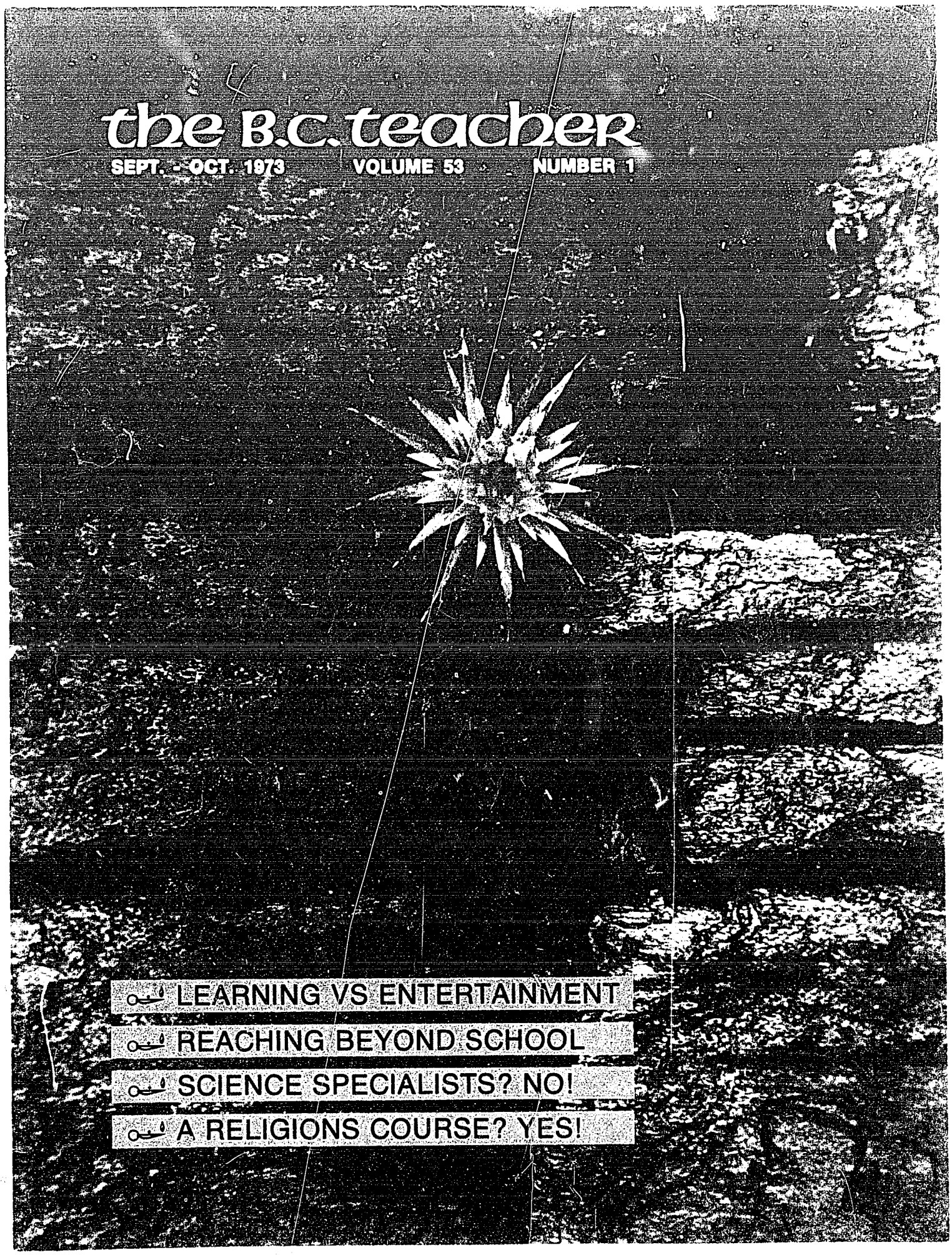
the B.C. teacher

SEPT. - OCT. 1973 VOLUME 53 NUMBER 1



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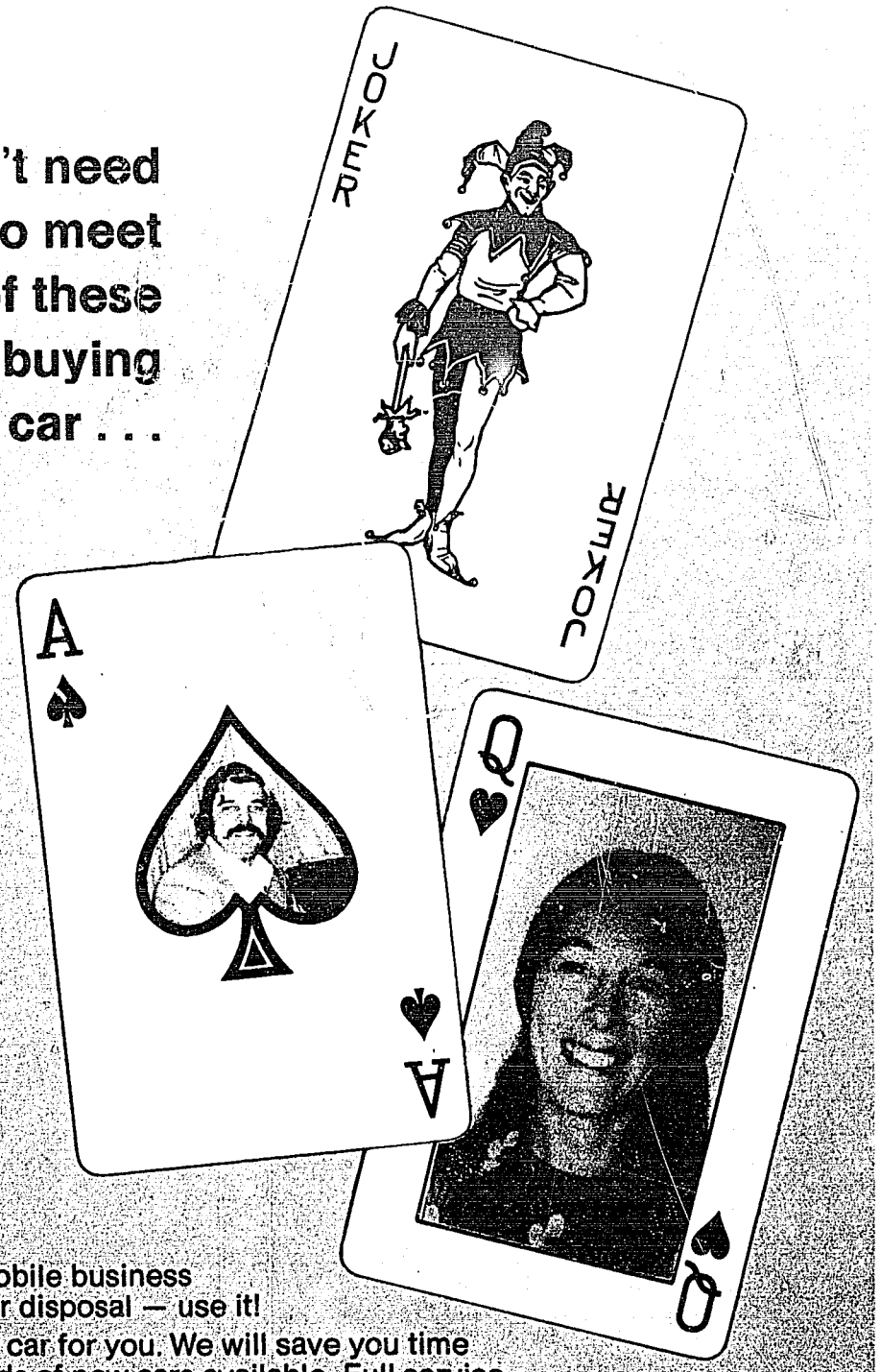

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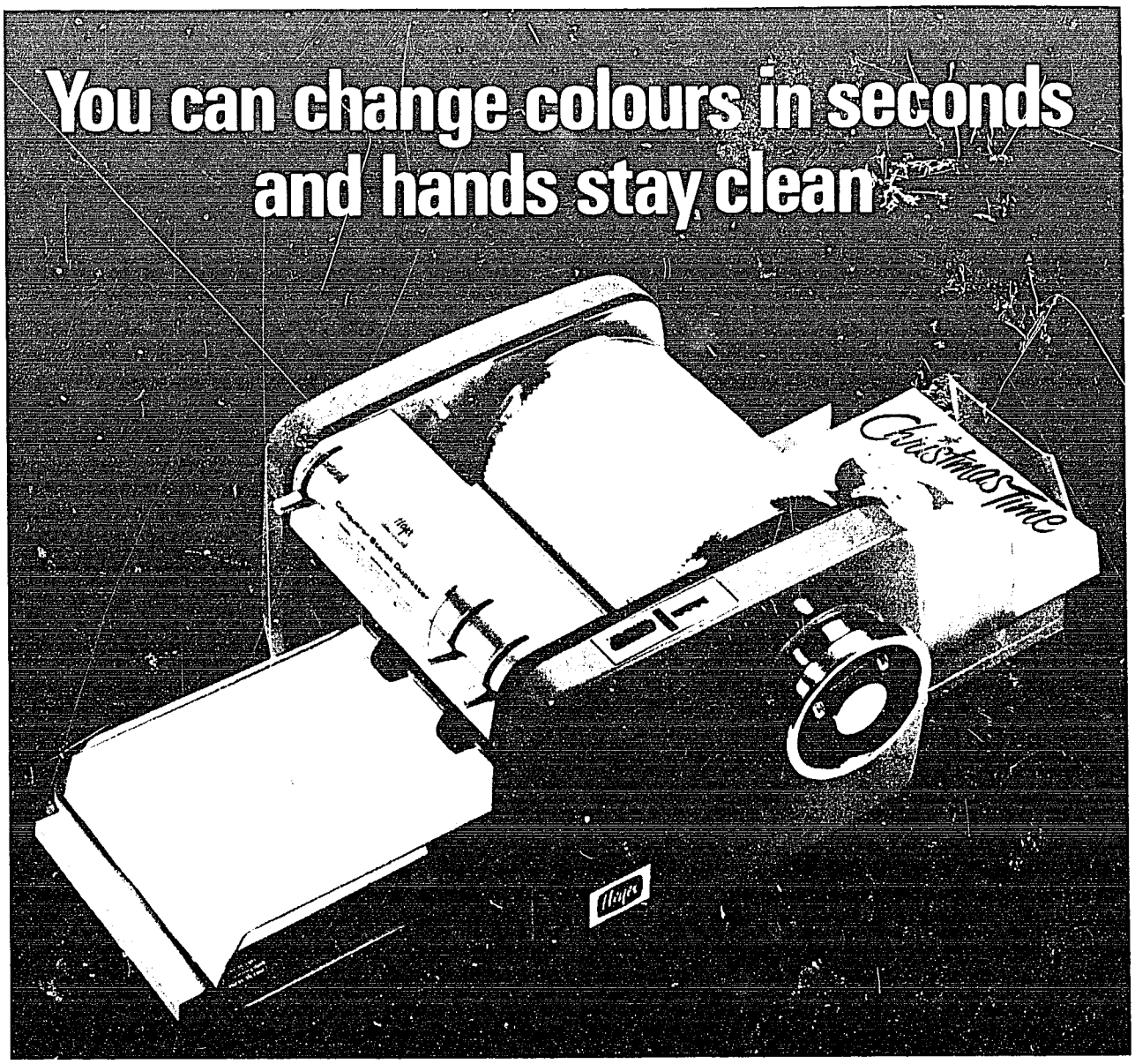

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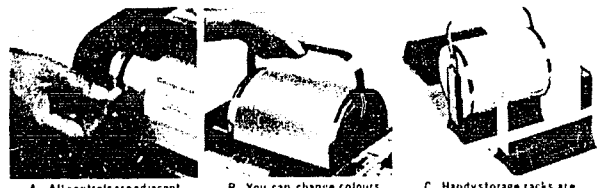

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THE BC TEACHER

PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION
Affiliated with the Canadian Teachers' Federation

Vol. 53, No. 1 — September-October 1973

COVER PICTURE
With this issue we start a new cover series with color pictures generously lent by MacMillan Bloedel Ltd. This month we show Hair cap Moss, male gametophyte, whose botanical name is Polytrichum juniperinum.

PHOTO CREDITS
P.7 — Rosa Regan; p.8 — John Hardy; p.10 — Bob Bodlak; p.11 — Audio-Visual Services Branch, Dept. of Education; pp.14,20 — Chuck Biddle; pp.15,21 — Cliff Ketchum; pp.16,17,18 — Templeton; p.19 — Don Sampson; p.23 — supplied by Canadian Red Cross.

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SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1973

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BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' FEDERATION

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Relationship: .....

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(a) Lung disorder (e.g. Asthma, Bronchitis, Tuberculosis)?		
(b) Heart trouble (e.g. Pain in chest, shortness of breath, high blood pressure or murmur)?		
(c) Stomach trouble (e.g. Ulcer, indigestion or gall bladder)?		
(d) Diabetes, Kidney disease or abnormality of the urine?		
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(g) Neuritis, arthritis, rheumatism, back, spine or muscle disorder?		
(h) Any disease, impairment or deformity not named above?		
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Date ..... **Signature of Life to be Insured** .....
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From our readers

Halloween Boxes Aid Unicef

Again this year, Unicef Canada wishes to thank the teachers of British Columbia for their co-operation in distributing Halloween Unicef Canada boxes to their young students. Last year on Halloween children from one coast to the other donned their costumes and went shelling out, asking for treats for themselves and pennies for their Unicef boxes. Canadians responded by giving $800,800 for the work of the United Nations Children's Fund.

One cent can protect a child against tuberculosis. Five cents will provide enough seed for a 200-foot row of carrots. Ten cents will buy exercise books for three school children.

Speaking in Vancouver on her recent Canadian visit, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi declared, 'The current drought and economic situation have created an extremely tight situation.'

West Africa, too, is experiencing severe drought; conditions of starvation are reported among the people.

In 111 partner nations with a child population of 780 million Unicef is involved in programs in Emergency Aid and more long-range efforts in education, in child health, in nutrition and in family-child welfare.

Through Halloween for Unicef Canada, our children are able to help those in the developing countries.

Canadian Unicef Committee
Toronto

Mrs. Eileen Adams
Public Relations Consultant

The B.C. Unicef Committee's Provincial Halloween Chairman is Mrs. Clifford Anderson, at P.O. Box 602, Station A, Vancouver 1–Ed.

Magazine Is Appreciated

Again my thanks to you for sending me *The B.C. Teacher* and the *BCTF Newsletter* for another year. I do appreciate receiving them.

I thoroughly enjoyed Frances Fleming's article and her tribute to the pioneer teachers for I am one of them, having begun my teaching career in Saanich in the fall of 1916. What memories the article brought back and how well she has related just how things were in the school in those days!

The little one-room school had a lot in its favor and I consider it one of the many blessings of my life that I was privileged to attend one of them for eight years. It's nice to look back on those busy, happy days.

Incidentally, I still keep in touch with my first teacher. She was 90 last December and still very alert.

Best wishes from one who attended and loved a little one-room school.

Colorado Springs, Colo. (Mrs.) Jean Bruening

I am a constant reader of *The B.C. Teacher*, but I don't think I have ever before written a note of appreciation.

Apart from the general standard of your publication, which is most commendable, I would like to thank you for the May-June issue, which was excellent.

I particularly enjoyed Frances Fleming's 'Rhoda in Retrospect' and would humbly suggest that for us old-timers and for those who, as Frances says, 'don't have any knowledge of this archaic form of education,' you print a bit of nostalgia, or history if you like, more often than you do. It gives us a bit of perspective.

'One Man's Folly' should be distributed and read by all who have a concern for education. Chris Harker gave us a very real picture of his Tanzanian experiences. I even appreciated Armstrong's statistical attack on us bureaucrats.

A most worthy issue.

Campbell River C.I. Taylor

Calling All Math Teachers

May I take some space to mention why those teachers who teach arithmetic or math, whether elementary or secondary, should join the B.C. Association of Math Teachers this year.

Last year the Association did a good job since it:

1. Tried to have the classroom teacher's voice on mathematics heard by the Minister of Education by submitting a brief.
2. Encouraged teachers to join it in its various projects.
3. Organized two most successful summer conferences.
4. Made lists of resource people for in-service chairmen.
5. Opened up a dialog with the government's mathematics revision committee for representation of the B.C. math teachers.
6. Worked like heck on the teachers' behalf supporting the elementary and secondary teachers who teach some math.

This year the mathematics teachers hope to do some interesting things meeting the challenges of decentralization. We hope, with wide teacher support, to:

1. Continue the good work of last year.
2. Start a 'Think Tank' on classroom math problem areas manned by practising math teachers. (If any teacher would like to offer help, write BCAMT c/o the BCTF office.)
3. Begin leadership workshops to begin math PSA chapters in remote areas of the province (like Vancouver?)
4. Produce a BCAMT journal that is even more useful to the practising math teacher.
5. Encourage more math workshops.

So, perhaps, these 12 reasons why a teacher can *benefit* from joining the B.C. Association of Math Teachers will prompt some teachers to give us their support (that's the twelfth reason!).

Vancouver Roger Sandford

PSA application forms are available from the BCTF office, #105-2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver V6J 3H9-Ed.

To be considered for publication, letters should be approximately 250 words long and must be accompanied by the name and address of the correspondent. Pseudonyms will be used if requested. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.

Pop Is Real Music

Ah yes, I am one of those 'overworked music teachers, who carry a full classroom load and try to teach a beginners band.' And all this in an elementary school, yet! Nevertheless, I worked my way through Neville Scarfe's article (April issue), which in the end made my baton quiver with 'primitive emotion.'

We have the obligatory bow to our youth music culture and how wonderful it is. And then Dean Scarfe hits the bass drum: 'Certainly it is music and certainly it is innovative, because electronics makes it so; but equally certainly it is fundamentally primitive and

simplistic and it is considerably easier to master than the music of the masters. It is almost totally emotional, and instinctual in its appeal and effects. If it represents the best of our civilization, what are we to say about our civilization?'

As long as modern music, call it 'pop' if you will, is not recognized as a valid entity in itself, as long as it is compared and considered 'inferior' to our 'masters,' music education will be ignored by the students. We must get rid of the notion that 'pop' music should be treated as a half-way mark toward the appreciation of our 'masters.'

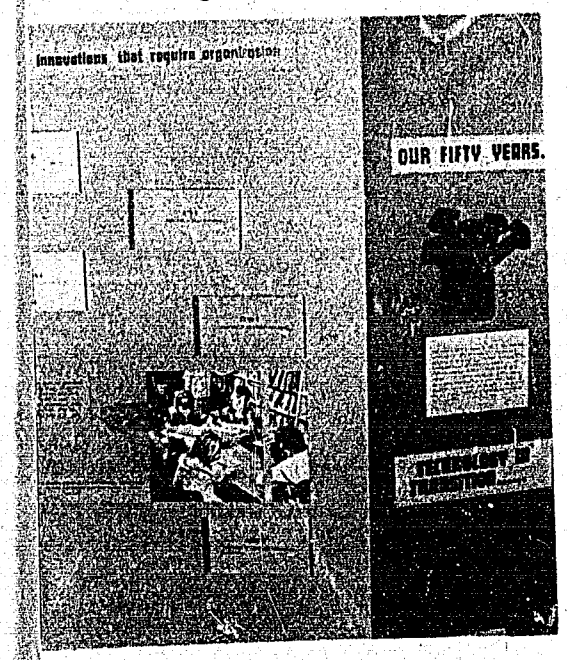
Consider this analogy: In every other subject in school attempts are made to involve contemporary artists and scientists to provide materials. Stephen Leacock, W.O. Mitchell writing for language arts texts, computer analyses in math texts, but where, oh where is there one single contemporary 'hit' song in a music book? Well, we have 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds' in *English Through Experience* (wow, aren't we with it!), but the music to it? Never; our 'masters' are so much better!

About the technical mastery of modern music; well, have a look at some of Duke Ellington's stuff some time, Mr. Scarfe!

Prince George — K. Blumé-Temoin

Our Cover Will Travel

You will be interested to know that the cover picture of the February 1973 issue of *The B.C. Teacher* was used in a display to feature the 50th anniversary of the Association for Educational Communication and Technology recently held in Las Vegas, Nevada.



The archives display traced the use of media for instructional purposes from 1923 to 1973, showing pictures that ended up with your cover picture. This picture showed elementary pupils using a tape recorder and listening post and headphones in a library resource center and was a perfect choice to indicate the present use of technology in education.

The person responsible for the archives display was Dr. Raymond V. Wiman, professor of education at Central Washington State College, Ellensburg, Wash. This conference was attended by more than 10,000 educators and since the archives display was a success, Dr. Wiman plans to design the materials so they can be transported easily and set up at other conventions across the U.S.A. Hence your cover picture will travel far afield.

Victoria — Ross Regan

We Shall Miss These Teachers

In Service	Last Taught In	Died
Shirley J. (Rees) Bodlak (Not previously reported)	Kamloops	June 1, 1970
Donald G. Branson	Cowichan	March 24
Gwenyth E. (Buckley) Campbell	Courtenay	April 27
John A. DeBeck	Surrey	April 2
Flora G. Gillies	Vancouver	May 13
Jo-Elien (Egan) Haley	Nelson	Not known
Irene M. Harding	Powell River	May 7
Audrey L. (Lundblom) Hook	Surrey	March 13
Trevor Leslie Niebling	Smithers	June 16
Ruth Cumming Teeple	Surrey	December 18, '72
Dolores Antonette Tenisci	Victoria	October 13, '72

Retired	Last Taught In	Died
Robert W. Adams	New Westminster	March 22
Colina Black	North Vancouver	March 25
Arthur F. Burch	Vancouver	May 15
Jessie L. Campbell	Vancouver	June 9
Margaret Catteli	Vancouver	April 22
John Cooke	Summerland	April 27
Hazel M. Davidson	Trail	March 5
Kate E. Ford	Victoria	April 30
Roth G. Gordon	Mission	June 13
F. Kathleen Lawrence	Kamloops	February 21
Annie C. Loughead	Vancouver	July 21
Frederick Lowe	Vancouver	March 16
Gertrude E. MacDonald	Vancouver	June 7
Eva P. McWilliams	Qualicum Beach	March 5
Duncan L. Marrs	Vernon	May 29
Harold Martin	Chilliwack	May 4
Harold E. Patterson	Vancouver	June 26
John M. Robinson	West Vancouver	May 22
James Heber Stephenson	Richmond	July 6
Dell M. Todhunter	Grand Forks	May 11
Dorothy E. Whiles	Vancouver	April 10

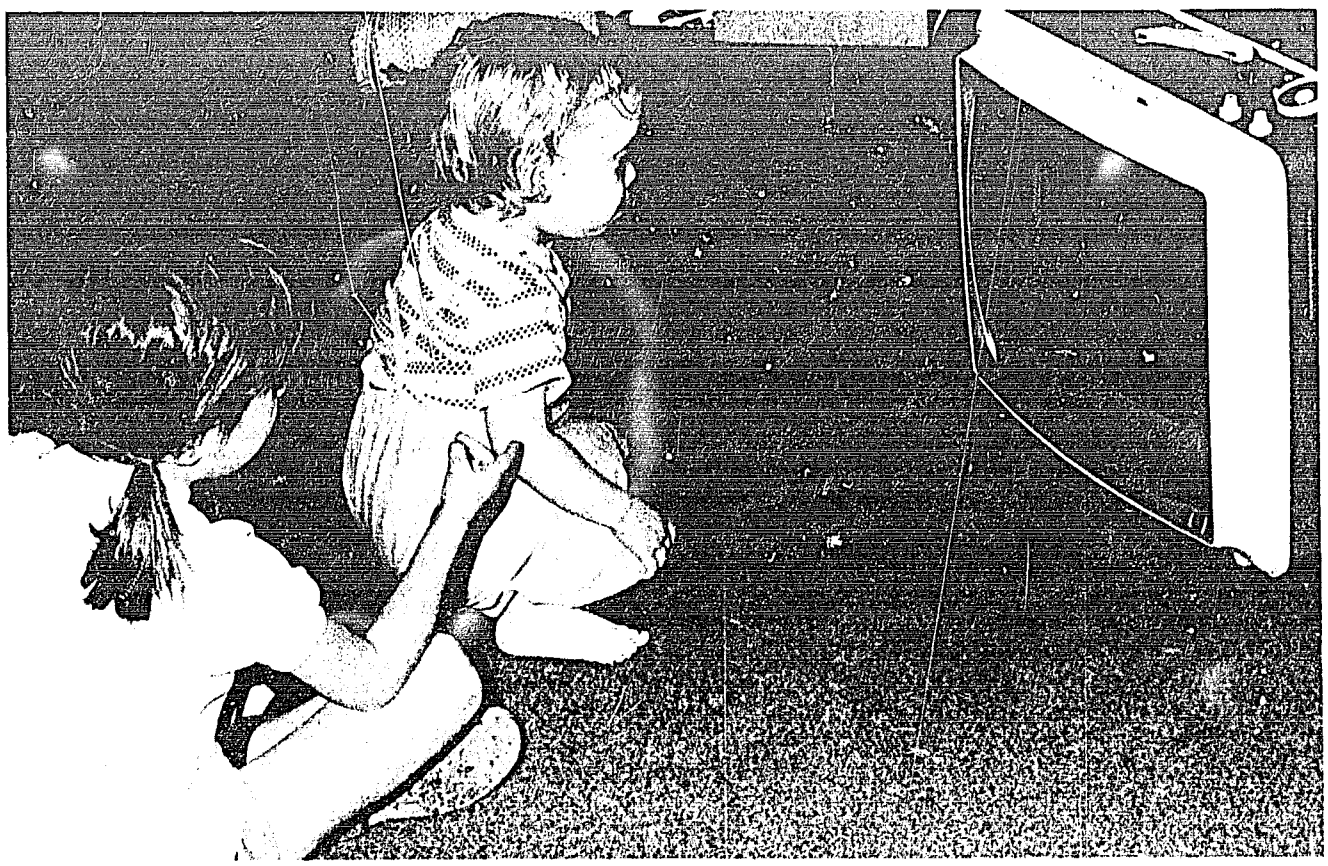
Do You Teach B.C. History?

Interested in British Columbia history? Got some ideas? Let's get together.

I'm developing and teaching a provincially approved local option course, British Columbia History 11x. As at present constructed, the course tries to include any and all aspects of interest in the province's development from art to economics, local history to literature.

I'd like to hear from teachers interested in teaching anything in the field, contributing materials for general use or making suggestions. I am offering some basic data (although I can't promise instant action). My address, for anyone interested, is Mount View Senior Secondary School, 3814 Carey Road, Victoria.

Victoria — Ian D. Parker



LEARNING VALUES VERSUS IN ENTERTAINMENT COLLISION

E.M. VOLKART

This provocative article contends that a grim, silent and relatively unrecognized struggle is taking place in North American society between learning values and entertainment values — and that entertainment is winning. Prolonged exposure to television has made easy escapism habitual in youngsters entering school, and has indoctrinated them with the principle of least effort. Their predominant orientation toward the world has become one of entertainment, not learning. Consequently, schools have sought magical devices that would make learning easy or pleasurable — and in so doing have substituted the illusion of learning for its substance.

The author is a professor of sociology at the University of Hawaii. He has a particular interest in the sociological effects of the mass media.

Few aspects of North American society have been the subject of as much concern and scrutiny in recent years as have education and the public school system.

Among other things, public schooling has become embroiled in political controversy with reference to racial integration and its role in promoting equality; it has been the arena of countless innovations in teaching methods, curricula and organization; it has also been implicated in the so-called 'generation gap.'

One result of these and other factors has been the flourishing of educational research in the attempt to measure the effectiveness of public schools in achieving desired learning objectives and outcomes.

Of particular concern has been the presumed and actual impact of school programs on the cognitive development of children, and here the weight of the evidence is less than reassuring. The well-publicized Coleman Report in 1966 indicated that measured cognitive outcomes could not be linked directly to a number of presumed important educational characteristics, e.g., student-teacher ratios, staff qualifications, physical facilities, and so on.

More recently, Christopher Jencks and his associates concluded, after surveying a wide range of relevant studies, that 'the character of a school's output depends largely on a single input, namely the characteristics of its entering children. Everything else — the school budget, its policies, the characteristics of the teachers — is either secondary or completely irrelevant.' They add that the 'cultural attitudes, values and taste for schooling' are crucial factors in both school attainment and the amount of schooling achieved by children.

One other recent research finding is relevant: for reasons unknown, the average scores on two important cognitive parts of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) — verbal and mathematical — have been declining during the years 1956-1970. Gene R. Hawes, who reported this shift early in 1973, indicates that this decline cannot be attributed to an upsurge of lower-income, lesser qualified children now seeking entrance to college as compared to 15 or 20 years ago. Rather, it is found in the best-rated schools, in the higher-income, stable communities, as well as elsewhere. The decline seems to be general rather than specific, cutting across various population groups, and Hawes suggests that some 'deep running social trends' may be diminishing the value placed on the acquisition of cognitive skills in our culture.

Some caution should be used in interpreting the data and conclusions from these diverse sources. There are well known methodological limitations involved in conducting such studies as Coleman's and the ones surveyed by Jencks et al. Many of the variables are aggregates and difficult to conceptualize in operational terms. Also, the decline in SAT scores, while noticeable and cumulative, is not of staggering proportions and it is possible that they have been affected by some relatively minor changes in the tests themselves during the period studied.

Nevertheless, the findings are based upon the most careful and systematic research that has been conducted on such matters, and they can hardly be ignored. Together they suggest that cognitive development and attainment are not only heavily influenced by non- or extra-school factors, perhaps even in pre-school years, but also that levels of cognitive performance have declined in recent decades. At least, they indicate that some attention should be directed toward the further specification or identification of those 'cultural attitudes, values and taste for schooling,' or those 'deep-running social trends' that seem to be involved.

This article attempts to cast some light on the problem. In it, I sketch a rather general, over-simplified, yet plausible interpretation of some new and powerful forces that may be operating in the lives of young people.

The central problem of today is not between the traditional and the modern, the sacred and the secular, but between the serious and the trivial.

The central theme is that the introduction of television into the North American home during the past quarter of a century has had subtle, indirect, but pervasive impact on youthful attitudes and values toward learning and schooling, and especially the acquisition of cognitive skills.

Stated more strongly, the theme is that a grim, silent and relatively unrecognized struggle is taking place in North American society between 'learning values' and 'entertainment values,' and that prolonged exposure to television, as an entertainment medium, is an event of significant cognitive consequence. In my judgment, this collision between entertainment and learning values is a potent one for understanding some of our educational dilemmas, the generation-gap of today, and the dim uncertainty of tomorrow.

To grasp the thesis presented here, one must look beyond such surface events as the amount of violence in and poor quality of children's television programs, on one hand, and more or less superficial modifications of school curricula and practices, on the other. What is required is a closer examination of the deeper structure and meaning of 'learning' and 'entertainment' as these relate to cognitive development.

For present purposes, I wish to use the terms 'learning' and 'entertainment' to designate two fundamentally different types of human experience. The former centers on notions of effort, study, discipline, and purposeful activity of some adaptive consequence; the latter centers on notions of ease, pleasure, immediacy and indolence. Learning implies an active mastery of something regarded as important; entertainment does not. Entertainment tends to be fugitive, discontinuous, passive and diffuse; learning, on the other hand, can be, and often is, cumulative, i.e., each plateau reached becomes a launching pad for new learning and the exercise of judgment, discrimination and analysis.

Initially, both may involve some modicum of curiosity, attention, motivation and rudimentary understanding of what is going on but, typically, genuine learning requires more concentration, more effort, more self-conscious discipline and practice, and more sense of goal, than does entertainment. By intention, this analysis applies more particularly to the acquisition of cognitive capacities (literacy, ideas, logic, mathematics), and the means of such acquisition, than to attitudes, beliefs and physical skills. The latter can be attained frequently by simple exposure and repetitive, but not necessarily obtrusive, reinforcement.

Admittedly, these distinctions are somewhat crude, and they cross-cut a number of standard psychological categories — e.g., perception, motivation, affect. Yet they seem to correspond, roughly and intuitively, to the ways in which most people recognize, categorize and evaluate their experiences.

Obviously, the two categories as described imply strong contrasts, if not

mutual exclusivity. In concrete experience, however, they can and do intermingle, in the sense that there can be areas of overlap, concurrence and sequence. One can learn from situations that are entertaining and, contrariwise, one can be entertained in the process of learning. But the intent here is to identify the predominant orientation of a person toward any given activity, and for this purpose it is more useful to regard 'learning' and 'entertainment' as separate, distinctive categories of experience. In this sense, they are purposely contrived abstractions that approximate what Max Weber meant by 'ideal types' — not faithful descriptions of the complexities of existence, but analytic tools to facilitate an understanding of those complexities.

Living Requires Learning

With these considerations in mind, it seems clear enough that all societies — in their customs, practices and institutions — have made provision for both learning and entertaining experiences in the lives of their members, including children. It also seems clear enough that most societies (at least the ones that have survived) made a rather clear distinction between the two and gave higher priority to 'learning,' especially in the serious business of socializing the young. In summing up what we have learned from history and anthropology, William Graham Sumner wrote: 'The first task of life is to live.' And living requires learning more than entertainment.

The adaptive knowledge that previous generations had wrung with great effort from long and bitter experience with man and nature was passed on to other generations by mixtures of stern instruction, initiation rites, daily sanctions, models and imitation. Learning, in a fundamental sense, was not often left to chance or happenstance. There was a structure and a purpose that required effort, patience, concentration and practice — a series of experiences that began early in life, formally and informally, and with an emphasis on learning how to learn, as well as what to learn.

In sum, all societies have placed a high value on the disciplined and successful mastery of the skills and knowledge most relevant to their existence.

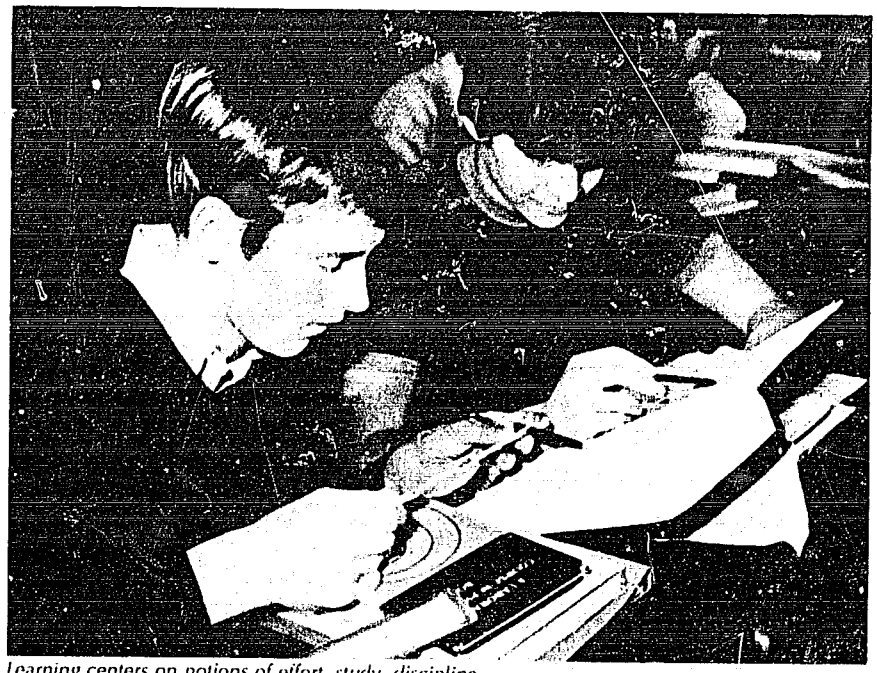
Prior to the 19th century, in most of the western world formal, explicit emphasis on the higher reaches of cognitive learning — Latin, scriptures, science, literature and mathematics — was confined to the elite, out of which there developed in time the learned professions. For most of man and womankind, however, learning (including cognitive comprehension) was related primarily to sex roles, traditional agricultural practices and, with the rise of commerce and the cities, the learning of trades in guilds and through the apprenticeship system.

In the United States the same conditions prevailed, with some modifications, until the middle third of the 19th century, when the principle of compulsory education for all the young won widespread acceptance. The ideology of democracy demanded an informed and literate public, and educational goals became a societal responsibility centered on the public school.

The first State Board of Education was established in Massachusetts in 1837; thereafter the public school movement expanded rapidly. Private and parochial schools continued to exist, but the heaviest burdens fell on the public school system, financed by taxes levied for that purpose. Taxes also supported the 'normal' schools, teachers' colleges and schools of education to train all the teachers needed to staff the ever-growing public school population. By law, children were required to attend school for a certain number of years or until a particular age had been reached. In the latter part of the 19th century, formal education was extended into the younger years of life with the introduction of kindergartens.

All of this testified to the importance, and seriousness of purpose, of learning as an organized enterprise in America. Books, schools and teachers not only provided opportunities for learning, but were also instrumental in promoting habits of regular practice, study and performance. Teaching methods, emphasizing drill, memory and recitation, were softened somewhat during the first half of the 20th century as a result of the influence of John Dewey, G Stanley Hall and others; more attention was paid to the presumed interests, curiosity and needs of the children, thereby encouraging active thought and doing.

Yet these changes were surely not regarded by either parents or teachers as a substitution of entertainment for learning. They were introduced, or at least rationalized, on the grounds that they would promote learning by increasing the amount of self-involvement and self-motivation to engage actively in the often dull, but necessary, learning and mastery of subject matter. Passivity was the target, not the essential values of study and learning and cognitive development.



Learning centers on notions of effort, study, discipline and purposeful activity such as these lads demonstrate.

In a very real sense, the school had a monopoly on communication from sources outside the family and peer-group. The school decided what textbooks and other types of learning material would be used. Teachers were presumably steeped in book learning, and were expected to employ more professional knowledge and skill in teaching the students than could be provided by parents. Homework was common within the resources available to the school, and in the secondary school any unscheduled subject matter classes were devoted to study rooms. For the most part, public libraries were an adjunct to, rather than an integral part of,

the school system.

Thus, for nearly a century and a half 'learning' came to be identified with, and defined primarily as, a self-contained, continuous, formal experience under the direction and supervision of the public school. In the elementary grades, study and practice were required from students in learning basic reading, writing and arithmetic, for these were regarded as the essential foundations both of general success in life and of further, more advanced learning.

Later years would bring more detailed studies, such as history and geography, then literature, and more advanced work in mathematics, language and science. The learning of useful skills was encouraged in classes devoted to the domestic arts, manual training, typing and shorthand, but by common consent the focus of school learning was clearly on the acquisition of cognitive skills.

It should also be noted that until relatively recently, public school education depended in very large measure upon the medium of print — not from whimsy, or simply because it was available, but because the print medium possessed certain attributes that made it highly appropriate for cognitive learning. The arbitrary symbols involved in mathematics and the alphabet were more or less permanently affixed to pages in books or magazines. The pages could be scanned, studied, referred to as often as necessary. Books and magazines were portable, easily carried from class to class, or school to home. They were readily available when needed for extra study or homework.

Books Contain Necessary Information

The pages of a book, containing the basic material to be learned, and the accompanying instructions and rules, may not have been the most interesting spectacle available to growing children — it is easier to listen than to read — and they may not have promised endless entertainment, but they contained necessary information that could be studied repeatedly for the main purpose — cognitive learning.

Thus, about 25 years ago the school was socially and individually defined as the major institution in which learning should and could take place. To some extent, parents were even discouraged from teaching their children how to read or write or do numbers because their techniques from an earlier day could well be at variance with those used by teachers.

Schooling, moreover, was generally

Prior to television, teachers seldom confused entertainment with learning. They made a sharp distinction between the two.

structured so as to require patience, preparation, practice, attention and concentration on the part of the student. No one ever promised him that learning would be easy. In this atmosphere the child was, so to speak, 'prepared' for the fact that teachers would and should make inteliectual demands upon him, and that a certain amount of dull, tedious — but eventually rewarding — activity would be required of him. In this system it was recognized that not all students would fare equally well in their attainments — but it was at least an article of faith that everyone, even the 'brightest,' would benefit under a regimen that included the acquisition of cognitive skills at the price of some self-discipline, study and work.

Finally, in this paradigm of pre-television schooling and learning, the value of play and leisure time activities was fully recognized. Not all school time and activities were devoted strictly to cognitive pursuits — there were recess periods, sports, school papers and plays. And outside the school, in addition to regular peer-group and family activities, there were comic books, radio and motion pictures.

But these influences tended to be peripheral, not central. Comic books did not usually attract prolonged attention until after some competence in reading had been mastered; motion pictures were not usually a daily preoccupation; radio, particularly music, was often used as background for study and homework since it did not require full attention — and when it was used for children or family programs, it at least had the virtue of requiring some imagination to comprehend what was going on.

Prior to television, outside, entertaining distractions available for pre-school or school-age children were relatively few. And, within school, teachers seldom confused entertainment with learning. They, together with most parents, made a sharp distinction between the two, and entertainment was subordinated to the demands of formal schooling and cognitive growth. In general, the value of learning, as a conscious effort, was unimpaired.

However, in the early 1950s and thereafter the wide-scale introduction of television let loose entirely new forces into the system of schooling and learning sketched above. An external influence of startling attractiveness, television entered into the lives of children as early as their second year and then remained a rather constant companion. Accepted initially as a new kind of toy, a means of diversion, and an instrument of constant entertainment, television rapidly reduced motion picture attendance, affected comic book sales, and destroyed network radio. It also provided a new context for learning and cognitive development.

There is little need to detail here all the evidence of the extent to which television has pre-empted the time and attention of the nation and its youth. It is sufficient to note that almost 98 percent of all American homes have at least one television set and that the average amount of time spent with it is between

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Experience weeks – The Theory

Experience weeks are a lot of work, but they offer opportunities no other learning experience offers. Something happens between teachers and students when they share work, learning and risk, and are able

MAURICE GIBBONS

I hear and I forget;
I see and I remember;
I do and I understand.
Chinese Proverb

School is a word-rich experience-poor environment. Even intense moments in the classroom are simulated activities with the urgency, challenge and risk leached out of them.

Young people need to test themselves against the realities of adventure, service, work and real problems found in the wilderness and the community.

An Experience Week is the first step toward a program rich in activities that challenge students to find out who they are by finding out what they can do.

An Experience Week is a week (or two weeks or four) of school time during which students are excused from scheduled classes and the school to become involved in challenging, intensive learning activities.

These activities may challenge students' physical endurance and daring, their compassion in helping others without expectation or reward, their willingness to co-operate with others in making a contribution to the community, their readiness to enter the world of work, or their ability to initiate their own programs of study in the field.

An Experience Week should be designed to meet the following criteria:

a. Commitment. The student should commit himself to a plan of action that he will see through to completion.

b. Participation. The student should not be an observer who learns about something only by watching others; he should be an active participant who learns by doing.

c. Challenge. The student should be challenged to extend his abilities as far as possible.

d. Self-knowledge. During the experience the student should learn not only about the activity, but also about himself and how he relates to others.

e. Appropriateness. If possible, the activity should be appropriate to the task of personal development most central in the student's life at the time: developing autonomy, initiative, industry, personal relationships, identity and so on.

Although all of these criteria cannot be met in all experience weeks, they help to define the central intent, to involve students in activities that will enable them to find out who they are by finding out what they can do.

What experiences should be offered?

Experience Weeks can be implemented at the secondary or the elementary level. Here is one possible program for a secondary school.

Grade 8 – Adventure Week

Small teams of 10 or 12 students plan an adventure to challenge their daring, endurance and skill in the out-of-doors. The team members work together with a parent, university student or volunteer outdoorsman to prepare a proposal and to conduct their hike, canoe trip, cross-country ski expedition, exploration or sailing venture. A solo, spending one or two days alone in the wilderness, may be included.

Grade 9 – Service Week

A week working a regular shift in an orphanage, old peoples' home, hospital, schools for the blind, handicapped or retarded helping in whatever capacity can be arranged with the institutions or community services. The object is to help without expectation or reward.

Grade 10 – Community Project Week

Students in teams conduct projects that result in some such visible contribution to the community as a hiking trail, a park-garden, reclaimed and beautified land, a playground, or repaired and painted pensioners' houses. At least one adult should participate

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The author is a member of the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University.

Reaching beyond the school

to chat informally on equal terms. The roles drop away, each sees the other in a new light, and a whole new kind of learning begins.

CHARLES W. DICK

Last spring David Thompson Secondary School in Vancouver tried an Experience Week, and it turned out to be a great success. Students received their education away from the school for periods of up to 10 days.

Many schools in B.C. have had students absent from school for longer periods of time than this, conducting field trips, but what was unique about our program was that more than 200 students and 13 teachers were involved in the program simultaneously.

The program began in the fall of 1972 when Dr. Maurice Gibbons and Dr. Milton McClaren from SFU, and Miss Charlotte Atlung, a former associate of the university, approached the principal, Ken McKenzie, with an idea and a proposal.

The idea was to excuse students from scheduled classes to become involved in challenging, intensive learning activities. These activities, it was hoped, would challenge their physical endurance, their compassion in helping others without reward, their willingness to co-operate with others in making a contribution to the community, their readiness to enter the world of work or their ability to initiate individual programs. The areas of endeavor suggested were adventure, service, community project, apprenticeship and field study.

Because of long involvement with extended social studies field trips, a variety of work experiences prior to entering teaching, and a commitment to a philosophy that much integrated learning can and does take place beyond the walls of the school, I was assigned the task of generating interest in the idea and, ultimately, of co-ordinating the activities.

However good the idea was, experience dictated that it should be the staff volunteers, along with the students, who should decide on the project outline. A general meeting of interested staff was held within the next few days. Eighteen staff members indicated a further interest. These met as a group to discuss the possibilities of actually getting a project under way.

It is important to note before describing the project that the program had every reason to succeed in this school. First, there is a unique harmony existing among all the members of the staff and, in particular, among members of the various departments. Second, many classes were already being covered on a reciprocal basis to permit many out-of-school learning experiences. Third, interdepartmental instruction and planning were strongly emphasized and encouraged. Fourth, field studies, work experience and work-school programs were strongly supported.

The work-school program is facilitated by the extended teaching day (8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.), by a registration period at 10:00 a.m., and by the excellent cafeteria and foods program, which permits the purchase of 'home cooked' food at most hours of the day, including full lunches from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Many students found it possible to hold a full-time job and to do a full or partial program each semester. The later registration period accommodates those students who work night shift or 'graveyard' and who find it difficult to make an earlier time.

Thus the school organization and operation created a teaching situation conducive to flexible scheduling and a student body prepared to assume much of the responsibility for gauging how much of their time could be devoted to study away from the school.

To return to the project: after the initial meeting, during which some guidelines were established, the staff were given two weeks to outline a proposal of their own and to make initial contacts with students.

During this period, five teachers with-

The author is a former administrator at David Thompson Secondary School in Vancouver and Co-ordinator of the school's Experience Week program. He is now Director of Secondary Instruction in Burnaby School District. He was recently elected a Fellow of the Canadian College of Teachers.

Cabinet-making was the work experience chosen by this student.

drew for various reasons. The remaining members organized themselves into five interdisciplinary projects and two single member projects. The original proposal was drastically modified, but I felt that it was better to proceed and be successful under the terms dictated by interest and needs than to follow rigidly an already charted path.

The next two meetings were devoted to seminar discussions, in which the members listened to each of the proposals and made constructive suggestions for improvement. Limits were set on the numbers of students for any of the groups. The selection of students was on a first-come-first-served basis with no age restrictions imposed. In all more than 300 students applied to take part in the program, and 230 were accommodated.

Meetings were held weekly to discuss problems. These turned out to be very valuable training sessions for the staff. The students who were committed to the projects prepared themselves by early completion of school projects, by reading about the subjects and areas of interest related to the 'experience' and by actual physical conditioning.

Lengthy brochures were prepared for each of the students indicating the rationale for the project, the responsibility levels expected, the methods to be used in recording their experiences and specific integrated subject exercises.

An evening with the parents, students and project staff was held in April. Rooms were provided for each group to view slides, hear talks by staff and experts in such things as canoeing, hiking and safety. The students who were to be involved with the multiple handicapped received a talk from a member of the Oakridge School for the retarded. The evening concluded with coffee and cookies prepared by the home economics classes.

Following the Experience Week programs several follow up meetings were held to compare notes and to prepare a lengthy report for the Vancouver School Board.*

The most important outcome of such a program is the changes that occur in the growth and development of each individual. Often these changes are subtle; sometimes they are dramatic. Most students become aware of their ability to make decisions and to act upon them. Their view of peers and teachers takes on a new perspective. They learn how to contribute to the team and in so doing learn more about themselves. Growth and change are often reflected in the personal comments. Look with me at the projects in turn, and at some of the personal comments from staff and student diaries.

Cliff Ketchum, who now teaches at Gladstone Secondary School in Vancouver and who was in charge of the Centennial Trail improvement program, gives the following account:

'The group successfully achieved the goals that had been set. Questioned afterward, the boys were unanimous in their opinion that the project had been a success. All expressed the desire to participate in a similar project in the future, should one be offered.'

Following is a brief day-to-day account of the events comprising Experience Week.

Saturday May 5:
Mr. Fenton and I surveyed the trail from Seymour Mountain Road to Deep Cove to determine which section the group should work on.

Saturday May 12:
Mr. Fenton, three of the boys, and I cleared space for a campsite, built a 12-foot table and generally prepared the campsite for the following week.

Sunday May 13:
I took some of the group to the campsite, so that there would be that much less confusion when the rest of them arrived the next day to set up.

Monday May 14:
The rest of the group arrived. Camp completely set up and group ready to go to work by noon. The foundations of a 44-foot bridge were laid by the end of the first day. *Sun* photographer arrived and took several pictures.

Tuesday May 15:
Boys divided into three groups, with three projects under way: (1) bridge work (2) construction of trail steps (3) re-routing of a section of rough trail entailing the construction of 200 ft. of new trail. A visit by Mr. C.W. Dick who gave much helpful advice and encouragement. He also took several excellent pictures, which are added to our collection.

Wednesday May 16:
Bridge nearing completion; trail diversion almost completed. Kangaroo court for one of the group accused of slacking off (with excellent results).

Thursday May 17:
Completion of bridge (with hand-rails and David Thompson marker); completion of new section of trail.

Friday May 18:
Half the crew worked on trail steps; the other half on general clean-up.
Broke camp and packed equipment to highway. Arrived back at school by 4:00 p.m.

General Comments

'The boys worked well together and accomplished a great deal.'

'Each boy prepared his own food, shelter, and took care of his equipment.'

Many an hour was spent around the campfire at night discussing the day's activities and life in general. The boys learned a great deal as a result of their week of outdoor living — such things as the identification of trees, shrubs and plants, construction methods for trail steps and bridges, splitting planking from cedar logs, the correct and safe handling of tools, and the method of sharpening axes and saws.

At this point it is important for the reader to recall that we are talking about urban students who have little if any opportunity to deal with problems accepted as commonplace by the rural child.

Don Sampson, geology teacher, George Robertson, history teacher, and Sue Barr, physical education teacher,

*The report (40 pages) was published June 30 and is available for interested districts from K.R. McKenzie, Principal, David Thompson Secondary School, as long as the supply lasts.

conducted the Southern B.C. and S.W. Alberta circle tour. Every attempt was made to relate the history and geology of the various areas visited. An outstanding brochure containing written material, pictures, maps and graphs prepared by the trio was produced by the graphic arts department of the school under Cec Davis, and copies were issued to each of the participants. Of the $900 needed for supplies and transportation, 90% was raised by the teachers and students through car washes, bottle drives and other assorted methods.

The students were well supplied with food and gear. At no time was there a problem of organization or faulty behavior. We camped in government campsites each night by pre-arrangement.

'The itinerary and route were in general followed as outlined in the booklet produced prior to the trip. Each student had an opportunity to read the booklet and was well prepared beforehand.'

'Recommendations

1. If at all possible the teachers should outline distinctly the itinerary with the bus driver or acquire a bus or van with teachers driving.
2. If possible two vans on such a trip would be advantageous; one for history students and one for geology. This would easily facilitate each group's following its own interests.
3. That the school board should acquire (at little cost) campsites in areas of the province suitable to the study of geology and history.
4. That more funding be made possible to ease the burden on both teachers and students attempting to finance such a venture.
5. Mr. Sampson and Mr. Robertson feel that such field trips are an integral part of any individual's education and that all efforts should be made to encourage more staff and students to participate in the future.'

Sandy Gargett, of the home economics department, and a child care specialist, teamed with John Sandercock from the English department to develop a volunteer service program to assist the multiple handicapped of the Lower Mainland for a one-week period. The students were taken to their respective projects about a week before for an orientation visit.

The values the students derived from this program can best be expressed by this quotation: '. . . increased self-confidence in my ability to work with both children and adults, increased my interest in my community and in handicapped people, increased the appreciation of my own fortunate unhandicapped circumstances and increased my understanding of the multiple handicapped child.'

The group was not without minor problems — transportation to the outlying centers, parents not coming out to the meetings and lack of direction from some of the instructors at the centers. It was later realized that these instructors were not aware of how capable the trainees really were.

The recommendations were . . . 'longer than one week; spread out over the term; a few days observation and then more work days,' etc. Interesting reports were completed by the participants and these are worth reading in their entirety.

The Bowron Lakes adventure program was precisely that — an adventure. The group tackled the circuit during the spring runoff, but fortunately the students (girls and boys) and the four instructors — Bob Lewis, PE and counselling; Kirk Templeton, history and geography; Jack Catherwood, PE and department head; Steve Doig, social worker — were well prepared.

Comments from the students prior to their expedition were: 'I know this will be tough. I expect the weather to be poor.' '. . . whether or not everybody will be able to survive each other's company without killing each other." . . . it's going to be fun.' 'I hope nothing happens.' 'If I see any grizzlies, I hope it's from my canoe.' Excerpts from the diaries of the trip:

June 2: '. . . arrive Lac la Hache campsite.'

June 3: '. . . completing the first portage. . . was sufficient enough shock to awaken everyone to the fact that this was not to be a pleasure trip . . . . every one mile of portage is five miles of hard work.'

June 4: '. . . portage seemed easier. . . as partners are getting it together and are working in harmony.'

'. . . appears that only the bare minimum of food has been brought along and many appear wanting and several grumble as to whether their share is enough.'

'That evening . . . rain. Rain has a tendency to dampen campfires, clothes and spirits. Fortunately the weather broke and we woke up to a bright and sunny Tuesday morning.'

June 5: 'Everybody was now well entrenched in the necessary tasks of setting up camp. . .' 'Members. . .assumed roles and tasks with some leadership revealed in the delegation of these tasks.'

June 6: '. . . arrived at the stretch of the river known as the "chute" and "Roller Coaster". . .'

June 7: 'No problem on the Isaac as we shot the chute and rolled the coaster without incident. . . entered the Cariboo River. . . with no idea of the problems ahead. . .the first group of four canoes made it through with a few scrapes. Several hours passed until finally the second group was spotted,

Centennial Trail Project group worked long and hard on building steps and clearing the trail.

Meals were very welcome after a day of paddling during the Bowron Lakes trip.

all safe, but minus one canoe! One canoe had hit a log, capsized, broke up in the logs and relieved itself of party and packs. . .by doubling up, the group was able to continue down the river and on to Turner Creek. That night brought the group as close together as ever before as fire, meals, clothes and experiences were shared.'

June 10: '. . .and twenty hours later we pulled into Vancouver.'

General Comments (assembled from student evaluations after return)

. . .pioneers must have been supermen, not knowing what was ahead.

. . .we were rushed. It was too short. Our whole day was taken up with the necessary tasks of making and breaking camp, of meals, of covering prescribed distances, with little or no time for relaxation. I expected a day or two of relaxing, of fishing, perhaps, or hiking up a mountain. We worked all day, we could see what we did from a train.

. . .shooting the rapids was a great challenge.

. . .the physical exertion was fantastic.

. . .the menu was lacking food which would fill you up.

. . .the separation of the group came about because of the feeling of one group that they were capable of making it on their own with no supervision from any of the teachers in the group.

. . .much to my amazement the girls more than pulled their weight and were very willing to help out.

. . .the most important aspect in my mind was whether or not everybody could tolerate each other. I expected some ill-feelings to come between some people and it did, but it was nothing that a good meal (more commonly called a pig-out) and a good night's rest didn't take care of.

. . .the most gratifying part about the trip was the fact that everybody got to know the real person.

. . .the teachers were considered more as friends on the trip and this has carried over back at school.

. . .there is no better experience than being in a group depending on each other for survival and succeeding.

. . .in my case the trip was most demanding in the Cariboo River as. . .the water was cold and it was frightening as the river was running at a very fast pace (tipped canoe).

. . .from this experience, I feel that I have gained a greater knowledge of the outdoors and myself. I have been able to cope with difficult situations and able to have a great deal of confidence and self-control in so doing. 'It is a shame this occurred at the end of the school year when I am graduating. I just got to really know the people and now we are saying goodbye.'

Our objectives were achieved from this experience — physical, social and emotional — and these objectives are illustrated by the above excerpts from the evaluations submitted by the students. A student summed it up best — 'It was an experience that no one week of school will ever be able to give a person.'

Madeline Gemmill, a physical education instructor, has selected the comments that are the most inspiring and present some of the best insights into the personal feelings of urban students and the changes they undergo. The group consisted of a diverse group of girls and the location of the 'experience' was in the Cathedral Lakes region south of Keremeos.

'Prior to our departure, basic instruction was given in map and compass work, shelter and fire construction, campfire cooking, and backpacking. Our equipment came from various sources: some packs and sleeping bags were purchased through funds provided by the David Thompson Students' Council and Simon Fraser University; other packs and sleeping bags were borrowed. Other purchases included mess kits, ensolite, freeze-dried food, maps, and whistles. Other items, such as compasses, climbing ropes, carabiners, slings were borrowed, while billy cans and hibachis were constructed by the students. Each girl committed herself to the purchase of vibram-soled hiking boots and all food except freeze-dried dinners.

'The group, composed of ten girls and one female teacher, departed Vancouver, Saturday June 9, for the Ashnola River near Keremeos. The hike, with packs and ropes weighing up to forty pounds, started up Lakeview Creek about 2:00 p.m. By 2:15 many wanted to turn back. The next two days were spent hiking the nine miles and six

thousand feet of elevation up to Lake of the Woods in the Cathedral Lakes.

'Once there, the girls did a ridge walk, a day hike up to the upper and frozen lakes, and some did an overnight solo. Two days were spent coming down Ewart Creek to the Ashnola River.

'Many educational outcomes were expected to occur as a result of this experience: physical, emotional and social. I think some of these occurred and would be best illustrated through excerpts from both the students' and teacher's diaries, which they were required to keep.'

Excerpts from Diaries

There's something about physical exertion that relaxes the mind.
Being out here, I like to try different things and not many things here scare me.
I wish I was still there in spite of the hard work.
Man, she was acting like she was going to die.

Heading into the rapids keeps paddlers alert.

It was snowing and blowing: it was just beautiful. I just about started to cry. The view was fantastic and to say, 'Wow, look what I did!'
I feel that its too bad that not everyone gets the chance to climb a mountain and having the feeling of accomplishment.
I can't believe I was once up there seeing the things I saw and I'm ripped off with myself for not climbing that ridge.

* * *

We just sat there absorbing the atmosphere around us.
We weren't sure of the purpose of the ridge walk at first, but after hard work we were rewarded with a spectacular view.
The ridge makes you feel how small you are in a huge world.
Now I'm by myself. Its hard to express my feelings, except its kind of a joy. You tingle inside. I'm surviving by myself with the earth and nothing else around me.
It was a little on the freeky side of an experience.
I really know why I came now — it was beautiful in the mountains and I felt a comfort being among them.
I had never been so close to a wild animal like this.

* * *

Everyone seems more full of understanding of everything now.
It's nice to be with friends but I'm getting an experience where I rely on myself and no one relies on me; there's no competition.
I've never been so relaxed and without worries.
Walking across the creek with our hands linked you had to have faith in the ten other people. Something like that makes you really close to each other.
I never knew any of the other girls but now I know them and how to cope with them.
Everyone tries to help each other.
My hands haven't been this dirty since I was a little kid playing with mud pies.
I have never felt closer to my students. This is the way teachers should know them — their broken homes, their childhoods, their aspirations, their fears, their joys and their tears.
I have learned a great deal, especially how to get along with others and to help one another.
Altogether this has been a fantastic experience.
I don't want to quit writing, to think it is all over, but the memory is still there so I guess it isn't over. It will always be there.

It Was Worth The Effort

Madeline Gemmill summed up: 'If somehow it would be possible to follow these students and teacher, we'd know the real value of this experience. Most of the values are probably intangible, so we shall probably never know. But already I feel that the Cathedral Lakes Expedition was worth the effort. The diaries brought out one solid conclusion: that the participants got to know more about people and, even more, they feel that they got to know more about themselves.

'The teacher gained new insights into students and may therefore be a better teacher. Students got closer looks at their teacher and may become better students.

'This is education. Granted it's a revolutionary departure, but it's still education in its finest sense.

'There was no television on the mountain, no cars, no movies, no dope, and no comfortable bedrooms. It was a hard life, one unfettered by role playing. Society was back in town, the society that forces people into molds and pigeonholes personalities. Here, life was eventful, even adventurous, and these girls found that they could not only dream the impossible dream, they could rise to the challenge of terrible weather, loneliness, discomfort, danger. They had to get along with each other and it turned out to be a lot easier than they thought.'

If you read the full report it becomes obvious that the program was successful; successful in terms of completed commitments to self and to others, in terms of an exposure to and conquest of the unknown, in terms of an exposure to a whole new spectrum of life and its activities and in terms of the development of a more mature respect for and reaction to people who are different — people with shortcomings, people with handicaps, people who are leaders, people who are weaker, people of a different color, of a different religion, people with one parent.

Very important, too, is that none of the students suffered any serious effects academically as a result of the time away from school. Many said they were better able to express themselves orally and verbally, because they really had to sit down and say how they felt, what they saw, how it tasted.

By the time this article appears the community follow-up night will have been held. Parents, students, trustees, senior officials, participating staff and other interested people will have gathered to see the slides and films, to hear the tapes and to listen to excerpts from the diaries of staff and students.

The groups will decide upon new strategies and programs. David Thompson Secondary will be launched into what promises to be a bigger and better program. Would you believe 30 teachers and 500 students?

You should try it sometime! It will make your life 100% better, your teaching 100% more effective, and think what it'll do for the kids.

Experience Weeks — Theory

Continued from page 12

with each team, proposals should be reviewed and appropriate authorities should be consulted where necessary. The objective is to look at the community as one's own and to work with the team to set and achieve a goal.

Grade 11 – Apprenticeship Week

Individual students are placed in jobs to co-operate with an adult in his work—market gardening, stock brokerage, architecture, sales, stenography, mechanics and so on. The objective is not so much to help the student find a life's work as to introduce him to the working world and to give him the opportunity of benefiting from the relationship with another adult, a skilled adult.

Grade 12 – Field Study Week

Each student sets a problem he wishes to solve, describes a body of knowledge he wishes to master or specifies a skill he wishes to develop. For instance, he may analyze the relationships in a small ecological environment, study the methods of converting ore to concentrates, or learn to play the guitar to a certain level of proficiency. This achievement is important, but more essential is the experience of deciding on a personal goal and pursuing it until it is achieved. Each student should have an advisor or advisory team if possible, including a teacher or parent with knowledge in the particular field of interest.

Students and teachers who do not, or cannot, take part in the Experience Week could become involved in a Concentration Week during which they devote their uninterrupted efforts to such activities as the following:

a. Guided Field Experiences

Teachers offer students a field experience in their areas of competence. Back-packing, sailing, canoeing, ranching, prospecting and mining, living in a French or German community and following historical trails are a few examples.

b. Field Study Experiences

Teachers offer students a program of activities to study aspects of their subject area in the field. Urban and wilderness studies, archaeology, local history, Indian culture, oceanography, building construction, politics and community arts are a few examples.

c. Initiative and Challenge Experiences

Teachers assign problems that challenge the initiative, imagination and industry of students, problems they can solve within a week with reasonable effort. Some examples of the problems could include: 'Map the ethnic origins of members of the community,' 'Make a booklet that catalogues the community services to which people may turn for help,' 'What is the wild animal population within the outer limits of the community?' 'What 20-mile drive encompasses the most aesthetic highlights of the city — natural and man-made?' or 'Find and mark the best route for hiking from ... to ... .'

d. School and Community-Central Concentration Weeks

Parents, teachers and some students could offer directed studies in any subject of worth and interest, studies that enabled students to spend a week attempting to develop a particular level of competence in a particular area or skill. Cooking, the arts, mycology, foreign language conversation, building construction, scuba diving, gymnastics, the martial arts and small business management are only a few examples of the almost unlimited possibilities.

Our experience working with the staff of David Thompson School (see accompanying article by Charles Dick) made it clear that a number of alternatives must be made available so that the varied interests of teachers, as well as students, can be accommodated. The plan we originally presented to the school included the five Experience Weeks only, each grade being assigned a specific kind of experience.

The staff members who volunteered to become involved adapted our proposal by ignoring the grade levels. They chose whichever kind of activity appealed to them. Some also ignored the suggested activities in favor of inventing their own. As the reader may imagine, their ideas were often distinct improvements over ours. As a result of that experience, the four Concentration Weeks have been added, to provide more alternatives.

The first step for teachers is to find out for themselves if taking students out of school for the kinds of experience described here is rewarding for them and for students. But they should not lose sight of the essential feature of the Experience Week concept, which is the commitment of students to activities in which they are taking the risks and often making the decisions. The program may begin as field trips directed by teachers,

The girls more than pulled their weight and were very willing to help out – and cooking over an open fire was a shared task.

but should progress to field challenges for students, challenges in which the teacher is resource and guide rather than director. The objective is to encourage maturity, not to conduct regular classes outside the school.

Why is it important for students to be involved in such Experience Weeks?

The classroom, at its best, provides an environment relatively free from distraction for the concentrated study of skills and knowledge. Such studies are important. But such studies are necessarily abstract and detached despite our best efforts to humanize, simulate, individualize and make relevant. They involve little personal commitment or risk. Because they are generally di-

The students learn by doing, by experiment, from peers, from adults, by seeking help. Digging fossils at Blairmore, Alberta developed a whole new range of abilities.

rected by others, such studies seldom prepare the student for autonomous, self-directed learning. Because intellectual-verbal skills are central in most classroom work and testing, many other performative abilities — leadership, imagination, initiative, inventiveness, daring, helpfulness, humor and many other social, physical and vocational skills highly valued in our society — are neither recognized nor developed.

Experience Weeks complement the necessarily more abstract, more academic, more passive, more verbal, more simulated learning activities of the classroom by plunging students into the life of the community — sharing the real work of adults, meeting the real needs of the community and its members, facing real risks and challenges. In the process the student places himself on the line as a person. He commits himself to the task. He challenges himself to rise to the demands of the occasion — to develop ideas, master skills and see his plans through to completion. In such activities a whole new range of abilities is brought into play, and because of this there is greater opportunity for all students to successfully demonstrate their competence. There is no competition with others, only with oneself. In addition, a major shift in methods of learning occurs. The student learns by doing, by experiment, from peers, from a number of adults, by seeking help. Eventually, he learns by designing his own experience curriculum, which is a model of life itself.

Above all, Experience Weeks can make a significant contribution to the selfawareness and personal development of students. Each experience is designed to help him accomplish the central task of development, the central question about himself he is facing at the time. By increasing their responsibility in each subsequent year, the student learns to make decisions, to become more initiating and to become more self-directing. In the process he learns to explore his own potential and perhaps to regard each limit he sees in himself as a boundary to be broken. Through experience he may discover that he is needed and that he can work. More important, by discovering that he can decide and act on his decisions, he is better prepared to regard the future with hope, with the knowledge that he can give his life shape and direction even in a confused and confusing world. By working with a team on real tasks, real contributions, real challenges he will learn how to work with others and, from them, learn about himself.

Why should the staff and the school go to the trouble of setting up a program of Experience Weeks?

The most convincing reason is the value to students in such activities, but there are a number of others. First, they bring teachers and students together to work on a problem of mutual concern, to see each other from a new perspective, and to relate to each other in a more natural way. Such opportunities to get to know each other better seem to create a new understanding and mutual respect that carries over into the classroom afterward. Not only are students and teachers made more human in the others' eyes, but students also learn a great deal about each other and teachers find many new opportunities to co-operate.

Since the activities involve parents and bring teachers and students together with other members of the

community for their mutual benefit, there can be a marked improvement in the relationship between the school and the community. And any activity that makes people feel better about themselves and better about their relationship is almost certain to transform their attitude toward the institution where they work. The school, by contributing to the growth of others, earns their contribution in return.

Another kind of value to the school became evident as my colleagues, Charlotte Atlung and Milton McClaren, and I worked with several schools to establish an Experience Weeks program this year. The responses of several administrative staffs made it clear that they felt bound in by the school schedule. One principal said that such an interruption would not only give him headaches, but would be objected to by teachers, parents and students anxious to get on with academic work.

Such bonds are largely illusory. Timetables are servants of education, not its master. An Experience Weeks program can be the instrument for breaking out of the schedule and the vehicle for traveling beyond the school walls. This is certainly the attitude of Ken McKenzie and the administrative staff of David Thompson Secondary School in Vancouver, where the teachers and students have just completed the first Experience Weeks program. As Vice-principal Chuck Dick said, 'There are too many important learning situations in the community to let the schedule keep us chained to the classroom.'

How does one set up an Experience Weeks program?

The proposal to implement a program of Experience Weeks may be raised by teachers or by the administration, but in either case it should be thoroughly designed in an open forum, since it requires extra commitments of time and energy from everyone involved.

The first decision is whether or not there are a number of teachers prepared to proceed. The involvement of the whole staff is desirable but not necessary; the support and cooperation of the administration is essential. The next decision is how the staff feels they can best try out this kind of program: as extended field trips, as teacher-led challenge experiences, or as the developmental program of experiences originally proposed, or a combination of these, enabling the teacher to select what he thinks best and feels most comfortable with.

Once the commitment to a program has been established, those involved should develop a timetable involving the following elements:

a. Orientation. Students should be informed about the program, what is offered, why, what the requirements are, and so on. Through interested students, parents can be called together for an evening meeting so that information can be given and assistance with the program can be sought. A slide presentation, especially one by students, helps to make the strange familiar.

b. Planning. Once the participants are identified — students, teachers and parents — the groups must meet to plan, preferably in school time. Two or three sessions, at least, will be needed to decide on specific objectives, locations, equipment, financing and travel, and generally to permit the students and parents to become involved in the project. Students particularly should be involved as much as possible in decisions and preparations. Some preparatory training sessions may also be necessary.

c. Experience. Students and teachers — and perhaps parents — spend the week at work in the community or wilderness.

d. Recording. Students should be asked to record what they have experienced. One way of doing that is to ask them each to keep a journal and from it to prepare a typed one-page report, including a photograph of themselves at work. After a period of display, all these reports could be collected in a looseleaf and placed in the library as a permanent record.

e. Sharing. Students should have opportunities to share their experiences with others — people involved in different activities and those who did not take part at all. Participants can clarify their own experience and learn a great deal from others by looking at the weeks' events in depth.

f. Follow-up. Some of the many possibilities for writing, filming, roleplaying, discussing and mounting action projects related to the weeks' experience should be taken advantage of during and after the event.

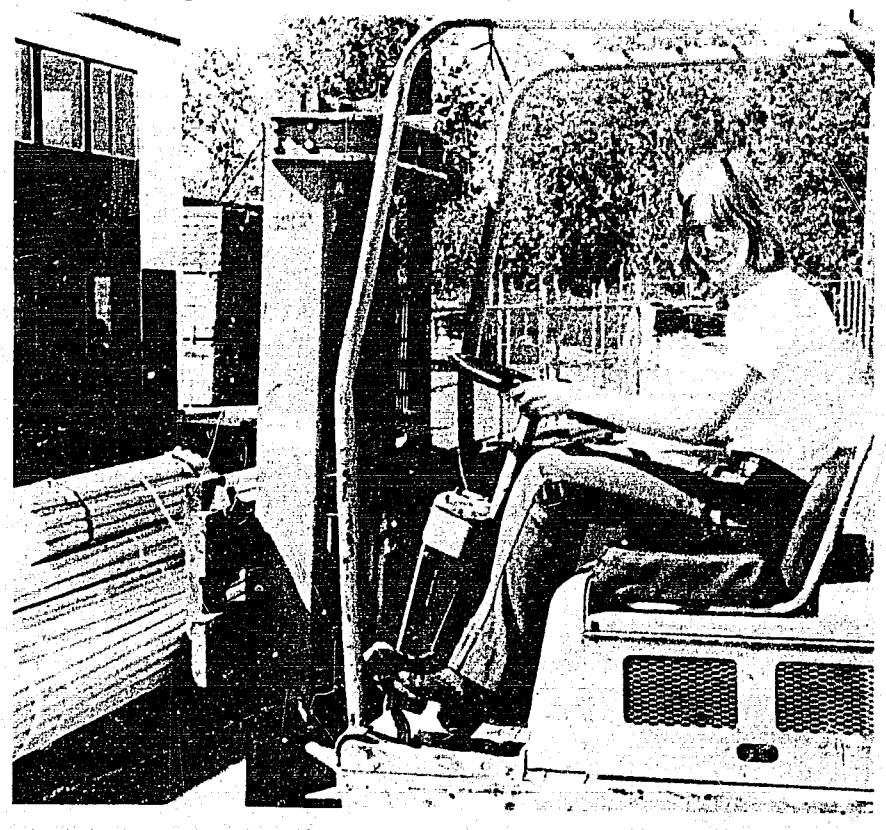
We found that a flow-chart of deadlines for decisions and preparations is a useful device to keep everyone informed about what must be done and when.

What support is required to make an Experience Weeks program possible?

The support required is money, personnel, equipment and transportation. Some suggestions for arranging such support follow:

a. Money. What cannot be scrounged must be paid for. Some ways of raising money include:

This student did a work-experience week at a specialized woodworking company. Operating a fork-loader was one of his duties.



1. A fee from students for the week.
2. Money raised by student activities (bottle collections, raffles, hot dog sales, film showings, etc.).
3. Foundation and service club grants.
4. School board and school funds.
5. A committee of parents committed to the project can do wonders in fund raising.

b. Personnel. Personnel are needed mainly as substitutes for teachers who are away during the week of the program. Assistance can be arranged by recruiting qualified parents as volunteers, by involving student teachers from universities, and substitutes if sufficient funds have been gathered. Some small amount of coverage can usually be counted on from other staff members, but nothing will kill the program faster than a general shift of the extra load onto their shoulders. When the whole school becomes involved, the need for substitutes disappears.

c. Equipment and Transportation. While some students have or can borrow sleeping bags, packs and other equipment, many have not or cannot. Rentals may be necessary. Gradually building a stock of outdoor equipment not usually available in a school is advisable. A rigorous search will usually uncover a club of enthusiasts or a business organization willing to help. Some companies may agree to sell some equipment for such projects at very special prices. Transportation — to and from job placements, for instance — may have to be provided. If students cannot handle the costs, teacher or parent car pools may be organized, and if absolutely necessary a bus can be rented. For volunteer community work transit companies may be willing to offer special passes or rates.

Liability for any accident that befalls a student is a problem with all programs that reach beyond the school — even for in-school programs. It is advisable to be certain that each parent is informed about the program and that a note of consent is received for each student. Check the conditions outlined in the school's insurance too.

Making all of these arrangements sounds like a lot of work. It is. But if the work is shared, it can become the medium for a new, more co-operative relationship among administrators and teachers, and among school staff, parents and students. Once the first successful trail has been blazed through this confusion of arrangements, it will be easier to get through the next time. School and parent interest will give boards and administrators reason to provide funds, equipment, personnel and transportation on a more flexible basis. This is a necessary step toward making the school a center for a much broader spectrum of learning activities.

At the end of the Centennial Trail project a 44-foot bridge, with handrails, was finished, along with 200 feet of new trail. Here's the group that did the job.

Are Experience Weeks worth all this trouble?

Yes. Something happens between teachers and students when they share work, learning and risk, and when they have the opportunity to chat informally on equal terms about matters that concern them personally. The roles drop away and in the sharing each sees the other in a new, clearer light. A whole new kind of learning begins.

Fifteen years ago several other teachers and I took 60 Grade 11 and 12 students away on a weekend retreat to talk about issues they had chosen. One girl wrote afterward, 'This was the most important learning experience of my life... We talked about things that really matter. My friends became my teachers and my teachers became my friends... I hope we can keep this going when we go back to school.'

The same kind of thing has happened in most of the out-of-school, overnight programs I have been involved in since. Apparently, it has happened in the Experience Week Program at David Thompson Secondary School. Thirteen teachers and 180 students went out this spring. More than 30 teachers and many of their students are ready to go out next year. The effect on relationships within the school, and to the school, are unmistakable.

Helping in a home for the aged or retarded, building a bridge over a mountain stream, working with a furniture-maker, survival in the remote alpine wilderness, studying history where it happened — which Thompson School students did — are real experiences, not exercises. They challenge the person to reach out and up, to grow. There is certainty in the worth of what one is doing, and having done it, certainty about one's own worth. After each successful step the student is willing to risk another step toward competence and confidence.

The value of Experience Weeks is that they help students to demystify the questions: Who am I? What can I do? Where am I going? What will my life be like? Questions that underlie all learning and development. By pushing back the boundaries of his imagined limitations, the student is reassured that the questions can be answered, that he can give his life shape, and that he can look forward with hope.

Eventually education may focus on these questions and the experiences that help students to answer them. And one day, when we are so involved in helping students identify and develop the full range of their potential, someone will write to this magazine proposing Academic Weeks to be held within a single building so we can concentrate on specific skills and practise them.

Then we'll know we have changed education.

LET'S GET RID OF SCIENCE SPECIALISTS IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

E. G. SWAREN

An appeal for a more humane approach to teaching young children.

Nothing is more likely to defeat the possibility of true growth in elementary science education than the desire on the part of many teachers to have 'specialists' do all the teaching.

Most elementary school administrators today speak disdainfully of rigidly organized timetables, bells, and student armies parading hallways — all elements of the often criticized secondary school scene — yet we, like lemmings, wend our way destructively onward. Why?

In fairness, on examining the pressures on teachers, one cannot blame principals for seeking means to streamline the elementary school. In a very few years we have had new math programs, new language arts, new music, new science, new social studies and new resource centers. These changes, combined with new techniques and technology to do with personalized instruction, evaluation and reporting, have done much to create an air of tense uncertainty in many schools.

On the whole, teachers are enthusiastic about the changes; however, few would say that the upheaval has not created considerable strain, especially when the retraining necessary to be successful in dealing with the changes usually requires the teacher to give up greatly needed free time. It is only natural, therefore, that we seek some means to lighten teachers' workloads — to streamline or to make our schools more efficient.

The reasons for increased specialization in the elementary school usually are stated in terms of increased efficiency. Some of the questions and considerations that principals and teachers deal with prior to launching their specialized programs are as follows:

- Why have all staff members attend all of the workshops and read all of the literature about the new programs when one or two can effectively learn the new techniques and apply them, with specialization, throughout the school?
- Why duplicate the effort of preparation? Have one teacher prepare one good lesson to teach to all pupils of a given grade or grades.
- Pupils need the opportunity to meet and work with many personalities — especially if there are conflicts in teacher-pupil personalities.
- Teachers who do not like a subject will not do as good a job in that area as does one who does like the subject.
- There will be less chance of teachers skipping a lesson in science if there is a specialist waiting at the door to take over.
- With the cost of implementing new programs it becomes prohibitive to place all of the new equipment in every classroom — we must schedule kids with kits.

All of these reasons for specialization are valid to some extent — especially if one considers that efficiency in teaching *the subject* is of prime importance. If such is the case, why do we in the elementary school so proudly claim that 'we teach children, not subjects'? The sad point is that many educators do not seem to understand that efficiency in teaching subjects and effectiveness in dealing with children do not necessarily go hand in hand.

Another reason we have been inclined to specialize is that traditionally our function as science teachers has been simply to cover the course. We stated our objectives in educationally nice-sounding terms, but rarely did we go beyond teaching what was in the text. Now, if the purpose of teaching science is to have children learn what is in the book, certainly the teacher best able to do the job *efficiently* is the one who knows best what is in the book. Let him teach all of the science. With our science program one might easily substitute the word *kit* for the word *book*.

Yet another reason we have drifted into subject specialization in the elementary schools is that it fits in so well with our traditional scheme of compartmentalizing our teaching day — once again for reasons of efficiency — 80 minutes of language arts, 40 minutes of math, 40 minutes of social studies, 40 minutes of science, and so on. By simply switching teacher A into slot B and teacher B into slot A we are able to specialize neatly in whatever area we like — and so the process grows.

What is the logical extension of this growth? Teacher A, being recognized as the most capable science teacher, because of his training and his expressed interest, is given all of the science to teach. Teachers B, C and D will then have to take something for teacher A. Soon we have to have a blocked timetable so that conflicts in teaching times do not arise (and bells to remind us not to go overtime).

Teacher A is now enrolling a homeroom class that he may or may not see during the day since he is teaching all of the other classes science. On entering class B, teacher A realizes that he has only 40 minutes to 'teach the kids' before he has to be off to class C; furthermore, class B is expected to be with teacher D who, everyone knows, will not tolerate anyone stealing his time.

With this type of tight scheduling can anyone see how one can possibly develop the new science program so that it will be very much different from the old? Teacher A's biggest problem will be in getting the materials out and back in, let alone giving children time to work with it, or more important, to 'mess about' as Hawkins would say. What is left but to tell the children what they need to know about the materials

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Prior to becoming a principal with DND in Germany, Mr. Swaren was principal of Quinson Elementary School, Prince George, and a BCTF Curriculum Director.

YOU AND YOUR ENVIRONMENT: PRIORITY FOR RED CROSS

The Red Cross has shed its antiquated image and is now 'with it' in helping teachers and students. Even Walt Disney's characters are helping out. We think you'll be surprised at the useful materials the Red Cross has for you.

R. E. ORMSTON

'What one most important thing would you like your students to take from your year with them?' To this question the teachers at a recent conference replied, 'self-worth,' 'skills of listening and reacting,' 'ability to evaluate,' 'knowledge of the values of others,' 'how to make decisions,' etc. None of this self-selected group indicated that they wanted their students to leave with a knowledge of multiplication, of the Canadian Shield, or of Shakespeare.

Certainly, if our classrooms were too 'heavy' in the area of 'self-worth,' or 'volunteering,' the response would be to teach them to read so they at least know which washroom door to enter, or which bus to take home. We want young Canadians to be more comfortable with themselves, to value themselves and others, to take an active part in shaping their lives and their society. Unfortunately, our curriculum as presented offers little opportunity for this kind of development.

A recent survey of British Columbia elementary school teachers showed that those teachers who use the education program of the Canadian Red Cross Society tend to be more community-minded, volunteer in the community more, are younger and are in decision-making positions more often than are those teachers who do not use the program. The same survey showed that there are many with similar attitudes who do not use the program.

Why? Because Red Cross has not communicated well with teachers. (Eighty-nine percent of all teachers surveyed indicated that they would like to receive information of the Red Cross education service through this medium.) Red Cross materials often have not been able to penetrate the inner sanctum of the staff lounge because a secretarial advance guard reroutes them to oblivion. Red Cross's wordy, poorly reproduced materials could not compete for eye-attention with the seven-color catalogs of the billion-dollar educational materials industry.

Once a pioneer in health education in

The author is director, Red Cross Youth, B.C.-Yukon Division.

the schools, and in 'valuing' in the classroom, the educational service of the Canadian Red Cross Society has received a face-lift. This fall it is providing elementary school teachers (an envelope of materials has been or is being sent to every school) with a new program guide *All Together For A Better World*. Teachers will be able to make use of cultural exchanges: CONTACT CANADA and CONTACT INTERNATIONAL; leadership development courses including babysitter; and the Instructional Media Centre — slides on China or the film 'How to Catch a Cold,' etc.

New this year is an Environment Resource Package featuring Walt Disney characters, a teacher's guide to activities, projects and references, an 'Eco-lage' chart and a list of audio-visual loan items. (Cost is $2.00 for participating schools — others must pay additional handling, postage and administration.) Environment having long been a major interest of the international Red Cross, the Society hopes the tools in this resource package will help teachers encourage youth to be sensitive to the quality of life and to take an active part in improving and preserving our environment. Red Cross plans to produce a series of resource packages of high quality (but at cost price) on topics of common interest: nutrition, bicycle safety, culture of other countries, etc.

Another new resource offered this year is a babysitter course (25c a student). This course was tried out last year in a number of classrooms with great success. The course is designed to present, in a minimum of three sessions, basic safety and child care information for students 10 years of age and up. The Red Cross, although it does not encourage children this young to babysit, recognizes that there are many who do babysit brothers and sisters, not necessarily for profit, and sometimes find themselves in situations they cannot deal with. It is hoped that this course will help prevent serious accidents.

This renaissance of the Red Cross educational services includes many programs yet to come. Canada leads the world in accidents among youth. Recent studies show that those who know first aid have fewer accidents. A new Basic First Aid course was tested as part of a more comprehensive pilot program, in 10 Grade 6 classes at 10 elementary schools in North Vancouver. Teachers, administrators and students were very enthusiastic about the course. Although the earliest that Red Cross can administer the first aid program on a large scale is the fall of 1974, numerous orders and enquiries have already been received.

A similar review and re-designing of the Red Cross secondary school program is under way.

Requests for additional individual copies of the new program guide, and any enquiries about the program, may be directed to Red Cross Youth, 4750 Oak Street, Vancouver 9, B.C. Together let us build a better world.

Science Specialists

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so that they can get down to the business of learning? What is left but to learn the basic facts that they will need to know next year? What chance is there to, as Bronowski suggests, '..prize the search above the discovery and the thinking (and the thinker) above the thought'?

Specialization cannot help fostering the teaching of subjects over the teaching of children. With rigid time allotments, bells and class changes we are at best doing poorly what machines could do well. Indeed, we often hear prognosticators of woe say that there are companies today preparing to take over all of the elementary training children need. Those teachers and administrators who have committed themselves to specialization, subject compartmentalization and timetables for the sake of efficiency in training the children — those who have forsaken their role as educators — may very well find themselves outdone by the ever-so-patient, kind, never-say-a-harsh-word computer.

Specialization in the elementary school tends to dehumanize the process of education. Thus, the real value of the elementary science program will inevitably be inhibited. How can we reverse the trend?

First, we must re-examine closely our role as educators. Is our role to teach children to jump through various hoops at set times throughout their school career, success being measured by the agility with which one demonstrates he can clear the hoop? Or, are we working for the emancipation of the human mind so that it may follow truth wherever it may lead, undeterred by prejudices, fears, inherited beliefs and untested assumptions? The choice is obviously grossly overstated. However, we must question how well we bridge the gap between what is actually happening and what we have long stated should be happening.

Second, we must strive to study 'the inter-relationships that exist among the presently separated disciplines in the elementary school curricula.' In other words, the 'integration of learning should be stressed rather than the compartmentalization of subjects.'

Third, we must take time on a personal basis, or preferably on a staff basis, to examine the stated objectives for the inclusion of science in the total curriculum. It is not necessary to quote the objectives listed on page five of the B.C. elementary science curriculum guide. Suffice it to say that, on close examination, it becomes very evident that to meet these objectives requires that the teacher knows his pupils and they him so well that every action or mood becomes a meaningful part of a total picture of mutual understanding and respect.

One cannot possibly attain this intimacy when he is dealing with hundreds of children within a schedule of rigid time sequences — on a mass production basis. At best, under such circumstances, we are able to become generalists in dealing with kids while being the specialist in dealing with the subject.

These three steps, combined with a good deal of 'heart thinking,' should lead us to the conclusion that to achieve our objectives for the science program, children must be able to react with the materials in a relaxed way. Teachers will have to recognize that when a child is engrossed in 'the search' he should be allowed to carry on, uninhibited by time schedules. Also, teachers will have to know their pupils so well that materials can be altered to meet the needs of the individual at all times. This cannot be done on a mass production basis.

Our goal should not be to return to the isolated classroom wherein the teacher is responsible for all the subjects and in essence have a series of one-room schools under one roof. Rather, it is one in which the teacher, in close co-operation with other staff members, is able to manipulate the child's environment so that optimum learning takes place.

Ideally, teachers will conduct group planning sessions, and teacher A will send his pupils to teachers B, C, D or E on an individual or small group basis whenever he feels that the experience available to them in these other classes is of more value than staying in his class. He will know, because of his intimate knowledge of the pupils and because of the open door co-operation of his colleagues.

Learning vs Entertainment

Continued from page 11

six and eight hours daily. Typical teenagers have spent as much, if not more time in front of television sets as in school, and habitual viewing is found among pre-school-age children as well as among those in primary and secondary grades.

There is some evidence that the amount of television viewing tapers off in secondary school years, and that its heaviest concentration is found in low-income groups. Yet television is on in nearly 40 million homes every night of the week, and the weekly *TV Guide* reaches nearly 20 million homes — the second most popular magazine in the country.

Few reasonable persons doubt that television and television viewing represent a 'deep-running social trend,' or that they have not had some influence on 'cultural attitudes and values,' particularly among the young. The question is: what features of television — and early, sustained experience with it — are most salient for understanding its impact on cognitive development and children's 'taste for schooling'?

In trying to answer this question, one should distinguish between the more manifest characteristics of television and its latent, but perhaps more significant, characteristics. The latter, in my view, have not been fully realized — which is one of the reasons for this article.

For example, much public concern has been generated recently by a somewhat belated recognition of the most obvious aspects: the blatant, noisy frequency of commercials designed to influence the wants (not needs) of children; the appalling quality of children's programs in general, and the amount of unsavory violence they contain; and the relative absence of programs that seek to instruct. But these concerns assume that most children spend most of their viewing time with children's programs. Recent studies indicate, however, that school-age children spend much more time with 'non-children' programs, i.e., late afternoon movies or re-runs and 'adult programs' during prime-time evening hours, many of which are alleged to be unfit for youthful watchers.

Yet to dwell on program content, and the overt messages transmitted, may be to commit the fallacy of misplaced concreteness and thus to overlook the full significance of television as a repetitive, pervasive experience from early years onward. This deeper life experience is less obvious than violence or commercials of dubious worth, but it is nonetheless real and compelling.

There are certain attributes of television that distinguish it rather sharply from other media of communication. For example, it engages the eye and the ear, but not necessarily the mind or the imagination — thus separating it from reading or radio-listening. It is omnipresent — thus distinguishing it from motion pictures as a theatrical experience. Moreover, once a child learns the physical location of the set, and how to manipulate the knobs or buttons, no further skill of any kind is necessary to participate in the viewing experience. When the set is on, the sights and sounds can attract interest or attention as sheer physical stimuli, regardless of message content or degree of comprehension. This is why children who can scarcely even speak can enjoy television: it is an easy experience.

Then, too, while the daily physical and social environment of pre-television children remains relatively constant and familiar, children with television can change their perceived, affective environment not only by merely turning the set on, but also by switching from one channel to another according to immediate whim or preference. Different worlds, so to speak, are within arm's reach, and while the sameness and repetitiveness of these worlds may be apparent to an adult, they seem endlessly diverting and different to the child. Instant, easy escapism becomes habitual, establishing primary patterns of motivation.

It is these features of television that Pulitzer Prize winner Leon Edel had in mind when, in a recent address to the American Academy of Psychoanalysis, he said: 'Small wonder that the attention span of the young diminishes ... They live in a world of non-sequitur ... a search always for something novel, for constant change, because that is what the small box (TV) ... gave them, flickering from one scene to another.'

Of course, before television and even beside it, children dreamed, had fantasies, or otherwise escaped reality, but these were intermittent, not regular, experiences; fragmentary, not continuous.

Pre-television children also sought novelty and escape from boredom, but they could not control the gratification so easily or so mechanically. If they could not read, story-telling depended on the presence of some one who could read; when they could read, literacy was involved as well as the opportunity for improving one's capacity to read. But the amount of printed stimuli in a child's life was much less than the amount of audio-visual stimuli provided by unlimited access to television. Different patterns of symbolic participation are involved, and these are independent of program content.

This is not to say that the caliber of programs is entirely without importance in assessing the impact of television on children's lives. Since commercial television in the United States is organized almost entirely as a mass medium of communication, marked by competition for the largest possible audience, the lowest common denominator prevails. This means that most programming makes no intellectual or cognitive demands at all on its audience: the major criteria are 'interest,' superficiality, and the maintenance of non-productive attention. Animated cartoons provide action without meaning; whatever the story, situations, characters and dialog remain uncomplicated; noise levels are manipulated to arouse flagging interest; canned laughter even signals the audience as to when it should feel amused. Indeed, television programs must consist of only interesting entertainment because they have no other purpose than to sell goods and services to as many people as possible. As a result, most television programs are designed to appeal to feeling rather than cognitive stimulation.

The sheer ease and availability of television, with its constantly shifting pattern of stimuli, and its constant use of thoughtless entertainment, have the subtle effect of indoctrinating children from an early age into a 'principle of least effort.'

The point is that the sheer ease and

availability of television, with its constantly shifting patterns of stimuli, and its constant use of thoughtless entertainment, have the subtle effect of indoctrinating children from an early age into a 'principle of least effort.' Daily entertainment — for hours on end — that makes few if any demands on the mind easily becomes an accepted fact and way of life. It creates expectations of further, endless, non-demanding entertaining experiences. Long before reaching the structured cognitive requirements of schools, children have accepted effortless entertainment — not as a rare novelty or special occasion, but as a central ingredient of experience. Their predominant orientation toward the external world becomes one of entertainment, not learning.

From this standpoint, the specific content of television programs is not so important as is the hidden psychological 'programming' that television-watching entails. When begun early in life and sustained, it breeds a set of habits and a frame of mind that are entirely at odds with traditional learning values. The great unanticipated, and often unrecognized, consequence of television has been to establish an early priority of easy entertainment as a standard against which other and subsequent experiences can be measured.

It is difficult to imagine another device that can so easily, instantly and regularly gratify childish curiosity and at the same time subvert the values of patience, study, effort and delayed gratification so necessary for cognitive learning.

Test Scores Have Declined

Should we then be surprised that children grumble about their 'strict' or 'grouchy' teachers who do not share their entertainment ethic — or whose daily behavior differs from that of Our Miss Brooks, Miss Nancy or Captain Kangaroo? Should we be perplexed when children complain that their school work is too hard, or that they don't 'understand' their lessons, when most of their previous experience has taught them that everything should be effortless and entertaining? Should we really be surprised to learn that scores on cognitive tests have been declining during the television era?

To the extent that the television-entertainment syndrome sketched above represents the real experience of children in recent decades, we should not be surprised or perplexed about any of these things. Indeed, the conclusion of Jencks et al. that the 'character of a school's output depends largely on a single input, namely the characteristics of its entering children' becomes not only intelligible but inescapable. I suggest that the early and enduring entertainment values derived from television exposure is a major mechanism that links the current input with the cognitive output.

There is another aspect of schooling and cognitive development to be considered in this context. One implication of the research findings described above is that the public schools are relatively helpless in promoting cognitive performance, *despite their best efforts to do so.* This underlying assumption can, I think, be challenged.

In retrospect it appears that for some decades, some (but emphatically not all) professional educators — administrators, instructional and audio-visual specialists, many teachers and teachers of teachers — have at least tacitly adopted the premises of the entertainment ethic of their students, and have tried to incorporate those premises into school programs. Faced with rising drop-out rates, increasing discontent among students who complained that school wasn't 'fun,' and parental dissatisfaction of various kinds — and also conscious of the fact that school budgets depended upon a reservoir of public acceptance and support — more and more schools seem to have adopted the philosophy of 'If you can't lick 'em, join 'em.'

Rather than insisting upon the necessity of disciplined thought, effort and study, rather than maintaining rigorous standards of performance and evaluation, rather than emphasizing the importance of clear thinking, careful reading and good writing — rather than doing these things, the schools have persistently sought some magical devices that would make learning easy or pleasurable. Flooded by increasing numbers of children immune or hostile to learning values, educational policy tried to make schooling tolerable enough that enrollments, and hence budgets, would not shrink. Thus the *illusion* of learning was substituted for its *substance,* keeping, perhaps, more people less discontented, but also vaguely unsatisfied and puzzled about what schooling was really intended to accomplish.

The retreat from learning was symbolized in various ways: an emphasis on spontaneity or 'creativity,' which not only by-passed the notion of effort and disciplined thought, but also placed a premium on surface performance with no guiding criteria; more or less interesting 'field trips,' which were primarily entertaining even though the motions of note-taking and reports were encouraged; the establishment of 'learning centers' that are optional rather than required in use and that are lightly attended; enormous amounts of free, unscheduled and unproductive time possible under the modular system; the abandonment of letter grades for vaguer categories or bland teachers' comments; a plethora of student 'activities,' in which personal interests took precedence over external demands; an emphasis on adjustment for life at the level of attitude and affect; and the unwarranted promotion of ill-prepared students from grade to grade, and their eventual graduation with weak cognitive habits and skills.

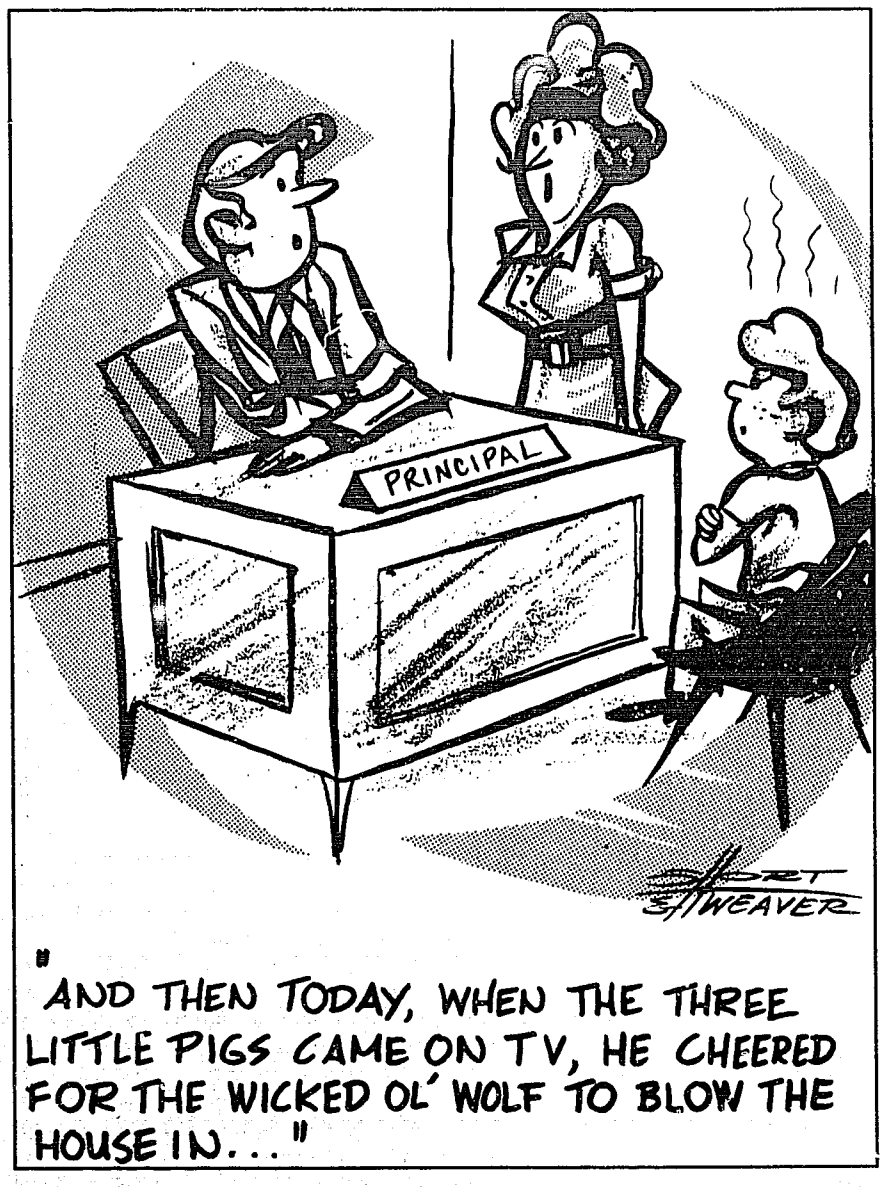
Disciplines Are De-emphasized

Perhaps more important has been the steady erosion of continuous, required courses in those subjects usually referred to as 'the disciplines,' i.e., language, writing, mathematics and science. These have been, and are, de-emphasized in favor of a variety of elective courses and activities designed to 'interest' the student — but which thereby perpetuate the entertainment ethic at the expense of cognitive learning and the effort it entails.

Thus, while it may be true that cognitive performance has been shown in recent years to be independent of school influences, part of the reason may lie in the schools themselves. In large measure, they do not seem to be dedicated or committed to the value of cognitive learning, and, indeed, many of their practices — curricular and otherwise — point in quite a different direction.

This is further illustrated by the schools' increasing reliance on 'gadgets' of all kinds that have more appeal to the senses than to the mind. The use of pictures, film strips, overhead projections, motion pictures, and even classroom television, has become somewhat standard in public school systems. Such instruments may be helpful as minor supplements or adjuncts to the more serious business of learning, but their value becomes more and more dubious as they come to function as substitutes for the hard, demanding work of thinking. They have stimulus value, they can capture attention and interest, but the 'traces' they leave tend to be transient rather than enduring.

I submit that reading *War and Peace,* for example, is a different cognitive experience from seeing even the best film based on that novel. To put the matter another way, almost any serious reading has an increment of cognitive gain that far exceeds any audio-visual presentation of the same or related mater-



ial. Further, the context of audio-visual material in our culture is nearly always defined as being entertaining and thus it is approached and responded to with a prior 'set' or frame of mind which reduces its learning significance.

It is more than a little distressing, therefore, to read the following in a recent work entitled *A Bookless Curriculum:* 'My students must be taught to communicate in an understandable way with their associates — but they will communicate almost exclusively by speech, either direct or by telephone. After high school, they will listen to and watch radio, records, television and films for the rest of their lives. From those audio-visual media they will gain all the information and entertainment they want or require. They will seldom read or write.'

The author is a high school teacher of English. If he not only reflects current trends in the public school system, but is also another voice of the wave of the future (another recent volume is entitled *The Celluloid Curriculum),* the role of schools in promoting cognitive learning of any depth is even more precarious than most of us have realized. The entertainment ethic has not only infiltrated presumed centers of learning: it is being elevated to a canon of educational philosophy according to the gospel of St. McLuhan.

Generalization runs the risk of becoming overgeneralization, even caricature. Obviously, not all the educational and learning dilemmas of our time — not to mention other trends — can be laid at the door of television or the practices of the public school system. Some of them are perennial, and perhaps unsolvable. Yet the risk of overgeneralization must be taken if those 'deep-running social trends' are to be understood in some fashion rather than be buried under so many masses of detail as to obscure significant patterns.

I have attempted to propose an interpretive scheme of contemporary life that pictures a collision between the values of 'entertainment' and 'learning.' Television, as a ubiquitous source of easy, aimless entertainment on a scale never before known in history, has been singled out for special consideration. I have suggested that its influence is more subtle, more powerful, and more pervasive than has been generally recognized; and that the public school system, in its attempts to adapt to dimly understood external forces, has adopted, wittingly or not, a parallel entertainment ethic that matches the characteristics of its entering students.

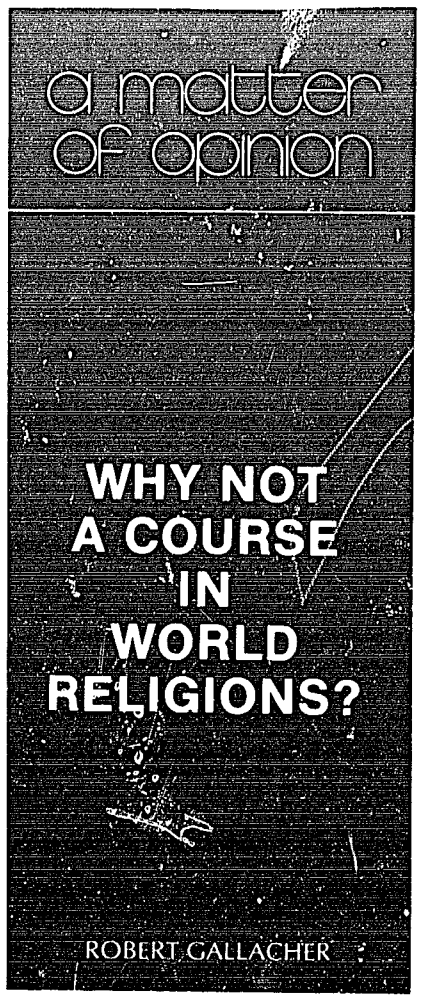
Professor Edel, in the address mentioned above, alluded to this central theme when he said that many contemporary problems are 'a consequence of the casting aside of education — the substitution of supermarket courses for a stable curriculum, the need for the candy coat on everything, and the refusal to recognize that man has to take the dull with the interesting.'

That part of our population under 30 years of age is the first genuine television generation. Its experience with that medium has, in large measure, been reinforced by the policies and practices of the public school system. The combined amount of time spent under these parallel influences has been enormous, and it would be strange indeed if this generation did not reveal the results of that influence. I think it does. The effects are visible in forms that seem to me to differ from the usual run of inter-generational differences historically considered.

They are to be found, among other things, in a diminished ability to concentrate on intellectual tasks for prolonged periods of time, and in attention spans that are easily distracted. The current college and university generation reveals little training in, or practice with, the concentration necessary for organized thought and clear, sustained writing; it prefers to 'rap.' Internal controls, self-discipline and self-motivation are relatively rare commodities. There is a tendency to seek simple, romantic solutions to complex social issues and idealistic retreats from a demanding social order.

A prevailing Weltanschauung is based on the existential present, emphasizing fugitive, discontinuous experiences. The under-30 generation seeks its destiny in 'doing its thing,' 'vibes,' and 'happenings' — a choice of

Continued on page 30



The study of man's religions is an important field of instruction that has traditionally been excluded from the public school curriculum in British Columbia. Fortunately there are signs that this picture is now changing.

As a result of the Department's recent directive giving school districts more autonomy in instituting locally-developed courses, several Lower Mainland districts have adopted courses in world religions. Yet very little, if any, encouragement has been given in any of the other 73 districts to developing a course in this field. This lack of recognition of the validity of world religions as a secondary subject is deliberate, and for a number of reasons.

I wish to discuss these reasons and show why none is as valid as is sometimes supposed. I hope, also, to demonstrate how adopting a course in this subject has a number of very real advantages within a secondary school's program of studies.

To begin with, it is widely assumed by most educators and not a few parents that a course in world religions would contravene the Public Schools Act since the Act expressly forbids the teaching of religious dogmas.

Section 167 of the Act reads, in part, 'The reading of the passage of Scripture shall be followed by the recitation of the Lord's Prayer but otherwise the schools shall be conducted on strictly secular and non-sectarian principles. The highest morality shall be inculcated, but no religious dogma or creed shall be taught.'

In our tolerant, pluralistic society educators and parents unanimously agree the public school is not the place to instruct children along denominational lines. For a province that has historically prided itself on the separation of church and state such a view not only is to be expected, but also is realistic.

Second, a course in world religions would necessitate a new look at a host of religious phenomena — the religious experience, the definition of religion, the historical evolution of each religion's basic tenets. The last may present a problem with respect to Christianity. Far from its being the one religion whose origins are beyond purely historical explanation, Christianity would be placed on a par with Islamism, Hinduism and Buddhism.

While such a concept may not be objectionable to most, the idea of teaching Christianity as but one of seven or eight religions might not be acceptable to a minority of parents. And because school officials are sensitive to the feelings and views of vocal minorities, a course of this nature is therefore best forgotten.

A third reason for the lack of support for developing courses in world religions seem to be the reluctance of educators to expand an already large curriculum with a 'fringe' course of this nature. Given a choice between history and religions or literature and religions, educators will invariably choose the more traditional disciplines. Students, on the other hand, may choose otherwise; but then it is not up to the students to determine the secondary curriculum. Here world religions is at the same disadvantage as sociology, anthropology, political science and other 'now' subject areas.

Finally, there is the problem of finding people qualified to instruct in this area. Because it is not a province-wide subject, world religions is not offered as a teachable course in any of the province's faculties of education. Consequently, no students entering the profession are trained to teach in the discipline. Graduates of a department of religious studies normally do not have enough courses in recognized teaching areas and consequently are not accepted into teacher education programs; conversely, few teachers have enough course work in religious studies. Combined, these two factors have made it difficult to find teachers qualified to instruct world religions courses. But whatever the reason for the paucity of teachers, that paucity itself is a cause of the lack of encouragement by district officials.

So we have four arguments, any one of which is used to discourage inclusion of a course in world religions in the curricula of most of the school districts.

Yet, how valid are these arguments? Closer inspection makes it apparent none of them is as supportable as both educators and parents generally assume.

In the first place a course in world religions would not contravene Section 167 of the Act, provided it is taught with the honesty, integrity and objectivity that we expect of all school courses. Teaching world religions belongs solely in the secular realm; it is concerned with instructing students not on the truth or falsehood of creeds and dogmas, but on their composition, purposes and origins. Hence the premise for teaching this subject is no different from that for any other.

Second, those who hesitate to place Christianity on a par with other great religions seem to ignore two very important factors. On one hand, Christianity is but one of numerous world religions, a fact we all recognize. Should we refuse to study the basic tenets and beliefs of religions adhered to by millions of people just because they do not coincide with the beliefs held by the majority of people in our own province? Do we ignore the historical study of Nazism or Communism or monarchial rule because these political systems place democracy as what it is — a system of government employed by a fraction of the world's people?

On the other hand, the reluctance to study the religions of man because such a course might de-emphasize the centrality of Christianity loses its force when we consider that, for most students, the only place they may learn of Christian tenets would be in a course in world religions. I myself have witnessed many occasions when students have recognized the relevance of Christian teachings. In every case, the course format of teaching rather than preaching was partly responsible for these discoveries.

Third, the idea that the more traditional disciplines of history and English literature are better for students than

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The author teaches social studies at Southern Okanagan Secondary School in Oliver.

courses in world religions is surely a myth. We all agree that teaching a subject that students find interesting and new is easier than teaching English and social studies courses every year.

As for the lack of trained personnel, this argument is only partly true. Certainly there are not enough qualified teachers *at present* to teach world religions in every secondary school in the province. Yet many teachers, having an interest in this area, are capable of instructing at the secondary level. Indeed, to assume that teachers need formal teacher education to instruct in a subject area is to ignore the present situation in the province. Moreover, there exist not a few teachers who are qualified to teach religions in every sense of the word. And given encouragement, more teachers would embark on formal training in this exciting subject area.

As for the very real advantages of incorporating a course in world religions in a secondary school's program, three major ones come to mind. The first is that religion continues to play a dominant role in the lives of millions of people throughout the world. From the primitive and isolated beliefs of the Kpelle tribe in Africa to the dogmas of the universal Roman Catholic Church, religion remains a major sociological force. And even if organized and structured religion is declining in North America, the quest for the religious experience is enjoying a renaissance among youth. The absence of this area of interest from the curriculum leaves a gap at present unfilled by the more traditional subjects of history, geography, etc.

More specifically, a course in world religions would enable students to gain a better understanding of other cultures. Out of this would come, one would hope, a greater tolerance of the 'foreign' beliefs and values of other societies. One must, for example, be familiar with the basic tenets of Taoism and Confucianism to grasp the successes of communism in China. Because religions are not adequately studied in our schools, an important field of inquiry remains unknown to students. And when this gap in their knowledge is carried over into the realms of history, geography and literature, it becomes greater than it is in the religious sector alone.

But perhaps most important of all, the lack of such a course denies students the real potential to acquire greater knowledge of themselves. In looking over the curriculum guide for the various courses taught in the province, one becomes immediately aware of a serious omission: not one course is concerned with encouraging the student to investigate himself. Who and what he is as a human being, his purpose in life, the reasons for his existence and a score of other questions for introspection are conspicuous by their absence from classroom learning. Instead, historical events, scientific theories, mathematical axioms, composition of poems make up course content.

It is nothing less than a tragedy that the most important field of inquiry, the nature of one's self, is considered to be too inconsequential (or too dangerous?) to warrant exploration in public school classrooms. And it is for this reason that the argument that the aim of education today is to give the student a better understanding of himself and his environment is surely hypocritical.

A course in world religions would not solve all the problems in a school curriculum, nor should it be expected that it would. Nevertheless, as one course of many, world religions would increase a student's knowledge of religious phenomena, of other cultures and of his own self. Can we expect more of a course? Indeed, do we expect half that much from courses already in the curriculum?

Learning vs Entertainment

Continued from page 27

rhetoric that mirrors perfectly its exposure to television and transient audio-visual entertainment. Its prolonged 'search for identity' is not so much for cognitive understanding of self and world as it is for gratifying sources of affective needs that can seldom be supplied by real people in a real world. Hence the frantic pace, the movement from one 'cause' to another, the relentless pursuit of novelty, and a preoccupation with things that are 'fun.'

It can be argued, and legitimately, that cognitive effort is only a part of life, not its entire enterprise. Indeed, many of the protests of this generation have been against an overly-rationalized, insensitive bureaucratic society that too often prizes efficiency more than sentiment, roles more than persons, and performance more than personality. One can sympathize with — even understand — the plight of a generation confronted by a sometimes bewildering, bizarre, even insane, world it never made or asked for.

But to some extent this has been *the* perennial generation-gap, which merely takes different forms in different stages of history. In this scenario, there is no intentional guilt or blame to be assigned; there are no heroes or villains. The only question is: can we recognize what is occurring in our own historic epoch and what it portends for the future?

In very broad terms, my concern is with the increasing tendency to blur the distinction between entertainment and learning and the quite different personal and social functions they perform; with the increasing institutionalization of entertainment as a substitute for learning; and with the growing penetration of entertainment values into all areas of life, not merely leisure-time activities.

Teachers, political leaders, clergymen and authors either become — or believe they must become — 'showmen,' 'performers' or 'staged presences.' Even the grim events they report cannot prevent television news-casters from making their programs 'shows.' W.C. Fields once said: 'I've been asked if I ever get the DTs; I don't know — it's hard to tell where Hollywood ends and the DTs begin.' The central problem of today is not between the traditional and the modern, the sacred and the secular, but between the serious and the trivial.

Many years ago, H.G. Wells wrote that civilization is a race between education and catastrophe. From the perspective of the late 20th century the contest may better be described as one between learning and entertainment — and, for the moment at least, entertainment seems to be winning.

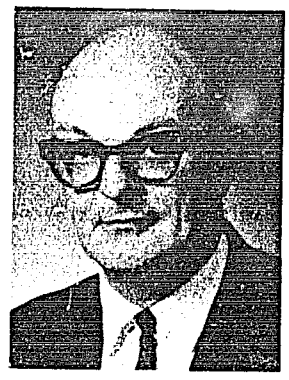
These Teachers Have Retired

At the close of the school year in June, one hundred ninety-nine teachers said farewell to their classes for the last time. Twenty-seven others, whose names are also listed here, retired during the six months prior to June 20 or during the two summer months or left before 1973 but were granted deferred allowances during 1973. To all these colleagues the Federation extends its good wishes for the future.

Helena Anna Ackert, Nelson
Mary Elizabeth L. Allen, Vancouver
Margaret E. Allison, Nanaimo
Dorothy Alice Armstrong, Victoria
Margaret Olive Babcock, Burnaby
Maysie Bailey, Vancouver
Grace Baird, Vancouver
Ruby May Barrett, Summerland
Lulu Mae Beaver, Burns Lake
Irene Beavis, Victoria
Mildred Bell, Arrow Lakes
Margaret Bellamy, Nanaimo
Elsie Sandberg Bentley, Qualicum Beach
Marion Ar de S. Bicknell, Victoria
Frances E.M. Bildstein, Creston-Kaslo
Hubert Oscar Bolstad, Chilliwack
Cleada Bernice Bower, Trail
Inez Irene Boyd, Vancouver
Elsie Irene Brandle, Nanaimo
Kathleen Brelsford, Vancouver
William Wesley Bride, Vancouver
Frances Marie Brown, Vancouver
Margaret Elizabeth Brown, West Vancouver
William Edward Brown, North Vancouver
Gwendolyn B. Browning, Courtenay
Janette R. Bryden, Vancouver
Frederick Thomas Bunce, Kelowna
Agnes Stevenson Bush, Keremeos
Sheila Eileen R. Cameron, Vancouver
Mary Eileen Campbell, Vancouver
Garnet Lindsay Carefoot, Richmond
Edith Catherine Carter, Vancouver
Margaret Hilda Carter, Vancouver
Emma Frances Chubra, Fernie
Anna Gertrude Coggin, Prince George
Dorothy Lawrence Cook, Vancouver
John Aylmer Cousins, Vancouver
Ella Hazel Creighton, Victoria
Alice Maxine Crosby, New Westminster
Ernest Henry Cupit, Vancouver
Grace Madeline D'aoust, Penticton
Elved Vaughan Davies, Victoria
Margery Lyda Mary Davis, North Vancouver
Phyllis E.G. Davis, Vancouver
Leah Grace Davison, Kamloops
Mary Isobel Deacon, Kelowna
Annie Counsell Demmery, Vancouver
Martha Olga Derkacz, Courtenay
Helene Layton Dickson, Abbotsford
William Patrick Dixon, Princeton
Phyllis Lillian Dodge, Vancouver
Alice Catherine Drew, Ladysmith
Mildred Adelaide Dumvill, Merritt
William Selkirk Duncan, Agassiz
William Harold Durick, Penticton
Margaret Elizabeth Fedden, Vancouver
Robert John Ferris, Vancouver
Dorothy Agnes Fines, Burnaby
Norman Oliver Finnigan, Maple Ridge
Emeline Myrta Ford, Surrey
Rhoda Beaumont Foster, Courtenay
Margaret Nellie Fowler, Howe Sound
Mary Furlough, Victoria
Ruth Marie Garnett, Revelstoke
James Wells Gemmell, Vancouver
Edna Mary Gill, Alberni
Myrtle Grace Gillson, Vancouver
Lawrence Leslie Goodwin, Delta
Josephine Gorcak, Langley
John Lawrence Greig, North Vancouver
Nina Margret Grigor, Penticton
Ethel Ruth Grove, Trail
Rudolph Peter M. Guidi, S. Okanagan
Ann Haig-Brown, Campbell River
Esther Wilhemina Hall, New Westminster
Selina Hall, Maple Ridge
Nellie Lydia Hanna, Peace River North
Mary Anne Haramia, Vancouver
Enid Viola Hardman, Sooke
Arthur Thomas Hardwick, Nanaimo
Mary Ann Harper, Merritt
Mary Edith Harvey, Abbotsford
Evelyn Ella Hazle, Burnaby
Patience M.R.W. Heavener, Creston-Kaslo
Edith M. Henly-Lewis, Lake Cowichan
John W.L. Henly-Lewis, Campbell River
Michael John Henry, New Westminster
Florence Mabel Hepburn, Gulf Islands
Dora Isabel R. Heppell, Nanaimo
Pauline Mary Nora Hewat, Vernon
Arlie Madeleine Hicks, Burnaby
Bernard Daniel Hildebrand, Abbotsford
Edith Una Hitchen, Nanaimo
Charles Edward Holland Victoria
James Douglas Hunter, Vancouver
Stella Mae Husband, Delta
Hermann H. Janzen, Prince George
Muriel Agnes Johnson, Victoria
Grace Ellen Jones, Burnaby
Stella Beatrice Kemp, Victoria
Frances Kempston, Trail
Ernest McDonald Kershaw, West Vancouver
Elizabeth V. Knott, Chilliwack
Eldon Herbert Knott, Victoria
Blondina Armella Kolling, Vancouver
Frances Mary LaBelle, Skeena-Cassiar
Edgar Covert Latimer, Burnaby
Jeanne Elizabeth Lear, New Westminster
Ruth Lefever, Lake Cowichan
Richard MacNaughton Lendrum, Lake Cowichan
Marjorie F.G. Leng, Vernon
Lois Alice Lind, Arrow Lakes
Thomas Lindsay, Abbotsford
Joan List, Nanaimo
John Boardman Litch, Nanaimo
Catherine Marion Loberg, Lillooet
Mary Helen McCaw, Chilliwack
John Alestair McCharles, Surrey
Florence G. McConnell, Victoria
Marie-Louise MacCosham, Saanich
Joseph Vernon MacDonald, Trail
Laura M. MacDonald, Vancouver
Robert Alexander McDonell, Vancouver
Dorothy McFarland, Victoria
Norma Frances McKenzie, North Vancouver
Constance Avonia McInnes, Vanderhoof
Donald Alistair MacKenzie, Vancouver
Muriel Dorothy McLellan, Richmond
Donalda Sara McLennan, Mission
Helen Kathleen McNicol, Nanaimo
Jessie Donald McRae, West Vancouver
William Stewart McRae, Vancouver
Phyllis Grant Mansley, Victoria
Edith Lillian Markle, Burnaby
Alice Lenore Martin, Golden
Alice Elizabeth Maxwell, Vancouver
Max Menkes, Victoria
Dorothy May Merifield, Powell River
Kathleen Foy Miles, West Vancouver
Marion Isabel Miller, Creston
Irene Thornton Mitchell, Powell River
Jean Mitchell, Coquitlam
Margaret Alice Mitchell, Burnaby
Marion Isobel Moir, Fernie
Kathleen Helen Montgomery, Vancouver
Dorothea St. Clair Moon, Mission
Alice Louise Morrison, Courtenay
Laurence Kenneth Morrison, Surrey
Beatrice Louise Mundell, Revelstoke
Archie William Murphy, Saanich
Charles Wesley Nairne, North Vancouver
Kenneth Neale, Mission
Charlotte Evelyn Neid, Mission
Hazel Florence Newcom, Vernon
Rose Sarah Jane Norman, Alberni
Margaret Isabelle Oliver, Maple Ridge
Elizabeth E.D. Owen-Jones, Vancouver
Jack Beverly Page, Trail
Charles Harcourt Parker, Vancouver
Mary Margaret Patterson, Victoria
Marjorie Helen Pearce, Williams Lake
Merle Ruth Peele, Maple Ridge
Ruth Mary Philp, North Vancouver
Caroline Boyd Porteous, Sooke
Kathleen Lily Porter, Victoria
Frances Marie Puddy, Kettle Valley
Katie Alice Raisbeck, North Vancouver
Isabel Ralph, Burnaby
Iris Marie Reiss, Sooke
John Harry Rewakowsky, Burnaby
Jessie Hill Richmond, Nanaimo
Margaret Elsie Roberts, Cowichan
David Donald M. Rogers, Mission
Pauline Romaine, Castlegar
Phyllis Ross Sanderson, Vancouver
Pearl Gwendolyn Schlitt, Richmond
Marie Ruth Scott, Sechelt
Lylian Gertrude Selby, Kimberley
Carol Sellars, Burnaby
Robert Friend Sharp, Vancouver
Effie Fleming Simser, Williams Lake
Marjorie Watt Smith, Vancouver
Ronald Robertson Smith, Kamloops
Virginia Louise Smith, Chilliwack
Jeanne Alexandra Snider, Burnaby
Jack Sparks, Vancouver
Walton Earl Stapleton, Surrey
Doris Muriel Stevenson, Sooke
Nellie Doreen Stewart, Kamloops
Mary Beeton Stirling, Vancouver
Marjory Eileen Stonhouse, Nanaimo
Eloise Magdalen Sundberg, Peace River South
Beatrice Mary Sutton, Victoria
William Norman Swanzey, Chilliwack
Margaret Russell Swift, Smithers
Ellen Miriam Taylor, Victoria
Marion Colville Taylor, Richmond
Roy Henry Temple, Victoria
Annie Margaret Tevini, Vancouver
Ralph Carleton Thomas, Vancouver
William Haywood Thompson, Vancouver
Constance I. Thornton, Victoria
Howard Jones Thornton, Victoria
Katherine Ruth Tickle, Vernon
Geoffrey Allan Trant, Vancouver
Leonard George Truscott, SFU
Reginald C.R. Tweed, Campbell River
Annie Milson Wagg, Victoria
Eva Maltby Ward, Victoria
Adeline Raphael Wasnock, Fernie
Myrtle Harwood Watchorn, Vancouver
Sylvia LeSuiur Weldon, Vancouver
Grace Mary West, Nanaimo
Harold Edgar West, Vancouver
Floyd Wallace Whitman, Vancouver
William Rostrom Whittaker, Castlegar
Mabel Frances Wiley, Victoria
Leila Joyce Wilkinson, Langley
Doris Lilian Wilkinson, Saanich
Doris Alberta Winfield, Burnaby
Edna Myrtle Wintersteen, Langley
Ethel Adelaide Wood, Chilliwack
Helen Kathleen Wylie, Mission
Marian Louise Wylie, Vancouver
Ella Evelyn Yates, New Westminster
Ethel M.M. Young, Williams Lake

new books

C. D. NELSON



SOMETHING HAS HAPPENED...
to our beloved English language over the past few years, and I for one am not pleased. I now invite any of my readers, that is, the entire teaching profession, to join me in a Crusade to Stamp Out Certain Words and Usages, some of which I shall enumerate now.

First on my list of words that are henceforth banished from this page is *contact*, as in 'Where can I contact you?' The use of this word as a noun is even more deplorable: 'He is one of my contacts.' Then there are those barbarities lately borrowed from the fields of computer science and atomic physics: *input, output, feedback* and *fallout, overkill* and *deterrent*. All of these words have real, specific meanings *restricted to their areas of technology*, and have no business being used as jargon terms in unrelated fields.

Let us speed the demise of such vogue words as *dialog*, meaning any sort of communication beyond its original theatrical meaning; *complex*, in the sense of an unspecified number of buildings; *highrise*, which I suppose replaces the rather quaint 'skyscraper' but actually means a 'tall building of x number of stories' (what is a 'lowrise' or 'middlerise'?)

Finally, for this month at least, off with the heads of all those who clutter up their speech or writing with words ending in *-ize* and *-wise*, such as 'legitimize,' 'immunize' (being given immunity by turning state's evidence), and 'populationwise,' 'customerwise' and similar horrors. Yeeuch!

SMALL JOKE ...

First-grader at home after his first day in school: 'Our teacher says we only have two rules to learn in her class: sit down and shut up.' — C. D. Nelson

CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Teacher and Child: A Book for Parents and Teachers, by Haim Ginott. Macmillan, New York (Can. Agt. Collier-Macmillan), 1972. $5.95 (cloth)

Although teaching offers many rewards, it has been aptly stated that, next to the ministry, teaching is also perhaps the most frustrating profession. Frequently teachers are expected to reach unattainable goals with inadequate tools and resources. Haim Ginott, a child psychologist and former public school teacher, tries to provide answers for myriad daily situations faced by the classroom teacher. Ginott translates therapeutic concepts into specific educational practices.

The philosophy of his book is summarized in the preface: 'I have come to a frightening conclusion. I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanized or dehumanized.' Ginott adheres faithfully to this philosophy throughout his book, which gave me much intellectual pleasure, emotional delight and many intensely practical insights for immediate appropriation.

Specifically the book covers a brief analysis by teachers of the educational system and what to do till it changes, chapters on teachers at their best and at their worst, and an illuminating section on congruent communication — genuinely fitting words to feelings. Ginott also discusses various kinds of praise — judgmental and appreciative; he suggests alternatives to punishment (a most timely chapter for B.C. teachers); he discusses the parent's role when teacher and child clash and he recommends several effective approaches to homework, indicates proven methods of motivating students and discloses some intensely helpful classroom procedures applicable to any course of studies. Ginott concludes with two delightful chapters on adult encounters and priceless vignettes of students recalling their teachers. A short, select bibliography and a useful index complete the book.

Written by an adjunct professor at New York University Graduate Department of Psychology, and a specialist in psychotherapy, the book is simply, lucidly and creatively written. The style is graceful, humorous and rich in anecdotes, dialog and short but sharp scenarios of classroom scenes involving student-teacher encounters. The emphasis is always on a language of acceptance and compassion, that is, on congruent communication.

Although the subtitle implies the book's equal utility for parents, it is basically centered on the classroom and addresses itself to teachers. His two earlier books, *Between Parent and Child* and *Between Parent and Teenager* were written specifically for parents and became best-sellers. At times, I felt that Ginott's beautifully phrased responses to students in critical situations were idealistic. Few teachers have the imagination and verbal facility to express themselves as creatively as Ginott does in his writing. But Ginott having provided numerous illustrations and everyday examples, teachers who are not satisfied with their current attitudes, tone of voice, and a language that emits more vibrations of rejection than acceptance, have here adequate resources to grow personally and professionally.

This book could prove useful to every classroom teacher from kindergarten to matriculation. Ginott also suggests innovations that free teachers from needless chores, increase the child's sense of self-worth and enhance the quality of life in the classroom. It is the most practical psychological book I have read in several years. Haim Ginott has rendered a very useful service to all teachers.—Victor J. Guenther

DRAMA

Theatre on a Shoestring, by Adrian Waller. Clarke, Irwin, Toronto, 1972. $4.95

A word of appreciation is due the printers and publishers for producing such a pleasing, eye-catching book. The book sells for only $4.95, yet it contains 158 pages, a stout binding, an attractive cover and excellent photographs that well illustrate the text. The consise text by Adrian Waller is also worthy of the highest praise.

This is a useful book to have around whether you are a specialist, an amateur, a

student or just a sincere drama enthusiast. The author does not waste words. He does provide an enormous amount of information and an equal amount of pertinent 'home-truth' for the benefit of those in the theater who might think they know it all.

There are 16 sections, each dealing with some aspect of theater — the Director, Actors, Choosing the Play, Make-up, Lighting, and so on. Every section makes for interesting and informative reading.

This book is a welcome addition to theater literature. It could well serve in the library as a class text or a teacher's handbook, and should certainly be in the hands of every member of every amateur drama group; nor will professional groups be wasting their time by reading this excellent publication.—John Getgood

ENGLISH

Dialogue. Harold M. Covell and James W. Greig, Eds. Macmillan of Canada, Toronto, 1972. $3.85

This book is one in a series of three readers catering for Grades 7 to 9. *Challenge* (Grade 7), *Viewpoint* (Grade 8) and this one, *Dialogue* (Grade 9). The contents include short works by many Canadian authors including Morley Callaghan, Farley Mowat, George Ryga, plus some original student material. It is well illustrated.

The book is fascinating because it uses, in a professional way, the styles of writing, illustration and subject matter that belong to the younger generation, yet in no way does it bend to mediocrity. Even the arts are well represented. The National Youth Orchestra is mentioned and depicted alongside the scenes of rock concerts; a Joan Baez song finds a place alongside a short story by Ray Bradbury. It's all very exciting to read, even for a member of the older generation. For the student, I think it is a winner that could interest the most stubborn student who has not discovered the delights of reading, as well as the prolific reader. The stories belong to the world of youth, yet they offer many challenging thoughts and ideas.

Do try this book with your students and, if you buy a copy for yourself, you will be that much richer in mind for having read it.—John Getgood

LANGUAGE ARTS

Magic Seasons (Yr III), by Alec Allinson, Beverley Allinson and John McInnes. Nelson, Toronto, 1972. $4.25; Guidebook $2.50

In the preparation of what the authors anticipate will be an engrossing content, they have endeavored to fuse the child's supply of information, feelings and ideas received from all sources. These are to be incorporated with ideas provided in a stimulus book (text) and related materials (guidebook and activity cards).

A note about book prices:

Prices quoted in these reviews are publishers' *list* prices, and are subject to varying discounts: 5 to 15% on *textbooks* and 25 to 35% on *trade* books. Library editions and prebound books usually do not have discounts. Where price is not mentioned, this fact is noted in the review.

Teachers buying books for their *personal* use should try to secure at least a 10% discount from book stores, or ask for the regular educational discount when ordering direct from the publisher or his Canadian agent. Be sure to establish that you are a teacher when you send in your order.

Language thus is developed through use in speaking, writing, listening and reading. As stated in the introduction to the guidebook: 'No time is spent teaching the child to correct grammatical errors he may never have made. No time is spent having him improve sentences that some adult has intentionally constructed as faulty. No rules are suggested for rote learning. The content is limited to stimulus material which will generate language that may then be appreciated, examined and developed.'

The stimulus book provides the core of the program. Its ideas and activities are designed to provide a full year's work in language and learning. The content, reflecting the changing seasons, is divided, suitably, into four sections, each featuring a cartoon story of magic. Excerpts from *Charlotte's Web, More Tales from Grimm,* etc., are interspersed with stimuli pages referring to ideas presented in these sections.

The children refer to activity cards or to the activity pages in the stimulus book to choose the manner of their responses. These may include talking, listening, reading, writing, acting, making, tape-recording, etc. — whichever is deemed to be appropriate. Further background for these individual or group endeavors is provided in the Teachers' Guidebook.

Consequences of working with *Magic Seasons* are expected to be twofold. First would be the *processes,* which include the activities entered into in the course of the work and second the *products* the things the child makes or does as a result of that work. Products may be individual or joint.

The teacher is involved in helping the child to classify and present his ideas and in teaching the appropriate skills as required. His role is to examine ways in which to make the children's product available to others — an audience of viewers, readers and listeners.

As a source of fresh material utilizing the inevitability of change as its theme, this new series should prove to be a helpful guide in planning a varied and challenging approach to the uses of languages.

—Betty-Marie Tuckey

MATHEMATICS

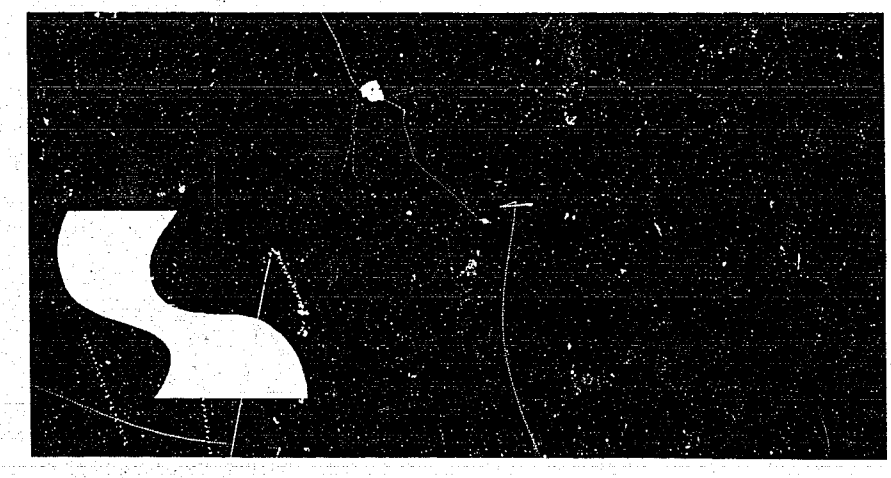
Why Johnny Can't Add: The Failure of the New Math, by Morris Klein. St. Martin's Press (Can. Agt. Macmillan of Canada), c1973. $7.95

Dare we say it? Is the room bugged? Will your income be reduced if you admit it? I dare not say it myself but Professor Klein, in a singularly strident and awkward tone, has done it by proclaiming that the 'New Math' has 'failed.'

Notwithstanding the tone, all math teachers, superintendents and others should read this book. It underlines many of the things that may have gone adrift (we only suspect that computational skills are weaker), but offers instructive reasons for the evils that beset us. He suggests that programs are heavily promoted and 'bandwagoned' by commercial interests before they are independently tested. Even today there are very few data showing any improvement in mathematical interest or facility in our schools. Heavy emphasis has been placed on curriculum changes (that's where the money and prestige are!) by people not too close to the schools while pedagogy is left to limp along berefit of admiration and academic respect.

Professor Klein points out that mathematics itself is an easier subject than the teaching of mathematics with its multiplicity of human and psychological problems. As a math teacher I had not realized the importance and complexity of my task and I thank the good author for boosting my morale. Secretly I have always objected to the procession of rigorous proofs guaranteed to sink nine-tenths of my students and turn them off to boot. Klein points out some reasons why the rigorous approach is bound to fail and calls for more intuitive approaches, more mathematics attached to the physical apparatus of the mathematics laboratory (which not too many schools possess!) and to a downgrading of the importance of set notation and the vocabulary-explosion of modern mathematics.

Historically the Hindus and the Arabs ar-



gued almost exclusively by analogy and basic to Klein's thesis is that the student study should retrace the historical path, albeit in abbreviated form, if understanding is to be gained.

Is $\sqrt{2} + \sqrt{3} = \sqrt{5}$?

Try $\sqrt{4} + \sqrt{9}$, which clearly is not $\sqrt{13}$; so we can write the answer to the first question in the negative.

Where I also deplore the lack of consultation with the interested math teacher in the past, the BCAMT (you don't belong to it? You should!) has been trying to get the classroom teacher a voice in B.C. mathematics. We know, as does Professor Klein, that word problems go like a lead balloon; the textbook writers don't — or what is worse, don't care. What we need in B.C. is a fruitful association of teachers, professors, teachers and teachers to find a moderate way between the rabid extremes of mathematics applied to physics and commerce and the 'pure' mathematicians who have been writing textbooks leaving out the world and the multiplication table. I hope the B.C. Association of Math Teachers will take up this task so that the math we teach the students of B.C. is sensible and appropriate to their needs.

I can't agree with Klein's thesis that most of the modern mathematics innovations are useless if not detrimental to understanding. Solution sets, union and intersection are not supersubtle ideas and congruence, groups, axiomatics and number bases are useful enrichment topics and can be enjoyable *per se*. In the hands of teachers who are wedded inexorably to the damned textbook each subject can loom so large as to submerge the essence of the arithmetic, the organization and the patterns involved so that Klein's point that the millions of dollars should have gone into good teacher education is well taken.

Incidentally, I find that students cannot do fractions and do not know the answer to the question one divided by zero, while the learned professor tried to teach Johnny addition with intersecting sets! —Roger Sandford

FRENCH TEACHERS

ECOUTER ET PARLER crossword puzzles are available from D.A. Leatherdale, RR No. 2, Gleneden Road, Salmon Arm, at $5.25 for the master copy. A stencil could easily be made from the master on most school stencil producing equipment. Samples available on request.

resources center

Do you need information?
Do you need ideas?
Do you want to brush up?

For your professional information needs get in touch with the Resources Center, B.C. Teachers' Federation, 105-2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3H9. Phone 731-8121 Hours: Monday-Friday 9-5; Saturday 9-1

The materials listed, plus many others, are available on loan:

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIANS. COMMITTEE ON PAPERBACK LISTS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
Paperback books for children. New York, Citation Press, 1972. 130p. Z1037/A433

EDWARDS, RUTH
The complete music teacher. Los Altos, Calif., Geron-X, 1970. 150p MT1/E35

GINOTT, HAIM G.
Teacher and child; a book for parents and teachers. New York, Macmillan, 1972, 323p. LB1033/G5

GT. BRIT. DEPT. OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE
Children with specific reading difficulties. London, H.M.S.O., 1972. 7p. LB1050.5/T59

HARTE, JOHN
Patient earth. New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971, 364p. QH541/H28

HEIN, GEORGE
Piaget, materials and open education. *EDC news*, Winter 1973, Issue no. 1, p.7-10.

JANSKY, JEANNETTE JEFFERSON
Preventing reading failure; prediction, diagnosis, intervention. (1st ed.) New York, Harper & Row, 1972. 207p. LB1050/J33

KEMP, DAVID
A different drummer, an ideas book for drama. Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1972. 176p. PN3157/K45

LINTON, DOLORES
Practical guide to classroom media. Dayton, Ohio, Pflaum/Standard Pub., 1971. 118p. LB1043/L55

FILMS

GAMES IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL (Motion picture)
Sponsored by Schools Council, London, 1972. Released by Southern Film Production, Brocklehurst, Hampshire, 14 min. sd. color, 16mm. (Free to move film series)
Summary: Demonstrates early play and free practice through full team games of netball, hockey, tennis, football and cricket.

THE GROWING MIND (Motion picture)
Produced by the British Broadcasting Corporation, 1967. 20 min. sd., b&w, 16mm.
Summary: An illustration of Piaget's theories of the stages of child development.

IF A BOY CAN'T LEARN (Motion picture)
Released by Lawren Productions, Burlingame, Calif., 1972. 28 min. sd. color, 16 mm. Includes film guide.
Summary: Strategies for teaching a 17-year-old boy with a learning disability in reading and math.

QUESTIONS FOR THINKING (Motion picture)
William Glasser. Produced by Media Five Film Distributors, Hollywood, Calif., 1972. 28 min. sd. color, 16 mm.
Summary: During this lecture, Dr. Glasser explores what schools are doing to encourage students to think.

SUBJECT BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Available on request from the BCTF Resources Center. (Each of these contains a list of material that can be borrowed by any member of the BCTF.)

— Adventure playground
— John Bremer
— Differentiated staffing
— Drug problem
— Educational objectives
— Education and the metric system
— English language arts
— Evaluation
— Kindergarten
— Learning resource centers
— Open education
— Outdoor education
— Personalized instruction
— Physical education
— Simulation game sources
— Special education
— Teaching mathematics
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— Videotapes
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LET'S STRESS QUALITY

K. M. AITCHISON

This year's Summer Conference for local association presidents and learning conditions chairpersons may well have been a turning point in teachers' efforts to improve the quality of education offered in B.C.'s schools.

The conference featured Dr. Norman Olson, formerly of Columbia University and now of Utica College in Syracuse, who reported on what is probably the most thorough study ever conducted of what goes on in classrooms.

Olson and his colleagues spent nine years studying nearly 30,000 classrooms in every part of the United States except the deep South, and evolved *Indicators of Quality,* a new and impressive measure of the process of education. Carefully trained observers, using a structured observation guide, obtained data that were convertible to a quantitative score for each situation observed.

The result was a valid and highly reliable measure of quality, which assessed a school system's classroom processes on four criteria: individualization, interpersonal regard, group activity and creativity.

Olson reported on his findings to the Summer Conference, and those people who attended have several printed items that list the study's findings in detail. To say the least, the results are fascinating. For example:

- Elementary classrooms consistently 'outperformed' secondary ones.
- Art scored high in both elementary and secondary schools; history (and commerce in the secondary) scored low.
- Elementary classes of 25 or fewer scored better than did larger ones; classes of 15 or fewer scored remarkably better; secondary classes of 11-15 scored significantly better than larger ones.
- The performance of substitute teachers was abysmal compared to that of regular teachers.
- The presence of three or four adults in a room resulted in lower scores than were obtained when just one teacher was in a room.
- Monday was the lowest scoring day of the week and Friday was the best day.

The most important finding of the study, however, was that by far the most significant indicator of quality education was the instructional style used by teachers — whether or not teachers employed certain instructional styles, and how well they employed them over a variety of times and a variety of different subject matters with a variety of student groups.

The study found that teachers tended to display one style or, at the most, two or three styles almost continuously. Unfortunately, there was a heavy reliance on the least effective styles.

Particularly high-scoring styles were small group work, individual work, informal discussion, brainstorming, role-playing activities, social dramas, laboratory work, pupil reporting activities and demonstration.

Lowest-scoring styles were lecture, question and answer, seatwork, tests and motion pictures. Yet the study found that as much as 80% of the time was spent in these least-productive teaching styles.

According to Olson, each teacher should consciously examine his/her own classroom behavior to see how frequently he/she uses one technique, for if he/she uses only one style, students learn to respond to that style — and if a teacher does that, he/she 'turns off half the students three-quarters of the time from many of the kinds of thinking activities that could take place.'

Olson admitted that the limited role many teachers seem to impose on themselves is often the result of factors over which they have no control. Sometimes it's the size of classes, sometimes it's the curriculum and/or materials teachers have to work with; sometimes it's the way teachers are treated by school boards that operate on a master-servant basis; sometimes pupil behavior is directly antithetical to everything a teacher is trying to do. (Follow-up studies, Olson said, revealed that students just do not understand the various kinds of learning roles they can play.)

In other words, an ineffective teaching style is not always the teacher's fault. But in some cases it is. That is why the personal assessment of one's classroom behavior is so necessary.

But there is little doubt that the main factor militating against effective teaching performance in B.C. is the size of classes here. Olson described B.C. class sizes as 'simply pathetic.' No wonder the BCTF has set as a major objective this year the lowering of class sizes throughout the province.

Olson calls large classes 'the big crippler,' because they impose restrictions and limits upon the perceptions of both teachers and students of how they are going to perform. The Indicators of Quality study proved conclusively that as classes get larger, teachers spend less and less time using the more effective teaching methods.

Olson hesitates to talk of an 'ideal' class size, but has no hesitation at all in stating that his studies show that classes of 15 are infinitely better than classes of the sizes common in B.C. A goal of classes of 15 here seems to be a pretty long-term one, but as Olson says, 'Until you believe that something is worth attaining, you aren't going to achieve that goal.'

We think classes of 15 are a goal well worth attaining. And lest there be any misunderstanding, let's get clear right now that teachers will work harder in classes of 15 than they do in larger ones, *because they will be able to use the teaching techniques Olson found were so effective.*

Meanwhile, each of us should examine the methods we are using now, and wherever and whenever possible use the more productive ones. Our objective, of course, is to give the young people in our classes as fine a school experience as we can possibly give them.

We're willing to do our part; we invite the co-operation of school boards, the provincial government and society as a whole in stressing *quality* in all our educational endeavors.

The author, the editor of this magazine, is a member of the Canadian College of Teachers.

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Note:
A special meeting will be held on November 7th at Gai Paree, Kingsway and Sperling Street, Burnaby, 8:00 p.m. Further information will be provided by return mail or telephone. Collect calls accepted.

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