handful of sand and starts to throw it on Susie. Babysitter says, "Don't throw sand," or "Bill, sand belongs in the sand box. Here is a car to use in the sand box."



Major Area: Responsibilities in Caring for Children

Emphasis IV: Providing play activities--Selecting materials for play activities

Objectives

Determines safe toys for children.

Knows how to select and use materials and activities suitable for children of various ages. (1, p. 54)

Appreciates inexpensive toys improvised and made at home.

Plans play activities for a child suitable for the child's age level.

Generalizations

Play activities are most beneficial to children when they are safe and suited to their age level.

Play materials may be made at home economically.

Learning Experiences

Read parts of Toys You Can Make, "Play Activities" of Sitting Safely, Toys for All Children, and How to Choose Toys guided by teacher, consider selection of play materials for various ages. List criteria for selecting toys. Several class members bring toy and class judge toy.

Make a chart showing toys and types of activities enjoyed at various ages.

Collect pictures of toys and other playthings. Determine suitability to age.

Suggest a variety of inexpensive toys to make for children such as: stuffed animals, sock toys, spool dolls, bean bags, rag dolls, octopi, shoebox train, etc. Make one item in class.

Assist in making fingerpaint, clay, and other play items.

GeneralizationsLearning Experiences

Select suitable inexpensive play materials already on hand at home: kitchen articles, boxes, dress-up clothes, etc.

Make a collection of inexpensive articles for a babysitters kit.

Select singing games with gestures, such as: "This is the way we brush our teeth." Plan, prepare, and demonstrate hand games and other entertainment for children of different ages.

Select suitable stories for children of different ages. Discuss techniques which make a story interesting. Students demonstrate reading of stories. Make arrangements to tell story to a young children's group at library, church, or home.

Plan entertainment for children ages 3 to 5.

Observe children in play groups at home or on playground. Summarize observations and cite examples of what they were doing.

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## SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The increasing number of slow learners who stay in school demand material and instruction planned to meet their needs. Slow learners are a challenge and responsibility of home economics educators. No one is better trained than the home economics teacher to help the slow learner develop skills to live wisely in his environment. Curriculum materials for the slow learner in home economics are limited.

### Summary

The success or failure of the slow learner in the learning program greatly depends on the attitudes of his teachers, his parents, and his peer group. An acceptance of the slow learner as an individual is conducive to the degree the slow learner responds to the learning program. An understanding of the characteristics of the slow learner in terms of physical development, intellectual growth and ability, and social and emotional adjustment assists the teacher in planning and using curriculum material for these students. A slow learner will make desirable educational growth in a classroom under the guidance of a teacher using teaching methods and materials adjusted to his needs and abilities.

Authorities agree that slow learners need successful experiences in the classroom to promote desirable educational growth to equip them with skills needed to take their place in society.

The purpose of this study was to develop a unit in child care and development for eighth grade pupils who are slow learners. No plans for teaching or evaluating the unit were included.

The developed unit, "Caring for Younger Children," contained two major areas: characteristics of a successful babysitter and responsibilities in caring for children. Criteria established in the review of literature were utilized in developing the learning experiences.

#### Recommendations

The unit developed in this study can serve as a guide in teaching slow learning eighth grade girls in home economics in a unit on child care. A responsibility of the teacher would be to adapt the suggested unit to the needs of slow learning students taking homemaking.

Recommendations based upon the limitations of this study include:

1. Students and their parents be involved in further planning and defining objectives for the unit.
2. The unit be taught and a follow-up study made to determine the value to the slow-learning junior high girls.
3. Objectives and learning experiences be evaluated with the assistance of the parents who employ eighth graders to care for their children.
4. Materials appropriate for slow-learning students be developed for use when teaching the unit.

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CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT FOR SLOW-LEARNING  
EIGHTH GRADE PUPILS

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

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The increasing number of slow learners who stay in school demand the development of instructional material to meet their needs. The slow learner is a challenge and responsibility deserving the attention of home economics educators. The home economics teacher is trained to develop skills and abilities to equip the slow learner to live wisely in his environment. Curriculum materials for the slow learner in home economics are limited.

A review of literature indicated that the success or failure of the slow learner in the learning program often depends on the attitudes created by his teachers, his parents, and his peer group. The slow learner needs to be understood and accepted as an individual. Understanding the characteristics of the slow learner in terms of physical development, intellectual growth and ability, and social and emotional adjustment assists the teacher to plan and use appropriate curriculum materials for these students. A slow learner will make desirable educational growth in a classroom under the guidance of a teacher using teaching methods and materials adjusted to his needs and abilities.

The purpose of this study was to develop a unit in child care and development for eighth grade pupils who are slow learners. No plans for teaching and evaluating the unit were included.

The developed unit, "Caring for Younger Children," contained two major areas: characteristics of a successful babysitter and responsibilities in caring for children. Criteria established in the review of literature were utilized in developing the learning experiences.