poses, then, there is little in evaluation that warrants the use of a word which means, if anything, the appraising of ends rather than the mere determination of the direction in which we are moving. What good does it do us to know where we are going without knowing whether we want to go there? And is it possible for us to conceive of any approach to knowing which is alternative to the approach of scientific method?

**Toward the Open Mind**

ELEANOR W. THOMPSON

A systematic approach to the creation of open-mindedness is described by Eleanor W. Thompson, Curriculum Assistant in the Open-mindedness Study, School District of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

IN *Toward the Open Mind* a group of participants in the Open-mindedness Study of the Philadelphia Public Schools have endeavored to recount and analyze experiences of the entire group in helping pupils become more open-minded. It has been written by school people for school people, in the hope that others will join what the writers have come to regard as “an adventure in education.”

A distinguished citizen of Philadelphia, the late Samuel S. Fels, provided inspiration and financial assistance for this adventure in education. Mr. Fels was convinced that “people everywhere are indoctrinated with a lasting bias in various directions . . . leading to stagnation.” He believed that “this condition was the fault of man himself,” and that it had never been directly attacked. “If people learn to be closed-minded,” he asked, “why can’t they be taught to be open-minded?”

To try to answer this question, groups of Philadelphia teachers and principals—in all more than two hundred—analyzed their own teaching techniques, consulted experts, read extensively and discussed procedures by which they could help pupils become more open-minded. The focus throughout the study has been on the pupils.

**Hallmarks of Open-Mindedness**

Participants in the study realized that first they must know what kind of person they were seeking to develop. After examining hundreds of cases of closed-mindedness and of open-mindedness, they decided that an open-minded person tends: to be alert, curious, interested and even a little excited about...
the world in which he lives; to be interested in the ways in which people make up their minds; to be willing to look at the other side; to be willing to examine his own interests, prejudices and allegiances; to be skilled in the process of critical thinking; to seek that which is just, that which is true, that which is beautiful. These qualities they called *The Hallmarks of Open-mindedness*.

They decided that the most important way to promote open-mindedness is to place increased responsibility on pupils for thinking through the problems they face. Consequently the participants sought to provide opportunities for pupils to find and to use good ways of dealing with problems. As a result they learned that pupils have far greater capacity for critical thinking than they had first believed.

They found that emotional blocks often keep pupils from thinking effectively. They sought, therefore, to remove such barriers by making direct emotional appeals that would help their pupils to substitute desirable emotions for less desirable ones. They found that songs, transcriptions, formal and informal dramas, and motion pictures often accomplished this purpose.

**Beliefs Supported by Attitudes**

Participants in the study discovered that when pupils accepted beliefs, they already had attitudes that supported these beliefs. These teachers saw that it was important for them to know how attitudes are acquired. They found that almost all attitudes develop gradually, sometimes unknowingly, out of the home, school and community environments; that some attitudes develop as one thinks; and that other attitudes come quickly through sharp emotional experiences that shock the individual into acceptance of certain beliefs.

**Avenues Toward Progress**

Gradually the teachers came to see that once they had detected closed minds in their pupils, there were four avenues they could use in leading pupils toward open minds.

They could create a good climate in which pupils are free to think and to act. They could help pupils examine and evaluate ways in which they make up their minds. They could teach pupils the process of critical thinking and help them to use it in trying to solve problems of everyday living as well as those dealing with academic material. They realized, however, that unless pupils make decisions, whether through critical thinking, tradition, intuition, or any other ways of making a decision, in accordance with desirable democratic values, their open-mindedness might conceivably lead to harmful results. Consequently, they saw a fourth approach to open-mindedness—through the building of desirable democratic values.

In *Toward the Open Mind* these four approaches are analyzed and illustrated. Anecdotes are given of experiences with pupils of every grade from kindergarten to the twelfth. These anecdotes are pointed up to show how these procedures are used. Space permits only two illustrations to show how the material is handled.

**Good Classroom Climate**

Good climate is no accident. In school and classroom, an atmosphere of
fair play and mutual respect can be created that will encourage open-mindedness.

First Graders Learn About Climate

Miss Black had to go to a meeting. While she was away, her first graders had been invited to join the parallel class. This was a new experience for them. When Miss Black returned, she was anxious to know how they got along. She discussed the visit with them.

"We had fun," said Jackie.

"We did numbers," said Janet.

"That's good," said Miss Black.

"Were they the numbers we knew?"

Alert little Janet reported for the group. "We did number stories on the board," she said. "Everybody took turns, and everybody knew them. Michael knew his real good. Didn't he?" She turned to the children.

They agreed. Michael beamed and nodded his head emphatically.

"That's wonderful!" said Miss Black.

"Did you do anything else?"

"We had reading out of new books," Don volunteered.

"And we knew all the words! Miss Stowe was so su'prised. And we told Miss Stowe we were proud of Freddie, 'cause he only asked Charley for one word," said John.

"You still don't know 'talk,'" scolded Charley, "and I told you and told you. You ought to know it by this time. You got all the other words fast as I showed you."

Freddie hung his head for a minute. Then he looked at Charley triumphantly. "But I know it now, Charley!" he crowed. "It's there on the board."

Everybody looked. He was right.

"And we thanked Miss Stowe for inviting us, the way we planned," chimed in Gilda. "Her children said they liked us. Can we ask them to visit us?"

There was a chorus of "Yes!" and "Can we?"

Plans were launched then and there for a visit to this class by Miss Stowe's group.

What Was Accomplished?

The teacher's part is evident. She made plans beforehand so that the work her pupils would do could be done with ease and comfort in the new situation.

In this experience, Miss Black provided opportunities for the children to share in planning their visit. They also had a realistic opportunity for practicing good manners.

There was warmth and friendliness in talking over the experience with the children after it was over.

Miss Black had helped her children to develop a feeling of group oneness,
and of pride in the achievement of the group and of individuals in the group. It was no accident that they were interested in Freddie and helped him. That was the way they were used to working. Freddie took Charley’s criticism in good faith, and was pleased to be able to show what he had learned.

Miss Black’s reading and numbers were serving a purpose beyond themselves. As she taught them, she was helping her children learn to live well together.

‘**Critical Thinking Builds Values**’

Each day decisions must be made in classrooms and schools, and out of schools, too. Some decisions must be made quickly; others require time and thought. Sometimes through the process of critical thinking pupils are helped to make decisions in accordance with higher values.

**Pupils Study Fact and Opinion**

Elsie’s remark rang the bell that started the bout. “All politicians are crooked and somebody ought to clean out the drones in City Hall!” Then the eighth period social studies class swung into action.

Ed stormed, “My dad’s in City Hall, and anybody that says he’s crooked doesn’t know what he’s talking about!”

“Well, he’s one in a million,” snapped Ralph. “What about all those fellows that are under investigation right now?”

Sue’s sarcasm had a sting to it. “Oh, they’re innocent as lambs. It’s just a political maneuver.”

“Oh, let’s forget it,” said Carl. “We can’t do a thing about it anyhow.”

“Well,” said Miss James. “Let’s call that Round One. Suppose you rest in your corners for a while. You’ve made some broad statements. I’ve heard some of them before, and I’ve often wondered how much is fact and how much is opinion.”

**More Information Needed**

As the discussion became calmer, Miss James helped the class to see that their statements leaned very heavily on opinion, and that much more information than they now had was needed even to begin to get at the truth of this complex matter. Two questions were formulated: “In what ways is our city government good, and in what ways is it weak?” and “Who are the people responsible for the kind of government we have?”

It soon became apparent that the task of studying the entire city government would be tremendous. The pupils agreed, therefore, to study the Department of Health and the Department of Public Safety as representative samples of the city government in action.
Visits to City Hall, observation of City Council in regular session, interviews with departmental officials, comparative studies of newspaper articles and editorials, and of replies from parents, teachers and others to questionnaires dealing with the placement of responsibility for good government, pointed the way to several major conclusions: (1) many public officials are capable, responsible servants, regardless of whether they were elected or appointed to their positions; (2) some public officials, elected or appointed, are incapable of doing their work well; (3) sometimes dishonest or incapable people are appointed or elected to positions which involve administration of public funds; (4) it is the responsibility of all citizens to participate actively in securing sound, honest government; and (5) not enough citizens take such an active interest.

A study of their own student government provided an excellent opportunity for the students to apply much of what they had learned. In discussing the value of the experience, students indicated that they had gained better realization of the privileges which they are afforded by their government, and that they had developed a sense of their responsibility for good government.

Analysis of the Experience

What values were involved in this situation?

Students in this class held that it is important that city government, a group of which they were a part, be able to make orderly progress.

They recognized that crooked politicians are individuals who endanger the well-being of the group.

Individual values growing out of allegiance to family were often found in opposition to group values expressed regarding city government.

Pupils exhibited a lack of confidence in their ability to assume responsibility for helping the group make orderly progress by stating, “We can’t do anything about it.”

The negative value, “We can’t do anything about it,” was in conflict with the teacher’s positive value that even getting the facts was a worth-while action.

What factors did the teacher consider?

The students were at an age when questioning authority is a normal part of their growth.

The value these pupils placed upon sane, secure, progressive group-living was one which apparently needed to be strengthened.

There was apparent need for developing a stronger sense of individual and group responsibility for good government.

The students’ attitude that “all politicians are crooked” had probably developed unconsciously, largely because it had never before been given careful thought.

This was a problem of major importance. The pupils would need help in sifting facts from opinions while thinking the problem through critically.

What experiences were provided?

Miss James planned three kinds of experiences with her students:

- Those which would give opportunities to think about the values involved in the problem.

Educational Leadership
Those which would have emotional impact on the students.
Those which would provide opportunities to try the values.

Through use of the process of critical thinking the students found a way of becoming more competent in making decisions. They became aware of their responsibility for exercising care in reaching conclusions.

Miss James saw her pupils' need for firsthand experiences in getting the facts, and for having a more realistic basis for judging the relative merits of facts and opinions. The visits to City Council and the interviews with officials served this purpose.

In order to determine whether the values they considered desirable were operating in their own school, the students were given an opportunity to examine critically their own student government.

In the mid-twentieth century, when our nation is one of the parts of the world that would free the minds of men, the development of open-mindedness must be viewed as a major objective of education. It requires the cooperative effort of all of us irrespective of the grade or the subject we teach. Will you join us in leading pupils toward open-mindedness?

'Culture Units' and Social Education

WANDA ROBERTSON

Penetrating analysis of effects of the "culture unit" approach to the social education of children is given by Professor Wanda Robertson, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

WHEN WE CONSIDER the shocking conditions which currently prevail in our highly interdependent and explosive world, it becomes clear that the most important task facing education today is that of building a world of people who can and want to live together. Science and technology have now made possible a world of unimaginable splendor. But at the same time they have created hazards in human living which now threaten to destroy our present great civilization. Radio, television, rocket planes, industrial processes, improved farming methods, atomic energy—we have them all. But how are we going to use them constructively to build a better world in which all people can live together with mutual respect and concern for one another's welfare?

Practices Need Examination

Today it is abundantly clear that if education is to develop citizens who can cope with these vital problems its present practices must be reappraised and reoriented to the age in which we live. Such an appraisal means that each method of instruction, both old and new, must be scrutinized in the light of certain fundamental social goals. For