

1977

A Negative Sodium Ion?

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10-7...Thursday. Yesterday wasn't productive, the last two days improved. I watched the social interaction between students. Of the slower pair of boys, one partner moved on by himself. The one left behind spent a lot of time reading through the packet. With this type of instruction there was time to give him extra help. So far, I had not seen this student request help. He may have been satisfied with his pace. He was good natured and didn't seem to be bothered by working alone. It will be interesting to see if he changes his level of involvement.

10-12...Tuesday. Two girls made some sucrose solutions of varying dilutions. It was good to allow the students to take part in its preparation, it seemed more of a whole experience, rather than a cookbook experience. This was my last official participation day, though I planned to continue observing on my own time.

Conclusion

As a result of the SPBE experience I feel that self-pacing instruction encourages students to accept more responsibility for their learning. Learning is done at their pace but not necessarily at their intellectual ability. Students are expected to communicate the results of their experiences in forms other than objective tests. The teacher is more accessible for individualized assistance, as a result, better rapport is established with students. The one-to-one relationship enables the instructor to become involved with the whole student rather than just the intellectual side of the student. Such involvement enables the teacher to help the students set realistic personal goals and attain them at a pace commensurate with their abilities.

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A Negative Sodium Ion?

Chemistry textbooks will have to be rewritten again because of a new discovery at Michigan State University.

The basic assumption that sodium ions are positively charged was negated recently when Dr. James Dye produced negative sodium ions. The new ions exist in two states — as gold-colored crystals and as a liquid.

It is now possible to produce entirely new classes of chemical substances that are useful as reducing agents or semi-conductors in transistors. Practical applications revolve around finding a cheaper way to make the negative ions. Current cost is approximately \$5,600 per ounce.

*Newsletter of the College of
Natural Science (Vol. 3, 1975)
Michigan State University.*