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ABSTRACT

This learning module on individualizing performance-based vocational education (PBVE) is one of nine developed for use in training administrators, teachers, and prospective teachers in the utilization of Vocational-Technical Education Consortium of States (V-TECS) catalogs of performance objectives, criteria-referenced measures, and performance guides. Information presented on individualized instruction focuses on the various forms (e.g., self-directed and self-paced), basic principles, and the teacher's role. Included is a case study to critique. Examples of module behavioral objectives are these: be able to give the advantages of both group and individualized instruction; the basic principles upon which individualized instruction is built; the suggested procedures for individualizing instruction in vocational education; and the role of the teacher. A glossary of terms, a glossary self check, and a model critique of the case study are provided. Also included is an individualization rating scale to be used by the reader to rate his/her present program of instruction. (A separate instructor's handbook, CE 017 440, for use with all the modules, contains the checkout activity, multiple choice and matching questions keyed to the behavioral objectives stated at the beginning of the module. The modules are designed for use with individuals or with groups.) (JH)

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Implementing Performance-Based Vocational Education
Utilizing V-TECS Catalogs

INDIVIDUALIZING PERFORMANCE-BASED VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

MODULE 5

State Department of Education
Office of Vocational Education
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

In cooperation with

Vocational Education Media Center
Clemson University
Clemson, South Carolina 29631

1978

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
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INTRODUCTION

It was suggested in Module 1 that the concepts embodied in performance-based vocational education and the concepts involved in individualized instruction seem to complement each other. But what, precisely, are we talking about when we say individualized instruction? Are we talking about independent study, prescribed instruction, personalized instruction, self-directed instruction or individually paced instruction? All of these terms are associated with individualized instruction and are perhaps best treated as forms of individualized instruction. In this module we will attempt to clarify these terms and suggest how each of these forms of individualized instruction might benefit our current programs.

DIRECTIONS

Module 4 should be completed before beginning work on this module.

Read the OBJECTIVE section. If you think you can accomplish this objective now, turn to the CHECK-OUT ACTIVITY, page 16, and follow the instructions.

If you feel you are not able to accomplish this objective now, look at the LEARNING ACTIVITIES, on this page. Begin the learning activities and as soon as you feel you are ready, turn to the CHECK-OUT ACTIVITY, page 16, and follow the instructions.

OBJECTIVE

Given instructional materials developed for this module, the participant will be able, with 100 percent accuracy, to identify on a multiple choice test:

1. advantages of both group and individualized instruction
2. the basic principles upon which individualized instruction is built
3. suggested procedures for individualizing instruction in vocational education
4. the role of the teacher in individualized instruction
5. four forms of individualized instruction

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. READ the Glossary of Terms for Module 5.
2. CHECK YOUR KNOWLEDGE by completing Self-Check I – Glossary of Terms for Module 5.
3. READ Section I – Individualized Instruction.
or _____
4. READ Section II – Forms of Individualized Instruction.
or _____
5. READ Section III – Basic Principles of Individualized Instruction.
or _____
6. READ Section IV – Suggestions for Individualizing Instruction.
or _____
7. READ Section V – The Teacher's Role in Individualized Instruction.
or _____
8. CHECK YOUR KNOWLEDGE of individualizing instruction by responding to The Case Study – Jim and Meg continue their discussion of the relationship between PBVE and Individualized Instruction.
9. CHECK your present program to determine the degree to which it is individualized using the Individualization Rating Scale.
10. Turn to the CHECK-OUT ACTIVITY, p. 16, and follow the instructions.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS – MODULE 5

In this module there are terms used with which you may not be familiar. Read through the glossary. Then, check your knowledge by answering Self Check I on the following page.

Independent study – objectives and learning activities are selected by the student.

Personalized Instruction – objectives are selected by the learner; learning activities are selected by the instructor.

Prescribed Instruction – both the objectives and learning activities are predetermined by the instructor.

Self-directed Instruction – objectives are selected by the instructor, learning activities by the student.

Self-pacing* – an arrangement whereby provision is made for the individual student to set his/her own schedule for learning or rate of achievement and to monitor his/her own progress.

*Adapted from Carter V. Good, ed., Dictionary of Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1973) p. 525.

SELF-CHECK I

Match the terms with their appropriate definitions. Write your answer on a separate sheet of paper.
DO NOT WRITE ON THIS SHEET!

TERMS

- a. Personalized instruction
- b. Self-pacing
- c. Self-directed instruction
- d. Independent study
- e. Prescribed instruction

DEFINITIONS

1. - both the objectives and learning activities are predetermined by the instructor.
2. - objectives are selected by the learner; learning activities are selected by the instructor.
3. - objectives and learning activities are selected by the student.
4. - objectives are selected by the instructor, learning activities by the student.
5. - an arrangement whereby provision is made for the individual student to set his/her own schedule for learning or rate of achievement and to monitor his/her own progress.

Answer Key

1. e, 2. a, 3. d, 4. c, 5. b

SECTION I

INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION

Thus far, most decisions concerning curriculum development have been predetermined. Tasks, performance objectives, criterion-referenced measures and performance guides were predetermined, when available, by the V-TECS catalogs. Grouping was predetermined if duty was used as the rationale; sequencing, too, was predetermined if the catalogs were sequenced by a writing team prior to distribution, as some are.

It is at the point of selecting a delivery system or mode of instruction that you, the teacher, will make the major decisions. One of the major decisions you will make concerns the degree to which you will individualize instruction.

There are, of course, both advantages and disadvantages to individualized instruction; but, in general, the more individualized the program, the greater the possibility for tailoring the instruction to the interest and needs of each student. And when the student is allowed to learn at his/her own rate, complete mastery of the task becomes a possibility for all students. If provisions are made for self-paced study through the use of self-directional, self-instructional student materials, even greater flexibility is available to each student.

But, there are advantages also of group instruction. As a matter of fact, some learning activities almost demand interaction or teamwork to accomplish a task. In other words, the group delivery method may best fit the individual needs of students. Then, too, if certain tasks are common to the needs of all students in the class, and if these students can learn these tasks at about the same rate, it may be much more efficient to teach them by the group method. In many cases, the task to be taught may be dangerous if undertaken by the student without prior demonstration by the instructor. The cost of packaging self-instructional materials may also be prohibitive for some tasks. And, finally, another very important advantage is that the members of the group motivate each other.

In summary, there is need for both the group delivery and individual delivery methods of instruction.

SECTION II

FORMS OF INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION

Forms of Individualized Instruction

Some educators have attempted to clarify the concepts involved in individualized instruction by identifying various forms of individualized instruction. This is difficult because the definitions of the various forms are not very distinct. However, a brief study of each definition may be helpful. In simple terms (and perhaps overly simplified) these forms are:

1. Prescribed Instruction

If both the objectives and the learning activities are course determined or determined by the teacher, the form of instruction is considered to be prescribed instruction.

At the secondary school level, most vocational courses are taught using this form of instruction. However, even though an instructor may have a curriculum guide which prescribes tentative objectives and learning activities, the instructor might vary these objectives or learning activities to better meet the needs of a given class or for an individual student.

In other words, the instruction could be either course prescribed or individually prescribed.

2. Personalized Instruction

If the objectives are selected by the student, but learning activities are prescribed, then the type of instruction used is considered to be personalized instruction.

If we allow our students to select the modules of instruction (modules are usually built around one or more objectives) we are using personalized instruction. This is because the students are selecting the objective, and the

learning activities are prescribed by the module. Admittedly, however, this is not always true. Often there will be optional learning activities suggested within each module.

3. Self-Directed Instruction

If objectives are prescribed by the instructor or the course, but learning activities are selected by the student, the instruction is termed self-directed.

Sometimes we set objectives for a course, but allow our student freedom in choosing the learning activities. For example, we may require a student to be able to "Bake a cake" to a specified level of performance, but allow the student a variety of learning activities to choose from. For example, students could be allowed to: 1) simply read a recipe, 2) observe a demonstration of cake baking or 3) practice by making a layer of a cake.

4. Independent study

If students are given the freedom to select both the objectives and the learning activities, the type of instruction is termed independent study.

Sometimes we may have students in our courses who are relatively mature in their judgement and who have some knowledge and experience in the field. These students can be allowed the freedom to select both their own objectives and their own learning activities.

Most likely, though, some guidance would be required, and if considerable guidance is required then this may in fact not be independent study, but individually prescribed instruction.

Individualized instruction as expressed in any one or any combination of these forms may help improve the effectiveness of our programs. This does not mean that individualized instruction is either feasible or desirable for the achievement of all objectives.

Perhaps a chart, such as the one shown on page 7, can be helpful to the instructor in selecting the most appropriate or feasible mode of instruction for particular tasks or performance objectives.

Self-paced Instruction

If instruction is organized so that the student may achieve objectives at a rate of his/her own choosing, such instruction may be termed individually paced or self-paced instruction. It is not a form of individualized instruction as such, because as long as a student is given the freedom to move at her/his own pace, any instruction can be termed self-pacing.

However, self-pacing as commonly used does not allow the student to move from module to module or activity to activity with complete freedom. The student can progress only after proven performance on an objective.

Although self-pacing could be used with any of the four forms of individualized instructions discussed previously, it will probably be used most with the prescribed form.

In order to implement self-pacing as used in the context of studying independently of the instructor and other students, it is usually necessary to have self-directional, self-instructional materials. These materials are usually packaged as modules or learning activity packages; however, other means of packaging self-directional, self-instructional materials are possible. Note that self-testing is not acceptable in the usual school setting. Peer testing, if acceptable, could, to some degree, reduce teacher dependency.

SECTION III

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION

The concept of student freedom of choice is often coupled with the concept of individualization. The more freedom the student is given in selecting objectives, learning activities (or learning styles) and performance standards, the more "individualized" the course becomes. In addition to freedom of choice, the concept of freedom of time is often considered a necessity for individualized instruction. The freedom to take as much time as needed to master a task is necessary in order to have self-pacing. Finally, the freedom to work independently or with others and the freedom to move from one location to another when necessary are concepts implied in individualized instruction.

Again, it appears that individualization is not a distinct term, but one which can assume several forms depending upon the degree of freedom the student is allowed. The following chart adapted from Baird, et al., identifies four forms of individualized instruction; see Chart 1.

Perhaps the most practical of these four forms of individualized instruction for vocational education at the secondary school level is the prescribed instruction form. It will be possible to allow more student freedom in choosing both objectives and learning activities as more catalogs of performance objectives and accompanying teaching materials become available.

Instructors may wish to analyze their programs, using the chart shown on this page, to determine the most practical form of individualization for their particular situation.

Although individualized instruction can take many forms, all of these forms have about the same objective - to provide instruction which best meets the individual interests, needs and learning styles of each student.

CHART 1

		OBJECTIVES	
		COURSE DETERMINED	LEARNER SELECTED
LEARNING ACTIVITIES	COURSE DETERMINED	Prescribed instruction	Personalized instruction
	LEARNER SELECTED	Self-directed instruction	Independent study

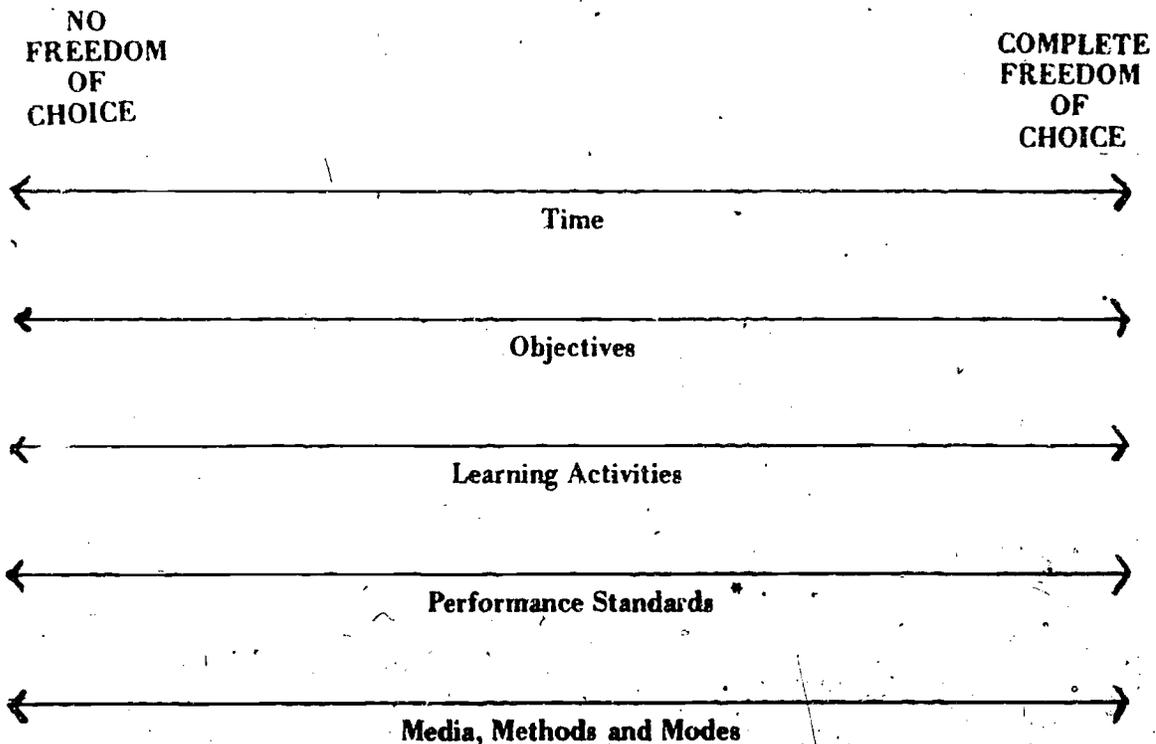
¹ Baird, Belt, Holder and Webb, *A Behavioral Approach For Teaching* (Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown Co., 1972) cited in Air Force Manual 50-2 - *Instructional Systems Development*. (Washington, D.C., 1975) Section 5, page 10.

This is accomplished by:

1. Providing a variety of:
 - a. objectives
 - b. learning activities
 - c. performance standards
 - d. media, methods and modes of instruction
2. Providing freedom of:
 - a. time (amount, schedule)
 - b. choice of objectives
 - c. choice of learning activities
 - d. choice of performance standards *
 - e. choice of methods, media and modes

Freedom or flexibility may then be the "bottom line" or the basic principle underlying individualized instruction. The following continuums will perhaps best express this principle. See Chart 2.

CHART 2
CONTINUUMS OF FREEDOMS FOR INDIVIDUALIZATION



*Performance standards would not be negotiable in a performance-based program.

SECTION IV

SUGGESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUALIZING INSTRUCTION

Suggestions for individualizing instruction:

1. Make student interests, needs and goals the major focus of program planning.
2. Know all you can about your students – their interests, needs, goals and learning styles. Study diagnostic tests with counselors, visit parents, interview student.
3. Provide a variety of objectives for your students.
4. State all objectives including those taken from V-Tees catalogs and supplemental content, as performance objectives which include performance standards, so that students can be evaluated "individually" and not according to how they compare with peers.
5. Provide a variety of learning activities from which students may select.
6. Provide a variety of performance standards for each objective in terms of student goals. Job performance standards may not be negotiable, however.
7. Provide a variety of strategies or methods:

discussion
modules
independent study
shop or laboratory work
simulations
library research
case studies
brainstorming
role-playing
games
lecture

8. Provide a variety of media:

Classroom Instructor

Lecturer
Demonstrator
Tutor/Coach

Instructional Aids

35 mm Slides
Chalkboard
8 mm Movie (silent loop)

Multimodal Media

Prenarrated Slides (with stop)
Prenarrated Filmstrip
Slide/Workbook/Audio cassette
Movies (sound)
TV (cassette)

Print

Books
Computer (words & numbers only)
Programmed Instruction Booklet
Microfiche

Peer

Role-Playing
Discussion Group
Tutor/Coach

Simulation

Actual Equipment Trainer
Gaming
Interactive Computer

9. Provide self-directional, self-instructional material when feasible and appropriate.
10. Provide as much student freedom of choice as feasible and appropriate.
11. Provide freedom of time to allow self-pacing when feasible and appropriate.

SECTION V

THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION

Perhaps the instructor is functioning at the height of his/her effectiveness when the instructional program is almost totally individualized — individualized in the sense that, to the maximum extent feasible, student interests, needs and goals are being met.

As previously mentioned, the instructor will use a variety of methods, media and modes in individualizing the instructional program. So, the instructor, teaching on a truly individualized basis, must be versatile.

Perhaps at one period of time the instructor will perform more as a "store clerk" who is constantly trying to help the customers fill his/her needs by offering a variety of products and helping them to make selections. And, at another time, the instructor may act more as a football coach as he/she provides large group instruction to fill a need common to the entire team, small group instruction for a need common to the defensive team and one-on-one instruction for the quarterback or kicker.

But, perhaps the greatest change of role occurs when self-directional, self-instructional materials are made available to the student so that self-pacing can be used. It is then that the instructor is freed from some of his/her previous duties such as providing lectures and demonstrations so that he/she spends more time setting up learning stations, setting up reference materials, scheduling learning activities, keeping records, setting up for performance testing, locating or developing self-instructional materials, and counseling students. This does not mean that the instructor will not at times lecture or provide demonstrations to groups. However, it may mean that more of his/her lectures or demonstrations will be filmed and/or taped for use in a self-paced program. The self-paced program will rely less on the teacher as the sole source of knowledge and the evaluation of achievement, and more on the instructor as the counselor, helper and manager of learning activities.

A CASE STUDY

Jim and Meg continue their discussion of the relationship between performance-based vocational education and individualized instruction.

At their previous coffee break Jim and Meg discussed the relationship between performance-based vocational education and individualized instruction. Today they again meet for coffee and continue their discussion. Jim has already fixed his coffee. Meg is pouring a fresh cup.

MEG: "Jim, we've gotta talk some more about this PBVE and individualization. I thought I had things about straight before, but after that session we had last week, I'm not so sure. You know, we said that PBVE almost demands that instruction be individualized because student's performance is judged on mastery of a task and the student is given the freedom of time necessary to attain mastery. So the freedom of time is what we are talking about—time to master? And that requires self-pacing doesn't it?"

JIM: "Well, not quite. You could provide time for mastery by group pacing, but faster students would surely waste a lot of time waiting for the slower students to master. So, in many cases, self-pacing would be the more practical approach."

MEG: "But, Jim, these terms which the teachers used in yesterday's session to talk about individualized instruction bothered me. The teachers talked about prescribed instruction, self-directed instruction, personalized instruction and independent study. Why do we have to have so many names for individualized instruction? We all know what we're talking about when we say individualized instruction—don't we?"

JIM: "Meg, I understand your concern, but I disagree. I don't think we do know what we're talking about when we use the terms individualized instruction. It is like the child who says 'look at the

pretty flower' but cannot say 'look at the pretty rose' because he/she cannot yet differentiate types of flowers. Some say that differentiating and grouping by differences and likenesses are the roots of all education."

MEG: "Oh Jim, for Pete's Sake. I know that; but what good is it going to do me to speak this terminology if I'm not going to use more than one of these types of individualized instruction?"

JIM: "Meg, granted, you will probably use the prescribed form most of the time and therefore your students will not have the freedom to select objectives or learning activities. But if you allow for self-pacing, you have given the student freedom of time to master. And I suspect that you will also allow your students some freedom in the selection of learning activities. After all, alternative learning activities could easily be added in each module where such materials are being used and wouldn't that make it, at least to some sense, self-directed instruction?"

MEG: "Well, I guess so, but I can't think of any case where I would use personalized instruction—isn't that what you call it when you let the student select his/her objectives and you provide the learning activities?"

JIM: "Yes, that's right; but come now Meg, you can allow a student some freedom in selecting objectives can't you? I mean, . . . you know . . . like handicapped students . . . Certainly you would allow them some freedom wouldn't you?"

MEG: "No, I would prescribe objectives for these students, or I should say that I would cooperate with the student and parents of the student in prescribing the objectives and learning activities

needed."

JIM: "Hmmm, maybe you are right, Meg. I hadn't thought of it that way. But at least you did allow the student some input and you did 'tailor-make' the course on an individual basis."

MEG: "Well maybe; but, Jim, I just can't imagine a case in the secondary school where a student could be allowed independent study."

JIM: "Aw, Meg, sure you can. Aren't you using independent study when you allow a student to select and accomplish a project on his/her own? Remember Ann Smith? Ann was the only student in your horticulture course who was interested in operating a retail flower shop. You let Ann select her own projects. Remember the mock wedding—she did all the flowers for that; and the potted flowers sale she planned and conducted at school—wasn't that independent study? And didn't she study at her own pace?"

MEG: "No, I suggested most of the objectives and learning activities, but I will admit that Ann was consulted and given some options. But, granted, she did progress at her own pace."

JIM: "Maybe you're right, Meg? at the secondary level most students need help in selecting both objectives and learning activities. Truly independent study may be only for more mature students at the post-secondary level."

MEG: "I think that is true. I think that we should prescribe objectives and learning activities for the most part, but prescribe on an individual-student basis."

JIM: "I would like to think we could, Meg, but I doubt that we can do much of this. You see, the State Department of Education may require that all students in a specific course satisfactorily complete certain

objectives. Teachers may not be given the flexibility needed to 'tailor-make' instruction for individual students."

MEG: "I disagree, Jim: I, in effect, 'tailor-made' a course for Ann Smith. I don't think we will be held accountable for any specific objectives. As long as the objectives selected are within the domain of the course, I see no problem."

JIM: "Maybe you're right, Meg."

MEG: "Jim, I think the 'bottom line' or major freedom that we are talking about—the thing that does most to effect individualization—is the freedom of time, and that is provided through self-pacing. Self-pacing means freedom of time to master."

JIM: "I agree, Meg."

MEG: "Jim, how did we get off the subject? We were talking about the relationship of PBVE and individualized instruction and ended up talking about the different forms of individualization. Why did we do that? What happened to PBVE?"

JIM: "Meg, we are really talking about the different methods of delivering performance-based vocational education. Perhaps the most fundamental question to be answered in selecting such a method involves the amount of freedom students are to be provided—freedom to select objectives and learning activities and freedom to progress at one's own pace. This question will be answered by every vocational teacher either consciously or unconsciously. I think the teacher should be conscious of her/his decisions and be able to communicate such decisions."

MEG: "Well, Jim, you still haven't given me a good reason for learning to differentiate among all those forms of individualized instruction, but I did enjoy the coffee. See you later."

JIM: "See you, Meg."

Review the Case Study. Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Do you think Meg is right in concluding that most vocational teachers will, of necessity, prescribe objectives and learning activities for students?
2. Was Meg correct in saying that Ann Smith's course of study was prescribed and not independent?
3. Was Jim correct in inferring that, at the secondary level, most students are not mature enough to select their own objectives and learning activities?
4. Was Meg correct in concluding that the "bottom line" or major freedom to be provided students is the freedom of time to master in the form of self-pacing?

Model Responses

4. As mentioned earlier, it does seem that the freedom of time for mastery may be the most realistic freedom to provide. However, it would be difficult to say that the freedom of time is more or less important than the freedom to select objectives or learning activities.

3. Yes, Jim was probably correct. However, students should be given as much freedom as maturity permits and as is feasible within the boundaries of a course or even among courses, if feasible, at the secondary level. Certainly students should have some input into the selections of objectives and learning activities to meet individual needs or learning styles.

2. Yes - the objectives and learning activities were prescribed but in this case "tailor-made" to the needs of the student.

1. It is true that most objectives and learning activities will be prescribed for students at the secondary level. However, it is hoped that within a course objectives could be "tailor-made" to the individual career needs of students to the greatest extent possible.

INDIVIDUALIZATION RATING SCALE¹

Rate your present program of instruction on the following scale.

NEVER SOMETIMES ALWAYS
 1 2 3 4 5

1. Students are tested and placed in the curriculum at the point they are ready to learn.
2. Students are allowed to progress at their own rate.
3. Students can pre-test materials they already know.
4. Students are allowed to select from alternative methods of learning.
5. Students are assigned learning that meets their individual needs, rather than the needs of the entire class.
6. Students help each other.
7. Students understand what to do at all times.
8. Students carry out assignments independently without being "spoon fed."
9. Students are encouraged to participate in the planning of learning activities.
10. Students know the minimum level of acceptable performance necessary to complete their objective.
11. The facility allows the student to work alone if he/she desires.
12. The facility allows students to move about freely to complete their assignments.

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

² Adapted from "Training for Individualized Programs." (Salem, Oregon: The Oregon State Department of Education and The Educational Coordinating Council), n.d., as cited by Fraser, Larry, et. al., in *The Vocational Educator's Guide to Competency-Based Personalized Instruction*. (St. Paul, Minnesota: The Minnesota State Department of Education, Vocational Division, 1976) pp. 45-46.

13. The facility allows for both large and small group activity.

1 2 3 4 5

14. All learning materials are accessible to the student.

1 2 3 4 5

15. Aides (either student or para-professional) are available to provide assistance to students needing it.

1 2 3 4 5

A score of less than 45 would indicate that the instructor may need to consider making a greater effort to individualize instruction.

CHECK-OUT ACTIVITIES

Inform your instructor that you are ready to be tested. You will be provided with a copy of a multiple choice/matching test and an answer sheet. Record your answers on the answer sheet and return both the test and the answer sheet to the instructor.