STUDIES IN GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING STUDIES IN THE TEACHING OF SOCIAL STUDIES

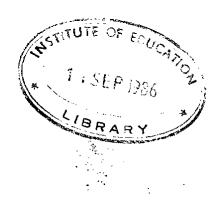
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Overview

by PETER KHOR and GRACE TAN



This issue features eight abstracts of studies in Guidance and Counselling and another eight based on research in the Teaching of Social Studies. In addition, there is a broadsheet entitled SAYS RESEARCH which presents in snippet form key findings from research studies not abstracted here. While these "snippets" are meant to be thought-provoking and interesting, they should not be generalised beyond the specific contexts in which the original studies were carried out.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

A teacher has many roles to play at school and one of the roles is that of guidance counsellor. The abstracts in this section present research findings that are relevant to this role. They highlight various pupil needs that require the attention of the teacher, and the effectiveness of various guidance and counselling methods in meeting these needs.

In "Pupil Self-concept Before and After the PSLE" by Kho Teng Cheng, the abstract suggests a need for teachers to help young pupils cope with examination pressure as part and parcel of school life. Ng Tiat Seng's "Parental Influences on Pupils' Achievement and Motivation", on the other hand, highlights parental concern for and interest in their children's schoolwork and learning as a factor that is associated with higher pupil motivation and achievement.

The abstract entitled "Career Perceptions of Secondary Four Pupils in Singapore" focusses on the various educational aspirations and job-related needs of prospective school leavers. Together with the companion study "Pre-University Students' Views of Teaching as a Career" by Soh Kay Cheng and his colleagues, this abstract underscores a specific need for educational and vocational guidance of young people, with, perhaps, a special emphasis on educating them to be interested in the teaching profession.

The. concerns of teachers over classroom discipline problems are reflected in the abstract entitled "Discipline in Singapore Schools". Several recommendations to overcome these problems are also made.

Counselling can also be an effective method in dealing with discipline and other learning related problems. Cobb and Richard's "Counselling Helps Decrease Children's Behaviour Problems" shows how it is effective in reducing 'disruptive behaviour of difficult children.

Similarly, Wooster and Carson demonstrate how a group of disruptive children were helped by a counselling programme in "Improving Reading and Self-concept Through Communication and Social Skills Training".

Last but not least, Gerler and associates show in their study entitled "The Effects of Counselling on Classroom Performance" that underachieving pupils, who received counselling, experienced academic success in subjects like Mathematics and Language Arts.

Therefore, taken as a whole, these eight abstracts present teachers with a strong case for dpplying counselling methods and to devise guidance programmes to meet various pupil needs, for the purpose of promoting effective pupil learning and personal development in our schools.

THE TEACHING OF SOCIAL STUDIES

The abstracts in this section deal with a variety of approaches that can be used in the teaching of Social Studies, History and Geography. Allen and van Sickle's "Does Team Learning Help Self-concept" suggests that teachers can adopt a team learning approach to help students master content and skills in Social Studies. Pupil achievement in Social Studies will also improve if teachers explain concepts clearly to pupils. McKinney's "Am Doing The Right Thing In My Social Studies Classroom?" recommends an effective approach which teachers can use.

The History section covers two major areas in the teaching of the subject. Huang Chai Lean's "How Receptive Are Teachers To The New Lower Secondary History (LSH) Curriculum?" examines the implementation of a new curriculum in Singapore. It tries to determine if there is a match between the curriculum developers' perceptions and teachers' perceptions of the intended Lower Secondary History curriculum. Wilson's "Slow Learners' Views Of History" discusses the importance of making History meaningful to pupils. It suggests that teachers use audio-visual aids and conduct field trips to make the subject more interesting.

Falk and Balling's "The Impact of Field Trips" also stresses the importance of field trips in the teaching of Geography. Gerber and Wilson's "Mapping For Young Pupils" recommends that teachers introduce mapping skills by bringing their pupils to the school ground to practise orienteering. Later pupils can be exposed to abstract reference systems like longitudes.

Apart from helping pupils practise mapping skills, Geography teachers can also guide pupils to apply their knowledge. Russell and Chiappetta's "The Problem Solving Approach Improves Pupil Achievement" shows how teachers can use a problem-solving approach in their teaching. Linda Wee's "The Effects Of Higher Order Questions On Geography Achievement" also suggests that pupil achievement will improve if teachers give them more practice in answering higher order questions.

ENDNOTE

The 16 studies have been selected for their relevance to issues important to you as teachers. We hope you will find the abstracts useful. All the original reports are available at the IE Library, and you are encouraged to consult them for more details about any of the studies abstracted here.

The effects of counselling on classroom performance



by EDWIN R. GERLER JR and OTHERS

Abstract by Vilma D'Rozario

This research article is based on a study of how counselling services might improve the academic performance of underachieving children.

WHAT DID THIS STUDY INVOLVE?

Begun in 1982 in North Carolina elementary schools, 65 children in Grades 3 and 4 (equivalent to Primary 3 and 4 in Singapore) were chosen to participate in this study. 41 children were randomly selected to form the experimental group for which individual and group counselling were made available to improve the students' achievement.

The remaining 24 children made up the control group which did not receive specialized help from a counsellor. At the end of this study, the two groups were compared to see if there was a change in classroom behaviour within each group.

HOW WAS THIS CHANGE IN CLASSROOM BEHAVIOUR MEASURED?

The children in both groups were to assess their own classroom behaviour using a self-rating scale before and after the study. Teachers, too, were to rate children's classroom behaviour on a rating scale; and children's grades in Mathematics and Language Arts were to be compared before and after the study.

THE TREATMENT PLAN

For nine weeks, counsellors used individual and group interventions tailored to individual <u>pupil needs</u> to improve the pupils' achievement in the experimental group. These individual and small-group sessions focused on improving study skills and school attitude, as well as increasing self-esteem.

WHAT WERE SOME OF THE METHODS USED?

- Pupils who showed positive behaviours like turning in work on time and paying attention in class were given appropriate rewards to reinforce their good behaviour.
- Group and individual sessions encouraged pupils to express their feelings about themselves and about their schoolwork.

- Through games, the children learned to use their senses and visual imagery to help them learn and remember material in school subjects
- Study skills sessions included word games and exercises in which children learned new words and practised using the dictionary.
- Group sessinns helped children practise the give and take of group discussion.
- Peer-helping sessions showed the children the possibilities of learning from one another.

WHAT WERE THE RESULTS?

Underachieving pupils who received counselling gave themselves a higher score on the self-rating scale after the study. They also improved in their Mathematics and Language Arts grades. Pupils who did not receive specialized help did not change significantly in their classroom behaviour.

WHAT DO THESE RESULTS MEAN?

- Slower learners do need specialized help.
- Counselling or specialized help enables children to think more positively about themselves.
- Individualized help promotes academic success in basic subjects like Mathematics and Language Arts.
- It is insufficient to just teach content without equipping pupils with the skills to learn, remember and apply their knowledge.



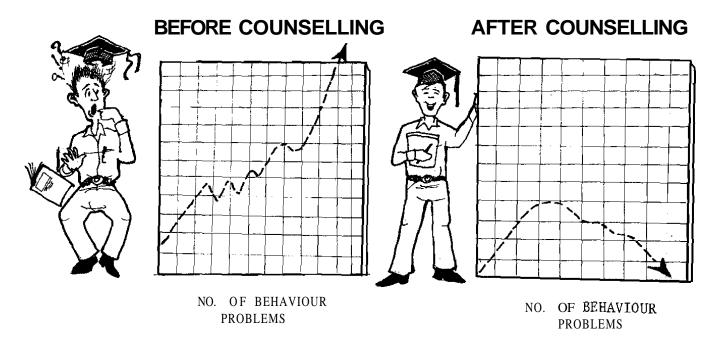
This abstract is based on the article entitled "The Effects of Counselling on Classroom Performance" by E.R. Gerler, Jr., J. Kinney and R.F. Anderson, Humanistic Education and Development, 23(4), June 1985, pp 155-165.

Counselling helps decrease children's behaviour problems



by H.C. COBB and H.C. RICHARDS

Abstract by Peter Khor Sinn Yeou



WHAT WAS THE STUDY ABOUT?

The study was conducted to find out if a programme based on a counselling approach was effective in reducing the number of behaviour problems of a group of difficult children.

HOW WAS THE STUDY DONE?

Ninety 4th and 5th graders (equivalent to Primary 4 and 5 pupils in Singapore) from four different classes of an elementary school in the US took part in the study. These children were all identified by their teachers, using the Behaviour Problem Checklist, as disruptive, had personality problems and showed behaviours suggesting immaturity and inadequacy.

Two classes were randomly assigned to Group 1 who first underwent the 8-week counselling programme. When this was completed, Group 2 (the remaining classes) began the counselling programme. At the end of each, the Behaviour Problem Checklist was used again to measure the number of problem behaviours. By this arrangement, the researchers could see **if** any results that occurred were due to the treatment programme alone.

Also, a sub-group of children from Groups 1 and 2 who had severe problem behaviours and who needed more intensive help were identified to participate in further small group'counselling sessions.

WHAT COUNSELLING METHODS WERE USED?

E. Conducted by the School Counsellor

- Classroom guidance sessions aimed at increasing self-awareness and understanding of others. Activities included:
 - values clarification
 - goal setting as a means of self-improvement
 - identifying personal strengths and sharing with others
 - how to increase positive self-feelings
- 2. Small group counselling sessions aimed at helping the children who had severe problem behaviours selected desirable behaviours as their goals. Activities included:
 - giving rewards for attained goals
 - role playing and practising skills that develop good school work habits
 - how to deal with conflicts

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Activities that essentially aimed at enhancing the children's self-concept.

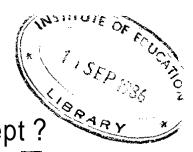
WHAT WERE THE RESULTS?

It worked! For all 90 children, their behaviour problem scores on the Behaviour Problem Checklist declined markedly at the end of the counselling programme. Moreover, the most obvious decreases occurred for each group following intervention, and statistical analysis showed that improvement in behaviour occurred after, and only after, the counselling programme was instituted.

WHAT WERE SOME OF THE IMPLICATIONS?

Some serious thought should be given to a counselling approach in dealing with discipline problems (instead of the cane). Teachers working hand in hand with their colleagues who have some form of training in guidance and counselling can intervene successfully in reducing the behaviour problems of school children. More specifically, the combination of group guidance, small group counselling and consultat on can be a very effective method of intervention in reducing conduct, personality and immaturity problem behaviours. There is therefore a need for teachers to acquire or refine their own skills in this area of providing counselling services to their charges. Finally, it is the most difficult children who need the most help from the teacher; they can be helped to change as long as the teacher is willing to do so and learn the skills to do so instead of giving up on them.

This is an abstract of the article by H.C. Cobb and H.C. Richards entitled "Efficacy of Counselling Services in Decreasing Behaviour Problems of Elementary School Children", Elementary School Guidance and Counselling, 17(3), 1983, pp 180-187.



Does team learning help self-concept?

by W.H. QLLEN and R.L. VAN SICKLE

Abstract by Wallace Muthu

WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

The study was aimed at finding out the effects of team learning on the self-concept and academic achievement of low-achieving Social Studies students.

HOW WAS THE STUDY DONE?

- The study was carried out in. a high school in a rural area of Georgia, USA.
- Two ninth-grade classes of low-achieving students taking World Geography were chosen for the study.
- Both groups contained the same distribution of students in terms of race and sex.
- Achievement and self-concept pre-tests were given to both classes before the six-week 'treatment' period began.
- One class adopted the team approach, otherwise both classes received the same instruction, saw the same films and did the same assignments.
- The class adopting the team learning technique grouped the students in teams balanced for ability, sex and race. Following the traditional classroom instruction, team members worked together to master content and skills. Following this, students individually took written quizzes and earned points for their teams.
- At the end of six weeks, both classes were given post-tests in achievement and self-concept.

WHAT WERE THE FINDINGS?

- The pre-test scores in achievement and self-concept were almost similar for both classes and a variety of other data showed the classes were very similar.
- Likewise, the post-test self-concept scores for both classes were very close, indicating that the team learning technique did not have a significant effect on students self-concept.

However, the achievement test showed that there was a significant difference in the scores between the two classes. The class adopting the team learning technique did exceedingly better than the other.

IMPLICATIONS

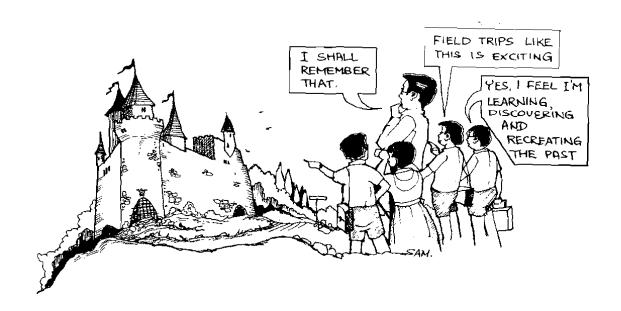
- Team learning techniques, if used imaginatively, can provide for variety and interest in Social Studies instruction.
- Team learning techniques encourage peer teaching, interaction and cooperation within the group, and competition between the groups enhances learning outcomes and the mastery of skills.
- Team learning techniques encourage students to seek information and acquire skills.
- Teams need to be balanced in terms of ability and sex so that students compete with each other on an equal footing. In this way even weak students can make a contribution to the team's achievement.





This abstract is based on the article "Learning Teams and Low Achieve's" by W.H. Allen and R.L. van Sickle in Social Education, 48(1), 1984, pp 60-64. The journal is available in the IE Library.

Abstract by Wilson Jacob



Michael Wilson's study examined the attitudes of slow learners to the study of History and how they rate History in relation to other subjects.

THE SURVEY

The survey covered 150 slow learners (aged 13 - 14) from three comprehensive schools in England. Questionnaires, interviews and school records were used as the main sources of information.

THE FINDINGS

- Pupils had an unfavourable attitude towards History both in terms of interest and importance. Because of their low self-esteem 45% of the pupils surveyed regarded themselves as failures in History.
- Pupils had misgivings about the relevance of History and found the subject difficult.
- They were also dissatisfied with the teaching/learning methods.
- To resolve such problems, the pupils suggested the use of alternative teaching methods, particularly pupil-centred strategies such as field trips and group discussion.

 They also felt that teachers should make greater use of audio-visual materials.

The perspectives of teachers differed somewhat, the most serious problems being the unsuitability of textbooks, short attention/concentration span of pupils and the History syllabus.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS

- The approach and methods adopted by History teachers will determine not only the level of pupils' interest in History but also its relevance and usefulness.
- Teacher-centred methods such as the chalk-and-talk method should be played down in favour of methods which allow for greater pupil involvement. Pupils should be actively involved; discussions and group work are extremely important.
- Field trips to places of historical interest should be carried out
 with properly planned field exercises, handouts, etc.
- There should be more frequent use of audio-visual aids. This will help make History more interesting.

This abstract is based on the article by Michael Wilson entitled "The Attitudes of Slow-Lerrning Adolescents to the Teaching and Study of History" in Teaching History, 36, 1983, pp 33-35. The journal is available in the IE Library.



The impact of field trips

by J.H. FALK and J.D. BALLING

Abstract by George Teh

WHAT WAS THE STUDY ABOUT?

The aim of the study was to assess the impact of school field trips on the attitudes, behaviour and learning of a sample of primary school pupils in the United States.

HOW WAS THE STUDY DONE?

- 196 third and fifth grade pupils in two suburban primary schools were involved in the study.
- Two classes at each grade level from each of the two schools were used.
- One third grade and a fifth grade class from each school were randomly selected for the all-day field trip to a nature centre to learn about the biology of trees.
- The other third and fifth grade classes were taught the same lesson outside their classroom during their regular science period.
- Changes in knowledge and attitude were assessed before (pre-test) and after (post-test) the field trip.
- The pre-test was administered to the pupils four weeks in advance of the field trip.
- To assess the pupils' behaviour during the lesson, two trained observers were present for each group of pupils.
- Fach class was administered the post-test twice following the field trip.
- The first post-test was given the day after the field trip, the second one month later.

WHAT WERE THE FINDINGS?

Field trip experiences resulted in significant immediate learning one month later for all groups but fifth grade pupils tended to score higher than the third graders.

- The third graders who remained at school and the fifth grade pupils who visited the nature centre scored best on the written test and also showed significantly more "on-task" behaviour.
- All pupils expressed a positive attitude towards field trips and outdoor experiences.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING?

- Field trips can promote cognitive learning and retention.
- The third graders found the less disruptive school environment to be more conducive to learning but the fifth graders found the nature centre a better place to learn.
 - Teachers should try to include field trips in their teaching. For younger pupils, snort field trips can be introduced but for older pupils, more elaborate and longer trips are recommended.



This abstract is based on an article by John H. Fall and John D. Balling entitled "The Field Trip Milieu: Learning and Behaviour as a Function of Contextual Events" in <u>Journal of Educational Research.</u> 76 (1), 1982, pp 22-28. This journal is available in the IE Library.



The problem solving approach improves pupil achievement

by J.M. RUSSELL and E.L. CHIAPPETTA

Abstract by Yee Sze Onn



An important outcome of education should be the production of thinking and problem-solving skills. A problem-solving strategy was developed by Russel and Chiappetta to improve the achievement of eighth-grade students enrolled in Earth Science (Physical Geography).

WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

The purpose was to investigate the effects of a problem-solving approach to the teaching of Earth Science on the achievement of eighth-grade (Secondary 2) students. The authors believed that such an approach to teaching Earth Science would produce significantly greater achievement than a conventional approach and that more questions of a higher order would be asked.

HOW WAS THE STUDY DONE?

-A total of 207 students participated in the study. The students were divided into an experimental group and a control or treatment group. The control group participated in laboratory activities, and in classroom sessions devoted to textbook readings, discussions and audio-visual presentations.

The experimental group participated in problem-solving laboratory activities emphasizing the application of Earth Science concepts. Each activity consisted of three phases:

presentation of a problem

- an investigation to gather information relevant to the problem
- a discovery phase which produced an answer to the problem

A forty-item post-test consisting of four subtests was administered to all students at the end of the study.

WHAT WERE THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY?

From this study, the authors found that:

- the problem solving activity created more realism and interest in the laboratory activities;
- the students were actively engaged in gathering data relevant to the problem during the process of investigation;
- the students were continually put into situations in which they had to apply the data gathered to different situations;
- the use of higher level questions (questions which test comprehension, application, analysis and evaluation skills) during class discussion provided students with additional opportunities to practise problem-solving skills.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING?

The problem solving approach appears to be an effective means of improving the achievement of Earth Science students and increasing the levels of performance in comprehension, application and analysis.

Thus classroom discussions and laboratory activities should focus on the application of concepts rather than the memorization of information.

This abstract is based on an article by J.M. Russell and E.L. Chiappetta entitled "The Effects of a Problem Solving Strategy on the Achievement of Earth Science Students" in Journal of Research in Science Teaching, 81, 1981, pp 295 - 301. The journal is available in the IE Library.

The effects of higher order questions on Geography achievement

by Linda Wee Heng Tin

Abstract by Mrs Maureen Ng

INTRODUCTION

This study was carried out to determine if higher order questions could be used with lower secondary pupils during Geography lessons, and to measure the effects of such questions on their performance in a Geography test. The higher order questions tested comprehension, application, analysis and evaluation skills, while the lower order questions tested recall.

AIMS OF THE STUDY

- Order questions through class written assignments might perform better in a class test than their counterparts who had more practice in answering lower order questions.
- To establish if sex and level of English proficiency had any effect on pupils' answering of higher order questions.

APPROACH TO THE STUDY

- Secondary One Express course students from two government schools were involved in the study.
- Both experimental and control groups received six weeks of instruction on mapping and map reading from experienced geography teachers in the schools.
- Ouring the six weeks of instruction, the pupils were given written exercises (treatment materials) to work on.
- The experimental group worked on exercises containing 80% higher order questions and 20% lower order questions.
- The control group was given exercises containing 80% lower order questions and 20% higher order questions.
- A 40 item post-test was administered to all students.

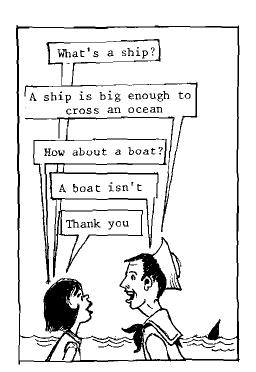
FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The experimental group performed significantly better than the control group in overall test scores, and in the higher order questions.

- The experimental and control groups did not differ in their performance on the lower order questions.
 - The boys performed significantly better than the girls in overall test scores, and in the 'application' questions.
- The pupils with higher (PSLE) scores for English Language performed better in terms of overall test scores, and on the higher order questions.

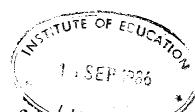
IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING

- Practice in answering higher order questions during class activities can help to bring about 'higher intellectual thinking' in pupils.
- Practice with higher order questions rather than lower order questions does not place the pupil at a disadvantage in answering lower order questions.
- Although the boys in the study performed better than the girls, this effect could have resulted from some test items that had 'masculine appeal', for example, planes and fuel, and others that required mathematical skills.
- The better performance of students proficient in English suggests that 'higher thinking skills' require a minimum level of language mastery,.





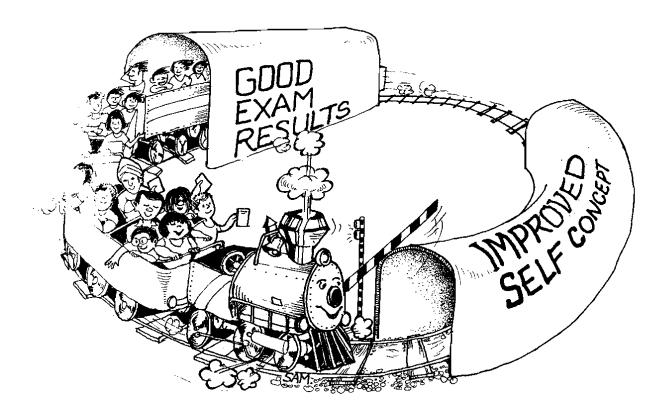
This is an abstract of Linda Wee Heng. Tin's M. Ed. dissertation (Rational University of Singapore) entitled "The Effects of Higher-Order and Lower-Order Questions on Achievement in Geography of Secondary One Students" (1984). A copy of the dissertation is in the LE Library.



Pupils' self-concept before and after the PSLE

by KHO TENG CHENG

Abstract by Soh Kay Cheng



SOME TEACHERS BELIEVE ...

pupils will do well in examinations if they think well of themselves. Other teachers believe pupils will think well of themselves after they have done well in an examination. This sounds like a chicken-and-egg question - what is the truth?

THIS REAL-LIFE STUDY ...

pupils, from lower-middle and lower income families, answered a series of questions on how they felt about the various subjects examined in the PSLE; how they saw their own ability to learn these subjects; how they felt about themselves and the school; how they related with their peers; and what they thought of their parents. These pupils completed the questionnaire three times - before the preliminary examination, after the preliminary examination but before the PSLE, and then after the PSLE results were released.

THE FINDINGS SHOWED THAT ...

- ... when the pupils were grouped according to their performance in both the preliminary examination and the PSLE:
- Pupils who did well in both examinations thought well of themselves, their ability to learn, and the school. These pupils, however, held less favourable attitudes towards studying, their peers and parents.

Pupils who <u>did not</u> do well in both examinations held on to their poor views of their own ability to learn, the school and peers. In fact, their views of themselves, their parents, and school subjects had become poorer after the examination.

IT SEEMS THAT ...

parents and school after the examination, irrespective of their results, deserves attention. It could be that the pressure mounting before the examinations had induced some degree of ill-feeling in the pupils. Can we not find some way to help the young pupils take examination pressure as part and parcel of school life so that the relationship with parents and the enthusiasm to learn will still be positive? Also, if the teacher is to help her pupils improve their self-concept and achievement, with the hope that improving one will improve the other, the helping must come much earlier than in Primary Six.

This abstract is based on Kho Teng Cheng's M Ed dissertation entitled "Change of Self-concept among Primary Six Pupils After the Primary School Leaving Examination" (National University of Singapore, 19851. A copy of the dissertation is in the IE Library.

Parental influences on pupils' achievement and motivation

by NG TIAT SENG

Abstract by Soh Kay Cheng



HOVE BACKGROUND ...

motivation, according to many local and overseas studies. But, as many teachers know, parents of different backgrounds tend to see schooling differently. Children may come to learn about parents' expectations in a subtle manner through daily contact with their parents. If so, then parents' expectation should have an influence on pupils' willingness to learn and how much they learn.

IN THIS STUDY ...

completed two questionnaires. These pupils were from two schools and represented a wide range of academic ability. The pupils answered questions on how much interest their fathers and mothers had shown in their school work; how much supervision there was and what the parents expected. In addition, the pupils also answered questions on what motivated them to achieve. Their PSLE performance was obtained from school records for analysis.

IT HAS BEEN FOUND THAT ..

also had higher motivation and better achievement. This was true for pupils coming from different home backgrounds. This shows that whether the pupil is from a high or low income family is not important. It is more important that the parents show interest in their children's schoolwork, provide adequate supervision, and expect the child to do well. What is even more interesting is that the mother has a greater influence than the father.

SO, (SAYS THE ABSTRACTOR TO THE TEACHER) ...

children from low-income families, as the family's socio-economic status may not be the cause of poor achievement. It may be useful, then, to find out from the child: Are his parents interested in his schoolwork? Have they supervised his homework? What do the parents expect him to be able to accomplish in the school? If the answers suggest a lack of parental concern, you may have to discuss with the parents so that they can help their child.

This abstract is based on Ng Tiat Seng's M Ed dissertation entitled "Perception of Parental Press, Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement of a Sample of Primary Six Chinese Pupils" (National University of Singapore, 1984). A copy of the dissertation is in the Library.

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Career perceptions of Secondary Four pupils in Singapore

by PETER KHOK SINN YEOU and OTHERS

Abstract by Peter Khor Sinn Yeou

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Many teachers have the experience of asking their Secondary Four pupils about their career plans only to get replies like "I don't know" or "I haven't thought about it" or "I'm not sure what I want to do when I leave school". Is this the typical picture of many would-be school leavers as 'far as career planning is concerned? If only pupils' needs in this area can be ascertained, then administrators and policy makers may be in a better position to provide career guidance in schools, with a view to developing a better match between the future workforce and jobs. and ultimately to improve productivity.

HOW DID THE STUDY BEGIN?

A team from the Institute of Education carried out a survey of secondary four pupils' career perceptions. A questionnaire covering the following areas was constructed:

- What were pupils career plans and aspirations like?
- Were pupils knowledgeable about jobs and the world of work?
- What were pupils sources of career information?
- What kind of help would they like to get from their schools in terms of career guidance?

In addition,, several personnel managers in various industries that employed large batches of fresh school leavers were interviewed, to find out how they felt about these young job applicants - this provided useful supplementary information.

WHAT WERE THE FINDINGS?

Based, on a sample of 220 Normal, 170 Express and 48 Special course pupils the results of the survey showed that:

1. Only about 40% of the pupils often thought about their future careers, with a progressive decline in concern about future careers from the Normal to Express to Special courses.

- 2. The pupils' educational aspirations were generally very high, especially so with 50.7% of the Normal course pupils aspiring to GCE 'A' level and university.
- 3. Pupils' job preferences also appeared to be unrealistic with about half preferring professional and technical-related kinds of jobs. The Normal stream pupils were more unrealistic here than the other pupils.
- 4. With regard to their careers, pupils tended to discuss with, as well as seek help from their friends, next their parents, and last of all their teachers (supposedly those who were more competent to assist in career guidance).
- 5. When "choosing" a particular career, pupils had two things in mind: the work must be interesting and the pay good.
- 6. They were also not very knowledgeable about the jobs they were interested in and indicated they needed the school's help in job information about job application skills, how to prepare for job interviews and guidance on what jobs they were best suited for.

Interviews with the personnel managers largely confirmed the above findings. Fresh school leavers were found to be generally ill-equipped with job seeking skills and had no clear career direction. They were only interested in fast promotions, good pay and many shunned routine or shift work.

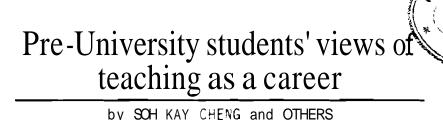
IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOLS?

The findings suggest, therefore, a need to:

- Encourage secondary four pupils to be more concerned about their future careers especially **if** they are completing their schooling soon.
- Teach pupils relevant job application skills together with effective dissemination of information on careers.
- Get teachers to be more active in initiating dialogues, discussions, individual career counselling and group guidance sessions concerning pupils' career interests (since pupils consider them last on the list).
- Assist weaker pupils to develop a more realistic match between themselves and their tentative career plans.

Finally, what may be needed is the implementation of a well-designed and planned career guidance system in the schools coordinated by the relevant authorities. Whether this will happen remains to be seen.

This is an abstract of an unpublished report entitled "NPC-IE Career Guidance Project" (1984). The report is available in the TE Library.



Abstract by Poh Sui Hoi

The shortage of teachers and the need to attract the right people to the teaching profession prompted this study. The Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Institute of Education carried out this study to provide fresh input to their strategy to attract better recruits to teaching, who will be 'stayers' rather than 'quitters'.

HOW WAS THE STUDY CONDUCTED?

- A total of 1177 Arts, Science and Commerce stream students from pre-university centres and junior colleges took part in the study.
- The students completed a questionnaire surveying their attitudes to teaching as a career, the motives for teaching and expectations of the teaching service. These were studied in relation to the students' background and personal information.

WHAT WERE THE MAIN FINDINGS?

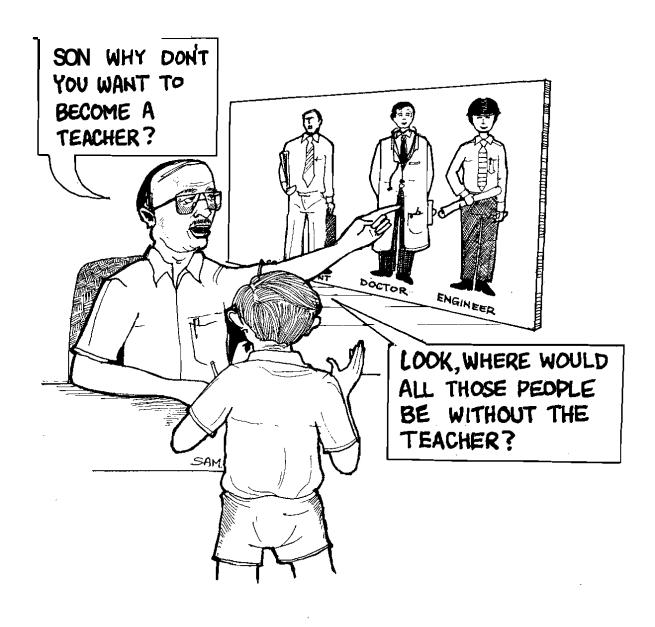
- 1. Only slightly more than 5% of the students would definitely choose teaching as a career. Another 53% might consider it in the future. Here there were more females than males and they were mainly non-Chinese.
- 2. Although parents' education was not associated with their choice of teaching as a career, having a teacher in the family seemed to be influential.
- Those who chose teaching saw it as a secure, interesting and challenging job as well as a convenient job after marriage and a noble profession which provided opportunities for further education. Those who were not sure were waiting to see if they could get a better job and they need to know more about the nature of teaching as a profession.
- 4. Those who did not choose teaching might consider if certain job conditions changed, namely, not having to handle ECA, not having to cope with frequent policy changes, having better pay and more chances of promotion and further education, and being more respected by society.

WHAT WERE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY?

1. The finding that only about 5% and mainly females who would definitely choose teaching, is unlikely to change very much over

the years as other professions, such as medicine, law and engineering, are perceived as being more lucrative. However, the 53% who wanted to know more about the teaching profession merit further attention. This is a pool of potential teachers.

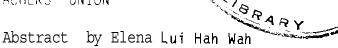
- 2. There is a need for educational and vocational guidance. As indicated in the study, one of the reasons for being apprehensive could be the lack of knowledge about the teaching profession.
- 3. Some pertinent variables like sex, race, level (Pre-Us or JCs), stream (Arts) and having a teacher in the family may shed some light on the search for potential recruits for the teaching profession.

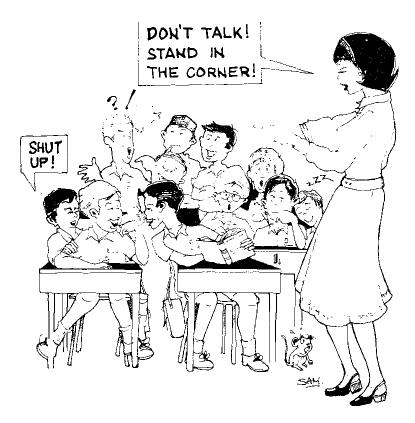


This is an abstract of the IE Occasional Paper No 25 entitled "Teaching As A Career: A Survey of Pre-University Students' Views" (1985) by Soh Kay Cheng, Lam Tit Loong and Poh Sui Hoi. This paper is available in the IE Library.

Discipline in Singapore schools

by THE SINGAPORE FEACHERS' UNION





WHY WAS THIS STUDY CONDUCTED?

In 1984, the Singapore Teachers' Union conducted this study to find out what teachers felt were their main problems in the classroom and how they coped with them.

HOW WAS THE STUDY DONE?

The first part of this study was conducted by means of questionnaires completed by approximately 10% of teachers in Singapore schools. The second part of this study covered interviews with 40 pupils who were considered "problem pupils" by their schools. The interviews were aimed at finding out how the "problem pupils" perceived themselves in relation to their classmates and teachers. Sixteen of these interviews were presented as case studies in the report.

WHAT WERE THE FINDINGS?

The findings of the first part of this study were:

State of Discipline - Though most of the teachers claimed that there was a growing lack of discipline in Singapore schools, this problem'had not become serious enough to cause alarm. Problem behaviours were mainly associated with pupils of the Monolingual and Extended courses in primary schools and the Normal course in secondary schools. While vandalism and theft were the major problems in the secondary school, talking, walking about in class and inattentiveness were major problems in primary schools. The main sources of problem behaviour were poor neighbourhoods and broken homes.

- Coping Strategies Teachers tended to scold and "counsel" the pupils before sendiny them to the discipline teacher. The merit/demerit point system was not used in most schools and most teachers did not believe it would improve discipline.
 - Classroom Management Two thirds of the teachers felt they did not handle their class discipline problems effectively.
 - Uniformed Groups Activities and rules of uniformed groups stressed uniformity and conformity rather than self-discipline. Although they emphasised discipline, nearly half of the teachers found that membership in uniformed groups made no difference in pupil behaviour in class.
 - School Assemblies Two-thirds of the teachers agreed that the school assembly was a significant factor influencing discipline, but that pupil participation in presentations and planning was very low.

WHAT WAS THE PROFILE OF THE PROBLEM PUPILS?

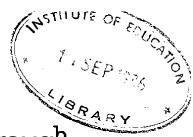
Most of the pupils were boys staying in 2-room and 3-room flats. They did not speak English at home and had little parental guidance in their studies and leisure activities; they perceived themselves as lazy and naughty, and had little confidence to pass examinations. Their relationships with teachers and prefects were not very good; and they disliked punishment though they agreed rules should not be broken.

WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT THE DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS?

Some significant recommendations made in this report were:

- Greater communication and dialogue was needed within the school to discuss discipline problems.
 - More regular evaluation and revision of school rules should be carried out with the co-operation of teachers and pupils in order to improve the climate of the school.
- School assemblies should be planned by a representative group of teachers, pupils and administrators in order to increase a sense of belonging to the school and respect for one another.
- In-service courses should be conducted by the Institute of Education to study the various models of classroom discipline and the effects of reward and punishment with special reference to corporal punishment.

This is an abstract of the Singapore Teachers' Union Report entitled "Teachers' Perception of the State of Discipline in Singapore Schools" (1985). A copy of this report is available in the IE Library.



Improving reading and self-concept through communication and social skills training

by ARTHUR D. WOOSTER and ANITA CARSON

Abstract by Katherine Yip

THE PROGRAMME

Disruptive children, if not given help in time, run a high risk of failing in school and becoming maladjusted in adulthood. For this reason, a special programme was drawn up to teach social and communication skills to disruptive children. In addition, the programme also aimed at improving self-concept and reading The programme, which lasted two terms, involved 26 disruptive eight-year-olds; ten were from broken homes and six of these were pupils with irregular attendance, and most had displayed undesirable behaviours such as aggressiveness and spitefulness.

WHAT TYPES OF PUPILS CAN BENEFIT FROM SUCH A PROGRAMME?

- Pupils who are disruptive, unmotivated and uncooperative.
- Pupils who are scholastic failures.
- Pupils who are socially maladjusted, and irresponsible.
- Pupil's who lack initiative.
- Pupils who are "itinerants", i.e. those whose class attendance is highly irregular.

HOW WAS THE PROGRAMME CONDUCTED?

The group of 25 children worked with an experienced teacher who had knowledge of counselling and communication skills. The reading levels of the pupils and their self-concept were established with the use of standardized tests. Next, pupils identified their own undesirable behaviours. This was followed by training in effective communication and problem-solving skills. Pupils were asked to practise in pairs and shalt groups, while the teacher prepared exercises to build up pupils! self-concept.

WHAT SKILL'S WERE TAUGHT TO PUPILS?

- brainstorming
- discussing and debating
- o decision making ... listening and attending to thoughts and feelings
- understanding each other's values and how values guide choices
- appreciating one's own uniqueness
- giving positive comments to peers

WHAT WERE THE OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAMME?

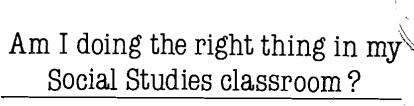
- When the same tests were given at the end of two terms, pupils showed dramatic improvement in self-concept and reading ability.
- Pupils displayed better self-control.
- Pupils showed greater ability in organizing their work and observing rules.
- Destructive competitiveness gradually dropped away.
- Teacher was able to spend more time in teaching.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS?

The results of this study point significantly to the fact that even disruptive children and children from unconducive home backgrounds are capable of better school performance and behaviours **if** counts and help is given in time.



This abstract is based on the article entitled "Improving Reading and Self-Concept through Communication and Social Skills Training" by A.D. Wooster and Anita Carson, British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 10(1), 1982, pp 83-87.



by C.W. MCKINNEY and OTHERS

Abstract by Christine Loh

WHAT IS THE STUDY ABOUT?

This study examined the effectiveness of three methods of teaching concepts: Merril and Tennyson's model, Gagne's inductive model and the reading-recitation method. The teaching proceduces that were used in these three methods are described below.

PROCEDURES IN THE USE OF THREE METHODS OF TEACHING CONCEPTS											
Merril and Tennyson's Model	Gagne's Inductive Model	Reading - Recitation Method									
* Teacher defines a concept, for example, arable land. * Teacher uses photographs to show pupils examples and non-examples of the concept, ranging from easier ones to more difficult, ones. * A practice-session follows during which pupils are given an unfamiliar set of photographs and are required to pick out examples and non-examples according to their understanding. of the concept.	* Teacher uses photographs to show pupils examples and non-examples of a concept, ranging from easier ones to more difficult ones. * Pupils are asked to induce the name and definition of the concept.	* Teacher introduces topic of lesson. * Pupils read silently a handout which includes a definition of the concept and examples of this. * Teacher reads the handout aloud. * Teacher questions pupils about the content of the handout.									

A second objective of the study was to find out whether or not reading a bility and sex had any effect on pupils' acquisition of Social Studies concepts.

How Was The Study Carried Out?

 Ninety-five sixth grade students from an American suburban school were selected and randomly assigned to one of the three experimental groups.

- Three experienced classroom teachers taught two concept lessons, arable land and tertiary production, using each of the methods on each of the three days.
- The pupils were given a test following each lesson.

Which Method Was The Best?

- Pupils taught using the Merril and Tennyson's model performed better in their acquisition of Social Studies concepts regardless of sex or reading ability.
- Pupils' attainment in concept acquisition using Gagne's model or the reading-recitation method was not significantly different.

What Are The Implications For The Classroom Teacher?

- In teaching concepts, a definition of the concept followed by a presentation of examples and non-examples and a pupil practice session is a more effective procedure to follow.
- Using a definition followed by examples only is not as effective.
 Neither is presentation of examples and non-examples adequate in helping pupils acquire concepts.
- Sex and reading ability have little or no effect on a pupil's ability to acquire and understand concepts.



This abstract is based on the article by C. Warren McKinney, H.Q. Peddicord, M.J. Ford and A.G. Larkins entitled "The Effectiveness of Three Methods of Teaching Social Studies Concepts to Sixth-Grade Students" in Journal of Educational Research, 78 (1), 1984, pp 35-39. This journal is available in IE Library.

How receptive are teachers to the ne Lower Secondary History curriculum?

by HUANG CHAI LEAN

Abstract by Tey Sau Hing



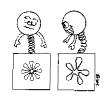
Developer's
Perception of
- what is intended
and
- how it is to be

implemented



MATCH?

o r



MISMATCH?

CLASSROOM

Teacher's
Perception of
- what is intended
and

- how it is to be implemented

WHAT WAS THE STUDY ABOUT?

A study was set up to find answers to a few crucial questions that are often raised in relation to curriculum development and implementation.

- Do teachers resist curriculum changes?
- Who are generally resistant to curriculum changes? Who welcome them?
- If teachers adopt the new (Lower Secondary History) package developed by CDIS, how do they use it in the classroom?
- Do teachers understand the developers' intentions clearly before they start on the new LSH package?
- To what extent do teachers' perceptions of the aims and objectives of the new LSH package agree or disagree with those of the developers?
- To what degree do teachers implement the new LSH package in accordance to developers' intentions of how it should be implemented?

HOW WAS THE STUDY DONE?

- A Teacher Perception Questionnaire (TPQ) was used to measure how receptive 126 Secondary One History teachers were towards the new LSH curriculum. Feedback was also obtained on how they perceived the planned LSH programme and the way they implemented it.
- A Developer Perception Questionnaire (DPQ) was sent to all 11 members of the CDIS History Project Team to find out their intentions of how the new LSH package was to be implemented.

WHAT WERE 7111 FINDINGS?

There was a large gap between what was intended by the developers and what the teachers perceived their intentions to be.

 Teachers who were committed to the aims and objectives of the new LSH curriculum perceived more clearly the intentions of the developers.

On the whole, teachers perceived themselves to be implementing the new LSH package according to the developers' intentions. The more receptive teachers implemented the new LSH curriculum in line with the developers' intentions than the less receptive teachers.

- The practical aspect of the curriculum was of greatest concern to teachers. Where feasibility (measured in terms of overall workload, instruction time allocated to history teaching, accessibility of AVA resources and principal's support) was perceived to be high, the teachers tended to implement the curriculum according to developers' intentions.
- There was still a gap between the teachers' perceptions and the developers' perceptions of how the new LSH package had been implemented. Developers felt that the use of the pupils' workbook for revision was being over-emphasised by the teachers.

Implications For Teaching?

- The study serves to provide teachers with a better understanding of the difficulties involved in and the challenges posed by the implementation of curriculum innovations in classrooms.
- When implementing a new curriculum, teachers should pay attention to four major factors that are likely to affect the way they go about their task in the classroom.
 - Do I know and agree with the dims and objectives of the curriculum package?
 - What is my level of knowledge and understanding of the assumptions and principles behind the innovation?
 - How competent am in implementing the new curriculum?
 - How do I make it feasible to implement the new curriculum in the setting of the school?
- Finally, it is important for teachers to ensure that the intentions of the developers of curriculum packages are clearly understood and successfully translated in the classroom in order that the learners derive maximum benefit from the curriculum.

This abstract is based on Mrs Huang Chai Lean's M Ed dissertation (National University of Singapore) entitled "Relationship of Teacher Receptivity to Implementation of the New Lower Secondary History Curriculum" (1985). This dissertation is available in the IE Library.



Mapping for young pupils

by R. GERBER and P. WILSON

Abstract by Liaw Beng Teck

This is a study of how eleven-year-old pupils develop an understanding of space and the use of the reference system in mapping. The study was carried out in Queensland, Australia.

WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

- To help pupils appreciate the different perspectives viewed from different vantage points in the school ground, and
- To help pupils learn to locate objects accurately by using a spatial reference system.

HOW WAS THE STUDY DONE?

- Pupils learn to use compasses to identify directions and practise orienteering in the school ground.
- Pupils work in small groups to identify main objects and locate them on an outline map.
- Pupils learn to construct a map of a designated area.

WHAT WERE THE FINDINGS?

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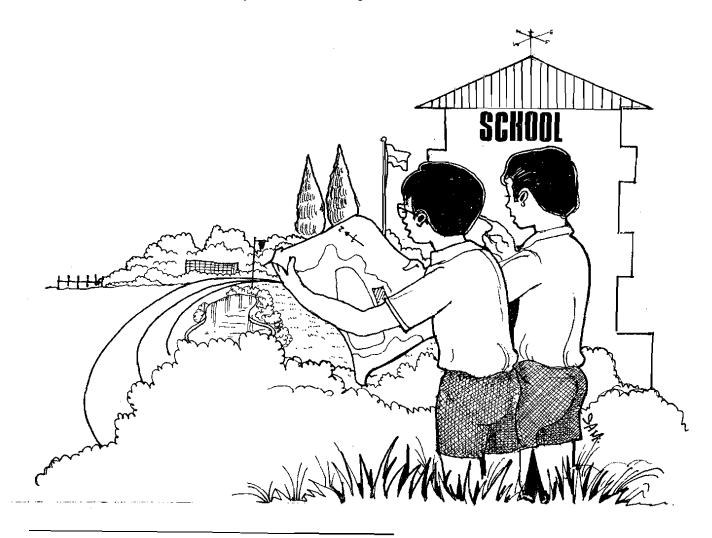
- These eleven-year-old pupils had a good understanding of directions and the **spatial** arrangement of objects in their school ground.
- They did not experience difficulty in locating an object using a reference system defined in relation to himself (egocentrism), or using a fixed and coordinated reference system.
- However, many of them encounter considerable difficulty when they are asked to describe the location of an object in relation to other objects (perspectivism).

 There is a gradation in pupil's ability to interpret signs and symbols used in a map.



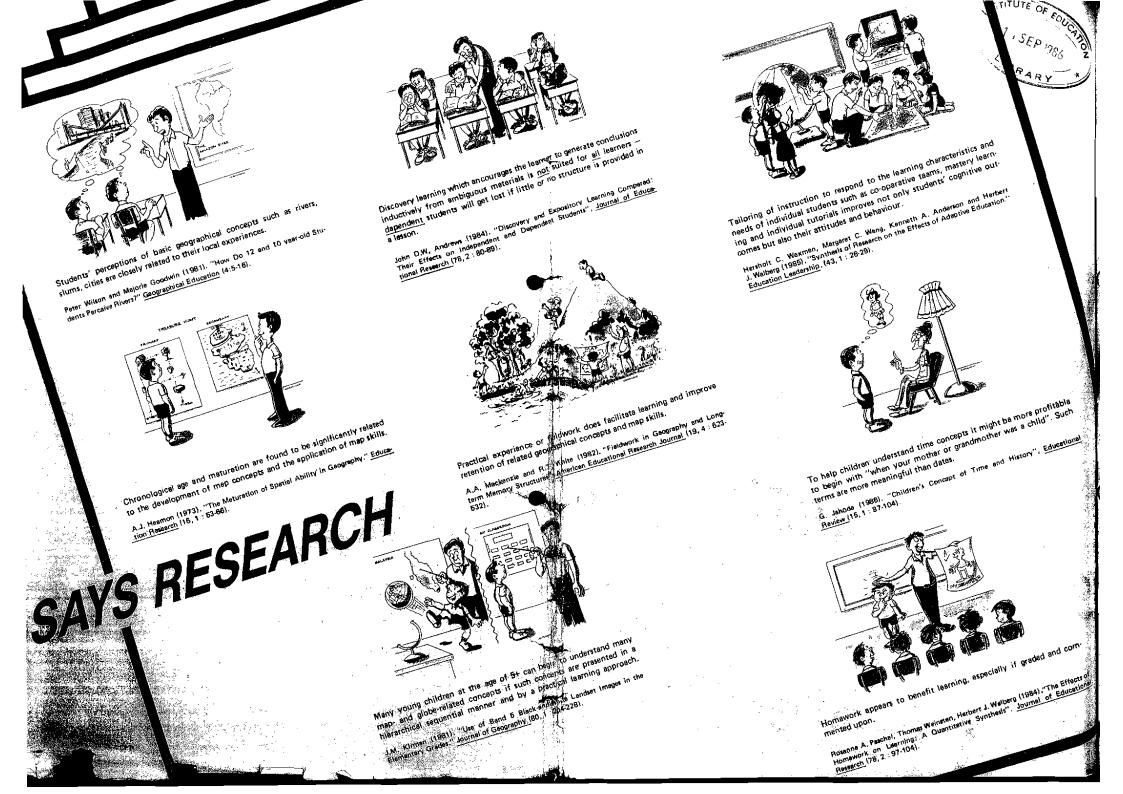
WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS?

- Pupils perceive and understand more when they can observe objects directly.
- o In the teaching of mapping, it is better to begin by bringing pupils to the school ground and let them practise their mapping skills. After this, pupils can then be exposed to the more abstract reference system like longitudes and latitudes.



This abstract is based on the article by R. Gerber and P. Wilson entitled "Spatial Reference Systems and Mapping With Eleven-Year-Old Pupils" in Geographical Education, 3, 1979, pp 387-39i. The journal is available in the IE Library.





React to REACT

Now that you have read REACT, re hope you will share with ψs some of your views so as to help us improve REACT. Please therefore complete the reactionnaire and return it to us through your principal at your earliest convenience.

	Als	o, please	complet	e the fo	llowing	question	s:.		
	1.	Are you a	JC/Sec	ondary/F	rimary	teacher?			
	2.	How long	have yo	u been i	n servi	ce?		ye	ears
	3.	What main	subjec	t(s) do	you tea	ch?			
	Tha	nk you.							
THE	EDITORIA	L BOARD							
			<u>!</u>	REACTION	<u>NAIRE</u>				
1.	How do yo	ou find the	e langua	age on tl	ne whole	e?			
	Reas read	onably able ()	Some diffic	ulty ()	Too Technica	al ()
2.	What ther	mes/topics	would y	you like	to see	in futur	e issues c	of REAC	T?
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4. Please indicate the extent to which you have found each of the abstracts INTERESTING and USEFUL.

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(3)	Career Perceptions of	()	()	()	()	()	()	()
(4)	Pre-University Students'	()	()	()	()	(.)	()	()
(5)	Discipline in Singapore	()	()	()	()	()	()	()
(6)	Counselling Helps Decrease	()	()	()	()	()	()	()
(7)	Inproving Reading and	()	()	()	()	()	()	()
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(9)	Does Team Learning	()	(.)	()	()	()	()	()
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(11)	How Receptive are	()	()	()	()	()	()	()
(12)	Slow Learners' Views	()	()	()	()	()	()	()
(13)	The Impact of Field	()	()	()	()	()	()	()
(14)	Mapping For Young	()	()	()	()	()	()	()
(15)	The Problem Solving	()	()	()	()	()	()	()
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