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## **A Comparison of Performance, Learning, and Retention of a Motor Skill by Mentally Retarded and Normal Children**

Max E. Ford

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A Comparison of Performance, Learning, and Retention  
of a Motor Skill by Mentally Retarded and Normal Children

Max E. Ford  
Odessa, Texas

Approved: *Lois R. Smith*  
Dr. Lois Smith, Advisor

*DM-DSP-Schilling letter*

*BRC  
read*

## Abstract

The purpose of the study was to determine if there is any significant difference in the performance, learning, and retention of a motor skill between mentally retarded and normal children of similar chronological or mental age. Subjects were categorized into one of three groups. One group (MR) consisted of 10 mentally retarded subjects. Another group (MA) consisted of 10 who were matched to the MR group on mental age. The third group (CA) consisted of 10 subjects matched to the MR group on chronological age. Each subject received twelve, 20 second trials with a 30 second rest interval between each trial on the pursuit rotor task. A week later, each subject was given an additional six, 20 second trials with a 30 second interval between each trial. The results indicated that the CA group's scores were significantly higher in performance, learning, and retention than the MR group, ( $p < .01$ ). The MR group compared to the MA group showed no significant difference in performance or learning. However, there was a significant difference between the MR and MA groups in retention of the pursuit rotor skill, ( $p < .01$ ) with the MA group showing a higher level of retention.