

# To Meet Increasing Needs, College Has Varied Special Education Offerings

By Octavia B. Knight

With the increasing trend of establishing classes for the mentally retarded, there is a vital need for better trained teachers to staff these classes. Since 1953, North Carolina College has been meeting the need by offering courses to in-service teachers, special class teachers, and other persons desiring training in this area of exceptional-ity. For the past thirteen years a graduate program leading to the Master of Education degree with mental retardation as an area of concentration, or to State certification for teachers of the mentally retarded, has been in operation at the college.

The educational philosophy motivating the program is geared toward helping teachers to develop competencies which will enable them to meet the needs of children with special learning problems. The prime focus in the program is the concept of individual differences. Thus, the practicum in special education is an important aspect of the summer program.

The practicum is designed to provide in-service teachers and those entering the profession an opportunity to gain experience in the newer methods and techniques in teaching educable mentally retarded children. Particular attention is given to grouping, record keeping, reporting, materials of instruction, and evaluation procedures.

During the summer, the demonstration class consists of 12 educable mentally retarded children enrolled in special classes in Durham city and county schools. The age range is from 8 to 13 years, with an IQ range of 50 to 75 as specified by state law.

Activities in the practicum offer an opportunity for each child to participate at his own rate of speed and level of comprehension. In addition to small group instruction, each pupil receives individual help with special problems.

Areas of emphases include language arts, with particular reference to reading, vocabulary building, development of listening skills, phonics and spelling.

Other areas include arithmetic, social studies, safety and physical education.

In addition to the practicum, regular courses are offered during the summer session, including Introduction to Exceptional Children; Psychology of Exceptional Children; Tests and Mea-

surements in Special Education; Problems, Materials, and Methods for Teaching Mentally Retarded Children; Mental Hygiene; Materials and Methods for Elementary School Teachers (Arts and Crafts); and Practicum for Teachers of Mentally Retarded Children.

Course offerings are enriched through films, field trips, lectures, laboratory sessions in testing procedures, and seminars.

Members of the staff are Mrs. Octavia Knight, John M. Hen- nique, and Miss Piccola M. Mor- row.



The Special Education Classes



**SPECIAL EDUCATION**—Making "something from nothing" might be described as the aim of the women in the top three photos enrolled in a class in Arts and Crafts for Elementary School Teachers being conducted through the Department of Special Education.

In the left photo, Miss Piccola L. Morrow, second from left, teacher of the class, works with students who use such things as burned-out light bulbs, empty detergent bottles and old clothes hangers to make useful household animals. In the center photo, students are making cor- rugated boxes into carrying cases and easels and other

objects. Miss Morrow, standing in right photo, supervises students in using clothes hangers to make toy animals.

The center row shows enrollees in the special education course taught by Mrs. Octavia B. Knight. Mrs. Knight is shown at left in the left photo as Miss Flossie Vereen, a graduate student, assists two students with an arithmetic lesson. In the second photo, Richard Mizell is shown assisting pupils in studying a spelling lesson. Miss Annette Liggins, an in-service teacher, helps a student gain a better understanding of initial consonants; and on the right, Rufus Horton, kneeling, supervises a reading

lesson as Mrs. Knight looks on.

On the bottom row, students in the special education class study health and safety under Miss Thelma Hodges and Mrs. Carrie Williams. The center scene shows Miss Ida Bullock explaining signs they will need to understand to two students who wish to be truck drivers. Listening, one of the basic tools of learning, is the object of the group in the right photo. The students, taught by Mrs. Corene Weaver, learn to follow directions as directions are given on the tape recorder.