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Ideally, the early intellectual development of the child should take place in the home. If this training cannot be supplied adequately in the home and by the parents, then the school is the logical social agency to do it.

The size of the family, the concern of the parents with the basic necessities of life, the low level of education of the parents, the frequent absense of a male parent, and the lack of a great deal of interaction between children and adults all conspire to reduce the stimulation, language development, and intellectual development of disadvantaged children. These are handicaps that the teacher of the disadvantaged must learn to work with and help them overcome.

Discipline and a structured routine are essential for teaching the disadvantaged child. These children usually want to get away with as much as possible and do as little as possible, yet they want to learn and they can learn. Discipline and a routine must, of course, complement "good teaching."

There are certain methods of class discipline that are necessary in working with disadvantaged youth.

First, the children should learn to enter the room in an orderly fashion. They are entering to learn, not to have fun, so they should come in and go to work. The teacher should keep a clean and attractive room. The disorder of a room seems to condone disorderly conduct. This pride in the appearance of the room shows the students that the teacher is concerned with the total classroom situation. The teacher needs to be consistent with class routine. Disadvantaged children cannot cope with change. Any necessary change should be gradual and not frequent.

Getting to know the students early in the term--knowing a child by name and knowing his abilities--helps establish mutual understanding. The teacher of disadvantaged children must hold her students accountable. She should challenge (but never humiliate) the student who comes in late or does not do his work. Each student should be paying complete attention before the teacher begins the lesson.

Instructions for disadvantaged children must be clear. The teacher should give one instruction at a time and make sure each instruction is understood before giving the next one. A good teacher will aim for full class participation. Daydreamers can be brought back by asking them to repeat what was previously cited.

She should explain to the child that he has wasted valuable class time, reminding him that he usually does good work. She can keep students attentive by walking around the room and asking questions at random. A teacher's best method of maintaining order is to keep the students interested.

The relationship between a teacher of disadvantaged children and her class should be friendly, but somewhat distant.

The teacher must be consistent with discipline. If she is lenient one day and strict the next, the child becomes bewildered. However, in dealing with individual children she should be flexible--deal with individual offenders in individual ways.

Disadvantaged children lack confidence in their ability to achieve. They soon fail to care. They need to be rewarded, encouraged, prodded each day. A teacher should never embarrass or criticize a child because of inability. She should stress the child's strengths (he is aware of his weaknesses already). She can use his strengths to provide experiences that will help him cope with his deficiencies.

Text books can be supplemented with intercultural lessons and with history and culture of minority groups which relate to a particular subject.

Motivation cannot be imposed or falsely generated for a few moments. Teaching must be practical, concrete, interesting, and oriented toward the child's level of learning. Disadvantaged children are doers--they do not think in concepts. Creative experiences that will engage the child actively in the lesson should be devised. Games create interest as well as teach. The children need to have their work displayed and commented on. Emphasis should be placed on what the slower child has in common with other children rather than on how he differs.

Any theft or defacing of property must be accounted for to prevent a bad situation from developing. Threats and obscene language should be dealt with calmly. (Students enjoy seeing the teacher lose control.)

When a disadvantaged child's behavior warrants a visit with his parents or a note to them, the teacher should begin by discussing the child's good points and she should act as though the parents/help and support in correcting the situation is a certainty.

In working with disadvantaged children, there will be many times when no established rule or suggestion will be practical. The teacher will have to use her common sense and her concern for the children as a basis for her decision on how to handle the situation.

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