Approaches to Assessment [v.2]

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Approaches to Assessment

Materials developed and collected by
Bank Street Follow Through Faculty

Edited by: GARDA BOWMAN
MARI ENDREWEIT
ELIZABETH GILKESON
JANET KANE

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We wish to express our appreciation to our colleagues on the Follow Through staff who have demonstrated and taught the various assessment instruments in the fourteen communities sponsored by the Bank Street Follow Through Program. They have collected data, tested the instruments, and given valuable criticisms and suggestions. Our thanks go to Carol Darcy, Mari Endreweit, Eleanor Greig, Richard Feldman, Lois Lord, Ruth McIntosh, Kay Sardo, Madelyn Schwartz, Annette Shapiro and Alma Weisberg.

Additionally, we thank those staff members of our fourteen communities cooperating with the Bank Street staff who have carried out the collection of data and used the assessment instruments with their own children. We thank also the staff of the Bank Street Children's School who have generously supported our work.

The final preparation of this volume could not have happened without the special assistance of Amina Al Quhaar, Ruth Kolbe, Diane Lewis and Patty O'Brien.
BANK STREET COLLEGE - AN HISTORICAL NOTE

The model of education for children and adults developed, enacted and disseminated by Bank Street College is based upon a consistent theoretical position which has been validated through more than 60 years of experimentation and analysis in widely differing settings. This viewpoint about learning and teaching can best be understood in the context of the institution's development over more than half a century as an experimental action center for the improvement of the quality of education.

Know originally as the Bureau of Educational Experiments, Bank Street was organized by a group of men and women of varying academic and professional backgrounds who wished to further a cooperative study of children in different environments. Beginning in 1916, the founders of Bank Street (Lucy Sprague Mitchell and her colleagues) engaged in empirical studies in New York City to explore how children learn and to identify those patterns of interaction between adults and children which were most conducive to children's growth and development. The staff of the bureau consisted of a physician, a psychologist, a statistician, a social worker, health workers, and teacher-scientists, who were supported by consultants in many of the social sciences and by the deep interest and expertise of Wesley Clair Mitchell, an economist and professor at Columbia University.

One aim of the Bureau's interdisciplinary staff was "To bring schools and specialists dealing with various aspects of children into intimate working contact with one another." Today the College still develops programs pragmatically and studies them systematically. The spirit of experimentation which imbued its founders is still the motivating force in a complex of interrelated departments and field action projects, including: teacher education, laboratory schools, publications, basic and action research, a media unit and cooperative projects in schools throughout the United States and many other countries.

In 1968, Bank Street College was invited, under the leadership of Elizabeth Gilkeson and Gordon Klopf, to join in the creation of the National Follow Through Program, an effort intended to sustain and extend the gains of Head Start for low income children. Bank Street's subsequent role as a sponsor offered an opportunity to extend knowledge, develop new tools for implementation and serve a diverse children population in many distant sites. The materials in this present volume grew out of Bank Street's efforts in this challenging program.

We thank the children, parents and staffs of all the communities in which we served. They have taught us much.

Lorraine Smithberg
Approaches to Assessment

INTRODUCTION
Assessment in a Developmental-Interaction Program

ELIZABETH C. GILKESON
LOTTAINIE SMITHBERG
The model of schooling for young children developed, enacted and disseminated by Bank Street College, is based upon Bank Street's consistent theoretical position with reference to Early Childhood Education which has been validated through more than sixty years of experimentation and analysis in widely differing settings. From the blending of psychological concepts and humanistic philosophy with the outcome of years of experimentation, there has emerged an approach to early childhood education which is known as The Developmental-Interaction Approach. This term, coined by Shapiro and Biber (1972)* to describe Bank Street's theoretical position, is defined by them in the following statement:

It is a basic tenet of the Developmental-Interaction Approach that the growth of cognitive functions—acquiring and ordering information, judging, reasoning, problem-solving, using systems of symbols—cannot be separated from the growth of personal and interpersonal processes—the development of self-esteem and a sense of identity, internalization of impulse control, capacity for autonomous response and relatedness to other people.

The goals for children in the Developmental-Interaction Approach may be expressed briefly in relation to the kind of people the children can become—confident, inventive, constructive, coping persons who are autonomous and self-motivated as learners. Logically and necessarily evaluation of progress toward this goal would have three foci: 1) individual outcome for children in terms of the full range of competencies and complex interactions of affect and cognition which characterize such learners, 2) adult behavior in terms of the extent to which adults elicit, reinforce, extend and support high level cognition and affect in children's experiences, and 3) the processes which take place in the classroom and in the total environment, in terms of creating supportive and intellectual interchange between children and adults, and also among children. Measures of these three foci constitute interlocking subsystems within the total system of analysis and evaluation.

Assessment is an integral component of the Developmental-Interaction Approach, essential to all aspects of the program. This is in keeping with Bank Street's concept of the teacher-scientist, developed by its founder, Lucy Sprague Mitchell. The "teacher scientists" ever strive to increase their skills in analytic observation of children and of their own interaction with them. The quality of each child's educational experience is primarily dependent upon the sensitivity, competence and analytic skills of the adults who are participating in the process.

Bank Street educators believe that adults learn new and more effective ways of carrying out their professional roles when they internalize positive attitudes toward self-study, i.e. the analysis of their own purposes and of the extent to which these purposes have been translated into action, thus far. In order to achieve this leap from goal to action through assessment, the following criteria should be considered:
- Assessment must be ongoing
- The tools of analysis and observation must be learnable and meaningful to teachers, parents and administrators as well as to psychologists, social workers and parent workers
- The information yielded must reveal strengths and interests as well as needs
- The information gained must give indications for immediate intervention.
- Assessment must be interdisciplinary.

To assist all staff in analyzing children's learning along with the quality of teaching, and the environment which supports and extends that learning, a battery of instruments and diagnostic tools has been developed as a Program Analysis System. These instruments and tools are used by the teaching team to record their judgments about children's' skills, behavior, attitudes, and feelings and to describe classroom organization and climate. The system includes the following instruments:

1. The Child as Learner
   - The Roster Profile
   - The Individual Child Assessment Form
   - The Reading Assessment Form
   - The SPACHE Diagnostic Reading Test
   - The Screening Test of Academic Readiness (STAR)
   - Behavior Ratings and Analysis of Communication in Education (BRACE)
The use of those instruments which focus on the child sensitizes the teaching team to significant dimensions for evaluating the child's learning and gives a picture of each child's competencies and needs. As teaching teams use the various tools routinely, they will inevitably deepen their understanding of their children both individually and as a group, and hence will be able to build the kind of flexible and creative curriculum that stimulates optimum growth and achievement. Through systematic use of the instruments, teachers also become more aware of their interaction with the children and of the major role they play in the quality of the learning experiences in the classroom. The specificity of the instruments helps them to understand the types of interaction that are most appropriate to support each child's development. For example, as the teaching team uses the reading assessment form, they become increasingly skillful observers who can discern the different learning styles, interests, instructional needs, and degree of motivation of each child, and thus can individualize the reading curriculum more effectively.

This analysis system is in contrast to the currently common approach in which a single test score is taken as a measurement of the child. The Bank Street system provides a wide range of information about each child's skills, interests, styles and needs which can then be integrated into a profile of each learner. In a Bank Street program, test scores have only two uses: (1) as one piece of information used in a comprehensive profile, and (2) in aggregate, as a measure of program effects.

The following papers describe the more comprehensive components of the Bank Street analysis system. In these components the teaching team is supported by trained observers, interdisciplinary personnel, and specialists in research and evaluation methodology. Several of the instruments designed or selected by Bank Street are described in some detail in this volume while others are merely listed.

The utilization of the instruments, particularly as they apply to early assessment for all entering children, is fully described. Information about additional components which are not described here may be obtained by writing to the Bank Street Follow Through Program.
Approaches to Assessment

SCHOOL ENTRY ASSESSMENT
School Entry Assessment

LORRAINE SMITHBERG

with: MARGARET EISENSTADT
VIVIENNE GARFINKLE
ELEANOR GREIG

Project Follow Through
Bank Street College of Education
610 West 112th Street
New York, New York 10025
Phone: (212) 663-7200
INTRODUCTION TO SCHOOL ENTRY ASSESSMENT

Lorraine Smithberg

with: Margaret Eisenstadt
Vivienne Garfinkle
Eleanor Greig

During its twelve years of sponsorship, Bank Street College has devised, with the participation of the able and committed staffs in many of our Follow Through sites, a methodology for the systematic assessment of the learning potential and needs of entering school children. The title "School Entry Assessment" (SEA throughout) has been arrived at with some care. Bank Street's approach is based on the fundamental assumptions that:

- there is no such thing as a non-learning child
- much pre-school screening serves to label children
- such an approach all too often creates categories which, in effect, relieve the classroom teachers prematurely of the responsibility for developing an adequate individual response.

School Entry Assessment is undertaken as a positive and dynamic process. It is not a screening out of those children who do not fit the narrow traditional norms for school success. This approach rests squarely on the assumption that, no matter what the quality of pre-school experience, entry to elementary school is a transition of tremendous significance in the life of every child. It is an initiation to a world whose climate and expectations are quite different from those of most pre-school settings. In addition, elementary school represents a beginning point -- a transition in which the centering of the child's learning life and energies move progressively out of the family circle and become a shared responsibility with educators.

The Bank Street model emphasizes the significance of all transitions. All initiations must convey a message of challenge, responsiveness and the potential for confirming success. A child is always ready for some significant learning. Growth is an ever-widening circle, not a ladder with steps of increasing difficulty. Given this understanding of the "spiral of learning" (Bruner, 1962), SEA provides the framework for a concerned staff as they interpret schooling to parents and challenge the child to new learnings.
BASIC CONCEPTS

In applying the Developmental-Interaction Approach to the process of early assessment we are guided by these basic concepts:

- learning for each child is an active, ongoing process of construction. As children interact with the elements of their physical, affective, intellectual, and social environments, they construct models of the world in which they live.

- these models consist of a set of ideas which organize and give meaning to the children's experiences. The child's constructs encompass his/her past experiences, present integrated world-view, and future orientation.

- this integrative process is vital to the attainment of many vital competencies.

In this view, competence pertains not only to mastery of academic skills but also to "maturation and integration of manipulation, locomotion, language; the building of cognitive ways and skilled actions; and the growth of effective behavior in relation to other people."* The child's overall stance toward life emerges from the nurturance or frustration of competencies, and their specification serves as a general guide for the enactment of any diagnostic/intervention program.

I. Goals of SEA

The goals of School Entry Assessment are:

- to identify the strengths, prior learnings, competencies, and current learning needs of each child

- to bring into play, in systematic fashion, all available knowledge, gathered from every vantage point

- to create an alliance between school and home

- to provide support to teachers and other team members as they make planned interventions

- to generate a comprehensive, systematic approach to these needs.

At the heart of this process is the study of the child as a person with a known history -- a person in a context. Each child approaches newness with a set of expectations based on prior experience and a reliance on a learned repertoire of coping skills. SEA serves to identify this repertoire, to discover the child's view of his/her world and to identify the child's expectations, interests and needs. In the Developmental-Interaction Approach, early assessment provides a method for the sensitization of all adults related to the child and his/her family as well as the basis for ongoing planning.

This approach gives all team members a stake in the process. The categories of observation are fairly well established in the field. Virtually all published screening batteries tend to investigate similar cognitive/affective domains, e.g. linguistic processing, visual-motor coordination, auditory perception. SEA translates these tools of the specialist into negotiable professional currency for all who are responsible for the child's education.

This is a method of continuing analysis. It poses a set of questions to be asked by all observers -- to be answered from the perspective of each discipline. These questions are "naive":

how does the child feel?
how does the child perceive?
how does the child organize experience?
how does the child communicate?
how does the child symbolize?

Each of these questions generates a series of more complex questions related to psychodynamic processes of maturation, self-image, ego functioning and linguistic competencies. However, team communication and communication with parents is best served if the discourse is conducted in a commonly shared language.

"Diagnosis" is permanently tentative. SEA relies on few test scores and no I.Q. scores. This approach to team observation and planning yields a differentiated profile.
This approach includes the study of all entering children. It is not intended to screen out the few handicapped children but to screen in each child in such a way that the school environment can become immediately responsive. SEA will not yield the level of clinical analysis required by the language of PL 94-142 (when in fact the intent of that statute is translated into careful, reliable diagnosis). For the minority of special needs children identified, a more intense evaluation is usually indicated.

School systems employing SEA have found that this method:

1) provides a framework for staff development in relation to assessment

2) demonstrates the potential of many well functioning children

3) develops a stable framework for early identification of special needs

4) introduces a structure for planning for that large number of children whose needs are not so easily recognized at entry -- those who tend to fall behind cumulatively.

Assessment is not perceived as simply a battery of tests and measures. It is a year-long continuous process in which each team member and parent plays a part. This process is punctuated by periodic sharing and review. The accompanying documents suggest typical annual patterns for this assessment and structures for the implementation of its various components.

II. Design of SEA

In the prototype design we include:

- teacher observation
- a standardized test of academic readiness
- a projective measure
- an analysis of pre-reading competencies
- a language sample and oral stories
- a developmental history and health screen
- a parent conference.
By mid-year this information is shared within the team and with parents. New goals are set for each child and interventions are restructured.

As the children become more fully related to the school environment it becomes possible for the team to identify those children for whom a more careful diagnostic assessment is indicated. At this point, the Jansky Diagnostic Battery is administered. This Diagnostic Battery was adapted from the work of Dr. Katrina de Hirsch and Dr. Jeannette Jansky.* This battery yields a more precise profile of child performance in those areas that these researchers identified as critical to later success in reading. On the basis of this diagnostic information it is possible to plan quite specific remedial intervention, to support referral for additional services if needed, and to identify additional areas in which even more careful information is necessary (for example, psychological, neurological, hearing or visual evaluations).

### A Prototype Design for School Entry Assessment - A Year Long Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
<th>What</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>How</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First two weeks</td>
<td>Initial Anecdotal Observations</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Follow-up of Initial Anecdotal Observations</td>
<td>Teaching Teams</td>
<td>Teaching teams to confer, reviewing observations, in regard to curriculum planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preliminary School Entry Assessment</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Administered individually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th to 7th weeks</td>
<td>*STAR</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Administered in small groups, 4 maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HPTA</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Administered individually. Teacher and Staff Developer conference with psychologist or guidance counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th to 12th weeks</td>
<td>Reading Assessment Checklist</td>
<td>Teacher and appropriate team members</td>
<td>Assessed individually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beginnings - 1st Quarter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language sample</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Administered individually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Follow-up of Beginnings &amp; Language Sample</td>
<td>Teacher and appropriate team members</td>
<td>Teacher and appropriate team members confer to develop individualized programs</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* The Screening Test of Academic Readiness (STAR) was chosen as being very useful to teachers as they plan curriculum. However, a school system may choose another test to study each child’s academic readiness. It should be given at approximately the 4th to 7th weeks in the school year. Each child’s protocol should be studied and filed in the child’s folder.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When</th>
<th>What</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12th to 18th weeks</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary Team Meetings</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary Team</td>
<td>Team reviewing information and making recommendations for each child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parent Conferences</td>
<td>Teacher and appropriate team members</td>
<td>Individual conferences with parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21st to 23rd weeks</td>
<td>UP-DATE: Reading Assessment Checklist - Beginnings - 2nd Quarter Language Sample - to be given to children who did not respond the first time on the Language Sample</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Assessed individually</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Administered individually</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Administered individually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher and appropriate team members</td>
<td>Teacher and appropriate team members confer to develop individualized programs based on results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25th to 30th weeks</td>
<td>Team Review of every child - Analysis of Updated information - Recommendations for Jansky Screening</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary</td>
<td>Team reviewing information and making recommendations for each child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parent conferences</td>
<td>Teacher and appropriate team members</td>
<td>Individual conferences with parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
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<tr>
<td>30th to 34th weeks</td>
<td>Jansky Diagnostic Battery</td>
<td>Any team member</td>
<td>Administered individually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading Assessment Form - Beginnings - 3rd Quarter</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Assessed individually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Follow-up of Jansky Diagnostic Battery and Beginnings</td>
<td>Teacher and appropriate team members</td>
<td>Teacher and appropriate team members confer, reviewing information and making recommendations for each child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34th to 37th weeks</td>
<td>Team Review of Every Child</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary Team</td>
<td>Team reviewing information and making recommendations for each child</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. The Teaching Role

As assessment becomes ever more integral to the concern for responsive educational enactment, it is apparent that the teaching role takes on many meanings.

This role transcends the traditional functions of instruction. The teacher gives instruction in the mechanics of learning, provides leadership in inquiry and problem solving, models acceptance of negative as well as positive feelings, and communicates optimism and expectation of success. By this example and through this interaction the child learns coping versus defending both in relation to the world of work and to the world of feeling.

The cognitive and affective capacities which grow out of this early developmental period are built as the child engages in a dialogue with self, with things, with others. Not only skills but also imagination and symbolization must be nurtured. Simultaneously, the cultivation of language allows for the enlargement of meaning, the analysis of relationships and the formation of hypotheses. It is in this spirit of dialogue that the teacher, in the Bank Street model, engages the child's mind and feelings.

Since a significant proportion of the children enrolled in programs such as Follow Through are likely to be those who might fail if remedial measures are not taken, Bank Street's approach to assessment has led quite naturally to a study of various approaches to intervention. Intervention is here defined as the presentation of experiences, materials and opportunities for mastery which are planned as teachers and supportive teams grow in understanding of each child. Intervention is prescriptive in that it relies on diagnostic indication. It is adaptive in that the child's responsiveness and mastery are clues to the next steps.

Thus, desirable responses are generally implied by the assessment itself. That is, they follow from the nature of the questions asked and the process for goal-setting which is structured. In this context, interventions will rely on the child's strengths even as they provide experiences corrective of weaknesses.

Remediation is but an instance of very good teaching. It is not a separate set of teaching behaviors. The child we serve is often cognitively and emotionally insecure. The learning world he/she inhabits is usually not gratifying or challenging. Thus, the first
step is to reduce the jeopardy associated with learning. Remediation then consists in discovering what the child wants to learn and how he/she can best learn it, and additionally, in offering a planned experience in the context of a relationship with an emotionally significant adult. Motivation can be fostered only in an atmosphere of nurturance. The child will learn as he/she feels understood.

The Developmental-Interaction Approach posits that the child is constructing a model of the world. Thus, an essential function of schooling is to provide those experiences which contribute to the construction of desirable models -- desirable in terms of cognitive and affective outcomes, desirable in terms of our goals for society as well as for each individual.

The teaching role is central since it is from this web of human interactions that qualities of mind and spirit are developed. As the child evolves ever more stable constructs and gains new competencies to interpret experience, govern behavior, and gain personal satisfaction, each experience of the school day is of importance.

The teaching goals are to help the child to:
- investigate his/her perceptions of experience
- express ideas and feelings
- clarify hypotheses
- set learning goals
- symbolize in many modalities
- extend knowledge, skills and competencies.

CLASSROOM CONTEXT

For this continuous cycle of action, interaction, reflection and dialogue to be fully effective there is a prerequisite: the day-by-day classroom curriculum must be age-appropriate, relevant and challenging. The Follow Through materials presented in Volume I give a fuller description of the dynamics of such an environment for learning. The point we are making here is that interventions can best be effected in a rich educational setting in which the child is able to change, shape and create new relationships while also being introduced to stable cognitive structures and opportunities to practice emerging competencies.
IV. The Interdisciplinary Team

Creating an optimal education atmosphere for young children is a multifaceted task. Since each setting is different in relation to staff availability it is useful to specify the functions to be fulfilled, rather than to list conventionally delineated professional roles defined in advance. Because many social and developmental aspects are interrelated as they bear on the education task, a sound intervention approach must direct itself to areas which at first may not seem directly related to education. This is the rationale for the team approach.

TEAM RELATIONS

Functions to be fulfilled by team members (whatever the professional role designations) are as follows:

- the fostering of a positive relationship with the child's family. In the course of building this relationship the goals and processes of Follow Through are shared with the family. Reciprocally, the team members gather a developmental history and an understanding of the vital factors which affect family functioning. This function can be performed by a social worker, social work assistant or parent coordinator.

- a review of the health history of the child. Educators understand the medical circumstances relating to the development of a family's view of the resources of the community in support of the health and dental needs of each member of that family. This function can be performed by a school nurse or health aide.

- a scan of the educational repertoire that the child brings to school with him/her. This is to include language, thinking, socialization, motor development, and coping style. This function can be shared by teachers, aides, school administrators, staff developers and psychologists.
CONFIDENTIALITY

In the course of a study of such depth it is likely that team members will encounter information related to social, developmental and economic stress. It is known that these factors have some bearing upon the learning potential of adults and children. It is necessary, therefore, to enunciate and clarify life events and social circumstances. It will, however, require concern, leadership and discretion in order to protect the child and his family and, also, to protect the professional team as it goes about its pursuit of an understanding of the child and the family. It is our view that the protection for all parties engaged in this delicate process is assured by:

- an open communication system between the parents and the staff as to the objectives and methods of their inquiry
- a role for parents in setting goals for the child
- an early response to the needs that are identified.

TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

School Entry Assessment rests upon multiple perceptions, not simply upon test results or discrete bits of information. It is a process that yields a portrait as well as periodic snapshots. Each team member will be observing life processes from a particular vantage point. The unifying framework is that all address the same questions and work toward the same objectives.

All assessment becomes intrinsically related to continuing small steps that constitute the intervention approach that the staff will live out with the child as an entering school child and which the staff is committed to sustaining over a long period of time. Assessment begun in the entering grade is the foundation for this team approach throughout the primary grades.

In this process, there are various tasks assigned to the different members of the team. Teachers are responsible for ongoing observations, the administration of standardized tests (in this discussion we rely on the Standardized Test of Academic Readiness (STAR)) and appropriate planning in relation to its outcomes, the collection of the House, Tree, Person, Animal drawing (HTPA) where technical support for this information is available, the administration of the language sample, collection
of oral stories, and the systematic use of the beginning section of the Reading Assessment Checklist developed by Bank Street College. Teachers share in developing appropriate curriculum responses based on the information developed by themselves and other team members. Teachers also share in the commitment for dialogue and reporting to parents.

The role of the teaching team in this effort is indeed a large commitment. It is clear that School Entry Assessment is not to be viewed as a task undertaken by teachers in addition to the "regular" school work. It is our position, justified and rewarded by long years of development, that the work of the entering school year is the assessment process itself. It is our finding that participation in this continuous process of assessment creates a large bond of communication, understanding and reciprocity between the teaching teams and the children. It has been our experience that the mobilization of the learning potential of every child is guaranteed by the careful attention to the dynamics of all initiatory experiences.

The Health Services Staff is responsible for a review of the child's early history with relation to health and dental questions, a detailing of the medical records primarily for the school child but, if available, for the total family. In addition, health services staff conduct continuous monitoring of medical and dental services. They make referrals and assist in the support and education of parents as wise consumers of these services. Health services staff participate with the total team in a process whereby developmental goals are shared, in which the continuity between home and school is meaningful.

Psychological and guidance staff members are responsible for careful observation and diagnostic testing, conferencing with teachers, parents and other team members, assessment of projective measures such as the HPTA and assistance to the total team and parents as they develop an articulated understanding of the child as a learner.

Many dimensions of this assessment are, of course, traditional in the roles of school social workers, psychologists, guidance counselors and nurses, teachers and principals. Our particular model extends these professional relationships by requiring continuous team interaction in a spirit that is non-clinical and in a framework that is open to the participation of the family. The child in school is the beginning and the center of this activity.
Roles presented may vary from setting to setting but the functions necessary to a basic education must be provided. In many cases support from professionals, paraprofessionals, parents and other volunteers has enabled the schools to carry forth a qualitative assessment program.

TEAM COORDINATION

It is essential that this study be formally organized and that there be regular opportunities for synthesis. We have witnessed the evolution of many different patterns of successful team designs in a number of communities. By success we mean not only success in the accumulation of information but ultimately success in a systematic way of asking questions which have usable and viable consequences relevant to the day-to-day practice of all the related disciplines.

The primary problem posed by the use of a multi-disciplinary approach is that of coordinating the services provided. The psychologist, guidance counselor, nurse or social worker are often seen as "specialists" functioning outside the classroom. To the degree that they are treated as specialists who handle special problems, their effectiveness is minimized.

In Bank Street's SEA approach, the child is not "taken out" to be studied. The arena for study is the classroom -- the living, organic, naturalistic setting in which growth is observable, in which sympathetic interventions can be enacted, in which change is possible, in which the setting, the materials, the daily program and the overall structure of the child's experience is by definition responsive, supportive, accepting and challenging.

SEA has proved to be an effective vehicle for staff development. The effort of adults to understand the child's developmental process contains the potential for the development, in turn, of new adult competencies. There is no magic; there is no elusive, clinical insight owned only by one discipline.

The success of this demanding and complex team undertaking is enhanced by the designation in every setting of a team leader. A corollary principle is that anyone, any team member, can initiate a team process. All information is relevant.
SUMMARY

The primary aim of SEA is to help the teacher, parents and other team members to discover the patterns of motivation of each child. The sensory-motor, linguistic, psychodynamic and intellectual systems are interdependent. *

SEA aims to translate the tools of the specialist into understandable terms for all who are responsible for the child's education. Most published screening batteries investigate similar areas of concern, e.g. language processing, visual-motor coordination, auditory perception. However, communication among team members and with parents is best served if the discussion is conducted in a common language.

Initial Anecdotal Observation

As one of the first steps in the screening process we are asking you to write a few brief paragraphs on each child in your class, focusing on your first impressions of him or her as he or she entered school. Please write these descriptive paragraphs on the form provided.

If any children enter your class later in the year, please write the descriptive paragraphs after completion of their second week in the classroom.

Child's Name __________________ Age __________________
Teacher's Name ________________ School ________________

How does the child interact with materials, children and/or adults?

Materials: What and How?

Children: Who and How?

Adults: Who and How?
**Initial Anecdotal Observation**

Child's Name __________________________ Age __________________

Teacher's Name __________________________ School __________________

Focusing on your first impressions as the child entered school, in what ways does he or she work best?

Check either 1, 2 or 3 and then check 4 and/or 5 if applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups in which Child Works Best:</th>
<th>Initiates</th>
<th>Persists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ALONE</td>
<td>2 WITH CHILDREN</td>
<td>3 WITH ADULT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games: outdoor and indoor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sand</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Table</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Table</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Collage</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Clay work</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dictation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Crayons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pencil activities, writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking at Books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Motor Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Comments:

Preliminary School Entry Assessment

Directions for administration of Preliminary School Entry Assessment

Visual Motor Coordination

1. Kaleidoscope Test -- to determine hand-eye coordination -- to indicate dominance.

   Teacher and/or Staff Developer and child sit facing one another -- they are centered. The distance between them is approximately 1-1/2 feet. This is a matter of judgment -- it is necessary to be near enough for a natural exchange yet distant enough to ensure that teacher or observer gets a good view of child's spontaneous choice of hand or eye.

   Teacher says, "I'm going to hand you this kaleidoscope. You can see many different pictures and shapes inside it."

   Teacher and/or Staff Developer hands child the kaleidoscope. The seeing end faces the child. Kaleidoscope is placed midway between adult and child and at mid-height to child.

   Child reaches for the kaleidoscope and places it to his/her eye. After the child has taken the kaleidoscope from you, please enter the hand and eye chosen by the child on the record sheet.

2. Body Image

   Say to the child in a conversational tone, show me your ear, knee, elbow, wrist, waist, shoulders. Indicate the child's responses on the record sheet. Make additional comments about any unusual behavior and/or comments the child makes.

3. Gross Motor Coordination

   Hopping -- Walking a Line

   Ask the child to hop on one foot. Count the number of hops. When the child stops, ask him to hop on the other foot and count the number of hops. This information is to be recorded on the record sheet.
Place a piece of masking tape 8 feet long on the floor. Ask the child to walk on that line. Please note on the record sheet whether this task is easy or difficult for the child and the quality of balance the child exhibits.

4. Child Interview
   General Orientation

   In a conversational manner, the interviewer elicits information from each child, individually and separately, about the child's general orientation and interests. This is not to be done in a small group by having children take turns answering each question.

   The questions to be asked of the child are listed on the record sheet next to the space in which the child's responses are to be recorded. If there is anything unusual about the child's behavior during this task (distractibility, extreme reluctance to answer the questions, anxiety, etc.) please make a note of that in the section marked "Comments on Behavior."

   In the case of Spanish-speaking children, arrangements will have to be made so the interview can be conducted in that language by bilingual personnel.
### Preliminary School Entry Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child's Name</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Aide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Comments on observed behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Visual Motor Coordination</th>
<th>Right</th>
<th>Left</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kaleidoscope</td>
<td>Hand choice</td>
<td>Eye choice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Body Image</th>
<th>Child's Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Show me your ear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show me your knee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show me your wrist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show me your waist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show me your shoulders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Gross Motor Coordination</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hopping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st foot</td>
<td>(Child's choice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of hops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other foot</td>
<td>No. of hops</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Walking a line
# Preliminary School Entry Assessment

**Child's Name** __________________________  **Teacher** ____________________

**School** __________________________  **Aide** ____________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHILD INTERVIEW</th>
<th>General Orientation Questions</th>
<th>Child's Reply</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date administered:</td>
<td>1. What is your name?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administered by:</td>
<td>2. Where do you live? The name of your street?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. What is your telephone number?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. When is your birthday?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. How old are you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. How many people are there in your family? How old are they?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Is it day or night?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. What day is today?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Count these crayons. (12 crayons)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**COMMENTS ON CHILD'S BEHAVIOR DURING INTERVIEW**
ASSESSMENT
THROUGH
LANGUAGE

THE PROGRAM ANALYSIS STAFF
I. The Importance of Oral Language Skills

Language is the prime medium for the exchange of meaning in all life situations. Language permeates life, and in the Developmental-Interaction Approach, it permeates the classroom. There are daily discussions: children listen to and react to stories; and there is extensive peer communication in such activities as block building, art, science and dramatic expression. The teaching team helps each child use language to express and fulfill his/her desires, to formulate his/her questions and ideas, to exchange meaning with others. Teachers emphasize the ideas the child expresses through language rather than the syntactic structures the child uses to express ideas. Thus, oral language is not only embedded in the curriculum but is also an essential aspect of the learning-teaching process in the Follow Through classroom.

Verbal communication is an important medium through which 6, 7, 8 and 9 year olds make their thoughts, feelings and needs known to adults and peers. Moreover, through verbal communication, children learn about the ideas, feelings and needs of others. Children use oral language not only to express but also to develop their thoughts. In Developmental-Interaction classrooms, teachers consciously use an ever-widening vocabulary and a more complex organization of language in situations where the child can draw on his/her experience to expand understanding. With new meanings internalized, the child is able to make listening an active process -- a process which involves not merely hearing words, but thinking, comprehending and internally responding. In the Developmental-Interaction approach, each child finds a supportive environment which stimulates conversation with peers and adults, encourages risk-taking in language production, and helps make speaking a creative process rather than an imitative one.

A premise of the Developmental-Interaction approach is that the stimulation of ideas and the reorganization of thinking takes place in and through verbal interaction. The adult plays a significant role in truly listening, in evidencing concern and genuine interest, in supporting the child's use of language to express the ideas and concepts with which he/she is grappling. The teacher's responsibility is to stimulate children to think, to ask questions, to see relationships,
# TABLE I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives related to Program Goals</th>
<th>Desired adult intervention for each objective</th>
<th>Children's language competencies related to each objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Growing ability to reason, to draw conclusions from evidence, to give rationale for actions.</td>
<td>Extending, clarifying children's comments; asking children to extend and clarify their comments</td>
<td>Expression of logical thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigation of what things are, how they function, and how they relate</td>
<td>Providing opportunities for activities based on children's real experience</td>
<td>Reporting accurately; documenting with experience; suggesting next steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing ability to formulate and express original ideas and opinions</td>
<td>Providing opportunities for expressive activities</td>
<td>Expressing imaginative thought processes; using an interesting vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing ability to build upon the ideas of others</td>
<td>Providing opportunity for peer communication</td>
<td>Extending, clarifying the ideas of other children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding and increasing use of problem-solving skills</td>
<td>Defining situations calmly and rationally as the method of controlling behavior</td>
<td>Coping with stress situations effectively and mediating them through language where appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing ability to communicate orally</td>
<td>Responding to children's communication with acceptance, encouragement, extension and clarification</td>
<td>Self-initiating communication and communicating frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressively more complex, meaningful and sophisticated use of language</td>
<td>Eliciting logic and imagination in open-ended questions; presenting thought-provoking material</td>
<td>Expressing logic and imagination; making highly elaborated comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating about feelings</td>
<td>Encouraging and listening with understanding and sympathy</td>
<td>Expressing and responding to feelings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and try to solve problems. Teacher and children become involved in an open interchange of opinions and differences, a sharing of actual experiences, and a broadening of language and thinking. Thus, oral language, both listening and speaking, plays a central role in intellectual development as children find new answers and, as a result, are able to clarify and redefine their knowledge and thinking.

Language skills in speaking and listening are also essential as foundations for reading and writing. Gradually, within the school environment, the child moves through oral language to a greater understanding that written symbols represent words, that one gets meaning from various combinations of these written symbols, and that it is possible to record personal ideas and feelings through writing. Children have already been learning to symbolize in many ways. To drawing and painting, block-building, clay-modeling, dramatic play and other expressive media, children add writing as one more and perhaps the most advanced symbolizing process. With a growing awareness of written words, children become ready to be "readers." Traditionally, schools have emphasized literacy—competence in comprehending and producing written language. In contrast the Developmental-Interaction Approach emphasizes the more fundamental skills of oral language. Children learn to find pleasure and satisfaction in communicating through oral language, and this motivation spurs the development of literacy. Children become proficient at learning through talking so that they transfer these oral skills to learning through reading and writing.

Because of the central importance of oral language in a Bank Street Follow Through classroom, the program has developed procedures and instruments for recording and subsequently examining children's language and the ideas they express. This analysis system identifies children's language and thinking competencies in a variety of situations and also assesses the adult's strategies in eliciting and extending the expression of the child's own ideas. The analysis system is designed to examine the relationships described in Table I. Ongoing, systematic assessment serves

(1) to increase teachers' awareness and understanding of individual children's strengths and weaknesses in the language area,

(2) to sensitize teachers to their own strategies for eliciting and extending children's language and thinking, and
(3) to help teachers assess communication patterns and the characteristics of the learning environment in their classrooms.

II. Instruments for Assessing Language

Since a major emphasis is placed on the assessment of the meaning and functional aspects of children's language for purposes of communication in settings conducive to sharing experiences, thoughts and feelings, three different instruments have been developed.* There are different systems of analysis for each of the three instruments, but essentially they are concerned with the same overall dimensions of language competence and cognitive development. The dimensions for the analysis of children's language and thinking are:

1. Language Competence
2. Logical Reasoning
3. Imagination, Abstract Thinking, Opinions
4. Drama and Characterization
5. Basic Information
6. Clarity
7. Responsiveness, Cooperation, Social Skills
8. Self-Confidence
9. Subjective, Personal, Affective Input
10. Involvement, Interest

These dimensions are related to the ultimate and overriding goals for child development in the Bank Street Approach.

The three assessment instruments are briefly described in this section. Further information and training materials for administering and using these instruments can be obtained from the Bank Street Follow Through Program.

(1) Analysis of Children's Oral Storytelling Task (ACOST)

The oral storytelling task is a prescribed procedure in which an adult administers the task to an individual child in a place appropriate for audiotaping. Initially the child is asked to complete two so-called "story starts." Each story start sets up a complication or problem which the child has a chance to resolve. Following this, the child is asked to tell two original stories. After each story, the child listens to a playback of the tape while the adult codes the child's behavior during

*Analysis of Children's Oral Storytelling Task (ACOST)
The Discussion Task
Behavior Ratings and Analysis of Communication in Education - BRACE
the previous storytelling. Intervention by the adult is minimal so as to secure a continuous flow of the child's own language and thinking. More specifically, the role of the adult who elicits the stories is to encourage and support the child without imposing ideas, values or notions of story structure on the child.

Coding variables examine clarity, complexity, imagination, logical reasoning, elaboration and fluency as well as the child's confidence, comfort, and involvement in storytelling.

(2) The Discussion Task

The Discussion Task, like the Oral Storytelling Task, occurs in a structured situation, distinct from the child's normal day. Discussion as a teaching strategy permeates the normal day but discussion as assessment is separate and structured to provide comparable situations for studying individual children. In the Discussion Task, an adult and two children talk about a drawing for half an hour. Later they talk about a second drawing. The adult's role in the Discussion Task is to respond and extend rather than to initiate. The main function of the adult in the discussion is to support and create opportunities for the child to see relationships and to weave his/her own images and experiences into what is known and shared. Both discussions are recorded, transcribed, and then analyzed. The analysis system focuses on assessing the capacities and qualities of thought, the integration of experiences, and the generation of ideas in the course of the discussion. The focus of the Discussion Task analysis system is to describe different ways children organize their thinking: i.e. different emphases, patterns and approaches. The intent of the Discussion Task is to capture the diversity and versatility of the children's thinking. Diversity in this context refers to how thinking differs from one child to another, and versatility refers to how much latitude there is in the thinking expressed by any one child in a discussion.

A preliminary analysis system for studying the impact of teacher/child and child/child interaction upon the child's expression of ideas and feelings is available, and a more comprehensive system is under development.

(3) Behavior Ratings and Analysis of Communication in Education - BRACE

BRACE (Behavior Ratings and Analysis of Communication in Education) is an instrument for systematic observation and analysis of child/adult, child/child and adult/adult interaction in educational settings. The instrument includes three aspects of observation and analysis: (1) verbal communication; (2) non-verbal behavior; and
(3) the characteristics of the settings in which children and adults interact.

With respect to verbal communication, the instrument records each unit of thought expressed by the subject who is being observed, in terms of its flow (to whom the remark is addressed), the mode (how it is said), and the substance (what is said). With respect to non-verbal behavior, the instrument records such factors as the subject's degree of warmth, friendliness vs. hostility, coping or failing to cope with stress situations, and the extent of child involvement in the task at hand.

With respect to the characteristics of the settings, the instrument records such factors as group size, the adult role, the child role, and the form, content, base, nature and choice of activity.

The correlation of verbal communication, non-verbal behavior, and the learning environment within each time span observed, provides a multi-dimensional picture of the subject in interaction with others and with the environment.

III. Design of the Three Instruments

Many factors were taken into account in designing the language assessment system. A primary objective was to structure situations in which the child's productive language rather than his/her receptive language could be measured. Based on the goals of the program, the variables of the analysis system were chosen to measure the child's abilities in communicating the meaning of his/her ideas and feelings. Factors that were important in designing the language assessment system are described below:

(1) The structure of the task is open, so the children do not perceive the activity as a test or threatening experience. As in Piagetian tasks, each child is able to respond in some way that seems adequate at his/her stage of development. The Piagetian task is, to some extent, structured by the child, and each child can feel that he/she has succeeded in the task. Similarly, Bank Street Follow Through's language tasks were developed as situations which would allow for the examination of a child's use of language to express thinking and feeling, rather than to determine whether particular characteristics of language structure have been mastered.
The assessment context is consonant with the child's classroom experience. It was felt that a task situation which held the child's security and involvement as primary features would be most appropriate for eliciting the criterion behaviors of interest in the Developmental-Interaction approach. Courtney Cazden* describes this type of task as a "concentrated encounter" and recommends it as especially appropriate for studying language skills because "the situational influences on speech are so powerful that it is difficult if not impossible to get a young child to transfer language skills he has demonstrated in a natural situation to some more contrived situation."

Assessment of adult/child interaction is a major focus of the analysis. Analysis of adult/child interaction in curriculum-relevant situations is essential to staff development as well as to program development. Becoming involved in a self-analytic process based on objective data enables teachers to become more conscious of the quality of their interaction with children, and stimulates them to strengthen their teaching skills and strategies.

Although children learn from each other, they need adult intervention if they are to expand their vocabulary, use more complex language syntax, and express their thoughts and feelings more effectively. Adult intervention includes not only serving as models but also responding to and stimulating children's ideas.

Hence, although the immediate goal of a comprehensive analysis system is to deepen understanding of the language competencies of individual children, the ultimate goal is to develop a more analytic approach to the learning-teaching process.

The assessment system includes a variety of settings. By using a variety of situations for studying language, a broader range of type of language use can be studied. For example, an interactive situation offers an opportunity to measure the extent of unsolicited comments and questions by children -- an indication of autonomy, confidence and motivation which are important goals in a Developmental-Interaction approach. On the other hand, there are aspects of language functioning which are equally goal-related but which can be studied only in a non-interactive situation, such as the

child's ability to organize and develop ideas without adult intervention. Hence a variety of situations is necessary to capture all the facets of productive language that are crucial in child development.

By comparing children's language performance across tasks, the consistency of the child's language use can be studied. Patterns of communication for a given child which are either consistent or inconsistent across tasks can serve to generate hypotheses about that child's particular strengths and weaknesses in language functioning. Consistent patterns would confirm and reinforce findings, while inconsistent patterns would suggest areas for further study and experimentation in order to determine the cause of the discrepancy. The more knowledgeable an adult becomes about a particular child, the better he/she can individualize the curriculum to develop the child's potential to the utmost. Aggregate scores across tasks for a sample of children from a given classroom, school or program may yield important insights about the relationship of children's language to characteristics of the learning environment. This assessment may reveal the need for restructuring the program on behalf of children's language development.

IV. Conclusion

The use of multiple language measures in combination does provide credible evidence about the ability of children and their overall functioning in the classroom. Detailed analysis of the child's language production in contrast to his/her class group challenges the teacher to rethink some aspects of the child's curriculum. Teachers who come into Bank Street sponsored programs often find it fairly easy to learn organizational skills involved in individualizing curriculum, such as setting up interest centers, making materials available to the children, giving them a way of indicating choices of activities, and helping them work independently and move from one activity to another. However, it frequently takes a far longer time for teachers to learn how to assess children's expressive and thinking skills. Until they are able to do this, they cannot put the more easily developed classroom organization skills to maximum use. In accordance with the Developmental-Interaction approach, assessment is viewed as a dynamic process in which observation and analysis guide program development. The ultimate goals are to develop through feedback the "teacher-scientist" and thus to bring about basic changes in the schooling of young children.
THE BANK STREET COLLEGE FOLLOW THROUGH
PROGRAM ANALYSIS STAFF

ELIZABETH C. GILKESON,
COORDINATOR OF PROGRAM ANALYSIS

ELEANOR BAISDEN
GARDA BOWMAN
VIRGINIA DEARBORN
KINA DIRECTOR
JANET KANE
MARK LUNDEEN
SUZANNE THACHER
CAROL WEISSMAN

ORIGINAL CREATORS OF THE LANGUAGE TASKS

ALICE COOPER
DONNA GOULD
JUDITH MAC DONALD
DAVID WICKENS

CO-AUTHOR OF THE BRACE
ROCHELLE MAYER
Approaches to Assessment

USE OF STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES
Standardized Testing in a Follow Through Program

ELEANOR BAISDEN
SHIRLEY MC CALL
CAROL WEISSMAN
I. Goals and Objectives

An overall, long-term goal of the P.S. 243 Follow Through program, based on the Developmental-Interaction Approach of Bank Street College, is to further the intellectual development of children. An important objective leading to the attainment of this goal is to help children become fluent readers. The reading program at P.S. 243 is one aspect of an individualized language program that emphasizes the development of speaking, listening and writing as well as reading. Both oral and written language are used extensively in the exploration of social studies themes that comprise the curriculum in the primary grades. In this language experience approach to reading, interest and comprehension are emphasized. It is hypothesized that these emphases will enable each child to become a motivated and independent reader.

The students at P.S. 243 represent a group that is different from the population as a whole in two important ways. First, the average family income is substantially below the national average, ranging from $4,000 to $6,000, less overtime. Secondly, the children attending P.S. 243 consist of approximately 95% Black and 5% other ethnic representation. These figures are in strong contrast to the national population which is 11% Black, 85% White and 4% other. The large proportion of ethnic minority children from poor families attending P.S. 243 reflects an enduring characteristic of the population which is served by the P.S. 243 Bank Street Follow Through Program.

The National Follow Through Program originated in 1967 because children from poor families, especially those of ethnic minorities, were generally not successful in school, dropped out very early, or were disproportionately represented in the lowest percentiles on standardized tests. According to Section 4.7(a)(2) of the General Education Provisions Act, the expectation for these children's achievement on standardized tests is that they will be one full year behind their middle class counterparts by the end of third grade.
In the New York City school district in which P.S. 243 is located, reading failure is a widespread and serious problem. Because of this, the school has chosen to stress the following two objectives in their reading program:

Objective 1: To prevent reading failure in the P.S. 243 Follow Through program

Objective 2: To develop reading competencies that will promote continued growth in reading beyond the third grade, the final grade in the Follow Through program.

These objectives are in keeping with the stated purposes of the National Follow Through Program.

Using scores from standardized tests, the program has accumulated evidence that these major objectives are being met. Analyses of these scores are presented later in this paper.

II. Evaluation Methods

Current methods of program evaluation are of deep concern to many researchers and educators. The use of standardized test results as the sole measure of program effectiveness is rejected by many as placing undue emphasis on test-taking skills. Bank Street Follow Through shares this point of view and is therefore involved in refining alternative methods that allow children to demonstrate their competencies under more natural conditions. In the Bank Street Follow Through program, evaluation also includes systematic classroom observation, analysis of children's oral language, and checklists to document skills children demonstrate during the school day. Bank Street uses each of these strategies to strengthen and enhance the others in a comprehensive and multifaceted approach to program analysis.

III. Collecting Test Scores

Bank Street Follow Through, working with P.S. 243, uses standardized test scores to assess aggregate student outcomes as one way of evaluating program effectiveness. Since the amount of testing conducted in the school to meet the requirements of federal, state and local educational programs already appeared to be excessive when Follow Through began, Bank Street chose to use reading test scores available from the end-of-year annual achievement
testing program administered by the New York City Office of Educational Evaluation. Table I identifies the tests used from 1972-1979. Each spring, the tests are given by the classroom teachers acting under the supervision of Board of Education staff. After the tests are scored, results are collected and analyzed by members of the Bank Street Follow Through program analysis staff.

IV. Choosing the Sample

In this report, data are presented from the end-of-year testing at second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grades for seven successive groups of children enrolled in the P.S. 243 Bank Street Follow Through program during the years 1970-1979. These longitudinal samples include only those students who entered the program in kindergarten or first grade and remained through the grade tested. Each sample group has been given a cohort number for identification and reference purposes. The cohorts are numbered II-VIII. The number of students in each cohort is shown in Table II. (Data from Cohorts 0 and I are not reported here because the program was under development during those years.)

V. Analyzing the Scores

Grade equivalent scores for the total reading test were recorded for each child in each of the cohorts at each grade level (second through sixth grade). These grade equivalent scores were then compared with those of the national norm group for the end of each school year for grades two through six to provide answers to two important questions:

Question 1: How does the percentage of Bank Street Follow Through students with reading achievement levels one year or more below grade level compare with that percentage of the national norm group for grades two through six?

Question 2: Are the achievement levels in reading attained by P.S. 243 Bank Street Follow Through students at the end of grades two through six similar to the national norms at these grade levels?

In these analyses, the national norm group is used as a stringent external criterion to judge the effectiveness of the Follow Through program. On the basis of the children's family backgrounds and
Table I
Achievement Tests Used in New York City Evaluation from 1973 - 1979

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Testing</th>
<th>Name of Test</th>
<th>Edition</th>
<th>Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT) 1971</td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT) 1971</td>
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<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) 1973</td>
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<td>1976</td>
<td>Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) 1973</td>
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<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills 1974</td>
<td></td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>California Achievement Test (CAT) 1977</td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>California Achievement Test (CAT) 1977</td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table II
Sample Sizes for Grades 2-6, P. S. 243 - Bank Street Follow Through Students in Cohorts II - VIII (1973 - 1979)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>*V</th>
<th>VI</th>
<th>VII</th>
<th>VIII</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1977 58</td>
<td>1978 54</td>
<td>1979 43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School entry characteristics, they would be expected to perform substantially below the national norm groups. If the Follow Through program is effective, however, these children's performances on standardized tests should approximate the national norm group.

VI. Evidence of Success

To answer Question 1, reading failure rates* of Follow Through students were compared with the rates in the national norm samples. Rates of reading failure for the P. S. 243 Follow Through program for Cohorts II through VIII and for the national norm groups for grades

* Data were not retrieved for one class, altering the sample size of Cohort V somewhat.
two through six are presented in Table III. In all of the comparisons in grades 2 and 3, the rate of reading failure in the Follow Through groups is lower than the rate of reading failure in the national norm group. Follow Through's goal of eradicating achievement differences related to socio-economic background has been realized in the program at P.S. 243. Since the percentage of children in the P.S. 243 Follow Through cohorts falling one or more years below grade level at grades two and three is uniformly lower than the expected percentage for the national norm group, there is convincing evidence that the program prevents reading failure.

Comparisons for grades four through six indicate that prevention of reading failure continues beyond the Follow Through program. In nine of the twelve comparisons for fourth through sixth grade, the percentage of reading failure is lower than or equal to the percentage of failure in the national norm group.

To answer Question 2, the mean grade equivalent scores in total reading for the P.S. 243 Follow Through students were compared with the national norms. Table IV shows that Follow Through averages are consistently at or above the national norms in grades two and three across seven cohorts. This is evidence of a very stable program effect for reading competency.

In the higher grades, grades four through six, former Follow Through children also generally score at or above the national average. This finding supports the conclusion that reading competencies acquired during Follow Through years enable children to develop more complex skills needed in the upper elementary grades.

VII. Summary

In summary, results show that despite predictions of failure based on the socio-economic status of its population, the P.S. 243 Bank Street Follow Through program has: 1) prevented reading failure and 2) helped students to achieve reading competency. Moreover, these program effects are evident throughout the upper elementary grades, after the students have left the Follow Through program. Thus the objectives of preventing reading failure and promoting competency throughout the elementary years, both during and after Follow Through, have been attained through successful program intervention.

* Reading failure is here defined as one or more years below grade level.
Table III
Evidence of Prevention of Reading Failure

The upper percent in each comparison is the reading failure rate in the P.S. 243 Follow Through program, and the lower percent is the reading failure rate in the national norm group for the test given that year. Solid squares are used to identify comparisons in which Follow Through's failure rate is less than or equal to the failure rate in the norm group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year and Test</th>
<th>Second</th>
<th>Third</th>
<th>Fourth</th>
<th>Fifth</th>
<th>Sixth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972-73 MAT</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-74 MAT</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974-75 SAT</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-76 SAT</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-77 CTBS</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78 CAT</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-79 CAT</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key

- **FT%** falling one or more years below grade level
- **Norm%** falling one or more years below grade level
Table IV
Evidence of Sustained Competency in Reading Through the Presentation of Mean Grade Equivalents for the P.S. 243 Bank Street Follow Through Students (Cohorts II-VIII, 1973-1979) in Comparison With National Norm Groups

Expected Achievement from Norm Groups *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year and Test</th>
<th>Second</th>
<th>Third</th>
<th>Fourth</th>
<th>Fifth</th>
<th>Sixth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972-73 MAT</td>
<td>2.7-2.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.7-4.9</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-74 MAT</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974-75 SAT</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-76 SAT</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-77 CTBS</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78 CAT</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-79 CAT</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: FT Grade Equiv.

* Grade equivalent scores for various tests:

MAT 2.7, 3.7, 4.7, 5.7
SAT 2.8, 3.8, 4.8, 5.8
CTBS 2.7, 3.7, 4.7, 5.7
CAT 2.9, 3.9, 4.9, 5.9