

Completion of the "unfinished business of democracy" is the goal of every wide-awake citizen of the earth. That major interest must be placed on the undiminishing need for harmonious and intelligent intergroup relations is made clear in this article by Marion Edman, formerly director, field staff, Bureau for Intercultural Education, New York, and now with the elementary schools in Bavaria. This resume of classroom practices in the field of intergroup relations provides a number of stimulating ideas for experimentation and lists the salient strengths and weaknesses of each procedure.

THIS IS ADDRESSED specifically to those teachers who have recognized the urgent need for intercultural education and who are asking for suggestions for classroom presentation. It does not pretend to set forth scientific evidence concerning method in intergroup education; the field is yet too new for much experimental evidence to have been accumulated. Instead it simply lists fifteen types of classroom practices which teachers have tried and which seem to yield the results they are after. These practices have been gathered through classroom observation and through an informal survey of some two hundred schools.

An attempt will be made at evaluating each type of classroom approach described. The strengths and the weaknesses of each approach will be analyzed in very incomplete detail, but enough will be said to show what the most salient points of strength and weakness seem to be in each of the various approaches described.

"Both-and" versus "Either-or"

Let it be emphasized at the outset that the greatest strength of any program in intergroup education is its diversity and continuity; the greatest weakness is the approach which is sporadic and "single-shot" in scope. The "both-and" rather than any "either-or" attack is urged for the settlement of such moot questions as

whether a factual emphasis is preferred to an emotional one; whether an integrated program is better than one which places specific stress on intergroup education through special units, programs, and "days" or "weeks"; whether one subject is more adaptable than another for promoting good human understanding; whether some selected grade levels are preferable to others; and so on. It should also be borne in mind that in considering the relative merits of the various approaches described, the adverse criticisms apply with particularly strong force when the approach is of the single-shot, sporadic effort referred to above. When the approach is diversified and continuous, these criticisms may carry little or no weight.

The order in which the fifteen types of practices described below are listed has no special significance or importance. Some attempt has been made to group together those practices which may have some slight relationship to one another. It should also be noted that there is considerable overlapping among the various types listed. No one approach is perfectly unique in its relationship to the others.

The Contributions Approach

This is by far and away the most commonly used approach to intergroup education. It has almost endless variations,

but in general there are two chief emphases: the great man and the folk contribution. In the great man approach, children are taught the names of outstanding representatives of various nationalities, religions and racial groups and certain biographical details about their achievements. The life of George Washington Carver is a particular favorite for this approach. The handicraft arts, dances, folklore, food, festivals, music and other unique features of a culture as a means of understanding a way of life somewhat different from the usual "Anglo-Saxon, American way" are used in the folk approach. A considerable amount of factual material about peoples can be interspersed with the activity program of singing, dancing, and other firsthand experiences which is the usual organization for the contributions approach.

Negro History Week, Christmas customs, the celebration of the Jewish festivals of Hanukkah and Passover, units on the Chinese, Mexicans, Eskimos, Indians, and other peoples are some of the favorite forms which this approach takes. Occasionally an overall survey is made of the cultures of many groups such as an all-school study centering in the theme "America: Home of All God's People."

One of the merits of this approach is that it dovetails well with the existing curriculum. It has been used for a long time and teachers are familiar with it. It is colorful and entertaining; children enjoy it. It is not too difficult and much helpful material is readily available.¹ The interest and cooperation of the community are easy to get, particularly in those

communities where minorities themselves can contribute to the school's program.

The emphasis on the achievements of a particular people helps build self-respect and group pride within the minority itself as well as interest and understanding of other groups for that minority. This feeling is particularly needed for the groups most keenly discriminated against, for it is difficult for them to maintain an objective point of view concerning themselves and their rightful place in the social order. It is also good for all children to understand the composite nature of our current culture: that it is built out of the benefits developed and advanced by many somewhat divergent cultures.

If teachers are skillful, they have opportunity to point up an extremely important concept; namely, that the culture patterns of people are more alike than they are different. In the essential needs of life, human beings everywhere make characteristically the *same* responses; it is only in the details and specifics that the unique variations occur.

It is in the last named strength that a great weakness of the contributions approach lies. Unless the teacher is skillful, children may easily generalize about the somewhat superficial differences among peoples and come away with the feeling "Aren't *they* funny and aren't *we* proper!" Furthermore, in the attempt to make this sort of work interesting and picturesque, teachers (and often textbooks, too!) perpetuate false notions about peoples. It seems extremely hard for American schools to give up the romantic ideas that: Dutch children wear wooden shoes; Norwegian people go about in colorful costumes; Indians wear feather headdresses every day; Eskimos

¹ For many items useful for this and other approaches see Publications List, Bureau for Intercultural Education, 1697 Broadway, New York 19. Free.

live in igloos! Interesting as hundreds of such details may be, they are essentially false details and had better be dropped immediately.

In the second place, communities which have numbers of first-generation Americans may also be perpetuating false notions of cultures. The Chinese who have lived in China, or the Poles who have come from Poland, and other immigrants often carry nostalgic memories of a culture which has changed significantly since the time of their emigration. The teacher must be on the alert to point out what is *historic* and what is *current practice* in the information and customs which the children gather from community sources.

There is strong disposition in this approach to use it predominantly in schools where there are children of the minority groups present. Thus Negro History Week² is most often observed in schools where there are Negro children. This is both a strength and a weakness. It is difficult to say which group, Negroes or whites, is more in need of the kind of learning which comes from good teaching of Negro History Week. It is certainly safe to say that *both* groups are urgently in need of an understanding of Negro life and history. Likewise, it is safe to say that intergroup education in general is most needed in those communities which seem to present fewest problems in intergroup living because of the homogeneous character of the population. This is true regardless of whether that population is made up of the so-called majority group (white, Anglo-Saxon, middle-class, Prot-

estant) or of any single minority group. It is true because the very character of the neighborhood limits the learning about people which goes on outside school in the more heterogeneous communities.

The greatest weaknesses in this approach lie, however, in its failure to touch basic issues involved in intergroup living. Reasons for prejudice and discrimination—indeed their very existence—are not touched upon at all. There may, however, be some merit in this weakness. In those communities where prejudice or ignorance (or both!) is particularly prevalent, no one can find much to oppose in a school program which uses the contributions approach. Many teachers have successfully used it in this type of community as an “open-upper” for a more vigorous attack on the problems of intergroup relationships. When this approach is used in an effort to effect immediate improvement in relationships among peoples, children are often led into a questionable kind of reasoning. For example: George Washington Carver was a great scientist; therefore, Negroes should be given occupational opportunities. Poles dance beautiful folk dances; therefore, Poles make good citizens.

Margaret Mead, the noted anthropologist, has well pointed out that as it is unfair to blame any individual person for the shortcomings of members of his group, so it is unrealistic to attribute honor to him because of the achievements of any member of his group. Joe Brown in the fourth grade of Rosehill School deserves no special merit because Paul Robeson can sing; neither should he receive any demerit because a Negro in his town was arrested for murder. So long, however, as the de-

² Negro History Week is celebrated each year the week of February 12. Free material may be obtained from The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 1538 Ninth Street, N.W., Washington, D. C.

merits for members of minorities are so conspicuous a reality in our society, they ought, perhaps, to be offset by rather farfetched and superficial identification with the merits won by individual members of those minorities. The teacher must be careful, however, not to place too strong emphasis on this type of identification.

The Precept Approach

Dr. Hutchins of the University of Chicago says that there is hope for the future of America because we have been brought up on the right words: *liberty, equality, justice, the people*. Certainly it is essential that children know intimately what the best American ideals are and what they mean in the specifics of group life. For that reason, a real understanding of such basic American documents as the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, the Four Freedoms, selected speeches of Jefferson, Lincoln, Wilson and others is extremely important. The religious concept of the brotherhood of man, strongly emphasized by all three of the major religious groups in America, also receives considerable attention in schools. Such documents as "Ten Commandments of Race Harmony," published for the Young Men's Christian Association, and the series of posters published by *Scholastic Magazine*, "Speaking for America," are used to discuss ideals of the American way. Brotherhood Week, sponsored each year by the National Conference of Christians and Jews³ is observed in many schools and serves as an opportunity for focusing on American ideals.

³ Brotherhood Week is scheduled each year for the week of February 22. Material can be obtained free from the National Conference of Christians and Jews, 384 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y.

The strength of this method is that it gives good perspective and good direction to children's thinking. "These are the things we have said we stand for as a people, and these things seem right and good and worthy of our best efforts," can be a deduction drawn from a study of the documents of democracy. The weaknesses of the approach are of course patent. Words can be entirely meaningless in practice (witness the startling effect of reading aloud so simple and direct a statement as the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States!). Words which involve such complex concepts as justice, equality, and democracy are in themselves somewhat meaningless to immature pupils. Furthermore, the precept approach may involve a false kind of motivation. It is to be found in emphasis on such exhortations as those delivered by movie stars, army generals or other persons of status urging tolerance and good will toward minorities. To emphasize that children ought to have good attitudes simply because Actress X says it is good to have them is to develop as shallow motivation as it is to urge them to eat breakfast foods for the same reason. It has been found by those who sell breakfast foods, however, that status appeal is a powerful one in getting children to eat healthful foods. Teachers should not neglect it in developing good attitudes. The danger lies in using this appeal to the neglect of more basic approaches.

The American Dilemma.

This approach makes use of the contrast between what Americans profess and what they actually practice. It lays bare the facts of life as they involve discrimination and prejudice toward mi-

nority groups by showing the inequalities which now exist in this country: inequalities of opportunity for employment, education, housing, recreation, health, and civil rights. Surveys of communities are often made to point up these inequalities.⁴ One favorite technique is to study newspapers, including the employment and housing want-ad sections, to see what discriminatory stipulations are made or what unfair labeling of groups in news stories is prevalent. The policies of various organizations, ranging all the way from the Ku Klux Klan to the YWCA are studied. One school, after the children had considered the matter carefully, refused to take the swimming cards which the YMCA contributed to them, because the Negro pupils were asked to take cards which segregated them from the rest of the children.

The chief merit of this type of approach is apparent: it is honest and realistic in letting children see conditions as they really are. Because they are led to understand that democracy is unfinished business, they can be motivated to think of ways in which improvements should be made. Without doubt, the proper concern of children for unsolved social problems is the best hope of progress.

Furthermore, learning to understand the kinds of discriminations and unfair practices under which peoples of minorities live in practically every community in the United States helps to break down feelings of chauvinism and extreme smugness which are apt to be inculcated in children, particularly in favored sections. Boys and girls who understand

the shortcomings of their own communities are less apt to feel so comfortably superior when criticizing Arab policy in Palestine, British policy in India, or even the racial policies of the southern section of the United States.

On the other hand, there is danger that false generalizations will be made from too close scrutiny of the results of discrimination. A visit to the slums in which Mexican Americans live may result in children thinking: "Aren't these people awful!" rather than in understanding that the *results of discrimination* are awful.

This type of approach can also be dreadfully disillusioning and disheartening to immature boys and girls. The knowledge that ideals are so easily swept aside, that laws are so completely and openly flouted, that there is such a fearful gap between precepts and practices can make them extremely cynical and skeptical.

Where children of minority groups are present in school, this approach has special hazards. The school must never be unrealistic in helping even these children to recognize the American dilemma, but they have probably already learned its bitter lessons from parents and from society. Classic is the statement written by a Negro child concerning Hitler's punishment: "Paint Hitler's face black and let him live in America." But the difficulty of this approach with children of minority groups is poignantly summed up by a line in the current play, *On Whitman Avenue*: "Who is wise enough to comfort the heart of a child—especially the heart of a Negro child?"

The Study of Prejudice

An attempt is made in this approach

⁴ Spencer Brown, *They See for Themselves*. New York: Harper and Bros., 1945. Paper, \$1.25. Cloth, \$2. Bureau for Intercultural Education, 1697 Broadway, New York 19.

to understand why people feel as they do toward certain minority groups. Historical, psychological and economic bases for discrimination are studied. Various techniques for perpetuating prejudice such as name-calling, stereotyping, segregation, scapegoating and the spreading of rumors are analyzed and understood as conscious or unconscious efforts on the part of majorities to keep minorities in subjection. Units built around such publications as *Probing Our Prejudices*⁵ and *ABC's of Scapegoating*⁶ are very popular, particularly at the high-school level. Name-calling and rumors can be discussed with very young children. Stereotyping can be explained in very simple terms or in very complex ones, depending upon the age level of the children.

Like the American dilemma approach, the study of prejudice is a realistic grappling with things as they are. It gives children insight into psychological and economic processes and attempts to explain these phenomena to them. It also affords good opportunity for self-examination and self-analysis.

The chief drawbacks to this approach are that it gives only slight motivation for the improvement of conditions as they exist; it is difficult to get proper materials for various age levels; it is not an approach which dovetails easily into existing curricula. In most cases, the study of prejudice is now taught as a special unit in English or social-studies courses at the high-school level, al-

though incidental teaching often occurs at the lower-grade levels.

The Factual Approach through Science, History and the Social Studies

One favorite method used in this approach is a special unit based on *The Races of Mankind*,⁷ which presents simply and directly the basic facts concerning cultures and races. A recent publication, somewhat similar in nature, is *Sense and Nonsense about Race*.⁸ This is also an anthropological approach simple enough for use in the upper grades of the elementary school, as well as in high school.

Another favorite method is a special unit based on the three major religious groups in this country. A book of particular value at all grade levels is *One God*.⁹ This explains the common elements, as well as the differentiated teachings, of Catholics, Jews and Protestants and presents with beauty and reverence the religious ceremonials of all three. The book is a *must* for all teachers who wish to create understanding for the major religious groups in this country.

Other factual presentations are interwoven with the regular subject-matter fields of the curriculum. The materials of science courses are sometimes supplemented by information about blood types, anatomy, innate and learned behavior, intelligence, and other data pertinent to an understanding of race. Many teachers find excellent opportunities for introducing information about various groups through the study of current

⁵ Hortense Powdermaker, *Probing Our Prejudices*. New York: Harper and Bro., 1944. Cloth, \$1. Paper, 65 cents. Bureau for Intercultural Education, 1697 Broadway, New York 19.

⁶ Gordon Allport, *ABC's of Scapegoating*. Chicago: Roosevelt College, 1944. 25 cents. Bureau for Intercultural Education, 1697 Broadway, New York 19.

⁷ Ruth Benedict and Gene Weltfish, *Races of Mankind*. New York: Public Affairs Committee, 1943. 10 cents.

⁸ Ethel Alpenfels, *Sense and Nonsense about Race*. New York: Friendship Press, 1946. 25 cents.

⁹ Florence Mary Fitch, *One God—The Ways We Worship Him*. New York: Lothrop, 1944. \$2.

events. *Scholastic Magazine*¹⁰ and *Junior Scholastic*¹¹ are used frequently for presenting good and unbiased news and information about many types of peoples. Particularly important in the factual approach is consideration of the economic factors involved in the treatment of minority groups and the widespread social implications of discrimination, for the majority groups as well as for the minorities.¹² For this reason, special weighing is often given units in the social studies where analysis and study of the problems involving minority groups can be logically presented.

Textbooks Are Incomplete

The chief drawback to this approach, though simple, constitutes a considerable impediment: American textbooks fail to include the materials which give fair and adequate treatment to minority groups. Teachers generally are not able to fill in the gaps for themselves. For the time being, pamphlet materials and special texts will probably be the chief sources to help to supplement general textbooks. Fortunately, there is now available considerable material of this type which is high in quality.¹³

Personal Contacts

Learning to know people as individuals is usually a sure way to break down prejudices against them. In those communities where there is heterogeneity of population, it is comparatively easy to arrange for inter-school visitation; to invite members of minority groups to appear at assembly programs

¹⁰ Published by Scholastic Corporation, 220 East 42nd Street, New York. 10 cents.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Wallace Stegner, *One Nation*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1945. \$3.75.

¹³ Bureau for Intercultural Education, 1697 Broadway, New York 10. Free publications List.

and otherwise to assist in interpreting local minority groups to children.

The dangers of this type of approach are fairly apparent. At best, the contacts are somewhat staged and few in number. Often children are asked to generalize from them in entirely unwarranted fashion. It is just as bad to insist that because Mr. Fu, who appeared on the school assembly program, is a fine gentleman, all Chinese are worthy citizens as it is to feel that because Mr. Wong, the laundryman, lost father's shirt, all Chinese are unworthy citizens.

Secondly, contacts in themselves, if they are unpleasant or on a patronizing plane, may do harm rather than good. Care should be taken to introduce children to attractive, warm personalities as representatives of minorities. As rarely as possible should these representatives be asked to talk about themselves as members of minorities. Rather they should demonstrate competencies of interest to the children. None of these difficulties is likely to hold when personnel from minority groups are included on the school staff. This gives children excellent occasion to know these people not as stereotypes, but as individuals whom they like or dislike for *personal* reasons.

Vicarious Experiences

Fortunately there is an adequate and constantly growing body of literature for all age levels dealing with the human values of intergroup living and of living within minority groups.¹⁴

These books portray normal, healthy characters among every kind of people

¹⁴ Interesting reading ladders have been worked out by Margaret Heaton and may be obtained from Intergroup Education in Cooperating Schools, 437 West 59th Street, New York 19.

who share the activities and feelings common to humankind everywhere, and show children of many groups enjoying themselves together. Thus they offer good opportunity to break down stereotyped thinking about minority groups. In some books the dark picture of injustice and discrimination enters and children take a hand in correcting what is wrong and evil.

The use of skits and plays, movies and the new technique of psychodrama (in which children are presented with a given intergroup situation, assigned roles, and asked to act out some solution on the spot) offer possibilities for vicarious experience in learning to understand and appreciate people of minority groups.

The great strength of this approach is that it combines factual information with emotional experience. It emphasizes the common humanity of all peoples and points up likenesses rather than differences. The chief danger lies in choosing materials which give an over-sentimentalized treatment.

School Activities

This approach tries to make sure that children respect one another and cooperate with one another in the voluntary associations of school life. To make this possible every child must have equal and fair opportunity to participate in all the activities of the school. This is particularly important in schools of mixed populations. There must be no discrimination, whether in school patrols, service clubs, school elections, casts for plays, locker assignments, showers, swimming, parties, playground activities, or anything else.

There is one pitfall of which teachers must be aware: they must not assume that because there is tacit acceptance

of the children of minority groups in school activities that there is no need for further intercultural education. Outward smoothness can sometimes be a cover for violent inward protest.

Child Study and Guidance

An anthropologist recently remarked that two factors are mainly responsible for prejudice: great economic inequality and improper understanding of child development. Certainly teachers need to work continuously and ardently at understanding the conditions which affect the behavior of their pupils. Children of minorities offer particular problems in guidance and counseling. This whole area of child study is one which is yet little understood, but one which offers great promise for the future.¹⁵ When teachers better understand the frustrations and problems of childhood, they will know better how to build healthy, integrated personalities where prejudice and bigotry will find little room.

Friendship Structures

Each classroom is a little world in itself, usually composed of cliques, friendly groups, and rejected individuals. Rejection is one of the most harrowing of all human experiences. It is therefore of paramount importance that the teacher understand something of classroom grouping and try to make adjustments which will do away with cliques that are closely drawn and with other forms of extreme rejection. She should be aware of tendencies toward self-segregation on the part of minority children, of socio-economic lines drawn within the group, of gang organizations operating outside of school. Simple devices have been

¹⁵ Daniel Prescott and others, *Helping Teachers Understand Children*. Washington: American Council on Education. Washington, D. C.: 1945.

worked out which enable the teacher to chart this whole pattern of social organization.¹⁶

Democratic School Procedure

Teachers must attempt in every way possible to have democracy lived in their classrooms. They and the children should always plan and work cooperatively. Self-government, whether through good group morale or through more formal organization, should be a part of classroom living, from kindergarten up. Free discussion and the honest statement of opinions, even when these are not in accord with the objectives toward which the teacher is working, should always be encouraged.

Orientation of Minority Groups

Special help must be given children of those groups against which extreme discrimination has been practiced over long periods of time. Teaching cleanliness, courtesy, and general good habits is important with neglected children from poor homes. Whenever the school can reach parents, it is extremely important that this type of program be extended into the community. Peoples of minorities come to be accepted more readily as they find it possible to practice certain standards of living and conduct. Oftentimes these standards must be achieved against great odds and then only with the specialized help which an agency like the school can give.

Attitude Testing

This approach offers great promise for the future. At the present time, attitude tests have not been developed to the point where they ascertain attitudes

¹⁶ See *Op. cit.*, pp. 275-364, for a good discussion of techniques which can be used in studying friendship structures.

with any known degree of validity. However, many teaching values are to be derived in administering and discussing the tests now available.¹⁷

Punishment and Reward

Good attitudes in children may be developed by punishment and reward. By showing subtle disapproval for bigoted and prejudiced thinking and by giving approval for honest effort toward improving attitudes, the teacher helps motivate better thinking and acting among children. This is particularly true if her rapport with the group is good and her status with them is high. There is danger, of course, in tying children too closely to the teacher's own emotional reactions. They should be encouraged, certainly, to think for themselves, but every teacher must recognize clearly the weight which her own convictions usually carry, sometimes quite unconsciously, with immature children.

Community Participation

This technique involves the community as an active partner in the school's program in intergroup education by encouraging planning by school-community committees, by presenting programs for parents, and by using all possible community resources. Teachers, on their side, participate in community activities designed to bring about better intergroup living. In this way, programs of the school and of other social agencies in the community receive mutual strength and support.

There are four fundamental premises

¹⁷ Louis Raths, of the Department of Educational Research, Ohio State University, has developed measurement instruments, *The Culture Conflict Index*, *The Ohio Recognition Scale-Who's Who In My Group?* and *The Ohio Social Acceptance Scale*. Samples may be ordered from the Bureau for Intercultural Education, 1697 Broadway, New York 19.

which undergird all approaches described above. They are essential to any and all techniques in intergroup education. The four are these: (1) democratic methods must be used in planning and executing a program of intercultural education, with both teachers and children; (2) critical thinking must

be applied in all approaches; (3) each approach must proceed with full opportunity for honest and free discussion; and (4) each must be permeated with a keen "sense of society," in which a strong feeling of the oneness and interdependence of all humankind is the paramount objective.

Good Consumers in the Making

STEWART B. HAMBLÉN

Knowing the what and how of buying is often difficult for the average consumer. It is logical that a child who receives a sound basis in consumer economics during school years will be a sensible buyer. Stewart B. Hamblén, consultant, The American Association of Teachers Colleges, New York City, describes one program for a consumer-economic curriculum in the high schools. Mr. Hamblén points out that while these projects are still in the trial and error period, they are a good beginning toward the time when such a program will be included in schools for the entire period from elementary through the secondary level.

WHAT YEAR IS THIS? It isn't enough to think, 1946, and let it go at that. It is the year in which our society has reached a stage of technological knowledge undreamed of even a decade ago. Science has given us the "know how" to produce and distribute goods and services that can make it possible for everyone to enjoy an adequate level of living. Why then do we find so many substandard living conditions in every community in this vast country? The answer to this question is long and complex. A partial solution will be considered here.

Most people do not know how to spend their money income. They do not realize that this money income can be supplemented by income-producing activities around their own homes—activities that will make goods already purchased last longer; activities that will produce many goods and services other-

wise obtained only by the expenditure of cash needed for ever so many other purchases. The schools can do much to remedy the lack of this needed knowledge. In particular, consumer economics can take the lead in this responsibility by furnishing a rallying point around which our curriculum can work at making our boys and girls and the whole community economically literate.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Rather than speculate about an ideal Shangri-La consumer-economics curriculum that looks good but has not been put to a practical test, let's look at a real situation where this work is actually being done and where ten years of trial and error work has been going on to make it a real and functional course. It is not perfect, but where can you find perfection? It is an honest effort to help boys and girls improve their eco-

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