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**THE EFFECTS OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED,  
DEVELOPMENTAL READING PROGRAM ON THE GENERAL  
SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT OF A GROUP  
OF ACADEMICALLY DEFICIENT STUDENTS**

**AN ABSTRACT OF  
A THESIS  
PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY  
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MASTER OF SCIENCE**

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A study was made of an individualized, developmental reading program to observe its effects upon the general scholastic achievement of the academically deficient students.

The paper attempts to see if there exists a sound correlation between the development of reading skills and the improvement of skills in other subject areas.

The study was conducted by referring to records of initial interviews with the students and their parents, records of standardized test scores, records of conferences with the students' teachers regarding academic and attitudinal progress in the classroom, and records of periodical conferences with parents concerning such matters as the students' willingness to do homework and his attitude toward school as expressed in the home situation. Notes were taken, as well, on comments and conversations by the pupils if such comments reflected an attitude toward school, school work, or his reading lessons.

The program was developmental rather than remedial in nature and involved the student and the teacher on a one-to-one basis. Instructional materials were selected in specific regard for the particular student's needs, determined beforehand through the use of parent and teacher conferences, objective scores received on the standardized tests, and subjective

report card grades given by the pupil's teacher.

Students who were shown to be generally deficient in their scholastic achievement were not given instruction in all deficient areas. Rather, they were placed on their own reading ability level and were instructed in the basic reading skills.

A sampling of the students was selected for study. Comparisons were made of their standardized test scores. Attitudinal and academic progress was studied by reviewing the records of initial parent and teacher conferences and comparing information from these records with information received during the course of later conferences. In addition, the subjective, teacher-given report card grades were compared as an indication of the academic progress made in the classroom situation.

Results of the standardized tests indicated that students who participated in the individualized, developmental reading program had improved their reading skills on an average of one and one-half years. In addition to the progress made in reading, various areas of arithmetic and language skills showed almost identical progress even though students were never given instruction in these areas.

In all, except two cases, pupils made significant progress in all reading, arithmetic, and language areas tested. All but these two students showed higher report card grades in all subject areas and had made, according to their teachers,

significant progress in terms of work habits and their general attitude toward school work.

It was determined that perhaps three conclusions might be considered valid.

1. There is great value in teaching developmental reading, on an individual basis, to academically deficient students as a means of raising their total achievement.

2. Reading development, and success in the area of reading, is one of the greatest influences upon the progress in other subject areas; a sound, developmental, individualized reading program can raise achievement and success in other subject areas.

3. Success in the developmental, individualized reading program has a positive influence upon the student's self-concept which, in turn, aids and affects future learning in the area of reading as well as in other subject areas.