

*A knowledge and understanding of the material with which one is to work, based on realistic and firsthand contacts, is accepted as part of an adequate program of preparation for any vocation. To that end, many teachers colleges are experimenting with programs which give young people many direct contacts with children. The way in which such experiences are a part of the total educational program at Central Washington College of Education, Ellensburg, Washington, is told by Mabel T. Anderson, instructor in child development, and Amanda Hebel, director of teacher training.*

"WHAT DO YOU DO when children whisper or talk without permission?" "If a child hasn't learned to read by the middle of the first grade, should I teach him more phonics." "Should a child who has been in the sixth grade two years and who still can't read or do his arithmetic be retained another year?"

Questions such as these are revealing, indeed. They indicate only too clearly that many teachers are not thinking of discipline, promotions, or teaching techniques in relation to fundamental facts that are now known about child growth and development. Quick answers and simple devices are their magic keys.

But there is the teacher whose professional preparation has included a study of child development. This teacher also asks questions which relate to child behavior, curriculum content, and classroom procedures, but he approaches the problems with a different point of view. He asks: "In trying to develop democratic procedures how does a child learn to assume responsibility for his own actions?" "At what age and for what types of behavior can he be responsible?" "What activities best develop readiness for reading in children who are mentally immature?"

"Is it better to have meaningful experience precede or follow drill in the arithmetic program?"

### Experience Is Still a Good School

In our teacher-education institutions today, we may well be concerned when we find numbers of teachers who are still thinking of courses of study, school organization and control as isolated problems. They are too often the teachers who have little or no understanding of basic principles which should be utilized in child guidance and in working out classroom procedures and curriculum content.

In an examination of the content of the present-day professional curricula of teachers colleges, we find that "child growth and development" holds an important place. A true measure of what actually is being done in teacher education to prepare teachers to become careful students of children requires more than a study of courses offered, however. Indeed, more important than courses are those activities and situations which afford the prospective teacher a wide variety of direct experiences with children.

At Central Washington College of Education at Ellensburg, through a long

period of years, child study has been considered essential in teacher preparation. During recent years, instructors have had special training in the field of child development, attended workshops, and studied reports which have come from the various research centers devoting time to a careful study of child growth. Child-study courses have been revised and the entire pattern of the teacher-education curriculum studied in relation to findings emerging from these research centers.

Every attempt has been made to give prospective teachers help in understanding and dealing effectively with children. To do this, direct experiences with children of all age levels are provided throughout the entire teacher-preparation program. Basic professional courses are developed with a child-study emphasis. In addition, a wide variety of elective courses is provided from which the students may select those suited to their needs and special interests.

### Steps to Better Guidance

Included in the sequence of required professional courses are child development, nutrition, school health, introduction to teaching, educational psychology and measurement, methods and curriculum, student teaching, helping the exceptional child in the classroom, and modern educational problems. Through continued observation of children, supplemented by use of selected reference materials and class discussion, the student learns to know a normally healthy child and to consider opportunities which should be provided to enable each child to make optimum growth and development in all desirable ways.

Illustrative of the way in which child

development principles become an integral part of the professional programs is the emphasis on courses in nutrition and health. Attention is given to the nutritional needs of children and how they may be met. "Teachers are made aware of what food can do for human beings, what food habits need changing, and what teaching methods will produce results in terms of improved health. They learn to recognize minor dietary lacks that lead to difficulty and how to supplement inadequate diets. They are brought to realize the educational possibilities of the school lunch and how to interest children in and initiate activities that are essential to healthful living."<sup>1</sup>

In considering the total health program, students are made aware of hazards to child health including childhood diseases. They learn to know procedures and values of physical examinations and appropriate activities which lead to good health behavior.

In many other courses which are included in the professional curriculum, some content deals directly with child study. For example, the course in manuscript writing is not limited to techniques and skills, but the placement of manuscript writing in the elementary school curriculum is considered in relation to basic principles of child development such as: "function should at all times be appropriate to the maturity level of structure"<sup>2</sup> and "effective learn-

<sup>1</sup> Workshop Report on Health and Nutrition in the Elementary School published by Central Washington College of Education at Ellensburg, Washington, pp. 9 and 10, 1945.

<sup>2</sup> The American Association of Teachers Colleges, *Child Growth and Development Emphasis in Teacher Education*, Charles W. Hunt, Secretary, State Teachers College, Oneonta, New York: 1944, p. 22.

ing of anything requires that learning opportunities be appropriate to each individual learner".<sup>3</sup>

In the methods and curriculum courses the prospective teacher evaluates the situations in which he sees children at work and studies curriculum content in relation to accepted principles of learning. The student evaluates a principle such as the following in light of actual situations which he observes.

"In any learning situation, progress toward a specific goal, whether immediate or remote, such as mastering the simple addition combinations or preparing to become an architect, the affective tone of the learner that is generated by the dynamic character of the total situation may determine desirable or undesirable concomitants of learning. These concomitants may express themselves in an endless variety of implicit and explicit behavior."<sup>4</sup> In analyzing curriculum materials and teaching procedures, the prospective teacher is also made aware of the importance of maturation and other readiness factors and delimiting factors in learning. Through much emphasis on these factors it is hoped that the teacher may come to know that what he may expect of a given child in any learning situation "should always be gauged by what is possible, reasonable and desirable in terms of the structure of the organism, his mental capacity, his present knowledge and skill, the methods and materials employed, and the degree to which he is motivated."<sup>5</sup>

#### Direct Contacts Stimulate

But the student does not rely on ob-

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

servation alone as the practical testing ground for principles of child development found in "basic references" or "recommended readings." He is given many opportunities for face-to-face relationships. These direct contacts, in a variety of situations including student teaching, offer opportunities to try out ideas gained in professional courses. Thus he is prompted to extend his study and to test and modify theory through actual experience under the guidance of college instructors and classroom supervisors. The opportunities present in the average pre-service program for direct relationships with children are numerous. The list of such possibilities included below indicates the wide range of experiences through which students at Central Washington College of Education may better learn to know and understand children.

A. In various courses and activities apart from student teaching; observation is carried on in a variety of situations and on various levels, nursery, kindergarten, elementary school, and junior high school. Included in this type of experiences are such courses and situations as:

Child Development.

Children's Literature.

Health and Nutrition.

Introduction to Teaching.

Methods and Curriculum.

Plays and Games.

Child clinics, immunizations, medical examinations, screening by school nurse, hearing and sight tests.

Clinical Practice in Speech.

B. In the student teaching experience:

Knowing as much as possible about each child in the room.

Studying children in the teaching group and getting specific knowledge of them.

Observing and keeping anecdotal records for specific case studies.

Participating in daily health inspection.

Measuring and recording weights and heights at regular intervals.

Making reports to parents.

Taking part in parent conferences.

Studying aspects of the environment: heating, ventilation, lighting, school furniture, acoustics, and instructional materials.

Examining curriculum and instructional procedures in relation to children's mental health and physical development. Noting maturation factors needing consideration, such as eye-hand development in reading and writing, muscular coordination in relation to play activities, social development in relation to individual and group activities in work and play.

Guiding various types of instructional situations, such as:

Planning and taking trips with children to farms, stores, railroad stations, bus and freight depots, cannery, and fire department; attending school assemblies, concerts; using a variety of instructional aids such as films, slides, flat pictures, exhibits, and science equipment.

Adapting play and instructional activities to individual personal needs:

Poor muscular coordination, hearing loss, speech difficulties, heart disorders, diabetics, allergies.

Attending PTA meetings and other all-school or classroom functions which provide for parent contacts.

C. In types of student work experience closely related to children:

Acting as nursery-school assistants.

Serving noon lunch.

Working in the school offices.

Driving a school bus.

Taking care of children.

D. While assisting in clinics and observing consultant service with public school children.

*Health clinics.* Preparing children for medical examination, greeting parents, dressing children, observing pediatrician and nurse as they examine children and conference parents.

*Reading clinics.* Use of tests, methods of managing clinic, studying results of tests and follow-up program.

*Reading readiness.* Types of checks used, method of giving tests, analysis and use of test results and other data in studying individual children.

*Individual case studies* for school adjustment such as remedial instruction, special curriculum adaptations, selection of various types of materials of instruction, and follow-up guidance in learning situations.

E. In Community experiences.

Serving as assistant guardians, counselors in boys and girls organizations, including Clubs, Scouts, Campfire, Bluebirds, Girl Scouts, Brownies, 4-H Clubs.

Instructing at swimming pool, community playground, youth activities at YMCA.

Camp counseling in camp activities.

Teaching Sunday School and singing in the church choir.

Helping with community drives and campaigns.

Participating in Red Cross work.

### Curriculum Needs Expansion

The prospective teacher of today must be guided in her pre-service study to acquaintance with the best possible source material for a better understanding of the material with which she works daily—children and youth. Included among available resources are books, current periodicals, films, and all types of instructional materials. But, in addition to this type of study, the teacher needs to observe children at all age levels to interpret their reactions in a variety of situations, and to work directly with them in laboratory courses,

student-teaching experiences, clinics, on the playground, and in the community. The teachers-college curriculum will need constant revision and reorganization in order that prospective teachers

continually may be aware of current developments in child study and able to make applications of research findings in their understanding and guidance of children.



Courtesy Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia  
Both beginners share experiences

## No Time Limit on Learning

*More and more, teacher education is being visualized as a continuous, never-ending process. In-service education has become as important a part of the professional consideration as is pre-service education. However, in too many instances, the two still are not viewed as integral and interweaving parts of one complete whole. Only as the latter point is more thoroughly accepted will colleges and public schools accept joint responsibility in the total program of teacher education. As such cooperative planning moves forward, programs of education for beginning teachers will be truly continuous and uninterrupted.*

### *"Super" vision and the Beginning Teacher*\_\_\_\_\_

BESS A. LEWIS

*A plea for a vision which sees and puts into practice, joint planning by colleges and school systems is made by Bess Lewis, West Side High School, Newark, N. J. Miss Lewis makes concrete suggestions as to how such cooperative planning by the two groups as well as by various groups within each institution may provide better guidance for beginning teachers.*

IN THE DAYS of the old West, out in the frontier saloons, there were often signs—so they tell us—which read:

"DON'T SHOOT THE PIANO PLAYER! HE'S DOIN' THE BEST HE CAN."

Teachers colleges, too often, have hung out just such a sign to ward off and to block criticism of poor selection

and preparation of candidates in the teaching field. Supervisors, too, have hung out the sign when, after one or two years of classroom teaching under their supervision, the so-called beginning teacher is considered ineffective in his work and unsuited for the career which he has chosen.

Something is wrong with such appar-

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