

"This Little Dot Is William"

LOUISE E. WEAVER

How far afield we can go in judging youngsters if we allow ourselves to be bound by conventional testing methods is illustrated in this article by Louise E. Weaver, a sixth-grade teacher in Chester, Pa. Miss Weaver lets a sixth-grader tell his own story. Willy doesn't particularly like "intelligent tests," but they don't worry him much because he knows he isn't as stupid as they make him out to be. His reactions show clearly that basic skills are those skills which each child needs for satisfying living and that they cannot be determined irrespective of the individual.

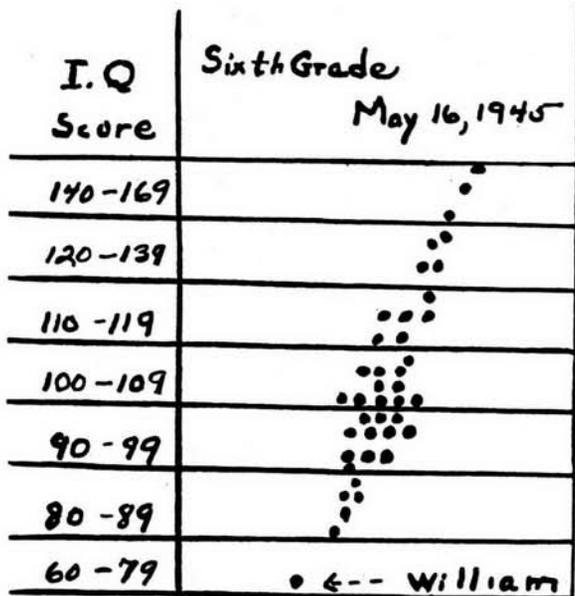
I KNEW there was something in the air for the whole lot of us sixth-graders when I saw the large package of papers carried in by the principal and the little stop-watch that set things agoin.

Yeah, I knew what was comin cause I had been through the works many times. I got more tests than the other kids cause I was a "special case." Once I saw the teacher show the principal a chart and say, "This is where William stands compared to the other children." Seems I was a little dot near the bottom of the chart not far from the zero mark. Sounds silly, doesn't it, a big boy like me bein a little dot on a line, but then the teacher put a lot of stock in that chart cause she looked at it often enough.

Well, this test was different and the funniest of all. At first I thought it was a joke, but the teacher seemed right particular about stoppin and startin and askin questions, which we weren't allowed to do.

The first page had yes-no questions on jogerphy like, Austria is south of Germany and Russia is east of Italy. With things so mixed up over there in Europe a guy can't be sure of anything, so I wrote, maybe, in all the answer blanks.

The next page had twenty more yes-no questions, but since I was sorta slow on the first page, I wrote ten yes and ten no answers



"I was the little dot near the bottom"

which was a smart trick cause it caught me up to the rest of the kids.

The third page had groups of words that the teacher said we should mark "true" if they made sense when hitched together and "false" if the hitchin didn't make sense. Like this they were: man-read, dog-fly, cat-talk.

"Man-read" sure had me guessin cause my old man said he started readin a book once, but it didn't make sense, so I guess you wouldn't call that readin. And my Uncle

Dan, who owns a sheep ranch, don't read or write cause he said he couldn't be bothered when his secretary could do it right well. Well, I just skipped the whole batch and went on to the fourth page which was the funniest of all. It was so funny that I wanted to tear this page out and give it to my brother, Jack, who loves to look at comic books and funny puzzles.

At the top of the page it said, "Dogs and cats are members of the animal kingdom, but man belongs to the human species." And then it said, "If the dog and cat are related, put a circle in the square at the top of the page; if they are not related, write your birthday at the bottom of the page; if the man owns the dog and cat, make three stars in the middle of the page; and if the dog and cat own the man, write your name three times at the bottom of the page." I got so mixed up that I decided to draw five circles, write my birthday and my name five times, and draw five squares clear across the paper. When this was done, I decided to call it quits and was the first one to finish what the teacher said was an Intelligence Test.

Well, I guess I didn't make out so good cause yesterday the teacher and the principal started whispering about me over the chart, and from the look on the teacher's face I

most likely answered myself clear off the bottom of the chart.

I reckon that school psychologist feller will be visitin me before long—he's like the queer lookin guy in the movies who comes into the courtroom scene and asks the man sittin in the little box to recite the alphabet backwards and then tells him he's crazy.

But I don't let my feelins get hurt cause I know I can do lots of things the teacher can't do. When the radiator leaks or the window sticks, she has to send for the janitor and when a B-25 goes over the school, she doesn't know what kind of plane it is or how many motors it's got. Neither does she know where the first spring violets grow, or the difference between the call of the wren or the thrush to say nuthin of whether the Phillies or the Giants won the last game.

I feel sorry for teachers sometimes. They seem to be in such a daze and miss all the excitin things. I'm glad I'm a "special case" cause I get a lot of attention. If I was like the other kids, they would just let me set.

I heard my Mom tell Mrs. O'Tulle over the back fence that she sets a lot of store in her Willy and I bet I'll get to be a cop just like my big brother, Jack, even if I am just a little dot at the bottom of the teacher's chart!



DSCD BALLOT ON WAY TO MEMBERS

All members of the Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development are being mailed a ballot with a slate of fifteen names from which they are asked to choose five persons to serve on the DSCD Board of Directors. The fifteen candidates are submitted by the Department Nominating Committee. The five persons receiving the largest number of votes will be members of the Board through February 1950. *This ballot must be in the mail by December 20.* Please return yours promptly.

Opportunity is also given on the same ballot for members to vote on the proposed new name of this organization, as first announced in the April 1945 issue of EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP. At that time it was recommended to the membership by the Board of Directors that, to clarify the status of this organization, the name be changed from Department of Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA, to Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, a Department of the NEA.

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