

# SEL: A New Entry in the Acronym Game

By J. FOSTER WATKINS

**T**O be really aware, fully informed in today's educational world, one must be able to converse knowledgeably in acronyms. These words formed from the initial letters of various program titles in education—NDEA, ESEA, NSF, PACE, NFAH, *ad infinitum* — are the by-words, the labels of modern education.

The newest entry in the southeastern conference of the acronym game is SEL. The Southeastern Education Laboratory is one of a series of 20 regional laboratories formed throughout the United States following the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Educa-

tion Act of 1965 — ESEA. The funds for these laboratories are provided for in Title IV of ESEA, a section devoted to research. Each of these regional labs has identified specific concerns within their areas toward which their efforts will be directed. SEL serves Alabama, Florida, and Georgia, adjacent to the Atlanta Airport.

The alleviation of educational deprivation is the primary focus of SEL. Under the direction of Dr. Robert L. Hopper, the Lab Staff has chosen two approaches to this focus: (1) improving communication skills and (2) improving interpersonal relationships. The ap-

proach of improving communication skills is a long-term experiment designed to study the character of language usage in selected schools as a means of discovering ways of alleviating educational and cultural deprivation. The approach of improving interpersonal relationships is directed toward developing inservice education activities for professional personnel, curriculum experiences for students, and school-community activities for parents and lay persons.

To implement this program of research in communication skills and interpersonal relationships, a net-

(See next page)

## Attention Teachers Going to University of Alabama This Summer

LIVE IN COMFORT WHILE AWAY FROM HOME

### UNIVERSITY HOUSE

1108 - 14th Ave., Tuscaloosa, Alabama

**THE ULTIMATE IN  
UNIVERSITY LIVING**

**2 BEDROOM APARTMENTS**

**ACCOMMODATES  
4 PEOPLE**

#### CHECK THESE FEATURES

Conveniently Located  
Air Conditioned  
Bath And One Half  
Coin Operated Laundry  
Screened Walkways On Upper Floors

Only 8 Blocks To School Of Education  
Private Parking  
Fire Proof  
Plenty Of Closet Space  
Near Good Eating Places

#### RENTAL SCHEDULE

Summer Session  
\$345.00

After June 1st  
Bill Ingram, Resident Manager  
Phone 752-6430

#### INQUIRIES

Phone, Birmingham 788-2461  
Ask For  
Mrs. Myers or Mrs. Kendall

Or Write  
1001, S. W. 17th Way  
Birmingham, Alabama 35211

# SEL: A New Entry in the Acronym Game, from page 27

work of 24 potentially innovative schools which now serve large numbers of the educationally disadvantaged has been established in Alabama, Florida, and Georgia. While these schools differ among themselves, they serve a culture of the disadvantaged, possess leadership which expresses a desire to improve educational practices, and

manifest potential for change in other schools.

## SEL IN ALABAMA

What does SEL mean in Alabama? Is it simply another acronym to add to one's list? Another special project?

SEL in Alabama means six pilot demonstration schools. SEL in

Alabama means research and experimentation directed toward alleviating educational deprivation. SEL in Alabama also means specific local efforts toward developing schools which can be examples of effective ways in which to combat educational deprivation.

Six of the 24 pilot demonstration schools in the region are located in Alabama:

Clements School, Limestone County System, Athens

County Training School, Choctaw County System, Lisman

Haleyville School, Winston County System, Haleyville

New Castle School, Jefferson County System, Birmingham

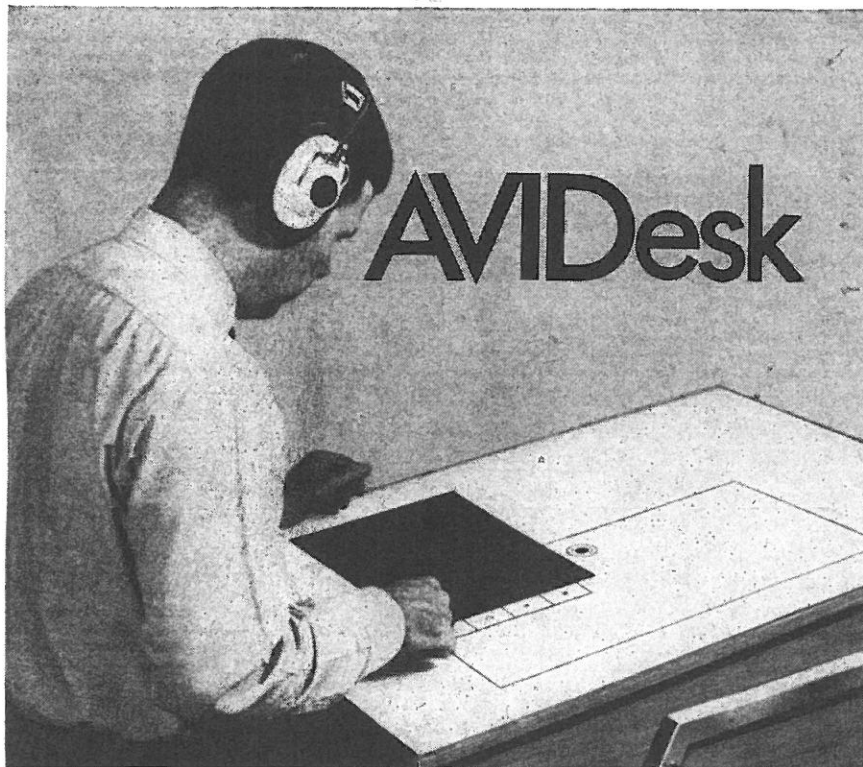
Stone Junior High School, Huntsville City System, Huntsville

West Elementary School, Cullman City System, Cullman.

More than 40 schools were visited and screened by the laboratory before final selection of these six. Many of those interested schools not selected may be involved in future expansion of the pilot demonstration school system.

The Southeastern Education Laboratory and these six Alabama schools are working together in two areas: (1) locally initiated curriculum developments and (2) the Laboratory's research program in communication skills and interpersonal relationships.

Through a self-study process conducted last Spring, each of the schools identified local curriculum and instructional problems and concerns. The Laboratory, operating through its field offices, provided assistance to these projects during the planning phase and has continued to support these local efforts with consultative assistance and limited instructional materials. Ranging from experiments in school-within-a-school organization patterns to in-service training programs, these local projects contribute to the devel-



**Successfully combines audio and visual stimuli to help the educable retarded child learn more — better! ... at his own pace**

**AVIDesk individualized instruction** permits each student to work at his own pace, in a relaxed atmosphere, according to programs developed by educational specialists. Every correct response is confirmed and rewarded immediately. The student's confidence is strengthened, his frustrations relieved, his rate of learning accelerated.

**Audio-visual programmed lessons**, minimizing trial and error, actively involve the student through multiple choice button response, together with other demonstrated techniques — written structural response, object manipulation, perceptual motor discrimination.

**AVIDesk dramatically reduces** the student/teacher ratio. The instructor remains the focal point of the educational process but is free from repetitive instruction so necessary to the concept of *overlearning*.

For more about the AVIDesk system and its many programs for the slow learner — write or phone today.



PM&E Electronics Inc., P. O. Box 4263, East Providence, R. I. 02914. Tel: (401) 438-5400

opment of these schools as exemplary situations.

In addition to the work on these locally-identified curriculum concerns, the six Alabama schools are cooperating with the Laboratory in its regional research program. The basis of the research to be done on improving communication skills and interpersonal relationships is being developed through the pilot schools in the region.

Four of the schools in Alabama are participating in the initial data gathering phase of the communication skills program. The literature related to educational deprivation contains many generalizations about the ineffectiveness of language programs for children who lack competence in standard English. From this point, SEL has begun a long-term project to study the character of language usage and ways in which educational deprivation can be alleviated by clearing up communication problems.

The communication skills program involves classroom observation, audio, and visual recordings of pupils' and teachers' language and interaction patterns. Multidiscipline panels of experts will analyze these data with special emphasis on the linguistic aspects of the teacher-pupil relationship. Significant observations will be organized into diagnostic and prescriptive techniques which will be refined and tested by teachers in the pilot schools.

The second regional program is concerned with improving interpersonal relationships between teachers, between teachers and pupils, between school personnel and parents.

Working in pairs and in small groups, professional members of school staffs seek a better understanding of their own attitudes and behaviors, as well as the attitudes and behaviors of others. The involvement of specific schools in these activities dealing with interpersonal relationships stems from the self-studies which indicated that

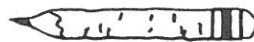
the lack of understanding of self and others is often a significant deterrent to the achievement of maximal instructional effectiveness.

Using guest consultants and programmed instruction materials, activities in interpersonal relationships are already underway with staffs and students. The involvement of the communities in these activities will begin later in the year.

Through its regional program, the Laboratory will continue to evaluate the application of its research findings and recently developed materials in the local school situations.

As it becomes necessary, new materials and processes will be developed. Other school staffs will be invited to participate in clinics designed to disseminate the results of the work done during this year.

So for Alabama, SEL is not just another acronym, but is definitely an important part of the efforts being made to strengthen education. The six pilot schools in Alabama would readily agree that SEL is a powerful member of the education game as well as the acronym game.



## Why does the Curriculum Filmstrips Reading Program GET RESULTS?

Because it's an organized supplementary concept program designed to fill in background gaps and establish new concepts necessary for understanding and comprehension. It consists of

### Basic Grade Library of Filmstrips

- 100 Filmstrip Reading Experiences for Grade One
- 125 Filmstrip Reading Experiences for Grade Two
- 125 Filmstrip Reading Experiences for Grade Three

PLUS: Teacher's Manual, Sample Tests, Recorded Teacher's Workshop, Installation Suggestions to Teacher and Principal, Simplified Key to Pronunciation.

This program is tailor-made to fit your needs, your methods, your readers and texts. Results are measurable and provable in your own classroom. Send for full information.



## CURRICULUM FILM LESSONS

For Results approvable under federal programs

write:  
119 S. Roach St.  
P.O. Box 1187  
Jackson, Miss. 39205