

It is quite possible that the mediocre showing for Conservation Center Corpsmen at this level reflects increased time away from education classes. The fact that the programs in use are adequately designed for the Job Corps population is demonstrated by the performance of the sample from the best Conservation Centers.

Intermediate Programs—For Corpsmen in this achievement group, the existing reading program appears inadequate. Table 7 shows that the average Corpsman from Conservation Centers lost about five months achievement in the three month period and that the average from an Urban Center made no gain in reading. The poor performance of persons in Intermediate reading program strongly suggests that Corpsmembers are just not being placed in programs after they have attained a level of about 6.0 and are, during the ensuing months, evidencing what one would expect, forgetting.

At present, the reading program, for Conservation Center Corpsmen achieving above sixth grade, is being revised. In addition G.E.D. programs are under development. Whenever possible enrichment materials must be provided at this level. Persons with sixth grade achievement are just beginning to reach a level useful for occupational or recreational pursuits. It should not be assumed that Corpsmen with sixth grade skills do not need continued training.

Analysis of the arithmetic gains data reconfirms the above conclusion. The average Corpswoman and the Corpsman from a Conservation Center showed a loss of about two-tenths of a grade level in two-tenths of a school year. The average Corpsman from an Urban Center, however, showed significant improvement. At least 50% gained four-tenths of a grade level or more. It is apparent that maintenance programs exist (either formal or informal). More than likely this continued gain is a result of Corpsmen using these skills in their vocational programs. The Urban Centers from which these Corpsmen were selected generally have related math programs as part of their vocational courses.

Gain Rates for Five of the Best Centers (Table 8)

Since the data are confounded by weak and strong programs, by Corpsmembers not in program and a myriad of other factors the gains of sample of high performance Conservation Centers were analyzed. About 80% of these Corpsmembers, whereas only 66% of the whole sample, showed improvement in reading and arithmetic. These Centers showed a median rate of gain in reading and arithmetic far better than the Job Corps average and roughly two to three times greater than the public school norm. Figures 3 and 4 demonstrate the difference between the best Centers and Job Corps average rates of gain.

The actual grade equivalents gained between the testing periods are presented in Tables 7 and 8. From the Tables it can be seen that the median gain ranges from more than a half year (.64) to four tenths (.4) of a year.

The median achievement levels for the sample in October are also presented in Tables 8 and 9. The median reading score in October ranged between end of second grade and middle of third grade, the level where greatest success was demonstrated by the larger sample from all types of centers.

In arithmetic, the median scores of the sub-sample were also close to that of the larger sample, at about the beginning of fourth grade. Their impressive performance demonstrates the kind of success Corpsmen in the program could make and attests to the potential strength of the program. The implication is clear; some centers are not yet reaching their potential. The group of high performance centers includes both Men's Urban and Conservation Centers, of that group only the best Conservation Centers were discussed here because of similarity of program and performance. The five centers selected for the reading analysis are not always the same as the five selected for mathematics.