

he wore slacks when the others wore jeans, never wore sneakers on the day the gymnasium was used for recreation activity, did not share in any of the homeroom activities. By indirect suggestions and by permitting the boy to overhear her inquiring from another boy regarding why he wore certain clothes on a certain day, the teacher was able to eliminate these barriers that apparently contributed to preventing the boy's sharing the companionship of his classmates. To be sure, she was so successful that she soon found him sharing his homework, but that too could be worked out.

The net result of a fact-gathering and fact-using procedure is that teachers become more realistic in their expectations of children. They recognize that change comes gradually and irregularly, and that impatience is a waste of effort. At first teachers are prone to think in broad terms of affection and security as magic keys, but gradually, perhaps in self-defense in accepting their own limitations, they adopt a more analytical and diagnostic approach in identifying the changes they are capable of bringing about as well as immovable barriers or conflicts which they cannot resolve.



LESLEE J. BISHOP

## PLANNING PATTERNS *in a Core Program*

**An analysis of planning patterns in a core program indicates significant variation over a period of time in the way pupils go about planning.**

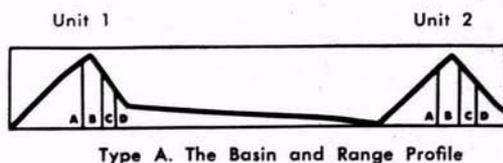
**W**HEN DO YOU DO your class unit planning?" is a question often asked of core teachers and others who employ teacher-pupil planning. The only answer that can easily be given is, "It depends. . . ."

It depends on the experience and maturity of the group, the nature of the contemplated work, the grade level, the morale of the class, the degree of student leadership, the role of the teacher in the planning process and many other factors. Furthermore, a comprehensive discussion of plan-

ning would be long and involved. It would include the planning done at home as pupils do assignments leading up to the actual class organization of a unit. It would include informal business meetings in class, teacher-pupil conferences, accounts of the work of the planning committee, as well as sessions before and after school, in the classroom, library, bus or wherever pupils interested in the content and direction of the unit might gather. This account considers only major class time devoted to unit planning.

These planning patterns are not unique to the Evanston Core Program—or even to core classes. They are common to any organization that attempts to be systematic in its approach to the coming season or year. In brief, they illustrate that some classes wait until one activity or unit has ended before they plan the next one, that more advanced groups are able to anticipate and plan out in some detail their year's work, and that other core classes evolve a pattern that is a combination of these two approaches. This analysis is useful in suggesting alternatives, in helping a new group work out its course of action, and in making possible a further study of the advantages and disadvantages of the various patterns mentioned.

Since most high school freshmen are unfamiliar with the techniques and procedures of planning, it is necessary to take the whole class through the process. Even after a unit or major project has once been planned it is unlikely that skills will have been developed to the point where pupils can proceed independently without teacher help. With freshmen it is very common to delay planning the second unit until the first is almost completed. Therefore, for at least the first half of the freshman year, the planning pattern will probably approximate Type A, The Basin and Range Profile<sup>1</sup>:



<sup>1</sup> Note: No attempt has been made to draw these graphs to scale—they are only approximate.

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The first unit planned by a beginning group probably will take most time. Not only is the experience new to most pupils, but instruction and review must be given in many skill areas. Further progress requires use of such skills as outlining, note-taking, and the use of the library resources such as the card catalog and the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*. Likewise, before the reports are presented, it is necessary to give instruction in the use and evaluation of various types of materials as well as in the techniques and skills involved in preparing and giving an effective oral presentation. Two to three weeks are often required for this work. Thereafter, the unit planning will take a few days at most.

A breakdown of the first planning experience might look like this:

1. Listing possible topics for study—one period.
2. Developing criteria to help in

*Height*—indicates intensity of concentration on planning as the major class activity.

*Length*—(left to right) indicates the relative amount of class time devoted to planning.

A—That part of the planning which involves the discussion of possible topics for study and the organization of these items. (Preliminary research at this point adds quality and facts to the discussion, contributes to an understanding of the nature and scope of the various topics suggested, and is essential to the making of an intelligent decision.)

B—The decision as to the specific direction of the unit and the major emphasis.

C—The refining phases where correct phrasing, proper subordination of items, and assignment of responsibilities will probably occur.

D—The reporting aspect, where minor changes will be made as research and interest alter the original working outline.

the selection of the unit topic—one to two periods.

3. Expanding on topics listed to see what would be involved if they were studied—two to three periods.

4. Deciding on the topic to be studied and its direction—one to two periods.

5. Development of general outline—one period.

6. Instruction on library research and note-taking—three to five periods.

7. Refining and expanding general items on outline, also review on outlining—two periods.

8. Assignment of items for reports and presentations—one period.

Following this comes intensive research on the material that is to be reported upon. Most of this will be "homework." Class time probably will be devoted to the skills mentioned earlier. The length of time spent on reporting will vary from two to twelve weeks, depending on the nature of the unit.

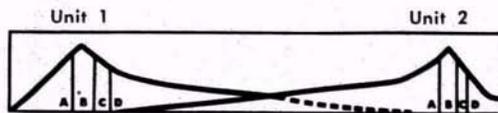
It should be emphasized at this point that "learning" does not wait for the reporting phase, but begins with the original consideration of tentative items. The research, thought and discussion relating to the planning and organizing of the unit may well constitute a major portion of the learning. This is more likely to be true with underclassmen who will spend more time in the planning stage than it will with upperclassmen who are more skilled in these areas.

### Analysis and Organization

Most of the discussions during the planning periods are not concerned with planning *per se*. Rather, the items

to be included in the unit are analyzed in terms of relative importance, cause and effect, place in time sequence, relationship to the present, and the like. These planning sessions enable the pupil to get an *overview* of the main ideas to be considered in the unit, *purposes* as they relate to individuals and the class as a whole, and serve as *orientation* and motivation.

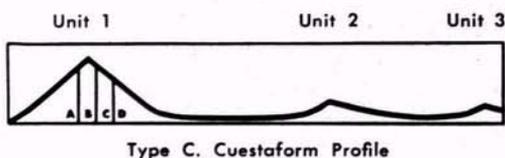
A sophomore core class (theme: world-mindedness) or senior core class (theme: college and career preparation) is likely to follow a different pattern. It may establish at the first of the year a tentative sequence of major units, but may prefer to wait until near the completion of one unit before going too far into the next. Usually the planning committee starts working on the details of the new unit soon after the current one is under way. The class enters the picture only by making major decisions regarding the direction, content, etc., usually following the recommendations of the planning committee which is responsible for submitting a "rough draft" to the class for its consideration. For this reason the Type B Profile, Overlapping Configuration, is very common:



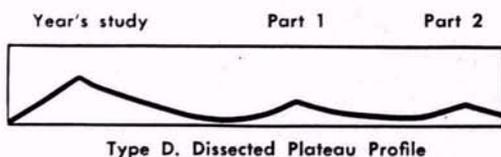
Type B. Overlapping Configuration

In the junior core classes (theme: U. S. history and literature) another type of pattern has been common. The "Cuestaform" Planning Profile given below develops from the fact that in the first week or two the group

will sketch out tentative unit plans for the entire year. Then as the year progresses, these preliminary outlines are revised and refined, but the major planning for the year has already been accomplished. The pattern would be:



Or if the group decides on the major areas, but does not work out all the details of each, the profile might be:



The chief difference between this pattern and Type B—Overlapping Configuration—is that these units do not terminate as an entity, but operate as phases of the year's work. For this reason no vertical lines were put on the chart.

In any case, no requirement is made as to a particular sequence or planning pattern; no attempt has been made to standardize procedure, except to give help and suggestions for possible next steps; each group develops its own system. There are other matters that have to be planned, and other phases of the program that require consideration. Learning to organize and plan is a complex of skills that greatly adds to the competence and confidence with which the pupils take their place in our democratic society. †

WILLIAM H. NAULT

## Can CURRICULUM GUIDES Be Effective?

Each year much time and effort in school systems are expended in planning and constructing curriculum guides. This article suggests that certain conditions of their involvement in preparing such guides directly affect teachers' use of them.

**T**HE SEARCH FOR WAYS to improve school practices is the never ending task of educators in a democratic society. This task carries with it the challenge and responsibility for critically examining current beliefs and practices so that new information and insights might be gained which will make possible desired improvement.

In a great number of school systems throughout the United States the production of curriculum guides by members of the local staff is the method most widely used by school people to improve the curriculum. In spite of the time, effort and money which go into the preparation of these materials a survey of the literature reveals only

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