This document is the last in a series of 12 early childhood program descriptions compiled by the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development. The program described here is the Primary Education Project (PEP) developed at the Learning Research and Development Center of the University of Pittsburgh. The PEP project is concerned with the development and evaluation of a model of individualized education for young children which is suitable for implementation in American public schools. To date, experimental materials for nursery school and first, second, and third grade have been developed. PEP concentrates on basic skills and concepts that are prerequisites for future academic subject matter. The PEP curriculum outlines carefully sequenced predetermined steps the child is to progress through at his own rate. If any difficulty is experienced at a step, the instruction is revised until the child has mastered the assignment so that the child never equates difficulty with failure. Included in the program description are brief outlines of: (1) goals and objectives, (2) content and materials, (3) classroom activities, (4) parent involvement, (5) professional and paraprofessional training, (6) administrative requirements and costs, (7) program development and evaluation, and (8) program history and present (1971) status. (JWB)
Program Summary

EYEPEDUCATION PROJECT

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The Regents of the University of California
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The California State Board of Education
The Regents of the University of California
The Utah State Board of Education
The Nevada State Board of Education
The Nevada State Board of Education
The Regents of the University of Nevada

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Contractors undertaking such projects under Government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their professional judgment in the conduct of the project. Points of view or opinions supported by the Laboratory are not necessarily represented by the Office of Education, U.S. Department of Education, or supported by the Government.
The Primary Education Project (PEP) is currently under development at the Learning Research and Development Center of the University of Pittsburgh. The project is concerned with the development and evaluation of a model of individualized education for young children suitable for implementation in American public schools.

To date, experimental materials for nursery school (ages three and four), first, second and third grade (ages six and seven) have been developed. The program is designed for an urban setting. It is felt that young children in such environments will benefit from an educational experience in which they are encouraged to learn at their own rate. The program is designed to be adaptable to individual needs and abilities.

To meet these requirements, the project staff is developing a carefully sequenced curriculum designed to be adaptable to individual needs and abilities. The PEP curriculum outlines predetermined steps the child is to go through in advance, and the patterns are intended to enable the child to master the assignment. If any difficulty is experienced at any stage, the instruction is repeated until the child has mastered the assignment. According to the rationale of the program, the child is not equated with failure. This is important because the child who experiences success is more confident and more motivated to learn than the child who merely fails at the task.

CONTENT AND MATERIALS:

PEP concentrates on basic skills and concepts that are prerequisites for future academic subjects. Three general classes of skills are included in the PEP model: (a) perceptual and motor skills, and (c) conceptual and linguistic skills. The first set of skills includes the ability to concentrate on a task and resist distractions, the ability to follow directions, and the ability to finish a task once it is started. These skills are intended to enable the child to function well in the classroom. Perceptual and motor skills include such things as direction, recognition, and body control. Conceptual and linguistic skills include classifying, reasoning, pattern analysis, and auditory discrimination.

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To teach these skills, PEP has identified and sequenced specific learning objectives and organized them into four curriculum areas: beginning reading; introductory mathematics; classification and language; and visual, auditory, and motor development.

There is a behavioral objective for each lesson. These objectives are sequenced in terms of degree of difficulty—from simple to more difficult tasks. A few examples of objectives are:

**Classification Skills**
- One-dimensional sorting without noisy attributes
  - 1.0 Basic forms of movement: The child can:
    - 1.1 Skip, gallop, run, etc.
    - 1.2 Hop on either foot
    - 1.3 Leap
    - 1.4 Jump, landing simultaneously on both feet
    - 1.5 Walk at various paces, e.g., an even pace

**Motor Skills**
- and attend to relevant aspects of a stimulus.
  - 2.0 Processing attention: The child can discover tasks for increasingly extended periods of time.
  - 1.0 Attention span: The child can work at a given task.

**Orienting and Attending Skills**
- These skills are developed and sequenced in specific learning objectives and have objectives are organized into separate categories on the basis of a given attribute (e.g., color, function, texture, etc.).

The PEM curriculum requires continual diagnosis of learning needs. Each child is tested frequently, and on the basis of test results, the teacher prepares task assignments using such behavioral objectives as are listed above.
When the child completes his task, he is tested again to see if he attained the objective. He is either given a new assignment if he demonstrates he is ready, or assigned additional work if his test shows the need. This continual testing process insures that each child receives instruction tailored to his own needs.

A continuous record of each child's progress is maintained, allowing the teacher to know precisely at what step the child is, what progress is being made, and what needs must be met. A continuous record of each child's progress is maintained. This process insures that each child receives instruction tailored to his needs. If he demonstrates he is ready, he is tested again to see if he attained the objective. He is assigned additional work if necessary.
The teaching staff... The training project is conducted jointly by the Learning Research and Development Center's Learning Laboratory and the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh.

**Administrative Requirements and Costs:**

Training materials currently being developed include videotapes, some of the course's learning laboratories and the school of education at the University of Pittsburgh.

**Program History and Present Status:**

The Primary Education Project (PEP) started in 1967 as a cooperative undertaking of the University of Pittsburgh, the Pittsburgh Public Schools, and the General Learning Corporation. The learning research staff is also developing instruments to measure learning outcomes in the affective domain.

The PEP model is based on current theories that regard intelligence as learned and responsive to experience rather than fixed and inherited (Hunt, 1961). In designing the skill sequences, the PEP staff drew heavily on the work of Piaget (The Child's Conception of Numbers, Mathematical Concepts of Geometry, etc.) and Jerome Bruner (on cognitive development). The specific instructional sequences, however, were developed by the PEP staff through a process of identifying each task, its components, and prerequisites (Resnick, 1967; Resnick, Wang, and Kaplan, 1970; Resnick, Wang, and Kaplan, 1970).

Because the project is still in the developmental stage, there is no way of determining the requisite costs or of assessing the training needs of the PEP staff. The training project is conducted jointly by the Learning Research and Development Center's Learning Laboratory and the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh.
The project staff is continuing to analyze, test, write, and retell the PEP program, as well as to develop new curriculum areas to add to the current model. As stated, PEP is also trying to develop new methods of parent involvement and to devise training programs that will enable teachers to function effectively in this program. The project is now supported by the Ford Foundation, with additional support from the U.S. Office of Education. The University’s School of Education is responsible for developing and presenting teacher training programs. The General Learning Corporation provided the initial funding for the project. The project is being developed in two Pittsburgh schools. The projected date of completion of the project is 1972.