THERE is little wonder that a 21-year-old middle-class white college graduate would ask, "What do I teach a group of 13-year-old Negro, American Indian, Puerto Rican, Oriental, or Mexican-American inner-city children?" His Negro counterpart raises a similar question, "What should I teach these 13-year-old middle-class white youths about the Negro and other minority groups: the Puerto Rican, American Indian, Oriental, or Mexican-American?"

Questions such as these are to be expected when one analyzes the present school situation. The average minority child—Negro, Oriental, or Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, or American Indian—attends a highly segregated school in which the characteristics of the student body are predominantly the same as his (1). Likewise, of the 2.4 million white school children, 2 million attend schools in which 90 percent of the students are of the same race (2).

"What we know about anything relates directly to the way we behave about it." Paraphrased, "What racial groups know about each other is reflected directly in the way they relate to each other." From this, one may infer that understanding and knowledge among racial groups will help immeasurably toward achieving integration. Integration is more than physical presence. It exists when people of all races accept themselves and each other, recognize the value of their differences, know the contributions of all groups and have an opportunity to interact (3).

The school should be a major social institution for achieving integration. However, the integration process is effective only when the educational experiences of the students are designed with the intent to develop an understanding of all groups, and to provide adequate opportunities for each individual to acquire positive relationships and mutual respect for each other. These changes can be initiated and implemented through the use

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of instructional materials, as well as through course content, methods of instruction, and teacher attitudes (4).

A Lasting Impact

Until recently, textbooks and other instructional materials which most school systems across the nation used were often void or grossly inadequate in their treatment of minorities; others reflected ethnocentrism (5). As the most universally used instructional material, the textbook has significant influence. It suggests not only the organization and content of a course, but also the collateral readings, activities, and experiences (6). This makes one cognizant of how inextricable methods and materials are, and how the textbook perpetuates many of the attitudes that are prevalent in our society.

Until recently, few texts featured any Negro personalities. Few books used or courses offered reflected the harsh realities of life in the ghetto, or the contribution of Negroes to the country's culture and history (7).

Instructional materials must be produced to create new conditions and to provide vicarious experiences for those who, because of de facto or de jure segregation of schools, are deprived of the opportunity to have direct contact with or to learn about minorities. Instructional materials are needed also for use by minority groups who, regardless of social class, are bound by a color-caste complex that affects their self-concept (8), and who, because of the absence of or paucity of materials relevant to their environment, culture, or contributions of their race, have become hostile toward society and question the utility of what is being taught (9).

It is not to be assumed that materials can substitute for direct experiences and contact among racial groups. They do, however, have a significant and lasting impact. When placed in proper perspective and used intelligently, a wide variety of well-selected multimedia, multi-ethnic instructional materials can become creative and effective instruments for fostering integration. Emphasis should be placed on utilizing an abundance of up-to-date materials rather than a single type. As is true of the textbook, no one type can develop adequately all aspects of a concept; achieve the various purposes for which individuals use the materials; and still provide for the complexity of needs, individual differences, experiences, and interests of the users.

Among the types and forms of instructional materials to which students and teachers should have access, in addition to the textbook, are the following:

*Reference books*—basic, accurate, objective sources about minority groups, as The Negro Almanac, or the International Library of Negro Life and History, which can provide authentic historical and contemporary information.

*Literal materials*—biographies (other than those of Booker T. Washington, George Washington Carver, and Marian Anderson), fiction, poetry, short stories, drama, etc., that present minority groups in an authentic, contemporary setting with which they can identify or from which the majority group can gain insight into the social pressures that minorities endure. Stereotyped illustrations or distorted pictures of minorities should be avoided. An example is the illustration of Pedro sleeping under the yucca, which has become the stereotyped picture of the Mexican-American.

*Newspapers, newsletters, periodicals, and journals*—sources for current happenings and analysis of news items regarding minorities, their economic and social problems. Ebony, Afro-American, the Pittsburgh Courier, Southern Education Report, and the Journal of Negro History are among suggested titles which should be available for all students, not just Negroes.

*Films, filmstrips, records, tapes, microforms, television, and radio programs*—authentic, up-to-date, productions to provide historical as well as current information and sufficient facts to negate the stereotypes, myths, and fallacious generalizations about minority groups. The NET Series, "History of the Negro People," or the filmstrip, Values, by Louis Raths are examples.

*Pamphlets and leaflets*—brief, current discussions of related topics about minorities.
Flat pictures and photographs—outstanding individuals of minority groups, especially personalities of contemporary society; and pictures of integrated scenes portraying the natural everyday life of minorities who are not "tan-Nordic" or middle class.

Teacher- and pupil-prepared materials—creative art and writing, flat pictures, transparencies, etc., are often indispensable sources in the absence of appropriate instructional materials about minority groups.

Speeches, reports, diaries, songs—authentic, documentary, source materials. President Lyndon B. Johnson’s speech, "To Fulfill These Rights," or William Katz’s Eyewitness: The Negro in American History, are among recommended sources.

Professional materials—books, as Heller’s Mexican-American Youth: Forgotten Youth at the Crossroads, courses of study, curriculum materials prepared by the Regional Laboratories, research studies, and bibliographies. Examples of selective bibliographies are: The Negro American in Paperback, Building Bridges of Understanding, Intergroup Education: Methods and Materials, and Reading Ladders for Human Relations. Many school systems have developed comprehensive lists, as the Cultural and Historical Contribution of American Minorities, by the Buffalo Public Schools, and Intergroup Relations, produced jointly by the New York State Education Department and the State University of New York.

The social trend of rapid change is reflected increasingly in the availability of multi-ethnic materials. This trend is evident in materials prepared for use in many of the subject fields. In the social studies, as an example, Land of the Free places Negroes in the mainstream of American history and culture; in the Holt, Rinehart and Winston Urban Social Studies Series, children can identify with the incidents and verbalize their emotions from the integrated photographs.

Basal readers, as the Skyline Series and the Chandler Reading Program introduce multi-racial groups in normal school and play situations; an inclusive, rather than an exclusive society is reflected. The new Steck-Vaughn Human Values Series helps to develop the concept of self and stress the inner reactions shared by all children. This trend is reflected also in trade books and other types of instructional materials, yet there is still a dearth of well-developed, accurate, multi-ethnic materials that present the life experiences of minorities, or present them in a natural realistic setting.

In contrast to the popular belief that social studies is the logical phase of the curriculum to discuss minorities or intergroup relations, every subject and experience of the educational program should include such relations, and should utilize up-to-date materials. Obsolete, outdated instructional materials which omit topics on intergroup living, or which present stereotypes of minorities should be discarded. This is essential if materials are to assist in integration.

Dignity and Worth

As was evident from a cursory examination of several recent curriculum guides, many elementary and secondary schools are introducing courses in humanities and anthropology. In many of these programs the basic concepts from the study of "man as a human being" are being developed, and the fundamental dignity and worth of every individual, regardless of race, color, or creed, is emphasized as a solution to our societal problems.

Realizing the value of a variety of instructional materials to support the curriculum, publishers are producing different types of materials and media that can be adapted to new educational strategies. Critical thinking and inquiry, role playing, and other group process and problem-solving skills are only a few of these strategies which can and should be used with instructional materials to foster intergroup relations and racial understanding. Critical inquiry and thinking, in-depth studies, role playing, scientific analysis, and discovery methods should help students and teachers to evaluate objectively, to distinguish fact from fallacy, and to acquire new truths from which they can generalize.

Although not designed solely to promote integration, many of the picture sets and profusely illustrated books can also be used:

Since pictures can be used effectively to communicate attitudes, facts, and feelings (10), the picture sets suggested may be used to stimulate creative writing and art, as well as to develop role-playing and problem-solving skills. In either of these activities the student may reveal his feelings and attitudes toward minority groups.

If instructional materials are to be used to foster integration, some criteria for their selection must be based on the following:

1. An accurate, adequate, objective presentation of basic concepts of race and culture;
2. Sufficient facts to eradicate the prejudgments and generalizations about minorities;
3. Emphasis on human values—the dignity and worth of each individual;
4. The diversity of American life in a meaningful, realistic, unbiased manner, with interaction among multi-cultural, multi-racial, and multi-religious groups;
5. An objective treatment of the problems and obstacles, as well as the contributions of each minority group;
6. Well-developed content, with the basic concepts and principles of the particular subject expressed adequately.

The use of instructional materials is not a panacea; mere facts or materials are insufficient to change persons who have strong prejudgments and prejudices. Materials, however, can provide new insights, and extend and expand knowledge and appreciation of others. They can also provide the information needed to allay the unwarranted fears and insecurity, destroy the myths and stereotypes, and eradicate misunderstandings. Yet it is the teacher who seizes every opportunity to help his students develop a measure of sensitivity, to create a climate in which a change of attitudes, feelings, and understandings is possible, and who in the end will determine how effectively instructional materials assist in the integration process.

References


Author's Note

The following is a list of materials which the author suggested in the above article:

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Lawrence W. Carillo, editor. Chandler Lan-
Language and Learning Disorders of the Pre-Academic Child
WITH CURRICULUM GUIDE
TINA E. BANGS, Houston Speech and Hearing Center. A comprehensive plan for early identification and assessment of learning disabilities, designed especially for use by clinicians and teachers. Drawing on recent findings in communication disorders, it stresses the need to diagnose language deficiency before a child is six years old. A unique feature of the volume is a pre-academic Curriculum Guide toward strengthening a child's assets and compensating for his deficits. 408 pp., illus., $6.50

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