

Significant Books in Review

Column Editor: Ruth Streitz

►Shane, Harold G. and McSwain, E. T. *Evaluation and the Elementary Curriculum*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1951, 470 p.

What is evaluation? What are desirable values in the elementary school? What are some desirable curriculum practices in an elementary school? These questions, and many others, are clearly answered in this book, which gives an outstanding over-all view of the elementary curriculum, and how it may be evaluated. The book is written in an interesting manner, and each chapter is effectively summarized, with a list of excellent recommended readings in addition to the summary.

No longer can evaluation be considered as a separate technique or device for determining pupil progress. Evaluation pervades the entire school program, and involves parents, teachers, and the pupils themselves. It is defined as a "continuous process of inquiry" which is a far cry from occasionally "taking stock" of the program of the school with special emphasis upon testing pupils and grading them according to the results of these tests. This inquiry must be a common sense approach which is the basis for the very existence of the school. What is the purpose of having an educational program in a community? This question must be answered by everyone involved in the process. The writers of this book agree that there are certain educational values which only the school can supply, and they emphasize that the responsibility for determining these values must be a cooperative one involving the whole community. This

cooperative approach presents the problem of conflicting values in the American culture. An excellent discussion is given of the diverse influences of value patterns on both individual and group behavior. The sources and evolution of these values are presented with respect to their effects upon the elementary curriculum.

Evaluative Criteria Expressed in Terms of Child Behavior

Having cooperatively established a set of educational values or criteria, the process of inquiry then becomes concerned with the "socially desirable changes in the behavior of children" as they respond to the school-community environment about them. Consequently, the criteria must be interpreted, and then expressed in terms of child behavior. The assumption is made that schools exist to meet the needs of children. An unfortunate thing about many schools is that the outside observer would probably have to ask the administrator to find out why they do exist. Such schools especially need the type of evaluative program so clearly presented in this book.

The evaluative process presents the problem of being objective in the field of sociology. Since it is here that many educators give up in despair, this book is highly recommended as a real help in the "how" of applying evaluation to the elementary curriculum. Furthermore, the process is treated in a most realistic and practical manner.

Does this continuous process of inquiry have special implications for elementary curriculum practices? This

question is carefully answered by a discussion of the elementary curriculum with elaboration upon desirable school activities and their relationships to the areas of the language arts, understandings in arithmetic, the social studies, elementary science and human development, and special fields and services. Several plans of organization of the elementary school are carefully appraised with respect to meeting the needs of children.

"Designing an elementary school program that will give children the opportunity to learn the values and loyalties inherent in democracy by experiencing them in all their school activities is a moral responsibility." Democratic leadership is presented as the heart of this designing process. This leadership is discussed in three parts: professional development of teachers; developing group leadership skills with children; and leadership in parent and teacher cooperation.

Problems of the Elementary School

Certain elementary school problems are persistent, especially those concerned with instructional practices which may clash with community mores and beliefs. Treatment of these problems is given in such a way that educators will be both stimulated and helped.

This book is considered a most helpful one on the process of evaluation, which seems to be so ineffectively practiced in many elementary schools. A very logical approach is made by means of clear definitions of terms, statements of desired educational values, and vivid descriptions with good discussions on the nature of the elementary curriculum. Valuable suggestions are made for solving many of the schools' problems through a careful evaluation of the curriculum.—*Lonie E. Rudd*, Ohio State University, Columbus.

January, 1952

it's
important
to specify

PRANG
REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.



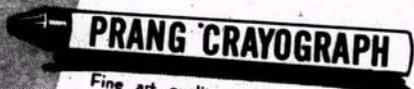
Popular Crayons for paper, wood and fabrics.



Painting and Sketching Crayons.



Painting and Drawing Crayons.



Fine art quality crayons for drawing and sketching, map drawing and coloring, costume design.



Large crayons especially adapted to the needs of Kindergarten and Primary grades.

REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

the **american crayon** company
sandusky, ohio new york

►Kelley, Earl C. *The Workshop Way of Learning*, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951. 169 p.

The "workshop" is a much abused and over-worked term and has been ever since the first experiment in this type of adult learning was tried in 1936. For the past fifteen years educators who are both creative and courageous have tried one form or another of the workshop idea while striving to improve and clarify the basic techniques of the workshop way of learning. Professor Kelley has rendered a distinct service to all service groups in his book, *The Workshop Way of Learning*. The chapter dealing with "Principles and Purposes" is most challenging in that it will stimulate the adult reader to stop and check upon his own purposes and principles.

Fostering Human Relations

Throughout the entire book emphasis is placed upon the quality of the human relations experienced through the attitudes of people toward one another. Emphasis is also placed upon individual worth, cooperative techniques as superior to competitive techniques, opportunities for personal and professional growth, assuming responsibility, improving morale and evaluating one's own efforts. Especially helpful are the pages dealing with "Procedures—Resources" as all too often there are resources available in communities which are either ignored or not even recognized as resources. This refers both to people and to opportunities which one might call experiences.

Criteria for Workshops

Workshops may be either long or short, but there should be some clarification of the term as all too often any professional gathering or meeting is called a workshop. A workshop as first

conceived and later developed has some very distinct features. In the first place the adults who are to participate must have the desire or feel the need to associate themselves with others in order to work upon problems of common concern. Second, "We think that there must be a *planning session* where all are involved at the beginning." Third, "There must be a considerable time for *work sessions* where all have an opportunity to work with others on the problems most significant to them." Fourth, "There must be a *summarizing and evaluating session* at the close." This is indeed a most helpful book both in the education and re-education of teachers.—*Ruth Streitz*, Ohio State University, Columbus.

►Redl, Fritz and Wattenberg, William W. *Mental Hygiene in Teaching*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1951. 454 P.

In recent years the area of mental hygiene has made great strides in the constructive phases of successful living instead of emphasizing the maladjustments and personality disorders which formerly occupied workers in this field. Today the emphasis is upon the building of wholesome, happy, socially useful persons by understanding and practicing sound principles of psychology in dealing with the young and by preventing certain attitudes and habits from developing in ways which will interfere with the individual's best good and the good of his peers.

Patterns of Living

As the editor states so well, "The aim of mental hygiene, as taught in this book, is to inculcate patterns of living among individuals which make people feel at home in the world, free to live with enthusiasm and zest. This is no simple pattern of 'adjustment' which leads to passive conformity and

NEW FOR 1952

HISTORY OF OUR UNITED STATES

CORDIER-ROBERT

A new textbook for grade seven or eight that points up the development of American ideals and institutions. It gives a chronological account of our country's history from its beginning to the present. But it is more than a factual account; it is an inspiring story of the development of democracy as a form of government, a way of living, and a set of ideals.

Different? Yes, in ways you will approve. You will like the large format that makes possible large maps and other visual aids. It does not rehash the facts usually taught in fifth grade history. You and your students will appreciate its new approach and its emphasis on the meaning of democracy.

RAND McNALLY & COMPANY

New York

CHICAGO

San Francisco

acceptance of group patterns without question; but leads to a kind of toughness with tolerance, so that the individual can put up a fight for what he believes to be right, while respecting the wishes of others."

Influences That Shape Lives

The book is organized in a most helpful manner. After a couple of chapters dealing with general introductory materials the authors proceed with chapters dealing with "behavior mechanisms, developmental psychology and the influence of important factors in individual development." Of special significance are the chapters entitled, "Influences That Shape Lives" and "Some Personality Distortions." These are so practical that all teachers will find here both encouragement and help in understanding their own problems and those of the children they teach.

The chapter on "Adjustment, Maturity and Normality" is especially constructive. The use of many concrete illustrations (undoubtedly drawn from real life situations) adds greatly to the usefulness of the book.

Renewed Teacher Faith

Ordinary classroom problems receive the greatest attention. Here the relationship between mental hygiene and learning, how group life in the classroom reveals various psychological factors, the place and function of the teacher in understanding these factors and thus being able to develop a more desirable atmosphere or climate for learning in her classroom, the presentation of "influence techniques" and a discussion of "some common dilemmas teachers face" all contribute to the teacher's understandings of her problems and to her confidence in being

able to handle such problems. If the book did no more than this it would have justified its existence, for here the teacher finds the techniques and procedures to help renew her faith in herself—a much needed ingredient for the conscientious teacher who today struggles against great odds.—*Ruth Streitz*, Ohio State University, Columbus.

► Fannie Wyche Dunn. *The Child in the Rural Environment*. 1951 Yearbook, Department of Rural Education, NEA, Washington 6, D.C.

When death came to Fannie Dunn her book was an unfinished manuscript, but her teaching was perfected in the hearts of students and associates who prepared the manuscript for publication together with certain previously published writings and addresses of hers. The book which continues Dr. Dunn's life of service for rural children illustrates one of her vivid descriptions of a law which she says the rural child learns by watching the changing seasons. He discovers that life and growth can follow "autumn's death and winter's rigor" in the "color, fragrance, life" of "yellow daffodils, tall scarlet tulips, or rainbow-hued hyacinths."

Rural Education Must Be Rooted in the Soil

"Color, fragrance, life"—these words characterize the spirit of Dr. Dunn's warm, understanding account of how children grow, and her plea that rural education be "rooted in rural soil." She uses the learning experiences of actual rural children to show how the rich resources of the rural environment can bring children's potentialities to full fruition provided they have elders with the insight and willingness to explore and use these resources as valuable learning situations. Dr. Dunn emphasizes the fact that the "human environment of the child is prepotent." She

believes that the unawareness of adults is the "reason for the too common fact, often commented upon, that many country children appear quite oblivious to the interesting and beautiful natural phenomena which surround them, and so derive from their environment very little of the intellectual and aesthetic nourishment it offers for them." Dr. Dunn cautions that there is no "typical" rural child, family, or community, and that the school must study the unique environment of any child in order to recognize its learning possibilities for him. Chapter 9, "Resources of the Rural Environment," is important reading for rural teachers, parents and pastors.

Broad Principles Translated into Concrete Action

Because Dr. Dunn "felt a moral obligation to translate broad principles of education into concrete terms so that thought could be followed by action," Parts I and II of the book ("How Children Develop in Preschool Years" and "Determiners of the Rural Child's Environment") can well be used in practical parent-teacher study groups or individual conferences. Many farm parents will be grateful to have the book called to their attention for this winter's reading.

Rural teachers will appreciate Part III ("School Education in the Rural Environment") for its help in showing them how to build their teaching creatively on the facts presented in Parts I and II. Many concrete suggestions are offered to those who serve in one-teacher schools (Chapter 14) and to those who teach five-year-old children in such schools (Chapter 15). Principals and supervisors in country or city will enjoy sharing with teachers Dr. Dunn's discussion of the significance of imaginative play (p. 35), the concept of typi-

cal behavior (p. 77-9), the distinction between child labor and educative work experience (p. 146-151), and the guidance of Daniel, "a fifteen-year-old at the crossroads" (p. 165-6). For this reviewer, reading the book was a refreshing preparation for approaching another year of college teaching.

Value and Nurture the Unique Capacities of Each Person

Dr. Dunn's concern is to enrich learning and living by intelligently valuing and nurturing the unique capacities of each person so that "No child's (or teacher's) achievements would be measured against another's any more than a rose's perfume or the fruit of a peach tree would be measured against the song of a robin or the brightness of the morning star."—*Mary Royer, Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana.*

SUGGESTED READINGS

► Monroe, Marion. *Growing into Reading*. Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1951. 274 p.

Marion Monroe has written a most pleasant and understandable volume on reading readiness. The style is rich in anecdotal illustration and should be enjoyed by undergraduates and experienced teachers alike. Attention is directed toward environmental influences and the role of physical, social and emotional elements in the child's progress toward reading maturity, all presented in a delightful style rare in informative books in the field of education.

The physical structure of the book is good, and charming, plentiful crow-

quill (pen-and-ink) drawings by Janet LaSalle add to the flavor of the ten chapters.—*Harold G. Shane.*

► Burke, Arvid J. *Financing Public Schools in the United States*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951, 584 p.

In view of the rapid expansion of public education, stimulated by population trends, Burke's new book is especially timely and should enjoy merited popularity as a standard reference. The author treats public school expenditures and revenues, fiscal control and financial management in detail and understandably. Students probably will like the specific quality of the information included. Burke's grasp of the topic seems excellent.

Physical format and organization of *Financing Public Schools* are good and the publishers have bound the book to help it withstand the wear of reference usage.—*Harold G. Shane.*

► Moehlman, Arthur B. *School Administration*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1951. 514 p.

This revised and extended edition of Professor Moehlman's book remains a factual, heavily documented source of detailed material on school administration. It should continue to be popular with students seeking background information.

Double-columned pages and relatively fine print do not add to the book's readability in the reviewer's opinion, but generous use of charts and tables are a major compensation.—*Harold G. Shane, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.*

Copyright © 1952 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. All rights reserved.