





CURRICULUM MATERIALS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The Annehurst Curriculum Classification System identifies curriculum materials compatible with student learning characteristics.

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Differences among pupils likely to affect their learning include more than differences in intellectual or cognitive ability. Other factors are their experiences, motivation, emotional qualities, creativity, social orientation, verbal expression, and perceptual-motor skills.

The differences in curriculum materials often parallel differences among pupils. For example, curriculum materials vary in the amount of experiential background needed by pupils, their motivational qualities, the emotion or personality characteristics

they depict, the degree of pupil creativity they encourage or allow, the social or interpersonal orientation they express, the verbal expression they elicit, and the extent to which they involve pupils in perceptual-motor activity.

Selecting appropriate curriculum materials is one way to differentiate instruction to increase student achievement. The Annehurst Curriculum Classification System (ACCS), jointly developed and implemented by public school and university faculty during a six-year period, is a systematic and practical means of determining pupil-materials compatibility.

ACCS describes pupils and available curriculum materials as high or low in ten dimensions:

Experience	Sociability
Intelligence	Verbal Expression
Motivation	Auditory Perception

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Emotion-
Personality Visual Perception
Creativity Motor Coordination

Curriculum materials also are classified in terms of subject area (and subtopics), media type, and age level. Once classified, they are organized and stored for easy retrieval.

When curriculum materials are needed for a particular pupil or group of pupils in a specific subject area, teachers can use the ACCS to select those most compatible. Pupil-materials compatibility, according to the ACCS model, involves a one-to-one match of the experience and intelligence dimensions (high pupils with high materials, low pupils with low materials). On the other dimensions, however, high materials are compatible with low pupils, and both high and low materials are compatible with high pupils. For an example, see Figure 1.

While a single teacher in one classroom can use ACCS successfully, a team, department, or an entire school can make even better use of it. Then most of the available curriculum materials can be pooled to increase the range of materials accessible to all pupils.

The use of ACCS among school districts is growing. Teachers and other school personnel are enthusiastic about it. The dimensions help them separate effective from less effective curriculum materials. Research supports the ACCS pupil and curriculum materials dimensions and indicates that the use of compatible materials is related to student achievement.¹

ACCS is an evolving system; neither its developers nor its users see it as fixed and it can be adapted to many types of educational settings. Once teachers or curriculum developers have classified and catalogued their available materials, they can identify remaining needs and purchase or develop additional materials.

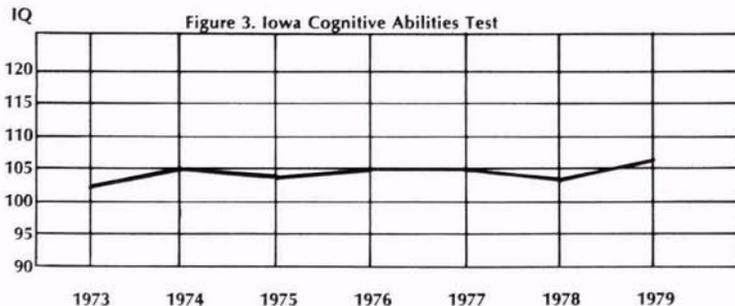
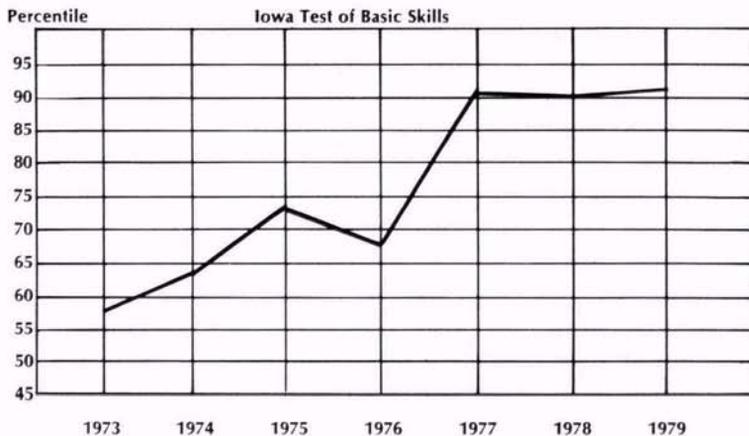
Curriculum materials are a prominent feature of classroom instruction. They do make a difference. With ACCS, we can make better use of the materials we already have and make better decisions about selecting and developing future materials. ■

¹ A list of research studies is available from the author.

Figure 1. Matching the Curriculum Materials

Dimension	Pupil	Curriculum Materials
Experience	low	low
Intelligence	low	low
Motivation	low	high
Emotion-Personality	high	high or low
Creativity	low	high
Sociability	high	high or low
Verbal Expression	high	high or low
Auditory Perception	high	high or low
Visual Perception	low	high
Motor Coordination	high	high or low

Comparison of Achievement With Ability Scores,
Annehurst Elementary School,
1973-1979



Mean achievement scores of fourth grade students at Annehurst School have climbed while ability scores stayed about the same.

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