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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
TWO GRADING SYSTEMS
AND
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

ABSTRACT FOR
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ABSTRACT OF THESIS ON THE RELATIONSHIP
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In recent years, pass-fail grading has been gaining popularity on all levels of education. Prior to this time, the traditional A-F letter grade scale was most prominent. This study deals with the investigation of the relative effectiveness of an A-F letter grade scale versus a P/F scale on the academic achievement of individuals.

Past research, done mostly on the college level, is explored with both questionnaire and test results from these college studies examined. Based on this past research, the hypothesis advanced is: elementary school pupils graded A through F in a course of study will score significantly higher on a standardized test of factual material than those who have been rated on a P/F scale.

The study was conducted in a sixth grade social studies classroom. Preparation for the study was initiated at the conclusion of the fifth grade through the administration of a social studies standard achievement test. Scores were tabulated for the formation of matched groups. In sixth grade, members of each group were instructed of the grading practices for their group, either A-F letter grade or a pass/fail.

The year's study was geared around another standardized social studies test. Much of the factual material was covered

in assigned outside readings and extra-credit projects which required the student's own initiative to complete. The teacher purposely refrained from covering this factual material in class lectures. At the end of the year, a comparison of the significance of the scores of the two groups on the standardized test was made by means of a "t" test. Results supported the hypothesis that students graded A-F rated significantly higher than those rated P/F at the .05 level of confidence.

In conclusion, suggestions are made for further investigation into areas of the curriculum and individuals who might benefit from P/F grading. A follow-up study on these same individuals to test retention of detail is suggested. Educators are cautioned against converting to P/F grading until more careful study has been made of its effectiveness.