

"Achievement in skills and understandings."

"Habits and Attitudes," which includes four specific items such as "Organizes and completes work," and "Respects rights of others," with spaces for three items more peculiar to the teaching methods, subject, or student.

The marking system is the same for all three cards. By reporting to parents and students whether the child's achievement is (1) better than, (2) consistent with, or (3) poorer than could be expected in the light of what the school knows about him, it is hoped that situations will be created in which poor students can succeed and good students will be stimulated to capacity.

Spaces are provided for teacher and parent comments, and a message to parents encouraging them to seek school conferences for more information.

The high school card promises, in addition:

During the year we will report to you

in person or by letter on:

1. How the pupil's progress compares with that of his group.
2. How well he is acquiring such basic skills as those involved in communicating ideas and using numbers.

"Reports on the Development of and Suggestions for the Use of the New Progress Records" were distributed to all schools with the cards. Principals were asked to hold study and discussion meetings with their teachers and parents. The teachers in turn were to discuss the revised forms with their students.

A vigorous sales campaign has been studiously avoided. Newspaper interviews, guest editorials, letters to the editor, and radio appearances have been used in moderation. It is the ardent hope of the sponsors that parents, teachers, and students will explore with open minds the value of the new forms and present constructive comment to the schools at the close of the year.

---

## Youngsters Take a Hand

---

PAUL R. GRIM

If evaluation of child growth is to be truly effective, it must keep in step with the changes fundamental to good development. Paul R. Grim, director, Student Teaching, College of Education, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, reminds us that in this measurement of attainments the child himself must have his share in appraisal.

AS OTHER ARTICLES have pointed out in this issue, the modern concept and practice of evaluation is comprehensive in scope, going far beyond the traditional process of testing, measuring, or examining. Evaluation is the process

of gathering and interpreting evidence regarding the progress and problems of the learner in achieving desirable educational objectives. It is based upon the assumption that the *values of curricular experiences are to be determined*. The

program of evaluation, therefore, must function within the framework of the educational philosophy of the school. It should help to determine the degree to which the school is fulfilling its social responsibility in modifying the behavior of its pupils. Evaluation must always operate as an integral part of the learning process, not in isolation from it, nor as an end in itself.<sup>1</sup> It is, rather, a continuous, cumulative process, an aspect of functional learning, serving to diagnose learning difficulties and to aid in guiding desirable child growth.

Another essential characteristic of modern evaluation is that it attempts to secure a complete picture of the individual, although it is necessary to sample different aspects of behavior at different times in a variety of learning situations. Interpretations of behavior relating to desired goals must be made in terms of the total personality of the child, even though differing aspects may temporarily be examined for the purpose of diagnosing learning difficulties.

A modern program of evaluation is comprehensive in scope in that it attempts to appraise pupil progress toward *all the significant goals of the school*. One cannot safely assume that testing for skills and information is a valid index of the achievement of other equally vital objectives. This points to the necessity of utilizing a great variety of appraisal instruments in the modern evaluation program.<sup>2</sup>

Since pupil growth is a continuous

process of interaction of the individual with his total environment, the program of evaluation should similarly be continuous rather than periodical. Evidence of pupil growth and progress toward personal and social goals should be gathered daily.

### The Pupil Plays His Part

It will be noted in the above brief discussion of the characteristics of modern evaluation, that the pupil plays an important role. He is no more isolated from the appraisal process than from other aspects of the learning situation. This must be true if one accepts the assumption that evaluation is an integral part of learning. The pupil should share in every step in evaluation, just as he shares in the planning and carrying out of all phases of learning through problem solving both in and outside the classroom. As he recognizes and accepts goals as being personally vital and important, he must also learn to determine his own status and growth patterns in relation to these goals. Thus the pupil learns to become increasingly independent in appraising his own progress, problems, and growth.

There are a number of distinct steps in which the pupil participates directly in evaluation.

He accepts certain goals as being significant to himself; these serve as motivation to his learning.

He may help the teacher and class group define accepted goals in terms of pupil behavior.

He may suggest experiences valuable in achieving these goals.

He frequently cooperates in helping determine and identify situations in the school, home, and community which are fruitful for appraising desired growth.

<sup>1</sup>Ralph W. Tyler, *Constructing Achievement Tests*, p. 14. Bureau of Educational Research. Ohio State University, Columbus, 1934.

<sup>2</sup>The Commission on the Secondary School Curriculum, *The Social Studies in General Education*, p. 324-325. D. Appleton-Century, New York: 1940.

He will aid in securing records of his progress toward accepting goals; these may include samples of written work and creative projects, records of recreational reading, radio listening, movie attendance, hobbies, and many other similar activities.

He will share in interpreting recorded behavior—determining what it means in light of the desired objectives.<sup>3</sup>

A further implication of the significance of self-appraisal is in its relation to marking and reporting. Since the pupil is an active participant in all phases of evaluation, he will, under careful teacher guidance, regularly discover his strengths, weaknesses, problems, and special abilities. Through daily sharing and participating in the total learning process, he will use the data gathered in the evaluation program to guide his progress more effectively toward his goals. It is, therefore, not necessary for the pupil to wait for a monthly grade or report in order to determine his growth status or pattern. He has been an active participant at all stages in the planning, directing, and appraising of his learning.

#### Values Come with Self-Appraisal

Self-appraisal is especially important in modern education in that it provides a technique which may function in guiding learning and adjustment throughout life. In more formalized programs of testing and measurement, there is relatively little transfer opportunity to other life situations. The pupil—under the traditional program—is usually “tested” by someone, rather than “testing” his own achievements. In a truly modern program of evaluation many

tests are used and interpreted, but always in reference to pupil purposes. The pupil sets goals, plans activities, helps carry out learning experiences, and aids in appraising his own progress. Independence in evaluating growth and achievement consequently becomes an important criterion of educational and social maturity. Such a learning skill as self-appraisal is valuable in every facet of well-adjusted personal-social living. Hence the school is serving a vital function when it enables the pupil to learn better how to judge and place values upon his daily adjustments to life. Successful social living and responsible citizenship require the ability to evaluate regularly one's contributions to his family and to the social institutions.

#### Boys and Girls Judge Themselves

Teachers in schools throughout the nation are daily helping pupils learn better to appraise their progress and growth. The following are brief samples of many such significant techniques which the writer has observed.

In a sixth grade class the teacher has over the years developed the technique of discussing both group and individual goals with her pupils. Group goals are evaluated cooperatively through tests, written papers, pupils' work, discussions, and the like. Individual pupils discuss personal goals with the teacher and also secure the judgment of classmates in identifying personal problems. Each pupil then writes his personal problem or problem area (such as learning self-control, courtesy, study habits) in a class book which is kept by the teacher. Regularly the pupil judges his progress, discusses it with the teacher, parents, and pupils, and ultimately makes a decision regarding his growth toward solving his personal problem. When all con-

<sup>3</sup>J. Paul Leonard. *Developing the Secondary School Curriculum*, Rinehart. New York: 1946, p. 492.

cerned feel that satisfactory progress has been made, the pupil removes his problem from the class book and concentrates upon other problem areas. These data serve as a partial basis for parent conferences.<sup>4</sup>

• • • •

In a fourth grade class in a work period with wood, clay, weaving, and drawing, pupils and teacher regularly discuss standards of work, use of time, and quality of work. Individual pupils explain how they have made their pieces and plan for next steps. Other children point out work well done and suggest specific ways of improvement. The children, largely, decide when a project is finished, though the teacher helps them raise standards with each succeeding piece of work. . . . The class sets its own standards in helping each pupil decide how to describe his picture for a shared assembly. . . . Pupils help determine standards for oral reading of their selected stories. . . . In arithmetic and spelling the children keep their own weekly records of check tests. Each child's record is kept in simple graphic form and is compared only with his own previous work, as he determines the direction of his growth in these skills.<sup>5</sup>

• • • •

A junior-senior high school with an outstanding guidance program makes effective use of self-appraisal. Test results are presented to help the student understand his strengths and weaknesses

in achievement, his aptitudes, his vocational preferences, and opportunity for success in various college courses. Students are encouraged to discuss their problems with trained counselors; much stress is placed upon self-understanding and self-evaluation. Home rooms are small in size, permitting maximum pupil-teacher understanding and guidance of techniques of self-appraisal. In certain class units students write autobiographies designed to help them evaluate and understand themselves. The student investigates himself in relationship to his family, has an interview with his counselor, gathers additional data about himself, outlines his interests and hobbies—all in terms of getting a better understanding of himself. He also interviews people in various vocational and recreational fields, puts the various data together, and attempts to draw pertinent conclusions regarding himself.<sup>6</sup>

In a large city school system recently the following recommendation was made by the coordinating curriculum council, which summarizes our point of view regarding self-appraisal:

"Student participation in checking and evaluating may be made a valuable exercise in sharing responsibility, developing trustworthiness, exercising judgment, and developing higher standards of neatness, accuracy, and punctuality."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> This has been developed by Mabel Squire, sixth grade teacher, Bristol School, Webster Groves, Mo.

<sup>5</sup> These techniques are used by Pearl Merriman, fourth grade teacher, Campus Elementary School, Western Washington College of Education, Bellingham.

<sup>6</sup> These practices were described by Walter Johnson, Director of Personnel, University High School, University of Minnesota.

<sup>7</sup> *School Bulletin*, Minneapolis Public Schools, p. 6, November 21, 1946.

Copyright © 1947 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.