

Curriculum Bulletins

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NOTE: The following faculty members of Teachers College, Columbia University, assisted in the preparation of this column by evaluating the materials in their areas of specialization: Professors MILDRED L. FAIRCHILD, MATTHEW B. MILES, PHIL C. LANGE, JOHN L. HUTCHINSON, ALICE W. SPIESEKE, EMMA D. SHEEHY, ROBERT L. PACE, MIRIAM L. GOLDBERG, PAUL W. F. WITT, and JOHN W. POLLEY. Some 36 colleagues have evaluated materials during the year. Miss BETH DRAKE has carried the heavy secretarial load necessary in preparing these columns.

- Oregon State Department of Education. *Using a Curriculum Consultant*. Salem, the Department; 1958. 15 p.

Increased curriculum development activities at the school system level pointed up the need for clarifying the role of the consultant in these districts. Oregon ASCD committee members developed the content and State Department staff members supervised editing and publishing. Brief sections deal with the who, what, why, how and where of consultancy, including suggestions about what and what not to expect from a resource person. Although content, particularly the list of sources of consultants, is limited to Oregon, the brief pamphlet is explicit and useful. Case examples might have enhanced the value of the publication. The additional readings are limited.

- U. S. Office of Education. *Conservation Experiences for Children*. Bull. 1957, No. 16. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1957. 192 p. \$.75.

Effie G. Bathurst and Wilhelmina Hill studied conservation education in elementary schools of 28 states to discover the ways in which children were being helped to understand the nation's natural resources and the means of conserving and using these. The bulletin is a compilation of curriculum experiences and a source of good practices and information for elementary school teachers and supervisors. Conservation experiences are grouped according to the resource involved—soil, water, forests, fish, wildlife, and minerals. Additional chapters deal with such activities as camps, clubs, and all-school enterprises. What schools are emphasizing and what teachers think about conservation are discussed in two chapters. The final chapter lists sources of information and includes lists of organizations, and agencies and publications available for class use and for teachers. The apparent shift from preoccupation with simple conservation to wiser and better uses of resources is reflected in the kinds of experiences children are having in observing and studying new developments. Learning activities that children have outdoors with the cooperation of interested individuals and local organizations are emphasized throughout.

- New Hampshire State Department of Education. *Learning to Use New Hampshire's Resources: a Guide for Secondary Schools*. Concord: the Department, 1956. 57 p.

A strong appeal is made for education for appreciation of resources to enable New Hampshire "to remain economically sound, retain her high standard of living, and preserve the scenic splendor now admired by countless visitors. . . ." This guide spells out ways in which teachers from different subject areas can help students understand how they can meet responsibility for saving and reinvigorating resources. Chapters deal with the human, mineral and renewable (soils, water, forests, wildlife) resources. For each area, the guide suggests general orientation, lists major concepts and understandings, proposes means for correlating work of several courses, indicates resource agencies, and provides bibliographies of audio-visual and other instructional materials. Detailed directions for organizing and conducting field trips are provided.

- Vermont State Department of Education. *Conserving Natural Resources in Vermont*. Montpelier: the Department, 1957. 45 p.

Classroom teachers of various subjects in widely diverse situations initiated the project which resulted in preparation and testing of this bulletin. Conservation education is to be carried on with "constant reference to an integration with natural science, local history, practice in language, reading, practical arithmetic, the study of civil government, communication and economics." This guide focuses on Vermont's specific needs and ties suggestions to the cooperating services, agencies and resources of the state. The bibliography is comprehensive and topical.

- U. S. Office of Education. *Instruction in Farm Mechanics*. Vocational Div. Bull. No. 267, Agricultural Ser. No. 70. Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1957. 63 p. \$.35.

Vocational agriculture specialists will welcome this bulletin's suggestions for developing training programs in farm mechanics. The theme is training in the five recognized areas of farm mechanics—power and machinery, buildings and other structures, electrification, soil and water management, and shop. There is a useful analysis of how teachers can assist students in planning and developing the mechanical phases of farming. The suggestions in each area consist primarily of activities which will help students attain the objectives outlined in Chapter II.

- California State Department of Education. *Check List for A Healthful and Safe School Environment*. Sacramento: the Department, 1957. 51 p.

This check list is an instrument for self-evaluation of school plants in terms of health and safety factors. It was developed out of the conviction that the health of school children depends in part upon the environment of the school. In 1948 a mimeographed check list was issued and gradually revised and printed in its present form. In each of 18 sections, desirable standards are stated and space provided for a Yes or No response on whether the particular criterion is met. The final section lists organizations, agencies, codes, and publications relating to health and safety standards.

- Tulsa Public Schools. *A Teacher's Guide for Physical Education in the Elementary School*. Tulsa, Okla.: the Schools, 1957. 69 p. \$1.25.

The three sections of this bulletin deal with establishing purposes for teaching

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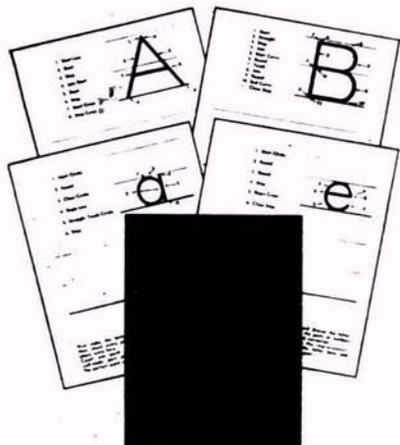
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physical education, organizing and managing the program, and activities. The last section constitutes about two-thirds of the guide and covers a wide range from rhythms and folk dancing to posture to team games. A bibliography and listing of audio-visual aids are included. The major criticism of the guide is that it must continually be supplemented by other reference books.

- State of New Jersey, Department of Education. *First Year in School*. Elementary School Bull. No. 8. Trenton: the Department, 1956. 106 p.

Arguing that "the first year in school should be an *additional* year, previous to the first grade, providing a program especially planned to meet the needs of beginners," the Department etches the dimensions of this proposed program. Chapter 3 describes and elaborates the curriculum: exploring the environment, creating and constructing, using lan-

guage, living healthfully, and developing readiness. Other sections deal with the school home, helping children get started, a balanced day, parents and teachers work together, and evaluating the development of children.

- St. Paul Public Schools. *Clues to Positive Teaching*. Curr. Bull. 65. St. Paul, Minn.: the Schools, 1957. 35 p. \$.75.

"Some Aspects of Motivation," the subtitle of this booklet, is the subject here—and it is strange how neglected is this important phase of the teaching-learning process. The preface states that the report "pioneers in the examination of specific group and individual techniques which work for successful Saint Paul secondary school teachers here and now." Sections deal with remedial techniques for pupils with poor attendance, pupils who are difficult to motivate, pupils with reading disabilities, pupils with emotional maladjustments, and the attitudes

the public and peers reveal against outstanding achievement. Specific suggestions fall short on the "how" and "why." What to do if the obvious suggestions do not work is not discussed. If teachers recognize the brochure as a point of departure, not a catalogue of sure-fire techniques, then the bulletin should catalyze approaches to creative developments in this area.

- El Paso Public Schools. *General Guide for Teachers with Provisions for Superior Pupils, Grade Four*. El Paso, Texas: the Schools, 1957. 372 p. \$3.50.

This curriculum guide, general in tone, lays its major emphasis on suggestions for improving teaching of gifted students. Pointing to its general and specific nature, the introduction to the teacher states: "the most casual examination of its contents will reveal the significant attempts to upgrade instruction generally in the fourth grade." Yet the proportion of emphases is dubious. For instance, two-thirds of the guide consists of seven geography units. The remainder encompasses arithmetic, art, health, language, spelling, and supplementary reading. Although the units tend to be rather complete and filled with aids for the teacher, the particular appropriateness of the content, methods, or materials for superior pupils is never supported. The reader can assume only that the teacher will have or can derive criteria for selecting learning experiences. What it is that makes these provisions desirable or essential for superior pupils is never stated except where teachers are urged to become familiar with its content "since it is so completely different from any other used in" the schools: This absence is, of course, a common failing in many bulletins of this kind.

- Cheyenne Public Schools. *The Gifted*

Child Program, Elementary. Cheyenne, Wyoming: the Schools, 1957. 48 p.

Bulletins in this area are beginning to fit a stereotype. However, as an example of the so-called "promising practices approach," this guide is better than many. The suggestions are generally practical and aids for teachers are many. On programming, the decision was to present enrichment in the regular classroom; the language arts field was considered the best for "offering many possible avenues for developing the varied interests and abilities of the superior pupils." Some guiding principles are suggested for teaching gifted children. The column charts for grades 3-4-5-6 are headed Language, Social Studies, and Suggested Enrichment. Ten questions for evaluation are presented. Counseling is disposed of in two sentences.

- Portland Public Schools. *127 Ideas for Classroom Teachers to Use With Gifted Children*. Portland, Oregon: the Schools, 1956. 127 p. \$1.50.

Teachers collaborated on this book to produce "a source of ideas for special projects for exceptional children in the regular classroom" at the elementary level. For each of the projects or "ideas" the following are included: area to be enriched, enriching subject, description of project, materials to be used, know-how notes, references, comments and suggestions. The projects are preceded by six pages of a chart titled, "Areas to be Enriched." A single paragraph suggests how the teacher can use the materials. Having been used extensively, the book is now being revised. It would improve the revision if the "use" paragraph were expanded somewhat and the criteria for selection of enrichment practices were elaborated.

- Kent State University, Department

From July 28 to August 29 the Human Relations Center for Training and Research of Saint Louis University, in conjunction with Mexico City College, will conduct a Human Relations Workshop in Group Guidance on the Mexico City College campus. The Workshop carries six hours of credit. The fee of \$365.00 includes tuition, board and room while in Mexico City, specified field trips, transportation from San Antonio and return via American Airlines, and one hour of daily instruction in Spanish for participants who wish such instruction. The group will meet at San Antonio on July 28.

The Workshop is intended for teachers, principals, superintendents of schools, hospital administrators, nurses, community workers and all persons who are interested in studying the concepts and basic skills which have to do with interpersonal and intergroup relations.

Interested persons may obtain further information by writing to:

Trafford P. Maher, S.J.

Director, Department of Education
Human Relations Center for
Training and Research

15 North Grand Boulevard
St. Louis 3, Missouri

of Special Education. *Demonstration Research Class of Gifted Children*. Kent, Ohio: the University, 1958. 155 p.

During the 1957 summer session, 30 fifth- and sixth-grade pupils participated in a class used for both demonstration and research purposes at the University School. In considerable detail, the nature of the group and its work during the session are described. The results of testing intellectual capacity, personal and social adjustment, achievement and interests are presented. These data, together with those contained in the sociometrics later, give a comprehensive picture of the children involved. Examples of units and lessons in arithmetic, literature, creative work, and foreign languages are described fully enough to impart the flavor of what happened. The final chapter contains sample unit activities, including objectives, motivation of unit, organization of work, procedures, culminating activ-

ity, outcomes, and group reports. A bibliography for children—books, films and filmstrips—is included. Although some of the units and experiences provided for youngsters are questionable, the publication as a whole gives an unusually complete picture of the operations of a class of intellectually able children.

• G. E. Hill, R. J. Lauff, and J. E. Young. *Identifying and Educating Our Gifted Children*. Athens, Ohio: The Center for Educational Service, College of Education, Ohio University, 1957. 43 p. \$1.00.

The Research Committee of the Ohio Valley Guidance Council sponsored the studies which resulted in this publication, the first in a new "Pupil Services Series." The volume covers a survey of the literature, a check list of school practices in some 31 counties of southeastern Ohio and northwestern West Virginia, and an intensive study of the gifted in one school district. The final chapter contains a set of concrete proposals for regional planning, including five practical steps toward program improvement. Here, the role of the Ohio Valley Guidance Council in regional planning is explored.

• Denver Public Schools. *Colorado, the Land and the People* (1957, 195 p., \$1.00). *Living in Denver* (1956, 66 p., \$1.00). Denver, Colorado: the Schools.

The first of these two publications is designed to supplement a ninth-grade social studies unit of the same name. The other publication is geared to accompany a third-grade social studies unit. They are well-written, attractively illustrated, and "finished" publications in many ways. *Colorado* contains chapters titled, "The Struggle to Possess the Land," "From Gold Pan to Geiger Counter," "From

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pated that the over-all outcome will be to raise the sights in the type of action research being undertaken by Association members.

Whether or not the institute as described above does take place, the basic problem to which its deliberations will or would have been turned remains: How can we develop new horizons for field study and research?

The answer may be indicated in the summary sentence from Bernard R. Corman's chapter on "Action Research: A Teaching or a Research Method?" in the December 1957 issue of *Review of Educational Research*:

If educational research, whether done cooperatively or noncooperatively, by action or inaction, by professional or amateur, is to be valued, it is necessary that the researchers make explicit the preferences that undergird their efforts and tackle the problems which are most pressing rather than those which are most convenient.¹

We need to spend more time deciding what deserves to be studied.

This year's research column (and last year's) and the projected Third Research Institute have been oriented in this direction. There are also other ways through which we may spend more time in defining pressing problems and coming up with more significant research leads.

We can keep in touch with what is going on in related fields. Reviewing the journals and new books in such areas as sociology, anthropology and psychiatry

¹ Volume XXVII, page 546.

with anything like systematic coverage may be more than we can accomplish. But we can select for study some of these that may make a difference in our conception of what we need to know more about.

We can review the kinds of projects we are now studying. If we are engaged in field projects of a study and research nature, can we say which of these are more or less routine? Are we investing more time in some than the results will be worth? Can we clear the decks for new concerns? Is there a germ of something a little beyond us in what we are already doing that might be worth nourishing?

We can reflect on what we most need to know. In this particular day, when all kinds of easy answers are being proposed for the most difficult problems, we should take the time to reflect on what we most need to know. Are there some big questions on which we have given up? What new understandings would make the most difference? Are there some new questions which we would like to help frame?

Perhaps reflection on our own needs may be the best place to spend time that would really pay off in terms of new horizons.

—ALEXANDER FRAZIER, *assistant superintendent for educational services, Phoenix Union High Schools and Phoenix College District, Phoenix, Arizona; and chairman, ASCD Research Commission.*

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Cowboy to Tractor," and "From Log Cabin to Skyscraper." As the title suggests, the history and development of the state are told through its land and its people. *Living in Denver* provides background information about that city while

showing a pattern of living common to other cities as well. The illustrations include many samples of children's work in both color and black-and-white. Both publications are outstanding examples of locally produced materials for students that show high quality and clear purpose.

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