

the center of their social life outside the home. The first Board of Directors set eleven o'clock as the closing hour for the Friday Night Club and each succeeding board has reaffirmed the decision.

Boys and girls broaden their sympathies and increase their understanding of the problems of others when they assume responsibility for the management of school life. The hunchback, the dwarf, the "prune," the show-off—all are accepted and fitted into the pattern of living and working and playing together. All enjoy that sense of belonging to a group and thrill with pride to

a group success. "Our group got A on clean-up today;" "Our home room has been reported excellent every day for tables in the cafeteria;" "Our team is leading in the league;" "Our dance was the best dance we have ever had;" and so it goes.

In giving growing boys and girls important and useful functions in the life of the school we postpone, if we do not actually prevent, that sense of frustration and futility which is at the heart of delinquency, whether of adolescent or of adult. "Give us kids something to live up to and we will be all-right," said a student council president.

Learning by Working Together

T. H. BROAD

Recognition of problems and sharing in their solutions by group effort gives momentum to learning abilities. T. H. Broad, principal, Daniel Webster High School, Tulsa, Okla. illustrates this by his account of how one high school worked together in promoting better school living.

TALK ABOUT the strengths of a democratic society invariably places stress on the rights and privileges of individuals living in such a society. And such strengths are not to be passed over lightly. But, if a weakness in our society has existed, it has been in the failure of individuals to assume and carry out their responsibilities in such a social order. In preparing children and youth for assuming these responsibilities the school must provide a society in which children *learn* democracy, rather than just *learn about* it.

When a school program provides all the direction for children and teachers, and when, from a central source, the directions are such that no thinking is

necessary on the part of members of that particular society, no corresponding responsibilities need to be accepted by the individuals. In such social orders little opportunity is provided for individuals to learn to assume responsibility.

In order to implement such assumption of responsibility, it has been the practice at Daniel Webster High School to provide as many opportunities as possible for students to participate in actual planning and carrying out of projects that involve their own living. Such a program at times seems to operate more slowly, and to some with more confusion, but the end results are more satisfactory.

Student Government Goes Into Action

Probably the leading organization in the school that provides opportunities for many educational experiences in democratic living is the Student Government Body. The policy in this high school is that the Student Council is charged with the concern of the health and welfare of its members, the advisement of the principal and faculty on policies, and the representation of the student body as a whole. They are not charged with the responsibility of traffic control or discipline, but serve as a discussion medium for such problems as may arise. In order that they may operate successfully, the officers who compose the cabinet are enrolled during the regular class period with a faculty member as sponsor. Credit is granted for this class period toward graduation.

This group has initiated the school's discussion problems that concern the student body as a whole such as smoking on the campus, student conduct at athletic events, assembly seating, and participation in the state and regional student government associations. The problem of financing representatives to such meetings, providing for all school dances and social activities, and providing representatives for student governing boards of various community recreational groups are other responsibilities of the student governing body. The president of the Student Council is a member of the Finance Board of Control of the school which handles all student finances.

One particularly interesting activity of the student governing board was an open forum discussion participated in by all students of the school with no faculty member present. Such a meeting

involved much purposeful planning and was held on school time. No doubt some time might have been considered lost in the discussion, but the original purposes were achieved.

Classroom Planning Involves Responsibility for Action

All procedure, likewise, involves planning with the students in order that they may present and think through the projects which constitute their "classroom" work. The general education approach is through a "block schedule" where a group of students and teachers are blocked together with time provided for teachers to think and plan the work so that they may correlate their activities. This includes teachers of English, social studies, and science. Since all the students in the block have the same teachers, they all participate in determining within those three areas the kinds of activities, and delegate the various activities to members of committees for responsibility in the solution of selected problems. Through such procedures students become aware of the necessity for purposeful planning while the teachers must be careful to see that students do not assume responsibilities which they are unable to carry out. But once a student has assumed a responsibility, he is charged with it.

Further examples of planning and action in classroom work illustrate the fact that youth concerns extend beyond building walls. One group was able, through a study of city parks in the community of the high school, to induce the city park department to make certain changes and improvements. Another group from the social studies class went on a visit to the local city com-

missioners meeting and pointed out that the commissioners were very lax in the way they handled their business. A newspaper reporter present carried a story about it in one of the local daily papers which brought about an improvement in the handling of city government affairs.

Recreation Is Youth's Problem

Students in this high school have assumed responsibility for their recreation, not only in school, but also in the community. Working with one civic club, they have established a recreation center. The student body assumes responsibility for the care, maintenance, and decoration of their center. They have established rules for conduct and use of the building. They have successfully operated this over a period of four years. As a sample of their participation in the community recreation activity, the entire school launched a magazine subscription sale campaign, raising money to purchase a juke box and records for their dances.

Another activity in which students have been engaged, in regard to recreation, is a citywide recreation center which they have named "Teen-Town." The students selected from Tulsa's three high schools have operated a citywide recreation center assuming responsibility for finances, care and maintenance, rules of conduct, and the other problems connected with such an organization. This has been operated most successfully for the past six years.

As a result of student interest and request, the school gymnasium is opened for dancing each morning for forty-five minutes before the opening of school. Students have assumed responsibility for

the care and maintenance of the equipment and for providing records. They assume responsibility for their own rules of conduct and operate their morning dances without faculty supervision.

Students Take Over the "Show"

One of the most interesting and largest projects of the students is an all-school talent show where a student board of control makes all the regulations concerning participation, which includes eligibility rules more strict than those set up by the State Athletic Association. The student group selects a theme and general idea for the show which has, through experience, followed a pattern of three acts and a prologue. Additional student committees write each of the three acts and prologue and with another committee, known as the auditions committee, select talent for each particular act. Other committees are charged with the duties of advertising, ticket sales, ushers, and various activities involved in presenting such a production including the making and painting of scenery for each specific act. The learning experiences have been evaluated each year by students and faculty and as a result of the cooperative planning and evaluation, a half school day for a week is given over to rehearsals before the show is produced.

Teachers Are on the Learning End

As a result of the study of the activities and of the problem of students assuming responsibilities, this faculty has learned much. Probably the most important is the fact that students do not assume responsibility just because an adult tells them that they have one.

The teacher who tells students to pick up the paper from the classroom floor will never get children to assume that responsibility. They develop the attitude that the only responsibility they have is to follow her direction rather than be concerned about the condition of the room.

Learning to assume responsibilities and to carry them out is best done by

providing genuine educational experiences for children where they learn through participating in the planning, setting up of their purposes, planning the activities, and participating in the evaluation of the learning experiences. "Learning by doing" applies in this case. Responsibilities and attitudes *about* responsibilities are learned through *having* responsibilities.

Getting the Community Into the Curriculum

EDWARD G. OLSEN

The tools and methods for teaching should be under constant appraisal and improvement. A comprehensive program toward that end is now under way in Washington State. Edward G. Olsen, director, School and Community Relations, State Office of Public Instruction, Olympia, Wash., outlines its essentials.

IF PUBLIC EDUCATION is to serve our dynamic civilization, it must itself become dynamic. This requires that our schools at all levels find their fundamental purposes in the enduring life needs of the whole child within his own community—a community that is conceived nevertheless in local, regional, national, and potentially worldwide terms. This means, further, that the instructional materials and methods used be based squarely upon the demonstrated fact that "we learn what we live, only what we live, and everything we live. We learn each thing we live as we accept it to act on, and we learn it in the degree that we count it important, and also in the degree that it fits in with what we already know."¹

¹ William H. Kilpatrick "Role of Camping in Education," *The Camping Magazine* 14:14-16; February 1942; *Education Digest* 7:46-48; March 1942.

The primary function of education is to create, clarify, transmit, interpret, and evaluate experience. In the very process of learning, specific experiences are organized into abstract generalizations, which themselves become meaningful as the context of previous personal experience is progressively widened. Thus education proceeds, stimulating the student to an ever-broadening and more realistic understanding of himself within his world. The instructional problem, therefore, is that of choosing and utilizing those particular types of experience which in each specific situation will most effectively help the pupil learn to live successfully in his varied personal, social, economic, and civic relationships.

Tools for Teaching

In recent years our professional con-

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