

1959

# The attitudes of fourth and sixth grade children toward classroom discipline.

---

<https://hdl.handle.net/2144/14421>

*Downloaded from DSpace Repository, DSpace Institution's institutional repository*

*Thesis*  
*Cedroni, A. M., et al*  
*1959*

BOSTON UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Thesis

THE ATTITUDES OF FOURTH AND  
SIXTH GRADE CHILDREN TOWARD  
CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE

Submitted by

Angela Mary Cedroni

(Ed. B., Rhode Island College of Education, 1953)

Mary Louise Sullivan

(Ed. B., Rhode Island College of Education, 1945)

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Education

1959

Boston University  
School of Education  
Library

First Reader: Dr. W. Linwood Chase,  
Professor of Education

Second Reader: Dr. Harry V. Anderson,  
Assistant Professor of Education

Importance of the study. The problems of discipline and self-control are assuming a new significance in today's world. In an earnest attempt to help children develop intellectual and moral discipline, various theories and opinions are being advanced concerning what is meant by discipline, what kind of discipline is wanted, and by what methods it can best be achieved.

The field is much too broad to even consider in one study. One aspect has been chosen for this investigation--that of children's attitudes toward discipline in the classroom. This important area of research, perhaps because of obvious investigative difficulties, has been surprisingly neglected. A study which could avoid the common pitfalls of subjectivity and definitional controversy is difficult to imagine, but an attempt to evaluate pupils' attitudes seems worthwhile despite its vulnerability to the objections of the statistical purist.

A controversial issue of modern education is whether or not a traditional or a progressive philosophy in teaching produces greater growth in a child's development. Experimental studies (further discussed in Chapter II) seem to show that democratic methods in a classroom are superior to traditional principles and methods. It is particularly interesting to the writers of this study to be able to examine the attitudes of fourth and sixth grade pupils toward the

traditional and the progressive methods of discipline exercised by teachers in the classroom. Bush tells us that "the effectiveness of the relationship between a teacher and a pupil is influenced by the techniques of control which teachers and pupils attempt to exercise over each other as well as by the purposes for which they are striving."<sup>1</sup>

Definitions of terms used. Throughout this study the term attitude is used to denote that consistency of response to various behavioral problems arising in a classroom situation which reveals the individual's feelings concerning disciplinary methods. Thurstone defines attitude as "a generalized reaction for or against a specific psychological object."<sup>2</sup> However, for purposes of this study it was felt that Allport's preference for treatment of the term is more applicable. He proposes that attitude be thought of as "a mental and neural state of readiness organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related."<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Robert Nelson Bush, The Teacher-Pupil Relationship (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1954), p. 137.

<sup>2</sup>Walter S. Monroe (ed.), Encyclopedia of Educational Research (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1950), p. 77.

<sup>3</sup>Monroe, Ibid.

words or held up to intellectual scrutiny.

Wickman's study of children's behavior and teachers' attitudes was an effort to analyze prevailing attitudes toward behavior problems of children.<sup>17</sup>

A study of the attitudes of sixth grade children toward respect for authority by McGann indicated that the sixth grade child has an adequate knowledge of the correct thing to do in regard to respect for authority.<sup>18</sup>

A survey of discipline in a junior high school by Hall concluded that the teacher represented the best approach to the problem of promoting better discipline in the school. Of the various factors within the school affecting discipline, there was none more important than the teacher himself.<sup>19</sup>

Lockhart's study was undertaken to determine the attitude of children toward law. No difference existed between the attitude of boys and the attitude of girls toward law in grades four to nine.<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup>Wickman, op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>18</sup>Lena Carter McGann, "The Attitudes of Sixth Grade Children Toward Respect for Authority" (unpublished Master's thesis, Boston University, 1946).

<sup>19</sup>Emery Howard Hall, "A Survey of Discipline in a Junior High School" (unpublished Master's thesis, R. I. College of Education, 1953).

<sup>20</sup>Earl G. Lockhart, The Attitudes of Children Toward Law (Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Studies in Character, Vol. III, No. 1, 1933).

In another study, letters from 12,000 children, in response to a radio contest in which children were asked to write on the subject, "The Teacher Who Has Helped Me Most," were divided into three age groups. The age group, 9 - 14, mentioned wide interests, cooperative--democratic attitude, patience, kindness and consideration for the individual, and consistent behavior as the first five characteristics.<sup>21</sup>

Summary. From the literature reviewed the following points appear evident:

1. Discipline has and shall continue to maintain an important position in education.
2. Although many problems exist in measuring attitudes, tabulating answers to a questionnaire can determine the prevalence of an attitude in a group.
3. For the survival of a democracy, a true democratic classroom climate must be sought and achieved.
4. Although the relationship between pupil and teacher attitudes is many and varied, a study of this nature is necessary for insight into educative problems otherwise inpenetrable.

---

<sup>21</sup>Ralph H. Ojemann, Personality Adjustment of Individual Children, National Education Association, Department of Classroom Teachers and American Educational Research Association (October, 1954), p. 16.

## CHAPTER III

### PLAN OF PROCEDURE

This chapter explains the way in which data were obtained and organized in an effort to determine the attitudes of fourth and sixth grade children toward disciplinary methods in the classroom. The study was conducted in the elementary schools of the city of Warwick, Rhode Island. The city, one of the fastest growing in the United States, with a population of over 60,000, is chiefly suburban in nature. Most of its working inhabitants are commuters of average middle class socio-economic status. It has a rapidly expanding school system whose population has doubled in the past ten years.

Construction of the research instrument. The preparation of an instrument to measure children's attitudes toward classroom disciplinary techniques is primarily a creative endeavor. No such standardized instrument exists. Much thought, therefore, was given to the format of such an inventory. After several possible solutions were weighed, it was decided, with the concurrence of the faculty adviser, that the most interesting and stimulating experience for elementary school children would be a series of typical classroom situations to which they might react with prepared choices along an intended permissive--authoritarian continuum.



To do this a number of elementary teachers were polled for suggested items which by nature would lead to some form of disciplinary technique in the classroom. Suggested items were listed, duplicates eliminated, and a final list of items thought to be most prevalent in classrooms resulted. Reference was then made to one of Wickman's tables--"Chart XI - Frequency With Which Behavior Problems Occurring 'Occasionally' or 'Habitually' In Children Were Considered Serious By Teachers (Cleveland School)."<sup>1</sup> Similarities between the teacher-made list and Wickman's table were obvious. From this prepared list thirteen items were selected, resulting in what was then used as a pupil preference test.

Each selected item was developed into a brief descriptive situation. The situations were followed by two questions:

1. What do you think the teacher did?
2. What do you think the teacher should have done?

The questions were followed by three multiple choice answers, appearing in random order, for the thirteen situations. In every situation, however, the answers to the second question appeared in the same order as those answers

---

<sup>1</sup>E. K. Wickman, Children's Behavior and Teachers' Attitudes (New York: The Commonwealth Fund, 1928), p. 85.

used with the first question. The responses were geared to form an authoritarian, permissive, and eclectic type of disciplinary action. A sample of one test situation follows:

Jane is cheating in an arithmetic test. This is the first time it has been noticed by the teacher.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Scolded Jane and ripped the paper.
- b. Went to Jane's desk and spoke to her quietly.
- c. Spoke to the class right away about doing one's own work.

What do you think the teacher should have done?

- a. Scolded Jane and ripped the paper.
- b. Gone to Jane's desk and spoken to her quietly.
- c. Spoken to the class right away about doing one's own work.

The same pattern was followed in constructing a research instrument for the teachers' use. Since it was felt the teachers would respond similarly to both questions, the second question--What do you think the teacher should have done?--was eliminated.

The instrument was presented to the graduate seminar group in the Boston University School of Education. Members of the group assisted with constructive criticism of the instrument. Suggestions as to the tense of verbs and the addition of two situations were followed. While the instrument was still in its infancy, it was administered to a small group of fifth grade pupils for experimental purposes. From this trial run, an estimated time schedule was

developed and the opportunity to examine closely the suitability of vocabulary was provided.

A small jury, five supervising principals from Warwick, was then asked to pass judgment on the face validity of the three types of responses--authoritarian, permissive, and eclectic--that had been selected by the researchers. The judgments thus derived were used in the final instrument. The entire instrument and scoring key may be seen in the appendix.

Administration of the instrument. It was considered desirable to give the research instrument to fourth and sixth grade children to determine what differences, if any, occurred between the two groups. Children were obtained from elementary schools, selected by socio-economic basis, in a rapidly growing Rhode Island community. Permission for the study to be conducted was granted by the superintendent. Elementary principals cooperated with the plans.

To help avoid situational bias in the responses, it was decided that the testing should be done by the writers themselves. While the tests were administered, teachers voluntarily left their classrooms using this time to respond to the comparable teacher's check list.

Directions for the administration of the test consisted of reading aloud the instructions while the pupils

did?", were cumulated.

Treatment of the collected data is presented in Chapter IV.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This chapter is devoted to the analysis of the data. The fourteen tables which follow were constructed to facilitate the interpretation of children's attitudes toward disciplinary methods in typical classroom situations. Construction of the tables was based upon the variables of grade, sex, and socio-economic status.

Percentages in the tables were rounded to the nearest whole per cent. The tables show the frequency and per cent of A (authoritarian), P (permissive), and E (eclectic) preferences of the prepared choices.

Since non-completed tests were so few (three in number), they were eliminated. Consequently, all scores are complete.

Total pupil responses. A total group comprising 617 pupils participated in this portion of the study. Descriptive data concerning the questions, "What do you think the teacher did?" and "What do you think the teacher should have done?", appear in Table I.

The figures reported are arrived at by multiplying the number of children's choices by the number of available situations. In other words, in Table I, if all the children (617) chose the same type response to each situation (15),

Grade four responses. Table II indicates the frequency and per cent of the answers selected by the fourth grade group. The highest possible score for any response on this table is 4,485.

TABLE II

COMPARISON OF GRADE FOUR RESPONSES  
AS TO WHAT THE TEACHER DID AND WHAT  
THE TEACHER SHOULD HAVE DONE

No. = 299

Question	A		P		E	
	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent
Did	1,644	37	1,181	26	1,660	37
Should Have Done	1,670	37	1,250	28	1,565	35

In the first question the authoritarian and the eclectic responses were chosen with the greatest frequency. The permissive response was selected by only 1,181 or 26 per cent of the group. Responses to the question, "What do you think the teacher should have done?", show the highest per cent to be authoritarian. It is interesting to note that in both questions an identical per cent occurs in the selection of the authoritarian response.

Grade six responses. The attitude of 318 sixth grade children is shown in Table III. The highest possible score for any response on this table is 4,770.

TABLE III

COMPARISON OF GRADE SIX RESPONSES  
AS TO WHAT THE TEACHER DID AND WHAT  
THE TEACHER SHOULD HAVE DONE

No. = 318

Question	A		P		E	
	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent
Did	1,473	31	1,267	29	1,930	40
Should Have Done	1,580	33	1,475	31	1,715	36

The most favored response is once again the eclectic with more than one third of the sixth grade group making this choice in question one. The authoritarian and permissive responses remain the least favored. Responses to the second question show a close similarity of choice. The eclectic is the most favored, though this is by a narrow margin.

Total boys' responses. This group consists of 315 boys. In Table IV, which shows their attitudes toward disciplinary methods in classroom situations, the greatest score would be 4,725.

TABLE IV.

COMPARISON OF TOTAL BOYS' RESPONSES  
AS TO WHAT THE TEACHER DID AND WHAT  
THE TEACHER SHOULD HAVE DONE

No. = 315

Question	A		P		E	
	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent
Did	1,660	35	1,222	26	1,843	39
Should Have Done	1,719	36	1,362	29	1,644	35

The boys in this group show, in the first question, a preference for the eclectic type of discipline. This choice was made by 39 per cent of the group. Of the two remaining choices, the authoritarian technique is considered to be more acceptable than the permissive. In the second question, the authoritarian response was chosen with the greatest frequency. The permissive response was chosen by only 29 per cent of the group.



Total girls' responses. In an attempt to notice if there were any outstanding sex differences in children's attitudes toward disciplinary methods in typical classroom situations, a group of 302 girls were used in this portion of the study. Table V presents the frequency and per cent of choices made by this group. The highest possible score on this table would be 4,530.

TABLE V

COMPARISON OF TOTAL GIRLS' RESPONSES  
AS TO WHAT THE TEACHER DID AND WHAT  
THE TEACHER SHOULD HAVE DONE

No. - 302

Question	A		P		E	
	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent
Did	1,457	32	1,226	27	1,847	41
Should Have Done	1,531	34	1,363	30	1,636	36

Forty-one per cent of the group chose the eclectic response. Permissiveness in classroom situations appears to be the least preferred (27 per cent) in the first question. Responses to the second question reveal a similarity of choice in the rank order of the three categories-- eclectic, authoritarian, permissive--as is reported in the first question.

Grade six boys' responses. Dividing the total boys into two groups, consideration will first be given to the sixth grade boys. This group consisted of 159 pupils. Their responses are reported in Table VI. The greatest frequency on this table would be 2,385.

TABLE VI

COMPARISON OF GRADE SIX BOYS' RESPONSES  
AS TO WHAT THE TEACHER DID AND WHAT  
THE TEACHER SHOULD HAVE DONE

No. = 159

Question	A		P		E	
	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent
Did	792	33	617	26	976	41
Should Have Done	846	36	701	29	838	35

The eclectic response, in the first question, represents 41 per cent of the boys responding. Only 26 per cent expressed a desire for the permissive choice. The second question reveals a 36 per cent choice of the authoritarian technique and a 29 per cent preference for the permissive.

Grade six girls' responses. Dividing the girls into two groups, consideration will first be given to 159 sixth grade girls. In Table VIII, where the results for this group are indicated, the highest possible score is 2,385.

TABLE VIII

COMPARISON OF GRADE SIX GIRLS' RESPONSES  
AS TO WHAT THE TEACHER DID AND WHAT  
THE TEACHER SHOULD HAVE DONE

No. = 159

Question	A		P		E	
	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent
Did	681	29	650	27	1,054	44
Should Have Done	734	31	774	32	877	37

In responding to what they thought the teacher did, 44 per cent of the sixth grade girls chose the eclectic response. This shows an increased per cent over former percentages given in the eclectic category. As a result of this increased percentage, frequencies for the remaining two categories were lessened. To the question, "What do you think the teacher should have done?", the favored response was again the eclectic, but to a lesser degree (37 per cent).

Grade four girls' responses. The younger group consisted of 143 girls. In Table IX, which reports the findings for this group, the highest possible score is 2,145.

TABLE IX

COMPARISON OF GRADE FOUR GIRLS' RESPONSES  
AS TO WHAT THE TEACHER DID AND WHAT  
THE TEACHER SHOULD HAVE DONE

No. = 143

Question	A		P		E	
	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent
Did	776	36	576	27	793	37
Should Have Done	797	37	589	28	759	35

These girls rated the eclectic choice as the most desired (37 per cent) and the permissive as the least (27 per cent). In the second question the authoritarian choice displaced the eclectic as the most favored. Again the permissive is felt to be the least desired.

Total pupil responses of the three socio-economic groups to question one. In an effort to determine any outstanding differences among the three socio-economic levels, the total pupil responses were considered according to this grouping. Table X presents the data for 250 children

from the high socio-economic level, 157 from the middle, and 210 from the low.

TABLE X  
TOTAL PUPIL RESPONSES OF THREE SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
GROUPS AS TO WHAT THE TEACHER DID

No. - 250 High, 157 Middle, 210 Low

Groups	A		P		E	
	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent
High	1,192	32	1,090	28	1,468	40
Middle	794	34	602	26	959	40
Low	1,131	36	756	24	1,263	40

The data in Table X refers to the first question, "What do you think the teacher did?". The greatest possible frequency for each level, from high to low, is as follows: 3,750 high, 2,255 middle, and 3,150 low.

Similarity of choice is evident in all three groups with the highest percentage (40 per cent) falling into the eclectic category. Children from the low socio-economic level felt the permissive response to be the least desirable, with only 24 per cent making this choice.

TABLE XIII

TOTAL PUPIL RESPONSES IN FIFTEEN SITUATIONS  
AS TO WHAT THE TEACHER DID.

No. = 617

Situation	A		P		E	
	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent
1	226	37	188	30	203	33
2	186	30	95	15	336	55
3	277	45	252	41	88	14
4	29	5	246	40	342	55
5	279	45	117	19	221	36
6	250	41	183	30	184	29
7	330	53	99	16	188	31
8	100	16	122	20	395	64
9	249	40	191	31	177	29
10	383	62	58	10	176	28
11	127	21	132	21	358	58
12	353	57	160	26	104	17
13	61	10	192	31	364	59
14	121	19	202	33	294	48
15	154	25	214	35	249	40

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Recapitulation. The purposes of this study are: (1) to discover the attitudes of children toward discipline in classroom situations, as revealed through a pupil preference test; (2) to indicate, through these statements of preference, in certain specific situations, how students interpret teacher reactions and how they feel teachers should react; (3) to examine possible differences in students' attitudes using such variables as grade, sex, and socio-economic status; and (4) to show the relationship between pupil and teacher attitudes in these situations.

To accomplish the purposes of this study, the research instrument (a pupil preference test) was administered to 617 students and 22 teachers in Warwick, Rhode Island. Subjects of the study were obtained from the fourth and sixth grades in six elementary schools selected on the basis of socio-economic levels estimated by the central school administration.

Interpretation of the reported data. Educators might derive some satisfaction or reassurance from the findings of this study if they are willing to accept the reported figures at face value. If there is any significant finding in the

discipline is inescapable in these data. It must stand as the most meaningful of the findings except for some interesting deviations in the general response pattern when the results are examined item by item.

A careful study of Tables I through XI fails to reveal differences that would merit examination for statistical significance. Grade four is similar to grade six in its choices of disciplinary techniques and in its satisfaction with how the teachers are handling these situations. Boys are similar to girls and though this may be somewhat surprising, it may be a function of the age level represented. Using the percentage columns in Tables X and XI, it can be readily seen that the responses made by reportedly different socio-economic groups are strikingly similar.

Reviewing all these indications, in a search for some appreciable direction in the findings, it is worth noting that what this study termed an eclectic approach--a sort of middle-of-the-road attitude toward discipline--is what the subjects of this study are finding in the classroom and what they feel they should find. Too, it is interesting to find, that the "permissive" attitude is least frequently encountered or desired by these pupils.

The classroom teachers who participated in the study, however, regard themselves as considerably more permissive.



felt to be too threatening to the teachers for this study, but it should be a part of a larger study where teachers could feel free from personal identification. If someone could pass judgment on whether the classroom climate was authoritarian or not, these differences would take on greater significance.

4. A somewhat more sophisticated instrument for higher grades also seems called for. Here boy and girl differences might make their appearance.

5. Of definite value would be a comparison of public and parochial school systems.

6. Authorities could be polled for a more exhaustive list of classroom disciplinary situations, from a wider area, and these items, after selection by a qualified and larger jury, could be rated for the seriousness of the breach. Then, the very difficult phase of setting up a series of choices concerning probable teacher reaction, and scaling these according to some acceptable system of defining degrees of strictness, perhaps in classroom management, could be worked out.

7. A much larger sample of teachers responding to a new, more exhaustive instrument, with carefully worked out reaction choices, could provide an interesting comparison between how teachers see themselves and how the pupils see them.

Despite the limitations of the study and the apparent lack of subjectively expected differences, the writers are enthusiastic about the implications that become evident in analyzing and interpreting these data. The scope that would be necessary for an authoritative study, however, places it well above the level of student research. Perhaps the answer would be a scientifically sound, supported program to perfect an instrument that could then be used in many places and many ways for validation purposes. This would provide education with an informative and continuing device for looking at itself through the eyes of its principal consumers.

- Hall, Emery Howard, "A Survey of Discipline in a Junior High School." Unpublished Master's thesis, Rhode Island College of Education, Providence, 1953.
- Hill, H. M., "Middle of the Road Discipline," Peabody Journal of Education, Vol. XXIV (1946), pp. 75-77.
- Hoover, J. Edgar, "Counteract on Juvenile Delinquency--Part III," This Week Magazine, November 9, 1958, pp. 15-18.
- Hughes, Marie M. with Staff of Provo Merit Study, Provo, Utah, "Teaching is Interaction," The Elementary School Journal, Vol. LVIII (May, 1958), pp. 457-464.
- Hymes, James L. Jr., A Child Development Point of View. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955.
- \_\_\_\_\_, James L. Jr., Behavior and Misbehavior. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955.
- Jersild, Arthur T., Child Psychology. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1954.
- Kalish, Abraham, "A Footnote on Discipline," High Points, Vol. XXXIX (December, 1957), pp. 53-55.
- Kowitz, Gerald T., "Conscious and Unconscious Controls of Academic Learnings and Classroom Behavior," The Elementary School Journal, Vol. LVIII (December, 1957), pp. 136-142.
- Ladd, Edward T., "The Perplexities of the Problem of Keeping Order," Harvard Educational Review, Vol. XXVIII, No. 1 (Winter, 1958), pp. 19-28.
- Leeds, C. H., "Teacher Behavior Liked and Disliked by Pupils," Education, Vol. LXXVII (September, 1954), pp. 29-37.
- Langdon, Grace and Irving W. Stout, The Discipline of Well-Adjusted Children. New York: John Day Company, 1952.
- Lansdown, Brenda Dr., "To Know How Children Feel and to Accept It," Grade Teacher, Vol. LXXV, No. 9 (May, 1958), pp. 18-19.

- Leonard, Charles W., Why Children Misbehave. Illinois: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1952.
- Lockhart, Earl G., The Attitudes of Children Toward Law. University of Iowa Studies in Character, Vol. III, No. 1. Iowa: University of Iowa, 1933.
- McGann, Lena C., "A Study in the Attitudes of Sixth Grade Children Toward Respect for Authority," Unpublished Master's thesis, Boston University, Boston, 1946.
- Monroe, Walter S. (ed.), Encyclopedia of Educational Research. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950.
- Monstakas, Clark, The Teacher and the Child. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1956.
- National Education Research Bulletin, Teacher Opinion on Pupil Behavior, 1955-56. Research Division Vol. XXXIV, No. 2. Washington: National Education Association, April, 1956.
- Ojemann, Ralph H., Personality Adjustment of Individual Children. National Education Association, Department of Classroom Teachers and American Educational Research Association. Washington: National Education Association, October, 1954.
- Osborn, D. Keith, "Permissiveness Re-examined," Childhood Education, Vol. XXXIII (January, 1957), pp. 214-217.
- Planck, Carolyn, "Parents and Teachers are Partners in the Development of Student Self-Discipline," National Education Association, Vol. XLV, No. 6 (September, 1956), pp. 348-349.
- Przychodzin, Joe, "Discipline," Clearing House, Vol. XXXII, No. 7 (March, 1958), pp. 411-414.
- Puner, Helen, "Discipline: Strict or Permissive," Parents' Magazine and Family Home Guide, Vol. XXXIV, No. 4 (April, 1959), pp. 39, 116-128.
- Scheviakov, George V. and Fritz Redl, Discipline for Today's Children and Youth. Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development. Washington: National Education Association, 1956.

- Thurstone, L. L. and E. J. Chave, The Measurement of Attitude. Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press, 1929.
- Trigg, Ruth, "What About Discipline," Educational Digest Vol. XXIII (December, 1957), pp. 32-33.
- Tschechtelin, M. Amatora and others, "Measuring the Attitudes of Elementary School Children Toward Their Teachers," Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. XXI (1940), pp. 195-218.
- Wickman, E. K., Children's Behavior and Teachers' Attitudes. New York: The Commonwealth Fund, 1928.
- Zirbes, Laura, "The Contribution of Research toward Discipline for Freedom," Discipline for Freedom (Reprint Service Bulletin No. 23, Childhood Education, September, 1950 and January, 1951 issues), pp. 29-34.

## SCORING KEY

A = Authoritarian, P = Permissive, E = Eclectic

<u>Situation</u>	<u>Response</u>	<u>Situation</u>	<u>Response</u>
1.	a. = A b. = P c. = E	9.	a. = P b. = E c. = A
2.	a. = E b. = P c. = A	10.	a. = E b. = P c. = A
3.	a. = P b. = E c. = A	11.	a. = E b. = A c. = P
4.	a. = A b. = E c. = P	12.	a. = P b. = A c. = E
5.	a. = A b. = E c. = P	13.	a. = P b. = E c. = A
6.	a. = E b. = P c. = A	14.	a. = P b. = A c. = E
7.	a. = A b. = E c. = P	15.	a. = P b. = E c. = A
8.	a. = A b. = P c. = E		

Dear Teacher:

Under the guidance of Dr. W. Linwood Chase of Boston University we are attempting to discover children's attitudes toward disciplinary action in the classroom. Would you be kind enough to assist us in our study?

We are working with representative groups of fourth and sixth grade pupils. Naturally, we are not concerned with identifying any of the respondents. It is hoped, however, that the information gained by this study will be of value to teachers in this important phase of teaching. As soon as the results have been tabulated, they will be available if you should be interested.

Attached are our two check lists. Please fill out the teachers form and return it to us in a sealed envelope when finished. Thank you for your cooperation.

Study Group #9

Angela Cedroni

Mary Louise Sullivan

Circle: Boy or Girl How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

When is your birthday? \_\_\_\_\_

Here is a list of things that sometimes happen in classrooms. It is not a test. When you answer the questions, think hard and try to tell how you feel. Read them carefully and then put in the space at the right, the letter for the answer you choose. Remember to answer all the questions.

1. Jane is cheating in an arithmetic test. This is the first time it has been noticed by the teacher.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Scolded Jane and ripped the paper.  
 b. Went to Jane's desk and spoke to her quietly.  
 c. Spoke to the class rightaway about doing one's own work..... 1. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the teacher should have done?

- a. Scolded Jane and ripped the paper.  
 b. Gone to Jane's desk and spoken to her quietly.  
 c. Spoken to the class right away about doing one's own work..... 1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Nancy is a bright pupil. She works very well with the group but wastes time for all the children because she is slow in putting her materials away.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Kept after her to hurry.  
 b. Helped her put her materials away.  
 c. Left her behind while others went on with interesting activity..... 2. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the teacher should have done?

- a. Kept after her to hurry.  
 b. Helped her put her materials away.  
 c. Left her behind while others went on with interesting activity..... 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. While getting ready to go home, two boys start to fight in the classroom.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Ordered both boys to stay after school, letting the other children leave.  
 b. Demanded an explanation from the boys while the whole class waited.  
 c. Sent the boys to the principal..... 3. \_\_\_\_\_



What do you think the teacher should have done?

- a. Ordered both boys to stay after school, letting the other children leave.
- b. Demanded an explanation from the boys while the whole class waited.
- c. Sent the boys to the principal..... 3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Johnny is known as the class clown. Practically every lesson is upset because of his foolish actions. Today he put on an Indian mask when the teacher wasn't looking.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Slapped Johnny and took the mask away.
- b. Took the mask and sent him out of the room to stand in the corridor.
- c. Told him to put the mask away and spoke to him later about his actions..... 4. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the teacher should have done?

- a. Slapped Johnny and taken the mask away.
- b. Taken the mask and sent him out of the room to stand in the corridor.
- c. Told him to put the mask away and spoken to him later about his actions..... 4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. The teacher sees Betty passing a note. Betty has been spoken to about this many times before.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Ripped the note, but read it first.
- b. Made Betty throw the note away.
- c. Paid no attention to the note passing, but spoke to Betty about it later..... 5. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the teacher should have done?

- a. Ripped the note, but read it first.
- b. Made Betty throw the note away.
- c. Paid no attention to the note passing, but spoken to Betty about it later..... 5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. When working with her social studies group, Linda is not polite. She is always talking out of turn and the other children don't get a chance to speak. They don't like it.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Sent Linda to her seat to work alone for a week.
- b. Talked with the group members about how best to help Linda improve.
- c. Had Linda write "I must be polite" 500 times..... 6. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the teacher should have done?

- a. Sent Linda to her seat to work alone for a week.
- b. Talked with the group members about how best to help Linda improve.
- c. Had Linda write "I must be polite" 500 times..... 6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. Michael is a day-dreamer. He spends most of his time looking out the window. His written work is never finished.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Moved Michael's desk close to the teacher's.
- b. Reminded him constantly to get to work and set a time limit.
- c. Appointed another child to remind him quietly to get to work..... 7. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the teacher should have done?

- a. Moved Michael's desk close to the teacher's.
- b. Reminded him constantly to get to work and set a time limit.
- c. Appointed another child to remind him quietly to get to work..... 7. \_\_\_\_\_

8. Claire bothers children sitting near her by whispering to them. Although she has been reminded by the teacher to stop, she continues to whisper.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Sent her to the principal.
- b. Spoke to Claire again about self-control..... 6. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Moved her desk away from the other children..... 8. \_\_\_\_\_

7. Michael is a day-dreamer. He spends most of his time looking out the window. His written work is never finished.

What do you think the teacher should have done?

- a. Sent her to the principal.
- b. Spoken to Claire again about self-control..... 6. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Moved her desk away from the other children..... 8. \_\_\_\_\_

9. After the teacher has given clear directions for a reading assignment, Dennis wants to know what to do. Some of the children groan because Dennis has not paid attention again.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Tried to see if Dennis could answer his own question.
- b. Had another child repeat the directions.
- c. Scolded Dennis for not paying attention and did not repeat the directions..... 9. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the teacher should have done?

- a. Tried to see if Dennis could answer his own question.
- b. Had another child repeat the directions.
- c. Scolded Dennis for not paying attention and not repeated the directions..... 9. \_\_\_\_\_

10. Freddy tells tales. He often runs in at noon to tell his teacher about a boy who hit some one else in the school-yard. He even tells the boy's name or says he will point him out.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Sent for the boy involved and got at the correct story by asking questions.
- b. Looked for bruises and then quietly ignored Freddy's story.
- c. Told Freddy to mind his own business and take care of himself..... 10. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the teacher should have done?

- a. Sent for the boy involved and got at the correct story by asking questions.
- b. Looked for bruises and then quietly ignored Freddy's story.
- c. Told Freddy to mind his own business and take care of himself..... 10. \_\_\_\_\_

11. Bobby picks on small children. He is always pushing, shoving, or tripping them. The teacher sees him trip Jane as she goes to her seat.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Scolded Bobby and had him tell Jane he was sorry.
- b. Sent for one of Bobby's parents.
- c. Talked to Bobby alone to help him change his ways..... 11. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the teacher should have done?

- a. Scolded Bobby and had him tell Jane he was sorry.
- b. Sent for one of Bobby's parents.
- c. Talked to Bobby alone to help him change his ways..... 11. \_\_\_\_\_

12. The children tell their teacher that Helen has taken school supplies. Although she says she didn't do it, the teacher finds a box of staples in Helen's desk.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Took the staples and spoke to Helen later.
- b. Had Helen write a note to her parents, to be signed and returned.
- c. Told Helen she might not get her own supplies anymore..... 12. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the teacher should have done?

- a. Taken the staples and spoken to Helen later.
- b. Had Helen write a note to her parents, to be signed and returned.
- c. Told Helen she might not get her own supplies anymore..... 12. \_\_\_\_\_

13. Dick bothers his neighbors by taking their materials. The teacher tells him to move his desk and he answers her back.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Asked Dick to apologize,
- b. Put him out of the room and spoke to him later.
- c. Slapped him..... 13. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the teacher should have done?

- a. Asked Dick to apologize.
- b. Put him out of the room and spoken to him later.
- c. Slapped him..... 13. \_\_\_\_\_

14. The teacher leaves the room for a few minutes. She chooses Susan to take care of the class. When the teacher returns, Susan gives her a list with the names of the children who had been noisy.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Thanked Susan for helping and spoke to the whole class about being trustworthy.
- b. Read the names aloud and scolded the children who had been noisy.
- c. Told the children who had been noisy she would speak to them after school..... 14. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the teacher should have done?

- a. Thanked Susan for helping and spoken to the whole class about being trustworthy.
- b. Read the names aloud and scolded the children who had been noisy.
- c. Told the children who had been noisy she would speak to them after school..... 14. \_\_\_\_\_

15. The teacher has spoken to the class many times about the bad habit of gum chewing in school. In spite of this, several boys and girls continue to chew gum.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Asked the class to decide what should be done.
- b. Had the children empty their pockets every day.
- c. Sent for the children's parents.....15.\_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the teacher should have done?

- a. Asked the class to decide what should be done.
- b. Had the children empty their pockets every day.
- c. Sent for the children's parents.....15.\_\_\_\_\_

Teachers' Check List

Here is a list of things that sometimes happen in classrooms. Read them carefully and then put in the space at the right, the letter for the answer you would like your children to choose.

1. Jane is cheating in an arithmetic test. This is the first time it has been noticed by the teacher.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Scolded Jane and ripped the paper.  
 b. Went to Jane's desk and spoke to her quietly.  
 c. Spoke to the class right away about doing one's own work..... 1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Nancy is a bright pupil. She works very well with the group but wastes time for all the children because she is slow in putting her materials away.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Kept after her to hurry.  
 b. Helped her put her materials away.  
 c. Left her behind while others went on with interesting activity..... 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. While getting ready to go home, two boys start to fight in the classroom.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Ordered both boys to stay after school, letting the other children leave.  
 b. Demanded an explanation from the boys while the whole class waited.  
 c. Sent the boys to the principal..... 3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Johnny is known as the class clown. Practically every lesson is upset because of his foolish actions. Today he put on an Indian mask when the teacher wasn't looking.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Slapped Johnny and took the mask away.  
 b. Took the mask and sent him out of the room to stand in the corridor.  
 c. Told him to put the mask away and spoke to him later about his actions..... 4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. The teacher sees Betty passing a note. Betty has been spoken to about this many times before.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Ripped the note, but read it first.
- b. Made Betty throw the note away.
- c. Paid no attention to the note passing, but spoke to Betty about it later..... 5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. When working with her social studies group, Linda is not polite. She is always talking out of turn and the other children don't get a chance to speak. They don't like it.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Sent Linda to her seat to work alone for a week.
- b. Talked with the group members about how best to help Linda improve.
- c. Had Linda write "I must be polite" 500 times..... 6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. Michael is a day-dreamer. He spends most of his time looking out the window. His written work is never finished.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Moved Michael's desk close to the teacher's.
- b. Reminded him constantly to get to work and set a time limit.
- c. Appointed another child to remind him quietly to get to work..... 7. \_\_\_\_\_

8. Claire bothers children sitting near her by whispering to them. Although she has been reminded by the teacher to stop, she continues to whisper.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Sent her to the principal.
- b. Spoke to Claire again about self-control.
- c. Moved her desk away from the other children..... 8. \_\_\_\_\_

9. After the teacher has given clear directions for a reading assignment, Dennis wants to know what to do. Some of the children groan because Dennis has not paid attention again.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Tried to see if Dennis could answer his own question.
- b. Had another child repeat the directions.
- c. Scolded Dennis for not paying attention and did not repeat the directions..... 9. \_\_\_\_\_

10. Freddy tells tales. He often runs in at noon to tell his teacher about a boy who hit some one else in the school-yard. He even tells the boy's name or says he will point him out.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Sent for the boy involved and got at the correct story by asking questions.
- b. Looked for bruises and then quietly ignored Freddy's story.
- c. Told Freddy to mind his own business and take care of himself..... 10. \_\_\_\_\_

11. Bobby picks on small children. He is always pushing, shoving, or tripping them. The teacher sees him trip Jane as she goes to her seat.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Scolded Bobby and had him tell Jane he was sorry.
- b. Sent for one of Bobby's parents.
- c. Talked to Bobby alone to help him change his ways..... 11. \_\_\_\_\_

12. The children tell their teacher that Helen has taken school supplies. Although she says she didn't do it, the teacher finds a box of staples in Helen's desk.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Took the staples and spoke to Helen later.
- b. Had Helen write a note to her parents, to be signed and returned.
- c. Told Helen she might not get her own supplies anymore..... 12. \_\_\_\_\_

13. Dick bothers his neighbors by taking their materials. The teacher tells him to move his desk and he answers her back.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Asked Dick to apologize.
- b. Put him out of the room and spoke to him later.
- c. Slapped him..... 13. \_\_\_\_\_



14. The teacher leaves the room for a few minutes. She chooses Susan to take care of the class. When the teacher returns, Susan gives her a list with the names of the children who had been noisy.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Thanked Susan for helping and spoke to the whole class about being trustworthy.
- b. Read the names aloud and scolded the children who had been noisy.
- c. Told the children who had been noisy she would speak to them after school..... 14. \_\_\_\_\_

15. The teacher has spoken to the class many times about the bad habit of gum chewing in school. In spite of this, several boys and girls continue to chew gum.

What do you think the teacher did?

- a. Asked the class to decide what should be done.
- b. Had the children empty their pockets every day.
- c. Sent for the children's parents..... 15. \_\_\_\_\_