

Education



Education Is Power

By THOMAS E. WILSON, PH.D.

The future of America is or shortly will be in the hands of our present-day young people. Our youth must pick up the baton of life and run with it until it is passed on to the next generation.

Those of us who have been in the work force, in educational institutions, and other professions, cannot help but wonder what will become of our hard-fought gains in the civil rights areas if our youngsters are not well qualified to carry on and make advances. We also wonder what effect the drug culture of the 60s and 70s will have on the intellectual performance of our present day young adults.

The answers to these and other questions pose serious problems as relates to the future quality of life for our children, grandchildren, and other progenitors.

However, the answers lie in such questions as the following: How much permanent damage was done to the intellectual functioning of our young people by the easy-access drug culture of the 60s and 70s?; To what extent did the drugs stymie the initiative of our young people to improve themselves academically?; What should be the basic plan of action to assure that there is not a recurrence of the activities of the 60s and 70s in the 80s?; Can we, as educators, stem the tide, with a dearth of financial resources, and educate young people who are not motivated to learn?; What part will these unmotivated persons play in carrying the torch for freedom and economic progress?

The fact that your young people have been exposed to the drug culture during the last two decades does not excuse us as educators from doing our best to prepare these future leaders for a fruitful life ahead, since some studies have shown that some drugs do not affect the brain unless taken over a long period of time. Our job is to put forth our very best efforts in our endeavors to teach these youngsters.

In the midst of the present economic crisis, whether real or contrived, the job of educating the masses of our young people is extremely difficult. Classes are large and will get larger unless something is done immediately. Little effort has seemingly been put forth to offer assistance to teachers in controlling the child with behavior problems. Resources for much needed materials have been cut off. The federal administration, the

NEW INTELLIGENCE TEST FOR CHILDREN BEING USED IN SCHOOLS FOR FIRST TIME THIS FALL

Anaheim, CA, - The Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children (K-ABC), the first new individually-administered test of intelligence and achievement to be developed in over a generation, will be in use throughout the country for the first time this fall.

Dr. Alan S. Kaufman, co-author of the test with his wife, Dr. Nadeen L. Kaufman, presented research today at the American Psychological Association's Annual Convention in Anaheim, California, which indicated that scores for white and minority groups on the K-ABC intelligence scales were substantially closer than scores reported for those groups on other intelligence tests.

"Unlike other tests which combine intelligence and achievement in assessing intellectual skills," noted Dr. Alan Kaufman, "the K-ABC distinguishes between mental processing skills and knowledge of facts. By separating mental processing and achievement we have tried to deal with many

of the criticisms of intelligence testing, including the minority community's concern over the effect of school and cultural environment on test scores."

Dr. Jack Cummings, assistant professor at Indiana University, believes that "the K-ABC is one of the best on the market as far as the non-discriminatory instruments are concerned. While no test can ever be completely unbiased, this instrument goes a long way toward meeting that goal."

The K-ABC is unique in that it defines intelligence in terms of a child's ability to solve problems and process information both sequentially and simultaneously. The test includes 16 subtests featuring novel game-like tasks for children ages 2 1/2 to 12 1/2. Scores on the achievement subtests measure both school-related achievement and environmentally acquired knowledge.

According to the Minnesota-based American Guidance Service (AGS), publisher of the K-ABC, there is

widespread interest from psychologists in schools, clinics, hospitals, and similar settings in using the test for assessing intelligence and for educational placement. John Nuerberger, Area Coordinator of Special Schools in Town and Country, Missouri, noted that his district plans to use the test extensively. "The philosophical base is what makes this test distinct," says Nuerberger, "it looks at kids differently and that's why we're interested in it."

The K-ABC, soundly based on theory and research in neuropsychology and cognitive psychology, has been under development by the Kaufmans and AGS for nearly five years. Both Kaufmans, widely recognized authorities on the theory, construction, interpretation, and application of intelligence tests for children, are on the clinical psychology faculty at the California School of Professional Psychology, San Diego. American Guidance Service is a major publisher of individually-administered tests and instructional programs.

The strong theoretical foundation of the K-ABC has been the cause of many professionals' interest in the test. Said Dr. Cecil Reynolds, Associate Professor and Director of the School Psychology Training Program, Texas A & M, "the K-ABC is the first major advance in psychological testing since 1939..." David

Utech, staff psychologist at the Community Consolidated School District No. 65 in Evanston, Illinois, added, "Because the theoretical basis differs from other tests, I was able to find out new information. We plan to use the test for diagnostic purposes, which may include determining whether a student has a behavioral problem or a learning disability."

The K-ABC provides the most comprehensive system available for interpreting a child's scores of mental ability and for translating them into appropriate teaching strategies. The interpretive system can help psychologists determine the student's preferred learning style (sequential or simultaneous), pinpoint significant strengths and weaknesses, and discuss remedial implications with classroom resource and specialized teachers.

Interpretive analysis is precisely how the test will be used in many schools. Dr. Paavola, Director of Memphis City School's Mental Health Center, who plans to give the K-ABC to special populations in Kindergarten through 7th grades, commented, "We've made a commitment to use the K-ABC, and we're very excited about the possibilities of using it to help teachers individualize their instruction."

Many users have found that children are less discouraged or frustrated and actually like the test. Says Dr. Arthur Constantini, Director of Pupil Appraisal Services, New Orleans Public Schools, "Children find it enjoyable, of a high-interest level, game-like. The testing situation is much better because you establish rapport with the individual child."

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