

each by word or motion, even when several were demanding attention at once. Occasionally she could be heard saying "good", or "very good". The children's attention, in turn, seemed to be altogether centered on her. The room was quiet but the children communicated with each other from time to time.

One teacher-aide at the right rear side of the room worked at tables with four children on collages. A second teacher-aide worked with three children at the rear left of the room on learning how to follow directions by coloring outlined figures on a ditto sheet. She was getting each child to print his name, a task which appeared to be difficult for them. She was assisting one child particularly. Apparently this was the slowest group. The eight children with the teacher appeared to be in the most advanced group.

The teacher, after approximately five minutes, went to the first teacher-aide and asked if her group was ready for reading at the front of the room. The teacher-aide replied, "No, not yet." Without questioning the aide further, the teacher returned to her group of eight to get them started in independent activity related to their "s" sentences. The first teacher-aide finished collages with her children and then moved them to the front of the room, ready for the teacher who was continuing to help the group of eight.

The second teacher-aide at the rear of the room with three children, collected their coloring, and got out flash cards for other children. Two of her group joined those in a discussion with the teacher at the front of the room.

Interaction between teacher and teacher-aides appeared to be quite subtle; they seemed to understand the timing involved in the changing tasks and the need for the movement of the children. The teacher had consulted the first aide and had not interrupted the aide's group activity, accepting the aide's statement that the group was not yet ready for change. One observer left the room at this point, realizing that it all had happened, but with a now-shaken conviction that it could not happen under all the circumstances.

A first grade at Lincoln School was similar to the first grade at Columbus School with one additional element. The principal of the school was participating as a reading teacher. The classroom teacher was at the front of the room with eight children around a small table conducting a conventional reading session. The principal was at the rear of the room at a small table working intensively with two boys, who appeared to have had unusual difficulty learning to read. The principal was using a variety of materials, chalk board, cards, dittoed material, and a variety of techniques. The principal was extremely attentive to the children, responding to them with eyes, hands, nods of his head. The children responded just as completely.

One aide was working with one child on letter sounds. She had the child identify the initial letter of the word the picture she showed him represented, but failed to require him to make the sound of the letter. Another aide in the rear of the room used the paper slicer to prepare small cards of colored paper. The activities changed after about eight minutes, but the groups remained constant, the same adult stayed with each group. There was no apparent interaction among the adults in the program.

The second grade was observed at Lincoln School. The teacher worked intensively with two children. One teacher-aide moved around the room helping eight children at their seats working on dittoed materials. The second teacher-aide worked with four children in the rear of the room with flash cards. No interaction between any adults was observed.

The fifth grade observation took place at Lincoln School. The teacher was at the blackboard writing math questions for 12 in their seats in the middle of the room. The teacher seemed flustered by the introduction of the observers. The first teacher-aide was working with one child directly in front of the teacher, rather than at a removed, quiet location. The second teacher-aide was doing desk work at the rear of the room with a group of four children. No interaction was observed.

#### *The Teachers' evaluation of teacher-aides*

In interviews with the teachers and in training sessions including teachers and aides, the range of teachers' opinions about the aides was great. Among the positive statements were:

"The need for aides to function at a high level is apparent."

Three teachers: "The aides are very helpful."

"They are wonderful. They help with the needs of the children."