Audio-Visual and Community Materials—Some Recent Publications

Amo DeBernardis, supervisor in the Department of Audio-Visual Education, Portland public schools, and Edward G. Olsen, director of School and Community Relations in the State Department of Public Instruction, Olympia, Washington, present for our use a bibliography in audio-visual and community resource materials. The bibliography will be of help to all who are eager to acquaint themselves with materials in this field.

A MODERN PROGRAM of education calls for rich and varied instructional experiences for every child. Growing public as well as professional awareness of this need is apparent everywhere. That is why our schools are steadily making broader and wider use of audio-visual aids and community resources in close correlation with appropriate library materials and constructive classroom activities.

Although all four types of teaching tools are equally significant and essential, space limitations confine this account to the first two mentioned. Studies in these fields since 1940 are presented with descriptive comment as guide to those who will wish to read further.

Audio-Visual Aids

Words in themselves are abstract and can mean little to the learner until the child has had a sufficient background of experience to give the symbol meaning (6, 18, 19). Through the medium of the motion picture, slides, radio, exhibits, models, or pictures the world can literally be brought into the classroom for close study and examination, and not just once, but again and again. The flexibility of visual aids makes it possible to repeat the experience whenever desirable.

Civilian Techniques for Military Use

World War II witnessed the greatest use of audio-visual teaching aids in the history of education (17, 24, 29, 30). No limit was placed on expenditures for equipment and personnel. There was a war to be won and every resource available was put to this one purpose. It is a tribute to present-day education that so many civilian teaching techniques and methods were adopted by the Army, Navy, and Air Force in training men for the various services. So well had civilian education done its job that nothing especially new in the way of techniques and methods was discovered in the use of these aids during the war periods (15).

Discoveries in Production

In the area of production, however, many new techniques were applied to the creation of films and other aids—techniques which have definite implications for civilian education (17, 33).
Both Army and Navy maintained large production centers where specific problems involving audio-visual aids could be investigated and materials produced to fit the needs. As yet, no civilian research clearing house for experiments with audio-visual aids has been developed (4), although enough has been published to furnish a great many ideas from the Armed Forces Training Program for the improvement of American education (24, 26). Miles and Spain (24), in a rather comprehensive study of the use of audio-visual aids in the armed forces, find these implications for schools:

1. Multi-sensory instructional materials should be used extensively at all levels of education.
2. Effective use of newer types of instructional materials should be based on systematic and careful studies by educational groups of the functions of such materials in teaching and learning.
3. Multi-sensory instructional materials should be conceived as aids rather than as self-contained teaching devices.
4. Improvement of instruction through the use of a variety of instructional materials can be effected by local ingenuity and initiative.
5. Multi-sensory instructional materials should be employed in general education as well as technical and vocational training.
7. Effective utilization of audio-visual materials necessitates both pre-service and in-service education in the use of such aids.
8. Multi-sensory instructional materials afford a means of capitalizing upon individual differences.
9. Local, regional, and national surveys are needed periodically to determine current uses of available teaching aids, needs for new aids, and methods of facilitating production and distribution of these aids.
10. Distribution of films should be decentralized to assure more adequate utilization.
11. The variety of types and uses of military training aids and the evidence of their effectiveness suggest the need for civilian educators to explore the uses of such materials for both new and old educational purposes.

Research for Effectiveness

During the past twenty years much research has been carried on to measure the value of audio-visual aids, most of it on the motion picture. This major emphasis is doubtless due to the dramatic quality which the “movie” possesses for the educator and the public alike. In most studies on the use of the motion picture film, superiority over average classroom techniques was definitely established (1, 14, 20, 32, 40). However, in some instances the so-called “traditional” teaching methods were found to be just as effective as the film (14). In industrial training, films helped train lathe operators more quickly (41). The use of films was reported to help children maintain interest, derive incentive for further study, and ask more questions. Wittich (40) found that children like to learn via motion pictures and are impressed by the clarity, vividness, and speed with which films present materials and concepts. Although considerable research has already been done on certain aids, there is need for much more, not only on the values of specific aids but on ways to improve production of materials for classroom use (37).
Lack of Availability

Considering all the interest and research already exhibited in the field of audio-visual aids, one would be led to believe that availability of these aids is widespread. In 1946, of 1011 cities surveyed, only 162 had organized departments for the distribution and utilization of audio-visual aids (2). This fact may not seem important until one compares the expenditure per pupil in cities with and without organized departments. The median expenditure per pupil for the first group was 52 cents, and for the latter only 29 cents. Obviously, a definite department for this purpose demonstrates its value so readily that more money is forthcoming for equipment and material.

Integration in Organization

The type of organization set up to handle these aids will vary according to the philosophy of the people concerned. If audio-visual aids are looked upon as teaching aids, entirely different in material and functions from other types of instructional material, then separate departments will be organized. Some writers in the field are beginning, however, to look toward an integration of all aids into resource centers which will purchase, house, and distribute every type of instructional material (10, 27, 28, 36, 39) under some unified direction.

No matter what pattern is selected for organizing the department, certain basic problems such as the director, facilities, distribution, in-service training, budget, materials, and evaluation must be considered (8, 9, 22, 23, 34, 38). If teachers are to make extensive use of audio-visual materials these problems must be solved (31, 35). Adequate equipment is an essential for an efficient program of audio-visual aids. A minimum goal for equipment advocated by Seaton (35) is:

1. One 16 mm sound projector for every 200 students.
2. One filmstrip projector for every 200 students.
3. One 2 x 2 projector for every 400 students.
4. One 3¼ x 4¼ projector for every 400 students.
5. One set of 35 stereoscopes for every 400 students (elementary schools only).
6. One opaque projector for each school.
7. One table-type radio for each classroom.
8. One two-speed, portable 16-in. transcription player (complete with speaker).
9. One microphone for use with playback or projector for each school.
10. Wall-type screens or suitable projection surface for each classroom.

In many instances it may not be wise to purchase a basic list but rather to select equipment based on a study made by teachers of the needs of the particular school to be served.

Facilities for use of teaching aids are as important as the equipment and materials themselves. Darkened rooms, projection stands, electrical outlets, storage facilities, and screens are all essential to proper utilization of visual and auditory aids (13, 16, 21, 25).

Classrooms As the Proving Ground

The real test of an audio-visual program is how effectively it aids the teacher in doing his job in the classroom. If the teacher does not recognize the potentialities of these aids and acquire techniques for their use, much of their value will be lost (3). In-service training of teachers to use audio-visual aids is therefore an important part of
an effective program of utilization since most teachers have not had opportunity to learn how to use these newer aids in their pre-service training (10). This needed training must be supplied by supervisors or directors of audio-visual instruction in the local school system.

If the program is to be successful it must be planned cooperatively by teachers and administrators (5, 8, 12). A well rounded in-service program on audio-visual aids should provide opportunity for all teachers to learn the mechanics of equipment, sources of materials, selection of criteria, utilization, evaluation techniques, and psychological implications (7, 11, 17).


21. Long, P. E. “Designing the School Building for Effective Use of Audio-


Materials

Catalog of Selected Educational Recordings. New York: Recordings Division New York University Film Library, 1944.


_Educators Guide to Free Films_. Randolph, Wisconsin: Educators Progress Service.

_Handbook of Inexpensive Resources and Service for Ohio Elementary Teachers_. Compiled by the Department of Elementary School Principals of the Ohio Education Association. Columbus, Ohio: Ohio Education Association, 1944.

Educational Leadership
The News Letter, Edgar Dale, Editor, Bureau of Educational Research, Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio State University.

One Thousand and One (The Blue Book of Non-Theatrical Films). Chicago: The Educational Screen.


Sources of Free and Inexpensive Teaching Aids, by Bruce Miller. Ontario, California. The Author, Box 222.


Periodicals

Business Screen, 812 North Dearborn Street, Chicago 11, Illinois

Educational Screen, 64 East Lake Street, Chicago, Illinois

Film and Radio Guide, Education and Recreational Guides, Inc., 172 Ronner Avenue, Newark, N. J.

Film News, Educational Film Library Assn. 45 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, New York.

Film World, 6060 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood 38, California

Hollywood Quarterly, 350 Royce Hall, University of California, Los Angeles 24, California.

Movie Makers, Amateur Cinema League, 42 Lexington Avenue, New York 17, New York.

See and Hear, 812 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois.


COMMUNITY RESOURCES

During the past decade the educational importance of first-hand constructive community experiences has received widespread attention. In consequence, the modern school utilizes a wide variety of community resources in the instructional program. This is commonly done by taking students into the community for planned observation, participation, and contribution and by bringing resource people into the school as speakers, demonstrators, and consultants. Numerous case illustrations of such practice in both rural and urban situations are reported in Community Living and the Elementary School (29), a volume of real significance to high school and college teachers also. Underlying philosophy is stressed as are tested procedures in utilizing community resources in curriculum building, community understanding of schools, meeting new community needs, and adventuring in school-community coordination.

Suggestions for Community Schools

School and Community (34), the first textbook and teachers’ guide in this field, summarizes the basic philosophy of the life-centered community school; presents a plan for analyzing any community in operational terms; shows how documentary materials, audio-visual aids, resource visitors, interviews, field trips, surveys, extended field studies, camping, service projects, and work experiences may be used to bridge the gap between school and community; and discusses the practical problems of scheduling, transportation, finance, legal liability, program-planning, evaluation, public relations, service center, community coordination, and teacher education. N.E.A. bulletin (30), “How to Know and How to Use Your Community,” presents nine articles describing curriculum planning and community
life, how to study community life, and the use of community resources in curriculum planning. Committees of teachers in Santa Barbara County in California have developed an excellent curriculum guide (40), for building units of study centering around local community processes and resources.

Practical suggestions to teachers for understanding a community better, for becoming participating members of the community, and for making effective school use of community resources are presented in a New York State Education Department bulletin (32). Detailed outlines for making non-technical studies of any community are offered in Colcord's Your Community (7). Here are specific leads for analyzing community setting, founding and development, local government, provisions for dealing with crime and for public safety, workers, wages and conditions of employment, housing, planning and zoning, provision and distribution of health care, provision for the handicapped, educational resources, opportunities for recreation, religious agencies, public assistance, family welfare, child care, foreign-born and racial groups, clubs and associations, and agencies for community planning and coordination.

Varied Approaches to Acquaintance

Community life may be directly experienced through many approaches. Resource people live in every community and work in every school (27). For example, an expert tailor comes to class to explain how suits are made, what materials are used, where cloth is purchased, and the difference between handmade and factory-made suits. A cobbler can demonstrate shoe construction and repair (41). Career Day conferences in which vocational guidance is provided through cooperation with community leaders is becoming commonplace in many schools (10). Individual students or committees may go into the community to interview people concerning achievements, interests, hobbies, ideas, values (26, 44, 17).

Class field trips to observe varied aspects of community life are characteristic of good school programs. Such trips must provide not only seeing but interpreting what is seen. Nor need we go far from home to see and interpret life. The concrete highway, for example, raises such questions as: what is concrete, where does it come from, who owns the right-of-way, how much did it cost? (3). Well-organized trips will grow out of previous experience and will be followed up through various constructive projects (42). Specialized excursions as in science (35) and intercultural education (33) prove most rewarding. Yet one must be warned against using trips merely to collect meaningless data, taking excursions merely because centers of interest are available, or minimizing follow-up activities because of over-emphasis on trip etiquette. Basic purposes are those of collecting materials for overview impressions, providing a basis for making value-judgment comparisons between different situations, and preparing for social action (16).

Group surveys of community processes and problems present another approach to direct community experience (36, 23). Such surveys provide a background picture of the school child showing how he acts in daily living and also what influences affect his behavior.
Local standards of living (11), housing conditions (28), health, recreation, and cultural facilities may be successfully surveyed by high school students.

Trips of Long Duration

Field studies of extended duration or distance are becoming common. Educational trips of three to five days duration have been reported from elementary schools in New York City (31). An Oklahoma school's Travel Club, composed of twenty-six pupils ranging in age from eleven to eighteen, with four teachers traveled to New York and returned by school bus at a total cost of $14.00 per pupil (14). The small high school in Gilson, Illinois maintains an extensive program of extended trips. Each student may make twenty or more tours covering the state as well as four regional trips averaging 3000 miles each (37). In a Michigan high school the Junior Red Cross initiated an eight-day trip to Canada as part of the social studies program. Real international understanding and respect were reported as a result (43).

Camping in the School Program

School camping is another approach through which natural resources in the community may be fully utilized. Cincinnati maintains a year-round program of nature activities for children. The First Settler Camp is on an historic site and consists of a modern farm where groups from the schools and playgrounds come to learn about farming procedures and produce. The Mound Builders Camp is located in an area first inhabited by the mound-building aborigines and provides extended summer camping facilities as well as a meeting place for clubs during the school year. The Traveling Camp is an exhibit of live animals which is taken to various schools and playgrounds as desired (8). Michigan is outstanding in its provisions for school camping (13). In one county, for example, all fifth and sixth grade school children can go to winter camp for two or three weeks (39). Los Angeles operates three camps for children during the summer. Campers are chosen by school playground directors on a basis of inability to receive other camp experience and on citizenship qualities (25). Kilpatrick has summarized the contributions of outdoor education in terms of the 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." (22).

Service to the Community

Community service projects wherein students, teachers, and community adults work together to meet mutual group needs is a further device for relating school and community in the instructional program. A community ice skating rink was built through a project originating in a community civics class (1). A pupil-inspired community fight against malaria eventually brought about a healthier environment (2). In another school seventh and eighth graders may elect "work" as a subject of study. This field includes care of handicapped children and of cafeteria, library, office, and mainte-
nance activities (12). Fifty pupils in another school supervise playgrounds, teach hobby skills to children, present programs to shut-in hospital patients, and lead local groups (18). One school is legally an administrative part of the local public welfare department and through it students function accordingly. Girls prepare and serve luncheons to children in the day nursery, students help in the Red Cross drive, and the pupils take over the entire charities program of the community for the Christmas season (4).

A Civic Pride class in another high school carries full academic credit. Home room representatives attend the class which is the general clearing house for all projects involving school-community activities (21).

Work Experience for Growth

Work experience programs through which children and youth may learn to accept the economic responsibilities of adulthood is also a means of using community resources in the instructional program. Such programs produce understanding and experience in democratic living, development of competence to do productive work, and development of individual interests (24). If these programs are to be truly successful they must be planned by school and community together with a representative advisory council, project and student and work activity indexes, and a competent program director (38). Types of possible programs, essentials of planning, and evaluative criteria have been presented by a number of recent specialists (5, 6, 9, 19, 20).

Perhaps the major implication of these and other such studies is that every teacher, regardless of grade level or subject field, should receive extensive personal, directed experience in community study and leadership as an integral aspect of both pre-service and in-service training. Not otherwise can we become competent users of community resources as one basic type of instructional material.

11. Ellis, Mildred P., “Framingham Facts: Our Pupils Investigate Local Stand-
36. Reschke, Alfred, "High School Seniors Study Milwaukee." Social
FINAL BULLETIN ON CINCINNATI MEETING—Shortly after this issue of EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP is mailed, all ASCD members will receive printed copies of the program for the 1948 Association meeting to be held February 15-18 in Cincinnati, Ohio. From time to time we have carried news concerning plans for discussion groups, general sessions, and housing. Copies of the “News Exchange,” sent to all members, have also supplied details on program plans and housing.

Plans for the final general session, the Association luncheon, to be held Wednesday noon, February 18, are now complete. The speaker at the luncheon will be Shepherd L. Witman, executive director of the Cleveland Council on World Affairs. Mr. Witman will speak on “Education’s International Responsibility” with particular emphasis on the role of the schools in view of today’s world developments.

The local Cincinnati committee, working hard on providing for our comfort and pleasure while in Cincinnati, sends us word that on Tuesday evening, at which time no meeting is planned, the Taft Museum will be open for visits from ASCDers; a special showing of documentary films has been arranged for those interested; and there will be a tour of radio station WLW with the possibility of a television tour if the station is completed by February 17.

In addition, the Cincinnati schools extend a cordial welcome to any who wish to visit them either directly preceding or following the time of the meeting. Any individuals who wish to make arrangements for such visits should correspond directly with Miss Cecilia Unzicker, Intermediate Grade Supervisor, Cincinnati Public Schools, 216 East Ninth Street, Cincinnati.

Watch the mail for your program with details of schedule and personnel. Readers of EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP who are not members of ASCD may receive a program by sending twenty cents to cover printing and mailing costs.