

A School Library Plans for Individualized Instruction

*The school library helps make
the educational offering
available to the pupil.*

EIGHT years ago, a superintendent planned a senior high school around the library. The school is now six years old. Educationally and architecturally, the library is designed to serve as a vital part of the school program. Centrally located, it has a professional library, a main reading room with a maximum seating capacity of 80, an informal reading center, a conference room, a listening room, a library classroom, an office for the librarian, a workroom, a stack room, and an audio-visual area consisting of workroom, storage room and preview room. The library staff now includes a head librarian, an assistant librarian, an audio-visual specialist and a secretary.

The initial budget for library books was \$20,000 and \$20 per pupil; for audio-visual materials \$6,000 or \$5.47 per pupil. The present book collection numbers 10,886 volumes. Audio-visual materials include 350 films, 1535 filmstrips, 315 tapes, and there are 335 recordings in the listening room. The library subscribes to 120 magazine titles, selected to meet the interests and needs of the pupils. The

professional library, in addition to a basic collection of books, subscribes to 54 educational periodicals.

A year before the school opened, the librarian had several conferences with the superintendent and the principal during which plans were formulated for a good library program. The professional American Library Association publication which encouraged them and gave them the greatest help in their thinking was "A Planning Guide for the High School Library Program," written by Frances Henne and others. This guide emphasizes quality and excellence in school library programs and develops criteria for evaluation by administrators, teachers and librarians.

Working with Teachers

The school is a comprehensive senior high school with a curriculum designed to meet the needs of all the youth in the community. A basic part of the school's philosophy is that the library is the educational materials center for the school contributing to all the areas of the curriculum—the language arts, including foreign languages; social studies; sci-

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ences, including mathematics; fine arts; industrial arts; commercial arts; home-making and the physical education program.

From the beginning of the school's history, the librarian has been a member of the principal's Faculty Council. Included in this group are the assistant principal, the director of guidance, and the departmental chairmen from all the curriculum areas in the school. Each year this committee helps the library staff to develop a planned library program which takes into consideration the varied interests, abilities and maturity levels of the students served. Teachers from this council have worked with the library staff using many basic and current tools of selection to choose books, periodicals, pamphlets and audio-visual materials most appropriate for the needs of the individual students, as well as appropriate for the subjects included in the curriculum.

The materials collection is evaluated in terms of curriculum and cocurriculum needs of the school's program. Questions considered are, "Does the collection provide pupils with a wide variety of materials for classroom needs, for recreational reading, for listening and viewing? Does it provide sufficiently for individual interests and abilities? Does it provide stimulation for the teacher who wants to improve his teaching knowledge and skills?"

The schedule of classes in the library is planned cooperatively by teachers and librarians, so that it will be possible for all the students in the school to have meaningful library experiences related to their interests and curriculum needs. Guidance services and attention to students as individuals is a major goal of the school's program, and this is better realized when teachers and librarians

provide cooperative supervision of student activities within the library. In the library, classes work in individual and small group relationships. Frequently the student comes to the librarian or the teacher with a specific problem related to an assignment on which he is working. As he obtains help from the librarian in locating specific materials through the use of indexes in finding the right book at the right time, he is learning to use library materials correctly. Correct use of library materials develops, on the part of students, independence in learning activities.

When a teacher plans to introduce a new unit, he may also plan to have his class meet in the library. A conference with the librarian should precede the visit. At this time the teacher and librarian discuss the theme of the unit and its development and the educational activities to be carried on by students, including the use of the library and its resources. The teacher and the librarian then explore the library's resources to check on the accessibility of materials, taking into consideration the reading interests and abilities of the students, as well as the content of the unit. If the number and variety of books, recordings, pamphlets or films are limited, and if there is a sufficient amount of time before the class is scheduled to come to the library, the librarian and the teacher prepare an order list of materials that will enrich the objectives and goals of this particular unit. Should the unit become an established part of the curriculum, the librarian continues to look for new materials, and notifies the teacher when these have been added to the library.

In this librarian-teacher preplanning, the developmental library skills of the students in the class are discussed. Will

a new tool, for example, the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*, be introduced to the class? Does the teacher want the librarian to come to the class and present the scope, arrangement and use of the index? Will the teacher take this responsibility and if so, does he want such teaching aids as, "How to Use the Readers' Guide to Periodical and Other Indexes," prepared by the H. W. Wilson Company, sent to his classroom? Will he review with the class the types of materials available in the library and check the students' skills in using tools and indexes for the location of books, magazines, references, pamphlets, and audiovisual materials?

Selecting materials that will best meet the requirements of the school is a major responsibility of the school librarian working in close cooperation with all

teachers. The librarian must know the general characteristics, philosophy and objectives of the school he is serving. He must know the curriculum, including the teaching methods that are used in the school. He must check bibliographies in texts, resource units, and curriculum guides, and arrange to order needed titles that are not in the library collection.

The librarian also works with teachers in the school's curriculum development program. In the process of organizing new units of instruction the librarian informs teachers of available materials. This close relationship with teachers in curriculum development also helps the librarian to have a planned program for the selection of materials. If the library provides books, magazines, pamphlets, films and filmstrips, to stimulate and

Independent research often begins with correct use of library materials.

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challenge students, taking into consideration their potential reading, listening and viewing ability plus their developmental skills in using materials, the library becomes an effective service agency for the school's program.

Assisting Guidance

The library's contribution to the guidance program of the school is a vital aspect of school librarianship. As preparation for it, it is essential for the librarian to be familiar with the testing program of the school, especially those tests concerned with reading. If such instruments as the Iowa Education Development Tests are administered to sophomores each year, the librarian should keep a file of the results of these until the students graduate. This battery of nine tests is of special interest to school librarians because they test the student's ability to interpret reading materials as well as his ability to use sources of information. The student test results are given in percentile rank and if the librarian studies the scores of the entire class, observing the strengths and weaknesses of individual students, he will recognize the student who has a frustrated look and who seeks help when confronted by Walker's *Rhyming Dictionary*, or the classified index of an encyclopedia.

Guidance counselors and classroom teachers confer with the librarian when individual students need help in their reading development. When the librarian has an understanding of the student's problems he arranges a conference with the student. The librarian talks informally with the student, discovers his reading interests and encourages him to broaden his reading pattern. If the librarian has time, he schedules several confer-

ences with this student during the school year, so that together they can evaluate his reading accomplishment. In the area of reading guidance, the library staff also gives assistance to individual students in locating and using library materials for special research papers in the areas of the Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts, and other subjects when this type of assignment is given. Teachers and librarians work together to help students develop good study techniques, and to develop an ability to evaluate materials, and to become independent users of library materials. Each school day the library staff assists individual students and teachers, groups and classes in selecting books for personal reading.

In addition to reading guidance the library has important contributions to make to the social guidance program of the school. The library should be the most pleasant place in the school for reading and study. Most students want the library to be quiet and orderly because they want to read and study in its environment. Small groups can work together in the conference rooms, and individuals or groups can listen to recordings in the listening room and preview or review audio-visual materials in the preview room. If and when it is necessary the librarian informs the student of the meaning of the word "decorum" and helps the student achieve the developmental task of self-discipline. The librarian in working with students has many opportunities to observe student morale in the school.

Varied Experiences

The library experiences of the high school students have been many and varied in the six years of this school's ex-

istence. Library materials are used in the art department as supplemental material in nearly all units of study. Books, filmstrips and magazines are generally drawn from the library and placed on a reading shelf for student use in the art rooms. Advanced classes are required to do individual projects in some area of art and are required to supplement these projects with the use of at least five references from the library which relate to the project that they are working on. The library staff is notified when this assignment is going to be given. Arrangements are then made so that four or six students may go to the library each day and work directly with the librarians who help them select the materials that will be needed for their individual projects.

The art students have developed an Art Festival which is held each spring in the high school library. The festival includes a display of projects produced during the year by the art students. The school dance band or other musical groups also contribute to the festival. The advanced art classes select one member from their classes to be chairman and he in turn appoints various committees which plan the design and theme of the show. The chairman has a conference with the librarian so that arrangements can be made to use the facilities of the library. During the festival students demonstrate in the various art media, such as ceramics, oil painting, silk screen, water color, enameling, and clay sculpture. Opening night of the festival is a P.T.A. program and the display remains in the library for two days so that all students will have an opportunity to see the beautiful work that is created in the art classes.

The library contributes to the music program in three areas: research, listening and recreation. Factual data gleaned

from technical books, dictionaries and professional magazines are used as background for the music which is studied in instrumental and vocal classes. The large record collection (with scores) is utilized for comparison in performance and styles and for solving technical problems which appear in the music under study. The Music Interest Club studies the scores of the selections while the recordings are being played and gives weekly reports on music and musicians that have been gathered from current books and periodicals. Students are encouraged to utilize the listening room during their leisure for pleasurable listening as well as to read books on music for recreational pursuit.

The following eleventh grade American Studies' unit, "An American Culture Emerges," has been selected to illustrate how a class of students work in the library under the guidance of the teacher and librarians, to select and locate the materials needed for preparing the assignment. Some students planned to write papers, others to give talks or be members of a panel discussion group. Some of the many facets that the pupils explored in this unit were: Immigrants Contribute to the American Scene; The Rise of an Urban Population; The City Creates Change in Social and Cultural Scene; Public Education Expands Rapidly; and The Fine Arts Tend to Become More Typically American.

The teacher and the librarian had compiled a bibliography of library materials for the unit, and each member of the class had a copy of the bibliography when the class arrived in the library. The students were prepared and eager to work; they used the card catalog, checked the shelves for books, the informational file for pamphlets and clip-

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provement. There is recognition that there have been curriculum improvement efforts and instructional improvement programs being carried forward by the State Education Department, professional organization efforts, college and university influences, and local school system planning and work. As we see it, the cooperative action program described in this brief report is a needed and a natural extension of these programs and efforts which have been taking place. The NYSASCD action program is aimed at ways of helping these

established and still developing curriculum improvement efforts to bring about a greater impact on instructional improvement within local school systems."

Members who served as chairmen for the local action committee are: Stanley Applegate, Manhasset; Perry Brown, Niagara Falls; Paul Halverson, Syracuse; Edna Hedger, Mt. Kisco; Bernard Kinsella, Rochester; Joseph Leese, Albany; and O. Ward Satterlee, Potsdam.

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Junior High School

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suggested are a recognition of the unique nature and worth of each student, the fulfilling of the heritage of the American Dream for each child. Whether or not individualization can be achieved in a classroom situation may depend in part

upon whether or not the teacher attempts to provide for all the individuals represented, or whether he is willing to recognize the importance of developing an environment of method, materials and motivation in which each child can find identity, purpose and achievement.

School Library

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pings, used reference indexes for special problems and the periodical index for recent information. The classroom teacher and the librarians also helped the students, answering questions and helping them locate materials that were needed for their special assignments.

During this past school year, the library was open on five Saturday mornings. Students had an opportunity to utilize library materials from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Seventy-two students took advantage of this opportunity and ex-

pressed appreciation to the library staff for this new service.

At the end of the school year the library staff was pleased to discover, when tabulating statistics for the yearly report to the administration, that 1084 class groups had been brought to the library by teachers. The school library becomes a vital agency of the educational program when administrators, teachers and librarians work together creating plans for individualized instruction. They provide opportunities for real library experience and meaningful library instruction at the time when students are ready for the experience.

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