

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TOOL SKILLS AND A HUNCH ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE AND LEARNING OF RETARDED PERSONS

Jim Johnson
C.O.F. Training Services

These charted data were taken by the instructional staff of COF Training Services, Inc., Ottawa, Kansas. Distributions plotted on the Chart show the number of correct digits written per minute. Two (2) one-minute timings were given in March, 1978, to a group of ten mildly retarded adults who had some computing skills. These timings were "writing digits-numerals in sequence" and "writing digits-basic addition facts." A range of 16 to 28 weeks of tool skill drills followed to increase the frequency of computing and writing. The median celeration during this period was $\times 1.3$ per week. In December of 1978 the same two timings were again given to the ten adults to check the durability of the tool skill drills. As seen on Chart 1, the median frequency of "numerals in sequence" increased by $\times 1.8$ and the median frequency of "basic addition facts" increased by $\times 3.5$.

The distribution at the far right shows one-minute performances of 45 seniors at Ottawa High School. These seniors were given the same basic addition drill sheet used with the retarded adults. Since the performances of both groups have a similar median and range, and since the group of 10 retarded adults can learn to compute and write at a median celeration of $\times 1.3$ per week, an obvious hunch arises: MANY RETARDED PERSONS CAN LEARN AND PERFORM AS FAST AS THEIR "NORMAL" PEERS; THEY ARE SIMPLY BEHIND AND HAVE FURTHER TO GO.

Jim Johnson is Adult Services Director, C.O.F. Training Services, Box 437, Ottawa, Kansas 66067.

REMEMBERING PEOPLE A MINUTE A DAY

Stephen Graf, Ph.D.
Youngstown State University

I have a hunch knowing and using a person's name multiplies the "warmth" of an interaction with that person. Seeing Ogden Lindsley lead a workshop in Precision Teaching, I noticed the sincere, direct, immediate effort Og makes in finding out and using a person's name (Lindsley, 1978).

After several years of unsuccessful attempts at learning names and faces of students in large classes of between 100 and 200 people, I finally started practicing three Precision Teaching strategies, and was rewarded with success. Four replications have convinced me of the method's usefulness. The strategies used were: (1) pinpointing learning channels; (2) practicing a minute a day; and (3) encouraging high initial error frequencies.

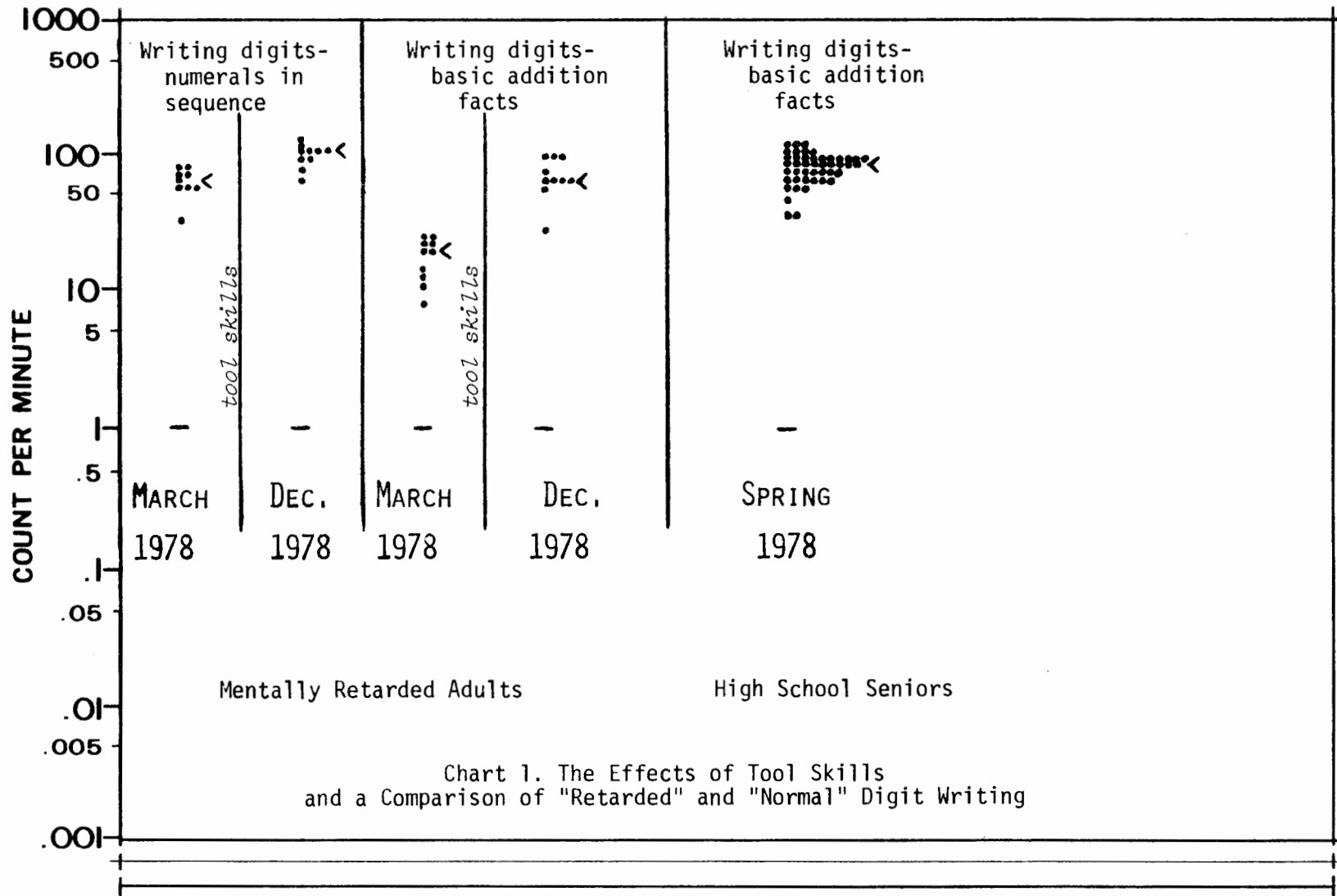


Chart 1. The Effects of Tool Skills and a Comparison of "Retarded" and "Normal" Digit Writing

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DAILY CHART TRACER (CT-8)

JOHNSON MENTALLY RETARDED ADULTS AND HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS SEE-WRITE DIGITS

C.O.F. TRAINING SERVICES OTTAWA, KANSAS