ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT of the LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

• Why is it appropriate to consider the teacher as the classroom manager?
• What changes have taken place for teachers to create this change in role?
• What is the supporting role of the paraprofessional?
ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT of the LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (continued)

• How do curriculum requirements influence classroom organization?
• How do achievement standards and testing impact classroom organization?
• How does testing of student achievement influence the management of the learning environment?
Berliner's Concepts of "Teacher"

- Teacher as Mother Earth
- Teacher as Information Giver
- Teacher as Executive
Systemic Changes In Classrooms Which Have Affected a Teacher’s Role:

- You, the paraprofessional
- Your Role
- Curriculum Requirements
Understanding the Teacher’s Role

• It affects what we expect of teachers.

• It gives an indication of what training they need.

• It helps Administrators understand what resources and support they need to carry out their responsibilities.

• As paraprofessionals understand your role in the learning environment, you will be better equipped to set priorities, organize your work, and communicate with your supervising teacher.
Classroom Functions

• **Curriculum** (what we teach)

• **Instructional strategies** (how we teach)

• **Classroom management** (physical management of the learning environment)
Interaction of Curriculum, Instructional Strategies, and Management Techniques

Curriculum

Instructional

- Strategies

- Management Techniques
Interaction of Curriculum, Instructional Strategies, and Management Techniques
Interaction of Curriculum, Instruction, and Management I

- **Curriculum**
  - Inappropriate for student Abilities e.g., too easy or too hard

- **Instructional Strategies**
  - Good

- **Management Techniques**
  - Good

Behavior Problems, And Limited Student Learning
Interaction of Curriculum, Instruction, and Management II

Curriculum

Instructional Strategies

Management Techniques

Appropriate

Limited variation (Poor)

Poor

Behavior Problems, Limited Student Learning

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CURRICULUM

- Latin: *a course of study*

- Consists of *scope* and *sequence*
  
  **Scope** - the range of activities, or the extent of the subject matter to be covered (*what* and *how much* to teach)

  **Sequence** - the process of following in space, time, or thought (*when* to teach specific subject matter).
RESPONSIBILITY FOR CURRICULUM

- School Boards
- Superintendent of Schools
- Director of curriculum
- Parents and teachers
- Curriculum selection committee

- To identify goals for content area;
- Review textbooks, and other materials;
- Compose a list of adopted or approved textbooks for school use.
CURRICULUM AND MANAGEMENT

Example 1: 2nd Grade Students

*Developmentally appropriate scope:*

- Solve whole number problems using addition & subtraction in vertical/horizontal notation.
- Use fractions to identify parts of the whole.
  - Model and illustrate meanings of addition and subtraction and describe how they relate.
CURRICULUM AND MANAGEMENT

Example 1: 2nd Grade Students

**Appropriate instructional techniques:**

- Students use manipulatives (physical equipment) for some work
- They may still need to count on their fingers and talk to themselves as they work
- Often taught in small groups
- Often complete work in a workbook or on worksheets, rather than spending unnecessary time on laborious copying.
Example 1: 2nd Grade Students

Typical physical arrangements:

- Desks/tables grouped rather than in rows
- Storage space needed for workbooks and manipulatives
- The classroom will “buzz” with the voices of students working in groups or talking themselves through their work
Example 2: 9th Grade Students

Developmentally appropriate scope:

- Draw conclusions using concepts of probability after collecting organizing, and analyzing a data set
- Understand and apply measurement tools, formulas, and techniques
- Recognize, describe and identify geometric shapes; solve problems using spatial and logical reasoning; apply geometric principles; modeling
Example 2: 9th Grade Students

*Appropriate instructional techniques:*

- Taught as a whole class
- Students use calculators for basic operations, and textbooks for information
- Students copy practice problems from a textbook or chalkboard into exercise books
- Students move from one classroom to another for each class period, and are expected to bring their own books and equipment with them
Example 2: 9th Grade Students

*Typical physical arrangements:*

- Desks in orderly rows facing the front
- Students work without manipulatives to help visualize concepts
- Classes may have larger numbers of students
- Relatively little storage needed for books and equipment
- The classroom tends to be quieter, with only one voice heard at a time
Possible Modifications

- Modify instructional materials and activities
- Reduce the level of difficulty.
- Reduce the breadth of the curriculum.
- Increased emphasis on practical and vocational skills.
- Modifications must be under the direction of a licensed teacher.
**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WORKING WITH STUDENTS WHO NEED A MODIFIED CURRICULUM**

- **Give clear directions, one at a time.**
- **Break larger tasks into their smaller components and assign one component at a time.**
- **Enlarge the font on worksheets, using colored paper, to make reading easier.**
TESTING: KNOWING WHETHER WE ARE GETTING IT RIGHT

- **Accountability**: schools and teachers should be able to show that they are doing the job that they are paid to do.

- **Effectiveness**: teachers constantly look for evidence that their students are learning, so that they know whether to re-teach or modify teaching.
CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

• Designed to match the current curriculum

• Scored as a straightforward count of correct answers, or a percentage of answers correct for each individual student

• Formative - to give the teacher a level of information that allows him or her to take action to improve the student’s understanding.
NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

- Developed around a very general curriculum

- "Normed" on large groups of students from different schools

- Questions answered "mostly correct" are retained; those answered mostly incorrectly are rejected or simplified

- Expensive, so almost always are developed commercially

- Usually scored by the company that produces them
NORM-REFERENCED TESTS (cont’d.)

• Scores are composite: given for the whole class or grade level, not for individuals, and expressed as averages and percentiles.

• Results are summative— they give a summary of how students have performed but do not provide enough information to help a teacher intervene and improve a student’s understanding.
THE CHALLENGE OF TESTS

- Value-Added: How Much Students Have Learned
- Valid Tests: Matching Tests with Teaching
TESTING

- Takes time
- Holds teachers and schools accountable
- Enables teachers and paraprofessionals to know whether students are being successful
- This is an important part of the instructional process and must be scheduled and planned