

A STUDY OF ENGLISH USAGE
ON THE PART OF TWELFTH-YEAR PUPILS IN A
VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This investigation evolved from an interest in improving the English usage of certain twelfth-year boys and girls in a Virginia high school; from dissatisfaction with results from traditional approaches to language instruction.

According to the Commission on the English Curriculum, of the National Council of Teachers of English,¹ "The goals of teaching the language arts are as old as the ideal of civilization," yet each generation, each school, and each individual teacher faces anew the problem of interpreting those goals in the light of ever-changing conditions, of the personal needs of youth, and of the legitimate requirements of the democratic society of which youth must become a part.

As DeBoer and others² point out, youth today is

¹The Commission On the English Curriculum of the National Council Teachers of English, The Language Arts, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., pp. 3, 132, 133.

²John J. DeBoer, Walter V. Kaulfers, Helen Rand Miller, Teaching Secondary English, 1951, pp. 1, 414.

challenged on every side by:

....international tensions, threats of war, personal conflicts, international and intercultural hostilities, uncertain employment opportunities, and normal perplexities of growing into adulthood ...

Hence, the same authors¹ assert,

.....there is need for an informed electorate. There is need for a citizenry capable of exercising independent judgment, one which reads as it views newspapers, magazines, radio, movies, and television; one with a capacity to discuss problems of public interest with intelligence, and one which is capable of expressing its opinions.

Others besides professional educators seem to realize the crucial importance of effective communication, not only to carry on the day-to-day business of living but also to preserve peace. Among those expressing such views is President Eisenhower,² who, in his address to the 1953 meeting of the American Council of Education, strongly emphasizes his belief that understanding among peoples of the world must be achieved if we are to attain our ultimate goal -- peace in the world.

¹John J. DeBoer; Walter V. Kaulfers, and Helen Rand Miller, Teaching Secondary English, 1951, pp. 1, 416.

²Quoted by Ivan Putnam, Jr., in an article, "Cultural Shock and Communication in International Student Exchange," The Speech Teacher, Vol. III, No. 2 (March 1954), pp.112-116.

¹
Dr. Karl Deutsch¹ said, in a speech to the National Association of Foreign Student Advisers, that one of the pleasant and supporting experiences of the foreign exchange students which had helped to break down their anti-American, nationalistic feelings, and to change their attitudes to desirable ones, had been the development of the power to communicate in English. Thus, many writers agree that communication in a common language is a necessary prerequisite to mutual understanding and appreciation, essential to attaining our goal of a stable and peaceful society.

In order to make this a better, a happier, a more comprehensible place in which to live, man must learn to communicate with his fellows in ways which reduce the possibility of misunderstanding. Thus, the goal of the modern educator is much the same as that set up centuries ago by Cato,² to wit, that of producing "a good man, able to speak."

* * * * *

Such considerations as those just presented led to the formulation of the main purpose of this study, namely, to discover some of the factors that promote or hinder the learning of good English usage on the part of older

¹Quoted by Ivan Putnam, Jr., in an article, "Cultural Shock and Communication in International Student Exchange," The Speech Teacher, Vol. III, No. 2 (March 1954), pp. 112-116.

²See A. Gwynn, Roman Education from Cicero to Quintilian, 1926, p. 208.

adolescent children attending a public high school.

In order to carry out this purpose, the literature of the field related to the teaching of English was first searched to find a suitable meaning for "good English usage." Next, this investigation attempted to find in such writings clues, concepts and conclusions concerning the best means of promoting good usage. In so doing, representative courses of study in secondary school English, produced in various parts of the country, were studied and evaluated. A further undertaking was to study the movement to emphasize usage in language communications and to de-emphasize structure and the formal side of grammar, in the teaching of English. Then, as a culmination of the initial phase of this study, a list of criteria was made for use in judging good English usage, and another for evaluating procedures intended to promote such usage.

Having the findings from the literature and the criteria just mentioned made it possible to devise a tentative method of teaching English in which emphasis was put on usage, as the major undertaking of the second phase of this investigation. That method was, in turn, put into practice in teaching a group of twelfth-year pupils in the Pulaski, Virginia, High School, during the 1954-1955 school session. While the method thus devised was being

put into operation, anecdotal records were kept respecting the progress made by individual pupils which were later incorporated into case studies. Those records, in turn, were used as data by which to make specific judgments concerning the effectiveness of the plan which had been employed to teach the subjects of this study, namely, certain highschool pupils.

In order to provide a record of the investigation just described, this writing is organized as follows: Chapter II contains a discussion of ways in which good English usage may be taught, as described in the literature of the field. In Chapter III there is a brief, general description of the Pulaski High School, and of the English class especially concerned with the study. Chapter IV gives in detail the procedures and devices used in teaching English usage to that group. Chapter V presents certain individual case studies, and gives an evaluation of the outcomes stemming from the procedures described in the preceding chapter. It also attempts to summarize the study, to give pertinent interpretations of the findings thereof, as well as to make recommendations for further undertakings related to the teaching of English.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE OF THE FIELD RELATED TO
THE TEACHING OF GOOD ENGLISH USAGE

One of the first steps in this undertaking was to search for a satisfactory definition of the word, usage, as applied to English discourse. Accordingly, various writings devoted to the teaching of English, as well as others, were consulted, in the hope that such a definition might be found.

Among the definitions studied in this connection is that appearing in Webster's New International Dictionary,¹ as follows: ".... (usage consists of) the methods or principles of a body or group of persons, as those of a certain profession." More explicit than the foregoing definition, is the following, taken from an older work:²

....usage is the established or customary mode of employing a particular word, phrase, or construction, and for these "anxious seekers" comes the job of searching for what is established and customary in the practice of a large number of speakers and writers of the English language.

¹ Webster's New International Dictionary, 1934.

² Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia, 1906.

/ A third dictionary¹ defines usage as "a use of words or forms considered as sanctioned or unsanctioned by reputable authorities."

However, none of the three definitions cited appeared to be useful for this study; for, when they were considered in relation to a world of ever-changing thinking, and ever-varied modes of expressing such thinking, they seemed more likely to create difficulties than to dissolve them, in view of the impossibility of determining what is "sanctioned" and who may be considered as "authorities." Thus, a more practicable definition seemed to be that of Cassell,² as follows:

Good English usage is language which is appropriate (a) to the speaker or writer, (b) to the reader, and (c) to the purpose of communication. Formal, literary English, used in most writing and in public address is marked by traditional wording, precision in grammatical construction, and completeness of sentences. Informal colloquial English, used in most speech, in personal letters, in news-writing, and in advertising allows some short cuts in sentence construction. It also permits the occasional use of contractions: don't, can't; of counter words: fine, good, of slang; of common idiomatic expressions: no sooner said than done.

¹Practical Standard Dictionary, 1934.

²George F. Cassell, quoted in A Course of Study in English for Experimental Use (City of Chicago), 1954, p.9.

According to Kennedy,¹ usage consists of methods and principles, which are to a great extent established. It denotes customary modes of speech which, in the opinion of many thoughtful people, should somehow be sanctioned by reputable authorities; but which, even in the face of such insistentencies, are frequently hard to judge in terms of what is best in contemporary English.

In similar vein, DeBoer and others² aver that

Teachers clearly cannot exert a significant influence upon the speech habits of the out-of-school world if their views of language are so out of tune with sociological fact that people begin to regard them, not as effective human beings who actually live in this world, but as a kind of cult that merely occupies a classroom in it.

Since only dead languages never change, this means that due recognition must be given to all living languages as ever-changing, ever-growing organisms. The proof of this dynamic characteristic of all living language is to be found on the pages of history.

The same authors point to the Declaration of Independence

¹Arthur C. Kennedy, English Usage, The National Council of Teachers of English Monograph, No. 15.

²John J. DeBoer, Walter V. Kaulfers, and Helen Rand Miller, Teaching Secondary English, 1951, p. 52.

to reinforce their position, as follows:

The signers of one of the country's most treasured literary and political documents, the Declaration of Independence, for example, spoke of mankind as if the word were plural. They said "mankind are" instead of "mankind is" despite the fact that the singular is more preferred today.

In the same connection, they quote verbatim from Thomas Jefferson's Plan for Education in Virginia (1799), the following passage:

The tutor is to be supported by the hundred, and every person in it shall be entitled to send their children three years gratis, and as much longer as they please, paying for it.¹

"Every person" here appears to be clearly regarded as a plural, in discourse written at a time nearer to that of the "King's English" than the times in which most modern textbooks have been written.

When the New England Primer appeared in 1670, the usage of that day, in accordance with the King's English, would have been to say or write "you were" only when the plural was intended. Thus, among the "easy questions for children" appear the following:

Of what was you made?

For what was you made?

¹John J. DeBoer, Walter V. Kaulfers, and Helen Rand Miller, Teaching Secondary English, 1951, p. 953.

As many of those consulted seem to agree, it is obvious that many changes have been made in speech habits or usage in the last two centuries, and that such changes have been made by speakers and writers who have had occasion to use language on the most influential occasions. They express the view that grammarians and dictionary makers have helped only in the collecting and reporting of convincing proof regarding such fundamental changes. Benjamin¹ says, "....language is always made not by decree or fiat, but by the consent of the governed." He goes even farther, saying that "Language is made by the needs of men, while grammar is made by professors."

According to Cawley,² language is an integral part of personality, philosophy, social life, and everyday relations with one's fellow beings, hence English usage may be said to consist of the methods or principles of that body of people who employ the English language. However, good English usage seems to be quite a different thing. Language must always be, to a great extent, a personal matter if persons are to use it intelligently,

¹Harold Benjamin, "Interchange of Cultural Viewpoints," Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. 24 (November, 1941), pp. 101-103.

²Thomas Cauley, "Visual Aids in Teaching English", English Journal, Vol. XLIII (September, 1954), pp. 316-319.

because language is the expression of ideas and thinking. Therefore, the great ambition of educators, certainly those belonging to the time of this writing, seems to be that of training young people to think for themselves. They appear to give especial support to that position in matters concerned with choice of words (diction) to the end that children may learn to select words carefully and with special attention to fine shades of thinking.

Certain statements of writers deemed to be authorities respecting good English usage appeared to have bearing on this investigation, as follows:

According to Kennedy,¹ "Good usage is, and always has been as long as good writing has existed, the usage of the best writers and speakers."

Pooley² states that:

Good English is that form of speech which is appropriate to the purpose of the speaker, true to the language as it is, and comfortable to speaker and listener. It is the product of custom neither compared by rule nor freed from restraint; it is never fixed, but changes with the organic life of the language.

Regarding the attitudes and understandings from which

¹ Arthur G. Kennedy, English Usage, 1942, p. 27.

² Robert C. Pooley, Grammar and Usage in Textbooks in English, 1933, p. 135.

good usage stems, Kennedy¹ says:

It is important for every student of the English language to have a well defined personal attitude toward the entire matter of the study, a clear conception of difficulties involved, and some kind of working procedure that can be employed for the settling of numerous questions that arise.

DeBoer and others² state that the first step in the teaching of English usage is always a diagnosis of the "... pupil's strengths and weaknesses in language to avoid spending time and energy on the correction of difficulties which, while common among young people in general, are not always common to more than a minority of a particular class." They further assert that the objective tests are valuable in this connection, but not infallible because, since the pupil is always on guard in taking such tests, they may not yield a true picture of his actual language habits.

The same authors³ recommend, as supplementary to giving objective tests, making provisions for informal situations in the classroom in which pupils may be observed

¹Arthur G. Kennedy, English Usage, 1942, p. 13.

²John J. DeBoer, Walter V. Kaulfers, and Helen Rand Miller, Teaching Secondary English, 1951, p. 78.

³Ibid., p. 78.

making use of language habits, as means of discovering their needs and evaluating their progress. They assert that

Free discussion of topics close to pupil interests, such as hobbies, pets, favorite radio or television programs, or interesting personalities in the field of sports, usually afford opportunities to observe and tabulate points of weakness in oral usage, while short biographies often yield symptoms of such difficulties in punctuation, capitalization, spelling, vocabulary, paragraphing, or usage, as commonly enter into composition.

Many writers insist that the teacher of English must decide whether, after studying his children's needs, he should, first of all, try to help them to build certain language habits; or if he ought to give principal emphasis to fostering insights into what constitutes effective English and to instilling in his pupils the desire to use the best discourse on all occasions. Morrison¹ seems to favor the latter alternative, namely, that of helping "needy young people" gain insight into the nature of effective English in respect of pronunciation, vocabulary, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and sentence structure. He also advocates helping children to develop "the habit of applying what they learn, not only when they are under observation in school, but in all life

¹ Henry C. Morrison, The Practice of Teaching in the Secondary School, 1932, pp. 349-350.

situations where standard English is the most appropriate and effective form of language." In that connection, he¹ believes that,

Pupils must be taught to discriminate between valuable and tawdry. The teacher must attempt to train the pupil in major conduct attitudes which form the conduct structure of civilized man and woman.

A gentleman and a lady are much the same wherever one meets them the world over, be it in the seventh or the seven hundredth century. Hence one course in literature, music, fine arts or conduct extends throughout the whole field of general education.

It would seem profitable and advisable to attempt to keep and encourage pupils to acquire a varied and serviceable wardrobe in language, one that will enable them to feel both at ease and effective in other language situations than those of intimate personal acquaintance. In order to do this there must be built up for the pupils a rich, varied background (necessarily experimental) of values which are calculated to appeal to many different individuals.

In somewhat the same vein, DeBoers and others² advise that,

¹Morrison, Henry C., The Practicing of Teaching in the Secondary School, 1932, pp. 349-350.

²John J. DeBoer, Walter V. Kaulfers, and Helen Rand Miller, Teaching Secondary English, 1951, p. 80.

In school we use standard English, not because of any inherent superiority, but simply because we cannot be effective citizens, wage earners, or professional people in a country of this size, unless we all subscribe to an easily understood, common medium of communication that will enable us as Americans to speak or write in Seattle and still be understood in Los Angeles, Honolulu, London, or New York.

Thus, from both of the sources just quoted comes the recommendation that, in meeting life situations in which standard English is likely to be used, and in which such usage is clearly the most appropriate, it is essential to possess insight into what constitutes standard English and to have a desire to make personal use thereof.

In order to accomplish such ends, DeBoers and others¹ suggest that,

Recordings by competent actors of stories, short plays, or abridged novels from the pens of well known authors provide excellent means for interesting young people in the effective use of oral English in modern life. Among such recordings are Ronald Coleman's "Interpretation of Lost Horizon and Tales from the Olympian Gods," also Herbert Marshall's moving rendition of The Snow Goose.

¹John J. DeBoers, Walter V. Kaulfers, and Helen Rand Miller, Teaching Secondary English, 1951, p. 81. The recordings mentioned are Decca Records: Ronald Coleman, Lost Horizon by James Hilton, Album No. DA-402; Ronald Coleman, Tales from the Olympian Gods, Album No. DA-415; and Herbert Marshall, The Snow Goose by Paul Gallico, Album No. DA-386.

Roberts and his co-authors¹ recommend the use of modern recordings for the purpose of relating English to other interests, such as world literature or music. They suggest that a resource of that nature might be Joseph Machlis' "Anecdotal Biographies of Schubert, Beethoven, and Tschai-kowsky,"² which might supply a model of effective usage in pronunciation and grammar; also, it might link the study of English with that of good taste in music. Furthermore, selected radio programs, if available during the class hour, could serve much the same purpose. Indeed, the recordings used could provide models by which to judge radio scripts, musically illustrated biographies and stories, or dramatizations, say, of community history, which the group might hear; as well as to evaluate dramatic creations of the children, which they themselves might wish to produce (under guidance) as a means of practice in writing and speaking for an audience such as another class, a club, a parent's group, or an assembly.

When the field relating to the teaching of English is studied, it appears that there is no limit to the

¹ Holland D. Roberts, Walter V. Kaulfers, and Grayson W. Kefauver, English for Social Living, p. 27.

² Decca Records: Album No. DA-386, Joseph Machliss Music Master Series, Vox Records, Vox Productions, Inc.

quantity of visual and auditory aids available to the English instructor. Among other things, it seems that appropriate talking pictures, when the school is equipped to use them conveniently, may be used effectively to give opportunities for both oral (discussion groups) and written communication, as well as for practice in good listening.

A device frequently recommended is that of asking pupils to keep files containing data respecting the interesting people of their community, especially those pertaining to travel, vocations, professions, and the like. Another is that of inviting able speakers, representing various walks of life, to appear from time to time before different groups of pupils. In such cases, there is a place for the writing of invitations; for exercising good taste in welcoming, introducing and thanking the speakers; also for composing notes of appreciation. According to Roberts,¹ such activities help to give both knowledge and practice in the use of standard English, as well as practical motivation therefor. Thus, in letters to artists of radio, stage, screen, television; in notes of condolence to ailing classmates; in correspondence with young people in other parts of the country or abroad; in interviewing

¹Holland D. Roberts, "English Teachers Face the Future," The English Journal (College Edition) Vol. 27 (February 1938), pp. 102-113.

adults in class or at home regarding unusual hobbies, experiences, or achievements; in staging plays, giving readings, giving newscasts, presenting illustrated talks on imaginary travels (in costume); or in producing radio dramatizations, the guiding principle is always that of helping young people to "find something interesting and worthwhile to say and in building an audience situation which will give them reasons for saying it."

Various writers in the field recommend using procedures such as those mentioned in the preceding paragraph, in place of more formal methods for developing effective English usage, because they view such means as more direct, economical, and efficient ways of reaching desired goals. Hence, they advocate using formal grammar only as a strictly professional tool.

If a workbook containing sentences phrased in language that the young people will recognize at once as being typical of their own is conveniently available, just enough sentences may be worked out to help them clarify the conception in their minds.

There is no better way to waste time than to ask students to change sentences which they themselves would never think of writing or saying.¹

¹John J. DeBoer, Walter V. Kaulfers, and Helen Rand Miller, 1951, p. 90.

* * * * *

In keeping with the points of view presented earlier in this chapter, a set of criteria was formulated for the purpose of judging English usage, as follows:

CRITERIA FOR GOOD ENGLISH USAGE¹

1. Good English usage is that form or manner of discourse--spoken or written--which (1) most effectively and agreeably conveys information, (2) gives entertainment, (3) influences the decisions and values of others, or (4) gives vent to the emotions.
2. Good English usage is that form or manner which is appropriate to the situation in which it is used.
3. Good English usage is that form or manner which conforms to realistic standards of elegance, respecting pronunciation, enunciation, syntax, diction, and rhythm.

Once the foregoing criteria had been set up, it seemed desirable to make a second list of criteria, related

¹These criteria were tested by referring them to various writings related to English composition, especially to Henry C. Morrison, The Practice of Teaching in the Secondary School, 1932. They were further tested by using them as an instrument for judging the actual usage of children in Pulaski High School during the school year, 1954-1955.

thereto, for use in evaluating the teaching of English usage. Accordingly, such a set was devised and submitted to a jury¹ composed of individuals deemed to have outstanding competence respecting matters concerned with the teaching of English. After certain members of the jury had criticized the original list of criteria, and had made suggestions for its improvement, various modifications and amendments were made thereto. The revised list finally appeared as follows:

CRITERIA FOR THE TEACHING
OF GOOD ENGLISH USAGE

Good teaching of English usage should:

- I. Provide experiences in which boys and girls have ample opportunity for free language expression.
- II. Provide interesting and exciting experiences, -- new things to think and talk about -- as opportunities for

¹The criteria were submitted to the following persons:
Miss Effie Bathurst, United States Office of Education, Washington, D.C.
Dr. R.D. Simonini, English Department, Longwood College, Farmville, Virginia.
Dr. J. Hooper Wise, English Department, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida.
Dr. Saul K. Padover, Director of New School of Political Research, New York, N.Y.
Dr. Jean Taylor, Radford College, Women's Division of Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Radford, Virginia.
Dr. Dora V. Smith, Department of English, University of Minnesota.
Dr. F.B. Gresham, Department of English, Longwood College.
Miss Eva Vaughan, Supervisor of Public County high schools.
Of those asked for comment and evaluation of the list, only the first three named responded.

learners to gain skill in expressing ideas effectively and appropriately, both in speech and writing.

- III. Promote an atmosphere in the classroom such that each pupil, feeling secure in his identification with the group, may be willing to accept responsibility therein; to express his thoughts and feelings naturally; and at the same time, may be motivated to make improvements in his usage of English.
- IV. Provide means of gaining thorough understandings of certain simple but essential principles of sentence structure and usage, which, coupled with the will to apply them, may lead to pupils' developing the skills and abilities they need for fluency and effectiveness in reading, listening, speaking, and writing.
- V. Provide situations and activities in which learners may acquire not only skill but confidence in their own powers, as they communicate with one another.
- VI. Provide experiences likely to increase pupils' appreciation of the role of good English usage in all sorts of human relations.

Formulating the six criteria just presented became a preliminary to the completion of a major phase of this undertaking, that of making a plan for teaching English usage to certain twelfth-year pupils in the Pulaski, Virginia, High School.

As a further preliminary to making such a plan, a study was made of the situation in which it was to be used. Thus, Chapter III contains a record of findings relative to the community of which Pulaski, Virginia, was the center, also of findings concerned with the school in which that plan was to be put into operation.

CHAPTER III
DESCRIPTION OF THE PULASKI, VIRGINIA, COMMUNITY;
ALSO OF THE PULASKI HIGH SCHOOL,
WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO ITS PROVISIONS FOR
LANGUAGE ARTS INSTRUCTION

Situated on the banks of New River and between the Blue Ridge and Alleghany mountains in the Valley of Virginia is the County of Pulaski. From east to west, it is traversed by the Lee Highway (U.S. 11), and, from north to south by the so-called Coal-to-Cotton Highway (Virginia Route Number 100). Its land area is approximately 327 square miles. Its temperature ranges in January from 24°F. to 38°F.; in July from 71°F. to 85°F. Inclusive of winter snow, the County has, on the average, 40 inches of precipitation a year.

The first permanent settlers of Pulaski County were the Scotch Irish who came in 1757 in search of desirable homes. As the years went on, a number of small communities were formed, among them a tiny settlement known as Martin's Tank, a name derived from that of a prominent local family. From that settlement evolved the town and county seat of Pulaski. According to the 1950 census, the population of

the County was 27,758; 9,202 of which belonged to the town of Pulaski, the county seat.

Ninety per cent of the people living in Pulaski County were Caucasians. Although the region in which Pulaski was found had formerly been devoted primarily to agriculture, it had, by the time of this writing, become a manufacturing center which gave employment to more people than did agriculture. According to the 1940 census, only 34.6 per cent of the population were classed as "farmers." However, the folkways and mores of the people, despite the industrial employment of so many, tended to remain those of rural folk.

The main industries located in and near the Town of Pulaski were concerned with textiles, woodwork, and chemicals. Some of the industries and business concerns situated in the Town were: knitting mills (four); flour mill; pigment plant; maintenance foundry for the Norfolk and Western Railway; furniture factory; lumber concerns (three); chemical and dye corporation; electro-plastic plant, wholesale grocery; veneer manufacturing plant; tinning concern; welding operation; dairy products plant; electric plant; commercial printers (two); also, various contractors, engineering and equipment companies, vault companies, and

many others. Further, there were two National banks, a radio station, a daily newspaper, and a public library.

There were many Protestant churches in Pulaski, but no Roman Catholic or Jewish places of worship.

In 1953-1954, there were twenty-six school plants in Pulaski County, housing schools in which approximately 200 teachers taught some 6,600 children.

Prior to the 1953-1954 school year, the County operated three accredited high schools for white pupils, and participated in the operation of a secondary school at Cambria, Virginia, to which it transported its Negro highschool pupils. That school, known as Christiansburg Institute, also served the Negro populations of Montgomery County and the City of Radford.

For some time prior to this writing, one of the major needs of Pulaski County had been for additional and improved school construction. There had been a big increase in population in the County, due largely to the influx of people seeking work in certain plants operated by the Federal Government in and near the County. That increase had caused considerable congestion in the schools. To remedy that situation, a bond issue was proposed and, in 1950, submitted to the voters, with favorable results. Accordingly, funds became available for building new

buildings and remodeling some of the existing structures. The last one of the buildings financed by the bond issue was completed and made ready for the opening of school, September 1, 1954. It was the Pulaski High School.

According to the Pulaski High School Student Handbook,¹ the former Pulaski High School building on Second Street was erected in 1915. In 1939, the Home Economics Cottage and Gymnasium were also erected nearby. Thus, the principal structure located there, on premises near the heart of the Pulaski business section, had served the highschool population of approximately half of the County, including the Town of Pulaski, for some 40 years.

In 1954, the new Pulaski High School on Pico Terrace Road was completed and the school was moved to its new location. There it was housed in a million-dollar, modern building having many facilities hitherto unavailable. It was occupied by more than 850 pupils, at that time.²

At the time of this writing, the Pulaski High School

¹Unpublished mimeographed brochure issued by the Student Council, Pulaski High School, 1954-1955.

²In 1953-1954, the County was re-zoned into two areas serving its high school population, one centered at the Pulaski High and the other at the new Dublin High School. The high school at Draper was thereby abolished.

had had seven principals. Its first annual was published in 1920-1921. In that year, also, its first football team was organized. The only sport for boys in 1920-1921 was football; for girls, basketball. The following year, baseball was added for the boys. By 1954, its athletic offerings had increased so as to include football, baseball, basketball, and track.

The School was a member of the Virginia High School League.¹

At the time this study was made, Pulaski High School had chapters of three nationally organized honor societies, as well as others which had been instituted locally.

Prior to 1953-1954, the Pulaski County school system had provided only eleven years of schooling for its pupils. In that year the eighth grade was added, in order to increase the curriculum offerings to twelve years.

In 1954-1955, the faculty of the High School consisted of

¹The Virginia High School League was an organization of the public high schools of the State. It was sponsored by the Extension of the University of Virginia. The League seeks to encourage student participation in desirable school activities by conducting or supporting programs of inter-school competitions.

37 members, all of whom were women except the shop teacher, the band and chorus director, the distributive education teacher, and three athletic coaches who taught physical education classes in addition to certain others. All of the teachers held bachelor's degrees from standard institutions. The principal and two other teachers also held master's degrees. Several had done some graduate work leading to the advanced degree. Eighteen of the women teachers were married; also, the principal and six of the other male members of the faculty. The teaching experience of the faculty, in point of years, ranged from two to twenty-five.

In 1954 there were 864 pupils in the five grades which, by that time, constituted the student body of the High School. The grade distribution was as follows: eighth grade, 280; ninth grade, 235; tenth grade, 47; eleventh grade, 167; twelfth grade, 135. There were 420 boys and 444 girls.

The main building contained 47 classrooms, the principal's office, music rooms, library, an art room, a cafeteria, auditorium, typing rooms, guidance room, home-making rooms, student activity rooms, locker rooms, book room, and so forth.

The library was located on the top floor directly

over the cafeteria, in the center of the building. (All pupils carrying their lunches or purchasing them, were expected to eat in the cafeteria.) Lockers were available for all pupils, in which to keep their wraps, textbooks, and other personal possessions.

The course offering of the Pulaski High School, at the time of this writing, was as follows:

TABLE I
COURSES OFFERED IN PULASKI HIGH SCHOOL
1954 - 1955

8th Grade	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
<u>Required:</u> Science English Social Stud. Math Phys. Ed. 9 weeks of Business Ed. Art, Music, Shop for boys, Homemaking for girls.	<u>Required:</u> English Phys. Ed. Gen.Math or Algebra I <u>Electives:</u> Art Band Civics Gen. Sci. Chorus Homemaking Ind. Arts Latin I	<u>Required:</u> English Phys. Ed. <u>Electives:</u> Alg.I, II Art Band Chorus Ec. Math French I Gen.Business Homemaking Ind. Arts Latin I Spanish I World Hist. Biology	<u>Required:</u> Am.History English Phys. Ed. <u>Electives:</u> Adv. Alg. Alg.I, II Art Band Bookkeep. Chemistry Chorus Div.Occup. Ec. Math FrenchI,II Gen.Bus. Homemaking Ind. Arts Latin I,II Pl. Geo. Shorthand Spanish - I, II Typing WorldHist.	<u>Required:</u> English Gov. Phys. Ed. <u>Electives:</u> Adv. Alg. Alg.I,II Art Band Bookkeep. Chemistry Chorus Div.Occup. Dramatics Ec. Math French II Gen.Bus. Mech.Draw. Latin - II,III Off.Prac. Pl. Geo. Rem.Math Shorthand- I, II Span. II Sol. Geo. Trig. Typing, Speech, World Hist. Journalism Geography Homemaking

The system of marking in use in the Pulaski High School during the 1954-1955 session relied mainly on the use of the letters "A," "B," "C," "D," and "F." Teachers who desired to make finer distinctions respecting pupils' achievement, than those implied by the five letters employed, would add "plus" or "minus" to the various letters. In that system, the letter "A" was employed to denote the most satisfactory work; "F" to mean unacceptable work, or failure to meet the minimum standards set by the teacher.

Each pupil was assigned to a home room where he was expected to report at the beginning of the morning session. He was also assigned to a class, study hall, or work period for each of the other six periods of the day. Pupils' attendance at every assigned place was carefully checked during the entire school day.

It appeared that whatever behavior problems arose in the School, whether related to attendance or to some other aspect of school life, were handled with a view to removing causes therefor; to assisting the pupils involved to make wholesome adjustments to their various situations. The teachers and administrators shared with members of the guidance committee the work of helping to solve various individual problems.

In order to provide for the accommodation of pupils

in the lunch room (cafeteria), two daily schedules were made, in such a manner as to direct approximately half of the pupils to that facility at 11:50 a.m.; the remainder, at 12:45 p.m. The two schedules are shown, as follows:

SCHEDULE "A"

8:50 -	.....	1st Gong
8:55 - 9:05	.....	Home Room
9:05 -10:00	.....	1st Period
10:00 -10:55	.....	2nd Period
10:55 -11:50	.....	3rd Period
11:50 -12:45	.....	4th Period
12:45 - 1:20	.....	Lunch
1:20 - 2:15	.....	5th Period
2:15 - 3:10	.....	6th Period
3:10 - 3:15	.....	Home Room

SCHEDULE "B"

8:50 -	.....	1st Gong
8:55 - 9:05	.....	Home Room
9:05 -10:00	.....	1st Period
10:00 -10:55	.....	2nd Period
10:55 -11:50	.....	3rd Period
11:50 -12:25	.....	Lunch
12:25 - 1:20	.....	4th Period
1:20 - 2:15	.....	5th Period
2:15 - 3:10	.....	6th Period
3:10 - 3:15	.....	Home Room

During the 1954-1955 school session there were eight teachers of English in the High School, five of whom taught five classes of English a day and supervised a study group during an additional period; one taught three classes of

English, one class of social studies, and one class of French, in addition to devoting one period to individual guidance; one taught three classes of English, one of dramatics, and one of social studies; one taught one class of English, two classes of Spanish, one class of social studies, and gave two periods to guidance activities. Those teachers assigned to classes in English for Juniors and Seniors taught only at those levels, and had approximately thirty pupils daily in each of their respective five classes of English, besides conducting a study hall and a home room of about the same number each.

When the Pulaski High School teachers' approaches to the problems of learning were studied, they appeared to be moderately progressive. The English teachers seemed to be decidedly modern in their views, since they tended to organize their work in units concerned with the children's needs, interests, and concerns.

The following outline shows something of the emphases made in the language arts work of the Pulaski High School:

Eighth Grade:

I. Composition:

- A. The sentence, paragraph, and theme
- B. Forms of writing

- II. Handwriting
- III. Grammar and usage:
 - A. Spelling
 - B. Vocabulary
 - C. Capitalization
 - D. Punctuation
 - E. Parts of sentence
 - F. Grammatical Usage

Ninth Grade:

- I. Composition:
 - A. Sentence, paragraph, theme
 - B. Forms
- II. Handwriting
- III. Grammar and usage:
 - A. Spelling
 - B. Vocabulary
 - C. Capitalization
 - D. Punctuation
 - E. Parts of sentence
 - F. Grammatical usage

Tenth Grade:

- I. Composition:
 - A. Sentence, paragraph, theme
 - B. Forms

II. Handwriting

III. Grammar and usage:

- A. Spelling
- B. Vocabulary
- C. Capitalization
- D. Punctuation
- E. Parts of a sentence
- F. Grammatical usage

Eleventh Grade:

I. Composition:

- A. Sentence, paragraph, theme
- B. Forms

II. Handwriting

III. Grammar and usage:

- A. Spelling
- B. Vocabulary
- C. Capitalization
- D. Punctuation
- E. Parts of a sentence
- F. Grammatical usage:
 - 1. Correct use of who, whom
 - 2. Correct use of few, less
 - 3. Correct use of nouns of measurement: miles,
feet, etc.
 - 4. Correct use of different, from
 - 5. Comparison of adjectives and adverbs

IV. Literature:

- A. Reading American literature
- B. Reporting on books read

Twelfth Grade:

I. Composition:

A. Writing of sentences, paragraphs, and themes:

- 1. Review of writing
- 2. Criticism of individual style
- 3. Development of style through avoidance of shifting tenses, overworked words, trite expressions, unnecessary words, and the like.

B. Forms:

- 1. Creative writing
- 2. Writing of articles reporting research undertakings
 - a. Notetaking
 - b. Making of bibliographies
 - c. Making footnotes
 - d. Quoting reference sources
- 3. Writing personal correspondence
- 4. Responding to application blanks and questionnaires

II. Handwriting

III. Review of grammar and usage (as needed)

IV. Literature:

A. Reading English literature

B. Reporting on books read¹

* * * * *

After studying the general situation at the Pulaski High School special attention was given to certain twelfth-year pupils enrolled in that institution, and to the language-arts teaching provided for them during the 1954-1955 school year.

¹Pupils in twelfth-year English classes were required to read a minimum of twelve books chosen from the following categories: historical novels, two; classics, two; biographies, two; etiquette, one; non-fiction, one; opera, one; mythology, one; England, one; and one other of the pupil's free choice.

CHAPTER IV

A CLASS OF TWELFTH-YEAR PUPILS
IN THE PULASKI HIGH SCHOOL,
PRESENTED BY MEANS OF
DESCRIPTIONS OF REPRESENTATIVE CLASS MEMBERS;
ALSO, THE PROVISIONS MADE FOR TEACHING THEM

During the early stages of this investigation, a list of criteria were formulated, to be used as guides in the making of certain teaching-learning plans suitable for teaching twelfth-year pupils in general, and for a particular class of such adolescents in the Pulaski High School. Thus, a succeeding step became that of constructing a plan relevant to those criteria. Doing so involved defining appropriate objectives, mapping out various procedures, and devising ways of evaluating progress, all in keeping with the criteria previously adopted. In order to give an account of that part of this undertaking, this chapter is, first, to present a series of sketches, or portraits of the learners for whom the plans were made; second, to outline the year's work envisioned as meeting the needs of those learners; and, third, to describe a unit believed to be representative of those included in the year's work.

Section A: Classroom Portraits

I. Ben

Ben was a tall, nice-looking boy of seventeen, who weighed about 150 pounds. He wore glasses to correct his poor eyesight. He was born in a privileged home and had one younger brother and an adopted sister, who was younger than the two boys. His father had recently had financial difficulties and his mother was in a tuberculosis sanatorium. The children were doing the housekeeping. Ben was a poor student. He was fond of reading and read continuously, even though the teacher might be talking or class discussion might be going on. He was of an argumentative nature and frequently vented opinions on his classmates and teacher. He would not change his opinion even in the face of definite proof. He seemed very slow to understand an assignment. Although he would ask, over and over, for directions; still he never did any written work. He was constantly disturbing others, pulling at their clothes, and stepping on their shoes. He was average in athletic sports. He had an almost passionate attachment to his monogram jacket and would not pull it off at any time except on Sunday when he attended church. He was a member of the Presbyterian church and always went to Sunday School.

II. Fran

Neat, quiet, timid, Fran seemed to be very reticent with the other pupils. She sought the companionship of the teacher rather than of students. She had previously lived on a farm, but her family had recently moved to a small house in a poor, modest section of town. Her voice, naturally low, sounded strained when she would try to speak loud enough for the class to hear. It seemed to be very difficult for her to force herself to speak in class. During the year's work she received the grade of "C" in history, English, and home economics; of "B" in typing. When it came to English and history her life seemed to be a continual struggle. She would study hard at work periods and would rarely turn away from her work at hand.

III. Earnest

Earnest, a handsome, brilliant youngster of average height, had flashing black eyes. He was the only child of parents of average means, and average cultural advantages. Both parents had been through high school and had attended but had not been graduated from college. Earnest's family had moved around the country considerably. He had attended school in Baltimore, but had moved to Pulaski when he was in the tenth grade. He seemed to enjoy writing, both prose and poetry. He was full of energy. Although

he gave indication of having a rather rebellious attitude toward school at the beginning of the year, he seemed to change for the better as time went on and was able to end the year having improved relations with both teachers and peers.

IV. Russell

Russell was a handsome boy, five feet, four inches in height, and about 116 pounds in weight. He was the only child of parents of moderate means, both of whom had finished high school. His was a privileged home. He was a dignified lad, respected and liked by his classmates, who had elected him to be the vice-president of the student council and to hold offices in many other school organizations. He was proficient as a student, especially in respect of oral communication; however, it sometimes seemed difficult for him to understand directions and to organize his thinking. In class he gave excellent cooperation, worked well, and tried to encourage others to do likewise.

V. Janet

Janet was a girl of average height, rather slim, blue-eyed, and blonde. She came from a privileged home. Her mother had been a widow for many years. Her father had been a good business man and had left his wife and their three daughters, of whom Janet was the youngest, in comfortable circumstances. Janet was an excellent student,

thoughtful, courteous, and popular with both teachers and classmates. She always seemed cheerful, resourceful and cooperative, although a bit reticent and, at times, moody.

VI. Chan

Chan was dark, thin, and tall, almost a head taller than the tallest of the other students. He was always ready to do the best he could with any task delegated to him. He was business manager of the high school annual, and held other responsible offices in clubs. He was the youngest child in a family of four. Both parents had finished high school. He was valedictorian for the 1955 graduating class, and was voted the best-all-'round boy in his class.

VII. Alice

Alice was the youngest child in a family of six children. Her father had left her mother and remarried, when Alice was six. After that, her mother had had a struggle to support the children. Her father, although he had several children by his second wife, was friendly with Alice and her brothers and sisters. He provided little or no financial assistance to Alice's mother and her children. Neither parent had finished high school. The mother had reached the seventh grade, the father the ninth. Alice was only average in intelligence and ability.

She was very friendly, however, and was well liked by all of the students. She was greatly interested in people, but very little in study.

VIII. Frank

Frank was the brightest student in the class. He was equally excellent in mathematics and science. When a discussion question or project was referred to him, he would consult every available source for all information and details possible. He came from a privileged home. His mother and father were college graduates. His mother was a teacher and his father owned a prosperous business. He had one younger brother, not so bright as he. Frank was planning to go to college.

IX. Marcia

Marcia did excellent work when under pressure. She was courteous and charming, but, much of the time, she appeared to be sleepy and sluggish. Her parents were wealthy and they dressed her in clothes considerably better than those worn by the girls in her class. Her parents were both college graduates and her one sister had graduated the year before Marcia became a senior. The older sister had been an excellent student, and was vivacious and charming.

X. Vance

Vance was the son of high school graduates. His father was from a higher social class than that of his mother. Vance was of average intelligence, yet he was ambitious and tried very hard to do good work. He was sensitive but tried to be fairminded. He was good natured but occasionally he would lose his temper when he felt that the teacher or some classmate was slighting him.

XI. Robert

Robert, a tall, gangling youth, was very popular with students and teachers. He made many errors in speech but his humorous personality overshadowed that defect. He was elected president of the student body during the 1954-1955 term. He had a talent for speaking and writing in a sort of comical vein. He was slow in understanding assignments, but was willing to work when he finally did understand. He was slow in mathematics, but, as was the case with English, he worked hard at mastering that subject.

XII. Henrietta

Henrietta, a chubby, seventeen-year-old of about five feet two inches, appeared to be slow and sullen. She was very sensitive, seemed to feel that everyone was neglecting her. When Henrietta was fifteen her parents had

adopted a baby boy of two years. Her work was always late. She resented any criticism or suggestions.

XIII. Rose

Rose was from a very underprivileged home. Her mother had never attended school; her father had gone through the fifth grade, only. He was a factory worker. There were four other children in her family. Of the two girls older than Rose, one had attended through the third grade only when she had dropped out of school, the other through the sixth grade. Rose's younger brother could not attend school at all, on account of epilepsy. The two youngest children in Rose's family were, during the 1954-1955 school year, in the first and second grades respectively. Rose was pretty, neat, quiet in class. She appeared to be afraid to speak or ask questions. Her teacher had to watch carefully to see that she understood the assignments. She was very slow in her work but she tried hard.

XIV. Karl

Karl was a thin, wiry lad of seventeen. He was underweight about fifteen or twenty pounds, looked undernourished, and had very sallow skin. He tried hard, but was a very poor student. He picked his friends from social levels superior to his own and seemed to be well accepted by those

he chose. He was pleasant, courteous, and agreeable. He had much talent in art and would contribute frequently to the group, along that line. He was the fourth child in a large family, for which economic life was a struggle.

* * * * *

As the various members of the class were viewed in the manner indicated by the foregoing sketches, there emerged a concept of the typical youth in the group, as follows:

A boy or girl of about seventeen; energetic; interested in sports and games; inclined to shift attention rapidly from one subject to another; anxious to avoid appearing too smart; sensitive; eager to be treated as an adult, even while displaying some of the traits of childhood; greatly concerned about personal appearance; possessed of considerable physical dexterity, and consequently prone to over-exertion; somewhat disposed to rebel against parental and pedagogical authority; in need of a confidential relationship with an understanding adult; greatly concerned over the financial or social status of his or her family; tending to resort at times to profanity or vulgarity as a means of appearing grown up; desirous of having friends among members of the opposite sex; liable to commit himself or herself to some clique or gang; bewildered and somewhat

frightened by the course of events in the atomic age; and awed by the decisions pressing upon him or her respecting religion, homemaking, and vocations.

Section B: Plan for Teaching English Usage

After studying the thirty-four members of the twelfth-year English class, with which this undertaking was concerned, a tentative plan was devised for improving their language usage, one which was to be followed throughout the 1954-1955 school year. The following list of units included those which were actually used, as the year's work developed:

- I. Exploration: using diagnostic tests and exercises; also evaluations of discourse in which both teacher and pupils participated, intended to help each pupil become aware of his greatest needs in language.
- II. Our English Heritage: viewing our cultural possessions in terms of their meaning for people living in the 1950's.
- III. Shakespeare: studying Macbeth and plays other than tragedies.
- IV. Our Democratic Ideals: tracing their development as expressed in English literature.
- V. The Improvement of Human Relations by Means of Understanding the Self: studying personality traits and behavior patterns and their effects.
- VI. A Look into Our Future: envisioning vocational opportunities, potential careers, and economic prospects.

VII. The Year in Review: evaluating pupils' growth in English usage.

When the year's work was planned, certain general objectives were set up in order to meet the needs of pupils in the class with which this study was particularly concerned. Those objectives, mainly concerned with fluency and effectiveness in written and spoken discourse, were formed as a result of further study of the three Criteria for Good English Usage, as set forth in Chapter II of this writing, as follows:

1. Good English usage is that form or manner of discourse -- spoken or written -- which (1) most effectively and agreeably conveys information, (2) gives entertainment, (3) influences the decisions and values of others, or (4) gives vent to the emotions.
2. Good English usage is that form or manner which is appropriate to the situation in which it is used.
3. Good English usage is that form or manner which conforms to realistic standards of elegance, respecting pronunciation, enunciation, syntax, diction, and rhythm.

Other bases for evaluation were those implied by the six Criteria for the Teaching of English, also presented in Chapter II. From study of the two lists, there emerged a statement of pupils' goals, as follows:

I. Abilities:

- a) To express thoughts naturally and fluently.
- b) To use language according to acceptable and appropriate standards.

- c) To recall and apply simple rules of sentence structure, punctuation, and capitalization.
- d) To use idiom effectively.

II. Understandings:

- a) Of essential rules governing sentence and paragraph structure, as well as other aspects of language usage.

III. Appreciations:

- a) For speech or writing suited to the situations in which language is used.
- b) For beauty and elegance in language.
- c) For the power of language to control the course of events.
- d) For the role of language in the development of the self.
- e) For the role of language in fostering good human relations.
- f) For the role of language in the creation and maintenance of human institutions.

In order to attain the objectives just listed, certain procedures and devices were employed, including the following:

Listening to the recording of, or reading, The White Cliffs of Dover, and discussing the characteristics of the English people.

Reading literature of other countries, which might lead to an understanding of the universality of human traits.

Listening to speakers (invited by students) acquainted with the customs and people of other lands.

Displaying and explaining works of art or objects of common use from other countries.

Engaging in round-table discussions of various countries, led by students who have made special studies of such countries.

Keeping a file containing names of people in the community who have traveled in foreign countries, and writing invitations to them to speak to class, from time to time.

Writing letters to foreign embassies or travel bureaus for information on foreign countries.

Listening to radio and television programs dealing with foreign relations.

Participating in panel discussions, class discussions, forums, radio programs (real or pretended), dramatizations, and conversations. Giving directions, telling stories, presenting oral book reviews, making reports of experiences to a group, presenting committee reports, making announcements and notices, and conducting interviews.

Discussing the skills involved in interviewing or being interviewed, and learning how to prepare for an interview.

Seeing movies and travelogues.

Taking part in assembly programs.

Illustrating or playing roles chosen from real-life experiences involving serious reflection and logic.

Practicing, as needed, the mechanics of writing and other forms of expression.

Working together in groups of six on problems and projects to be presented to class in form of group discussion, quizzes, dramatizations, or programs.

Learning to play individual roles while members of groups.

Helping to make decisions in a small group, and learning to discipline individual behavior so as to achieve some form of unified action.

Learning ways of becoming organized in a small group.

Learning to evaluate achievement as a participant in a small group.

Reading selections from literature (early and late) in order to acquire skill in recognizing character traits.

Listening to recordings of old English and middle English discourse.

Playing roles portraying characters found in English literature and trying to imitate the tones and manner of speaking such characters might have used.

Welcoming and introducing speakers who might be visiting classroom.

Practicing the speech and etiquette appropriate to such occasions by having a simple English tea in classroom, from time to time.

Presenting programs based on selections from English literature studied by various groups.

Writing letters of application and answering advertisements.

Taking aptitude and other tests.

Filling out questionnaires and other blanks.

Doing research on chosen fields of study, and writing reports thereof.

Reading and then telling others about people who have been successful in some field of interest to the teller.

Interviewing graduates of or representatives from various colleges.

Writing to colleges for information about admission.

Preparing a bulletin board showing opportunities for scholarships and pointing out the value of having a college education.

Discussing and listing qualities which pupils admire in others; emphasizing personality traits worth developing.

Listing and discussing questions on social behavior.

Collecting, studying, and discussing various columns and articles from newspapers and magazines concerning the problems of boys and girls in friendship, courtship, and marriage.

As a means of facilitating many of the devices listed, the chairs in the classroom were arranged at times in the shape of a horseshoe. Thus, communication was made easier and many of the pupils learned, perhaps for the first time, to include everyone present in the conversation, in a truly civilized manner. There were many stimulating daily sessions; buzz sessions; and get-acquainted meetings with the small groups. As a result, the students were able to acquire greatly improved skills in speaking and reading aloud and to widen their experiences.

* * * * *

In order to show more particularly the manner in which the various units were planned and organized, the

following section presents in detail one of the seven which comprised the year's work:

Section C: The Improvement of Human Relations
by Means of Understanding the Self

This unit arose from an awareness that language usage is related to certain fundamental human necessities; that children and youth especially need to acquire realistic attitudes of self-acceptance; that many young people entering adulthood are burdened with anxiety, hostility, defensive attitudes towards themselves and others; and that such persons frequently are found to have feelings of guilt, inferiority, or other forms of self-disparagement and self-distrust.¹

Awareness of the needs of selfhood, as stated in the preceding paragraph, led to study of the nature of the self; to searching for a useful definition thereof. Thus, the following statement by Jersild² was selected as being particularly appropriate for the unit and as likely to be useful in making plans for its organization:

.... the self is a composite of
thoughts and feelings which constitute

¹The foregoing ideas are adapted from Arthur J. Jersild, Ralph B. Spense, Sloan Wayland, Education as Personal Development, 1954, pp. 4-6.

²Arthur J. Jersild, In Search of Self, 1952, p. 9.

a person's awareness of his individual existence, his conception of who and what he is, and his attitudes regarding his worth as a person. The self includes, among other things, a system of ideas, attitudes, values and commitments. It is a person's total subjective environment. It provides the nucleus on which, and in which and around which experiences are integrated into the uniqueness of the individual.

Since the development of wholesome selfhood was seen to depend so largely upon the extent to which the individual is able to communicate with others, it therefore seemed appropriate to adopt as general objectives of the unit the three criteria which had been adopted previously, as standards for judging good English usage.¹

In order that the thirty-four pupils in the group, for which this unit was planned, might better understand themselves and thus promote personal growth, it was deemed desirable to give each of them, both as individuals and as members of the group, a large measure of responsibility; to establish a pleasant and energetic group spirit among them; and, if possible, to enable every one to respond flexibly and constructively to the individual talents and problems of the others.

It was intended that the unit would develop three

¹See page 50.

major foci: (a) a concept of self; (b) a concept of the value of working with others for the good of all; and (c) a clearer concept, through practice, of the communicative skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

It was hoped that this unit would help pupils to develop more adequate understandings of their own behavior patterns and those of others. Thus, from the first, it was intended that particular attention should be given to the roles of persons who had responsibilities for helping to modify behavior: in schools, designated as principals, teachers, club leaders, class officers, student government officers, athletic leaders, and the like; in homes, parents and other elders; in the community, mayors, councilmen, ministers, policemen, business leaders, and many others.

To carry out the general purposes of the unit, a plan of organization was formulated and put in effect which included certain activities involving the entire group, others involving smaller groups, and still others involving only individuals working alone. As the various groups were organized and as activities were planned, the pupils were told that they were to do planning required in a cooperative manner, under guidance and direction from the teacher; that, at all times, the teacher would reserve the right and duty of approving or disapproving of plans made by the pupils; and that they would be expected to carry

out whatever instructions she might give.

An early step in the organization, then, was to divide the entire group into smaller groups of six or less. The teacher and the pupils participated in choosing the membership of the various groups. In so doing, the former attempted to see that each group had adequate leadership; also that each had members from different socio-economic strata. When that was done, it was suggested that the members of the various sub-groups spend some time becoming acquainted, and collecting all information possible about the others in their respective group. Each group was to have a chairman and a recorder, who were to be selected after several days' delay. That postponement was made in the hope that the pupils selected, after some deliberation, would fit naturally into such positions. The chairmen were to preside over orderly meetings and to exercise leadership in seeing that assignments were carried out. Recorders were to keep concise, accurate records of day-by-day assignments of the work done by their respective groups; of progress made; of work habits of group members; and of absences of individuals.

The small groups were to provide opportunities for division of labor to make it possible to take part in a much richer variety of activities than would be possible for a

person working alone. It was pointed out that, while each member of the group was expected to do the general readings assigned, still their reading might be divided in such a manner as to lessen the responsibility for some, while others were improving their skills covering a wide range of materials in a limited time. A further provision relating to the pupils' reading was for some to do more intensive work on certain reading selections than others, so that they might be able to serve as leaders for their groups, in connection with discussions and analyses of assigned readings. Thus, in the work on special topics, it was possible to arrange matters so that different persons would cover different references and report back to the entire group. The same arrangement was also instituted respecting the use of films, making first-hand observations, and using other sources of information.

As the small groups were being organized, the teacher tried to bear in mind the principle that all members of a class could not be expected to be equally capable of attaining equal mastery of subject matter, or of the same achievement of goals related to language usage. That view seemed to be in keeping with the views of the authors of The Language Arts,¹

¹The Commission on the English Curriculum, The English Language Arts, 1954, p. 131.

learning activities for the groups were planned so that "they would be wide enough in scope and deep enough in meaning to appeal to the diverse interests of the individuals." Thus, each group was expected to undertake a project or some sort of creative activity which would be an outgrowth of the readings and observations of its members, concerned with human behavior patterns; an undertaking which would involve reading, writing, speaking, and listening. All such activities were to be concerned with personality traits, good or bad, brought out by incidents from various writings, group discussions, and direct observations of responses of individuals to situations in real life. Furthermore, the pupils were told that each activity was expected to pay its way by teaching them some needed social skill or understanding, as well as to further their mastery of language usage. Furthermore, it was expected that each small group would share with the entire group the results of its study and work; that whatever it undertook should bear promise of being helpful to others not included in its membership. Members of small groups were cautioned to plan carefully the contributions which they were to make to the large group; that they select the individual who was to make their report early enough to enable him, with the assistance of the other members of his group, to get his material in as succinct and as

effective a form as possible; also that those reporting should speak in such a manner that every person in the room could hear, and to address the entire group rather than the teacher or others who might be participating in the program.

As the plan of the unit was put into effect, it became apparent that the principal function of the small groups would be that of fostering greater understandings of the nature of the self; that, in the more intimate conditions prevailing therein, the shy, under-confident person might learn to overcome his reticence and take his rightful place among his peers. As for the entire group, it was to serve as a forum for the presentation of new learnings and the airing of doubts and opinions; also, as a means of sharing ideas generally, of locating supplementary information of concern to all members, of analyzing problems with which individual groups had been unable to cope, of reaching common agreements, and of making decisions affecting everyone. As was the case with the small groups, the large group was an educational instrument which was improved by the cooperative efforts of all the members.

At times the entire group would concern itself with some specific problem. For example, at one point in the unit, the group became interesting in writing a letter to

the Superintendent of Schools, to ask his permission to erect an athletic sign near the public highway. Accordingly, the letter was planned, discussed, worked over, and criticized by the boys and girls. Because they wanted their letter to be both effective and elegant, they sought advice in respect of using correct form, making clear and courteous statements, having each sentence serve its purpose, employing whatever punctuation might be needed to make meanings clear, and conforming to correct spelling. Text-books were consulted many times and a number of discussions were held before, satisfied with its letter, the group was willing to forward its communication to the Superintendent.

Even though the basic concept of organization employed in the unit was that of shared responsibility, that notion did not preclude each individual from having his unique responsibilities. Thus, each was expected to attend class; to participate in the work of his small group; to read the required readings;¹ to keep an account of his main activities in the course and his reflections on them;²

¹ Each pupil was assigned about eighty selections in the textbook, besides other literature not included therein.

² That account was a running narrative of the activities in which the pupil engaged. It was a continuous critical report of his day-by-day activities, and his reflections on them, referred to familiarly as his "CCR". It will be described further on in this writing.

to keep a bibliography of readings; and to engage in such other activities as might seem appropriate in his case.

In order to promote better understanding of the manner in which individuals were to conduct themselves, the following statement concerning individual rights and obligations was adopted by the pupils:

1. To work alone or in a group, but to have his plans approved by the group.
2. To join his group only when prepared.
3. To participate regularly.
4. To cooperate with both the chairman and other small group members.
5. To get the teacher's help when the group feels the need.
6. To refrain from irrelevant conversation during work periods.
7. To keep a record¹ of participation, references consulted, and time spent.

It was deemed to be important, in addition to defining the responsibilities of groups and individuals, to form definite concepts of the teacher's role in the conduct of the unit. As a basis for planning her activities the teacher first assumed that the pupils would want to learn and to improve; that they would keep on trying as long as

¹Recognition for some of the ideas embodied in this list is due to Mary Bolyan, author of "Enjoying Life More through Group Dynamics", English Journal, Vol. XLVIII, No. 6 (September, 1954), pp. 308, 311.

they appeared to be making some progress. That assumption, in turn, influenced her to resolve to withhold or delay criticism of earnest but initially diffuse efforts of pupils, in order to make the learning process seem more rewarding and satisfying. A further assumption was to the effect that children would be found to have more potential courage and capacity for self-realization than had been recognized in much of current educational practice.

A major concern, while getting the unit started was that pupils might have and use adequate materials with which to carry on investigations and from which to draw new ideas. It was realized that, although all had been in school at least ten years, many had not become familiar with such resources as dictionaries, encyclopedias, the Reader's Guide, and the like. Thus, they were advised to explore many ways for improving both their store of information and their language skills by means of observation and practice, discussions with others, records which others have made of their own experiences, books, plays, films, television, magazines, newspapers, and many others; also, that they exploit the reference materials to be found in the school library and elsewhere.

It was pointed out to pupils that people, as well as books, were sources of wisdom and knowledge; that the

new Pulaski High School and the Town of Pulaski offered rich possibilities of assistance because, in both there were many persons possessing Unique skills; that there was not only the school library available to their use, but also a town library, churches, theatres, and many other places wherein to glean insights concerning human aspirations and endeavors.

However, in addition to the broad sources to which attention was called, it was deemed valuable to have a common core of reference which all could utilize. For that reason, certain selections were chosen from a textbook on English literature,¹ also from literature not included therein; selections with which all pupils were expected to become familiar. Those readings were chosen with a view to their having both range of interest and consistency of approach. Thus, a list of readings intended for all was given out at the first class meeting.

As an integral part of plans of the unit, tentative provisions were made for evaluating the achievement of the pupils to be engaged therein. Such provisions were to judge their attainment, in part, by means of the general objectives² set up for the entire year's work; in part, by

¹Dudley, Miles, Robert C. Pooley, Literature and Life in England, 1948.

²See Section B of this chapter.

certain other objectives which were considered especially appropriate for this particular unit, and implied by the major foci around which the unit itself had been developed originally, as follows:

I. Abilities:

- a) To deal successfully and agreeably with other people.
- b) To organize and compose a report, either written or oral.
- c) To listen attentively and with discrimination to spoken discourse.

II. Understandings:

- a) Of the nature of self.
- b) Of ways in which groups may be organized to work toward common goals.
- c) Of the causes and effects of various human behavior patterns.

III. Appreciations:

- a) For team work in which every one strives for the good of all.
- b) For goodness and truth, as manifested in human behavior.

After the unit had been planned tentatively by the teacher and had been discussed with the pupils, it began to take form by and through the activities of the entire class, of the individuals in the class therein, of the teacher, and of the small groups of six or less into which members of the class had been organized at the outset.

Some of the activities of the teacher were to remind the pupils, early in the unit, that they were expected to seize every opportunity to develop greater skill in writing clearly and speaking effectively. At the same time, she pointed out that such goals could be sought while working on various tasks of particular interests to the pupils, especially those concerned with their study of personality. She made it clear at all times that she was in charge of the situation and was to be consulted in connection with all undertakings, whether of individuals or of groups. However, she tried to make the pupils understand that she welcomed opportunities to discuss problems with the pupils; that she would be available to meet with the small groups or with individuals both during class and at other times. Occasionally, she would contribute ideas, suggest various activities, make general assignments, give precautionary rules, and so forth.

All the while the unit was getting started, as well as later on, the teacher used every means, short of leaving them without guidance, to encourage pupils to make plans for themselves and their groups.

During the early stages of the unit, a panel discussion was presented by some of the more capable pupils, one from each of the small groups. That discussion was entitled,

"Good Suggestions for Group Procedure."

Preparing for and conducting the panel served as a lesson in research for those who participated, since doing so necessitated their doing much work and gathering considerable information in preparation for the occasion. The discussion also served to inform the entire class concerning the values of group dynamics.

The participants¹ on the panel were:

Chen: "A" student; business manager of the school yearbook; valedictorian.

Robert: "B" student; deliberate; humorous; president of student body.

Frank: "A" student; excellent worker; winner of science scholarship.

Rex: "A" student; winner of senior English award; vice president of student body.

Earnest: brilliant lad; a good worker when interested; high I.Q.; bit radical.

Such questions² as the following were discussed by the panel of which the pupils named were members:

¹ All names used are fictitious. See Chapter III for descriptions of some of the participants.

² The outline used was from a brochure prepared by Arthur J. Jersild, Ralph B. Spense, and Sloan Wayland, and published by Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City, pp. 7-9.

WHAT ARE THE GROUPS FOR?

To select, define, and work together on common problems.

To develop ideas and insights which will help solve the problems.

To identify problems and to get to know them.

To discover helpful resources.

EACH GROUP MEMBER

1. Helps decide on specific problems most needed and ways of working as a group.
2. Contributes ideas and suggestions related to problems.
3. Listens to what other members say and seeks helpful ideas and insights.
4. Requests clarification when needed.
5. Observes the group process and makes suggestions.
6. Assumes various roles as needed.

WHAT ARE SOME ESSENTIALS?

Clear formulation of goals.

Work on specific problems rather than general problems.

Plan in terms of time available and all resources.

Maintain an atmosphere which is permissive and conducive to full participation.

Each individual member participates.

Get acquainted.

HOW DO WE SECURE BEST RESULTS?

Each member does his own thinking.

The leader serves as a guide.

Each tries to think creatively rather than combatively.

Contributions are challenged if not accepted.

Inquiry is made concerning contributions not understood.

Values of different opinions are integrated.

Special care is taken to be fair to minorities.

Concepts are defined with illustrations.

Issues are restated when necessary.

Often it is better to be silent, or pause for reconsideration.

Available time is utilized to best advantage.

No one is to monopolize the discussion.

Ideas, experiences, and differences most worth discussing are to be stressed.

Summarize (1) whenever major point is finished;
(2) whenever discussion is long-drawn out or confused;
(3) before close of period. Use words of members of the group.

All members of the group interact with the others.

Everyone should trust the group; also he should remember that each member is superior to each other member in at least one respect, and that the experience of all is richer than the experience of any one. The group as a whole is more farsighted than its best member.

The panel discussion just described seemed to make clearer the plan of the unit, in the minds of all the pupils. Thus, the various small groups were able to begin formulating plans for their own projects. At that point, the teacher suggested certain activities, some of which

might be adopted by the various groups, as follows:

1. Making individual personality charts and sketches.
2. Listing and studying people, real or fictitious, who have been influenced by friendships, good or bad.
3. Drawing character sketches which point out desirable or undesirable traits.
4. Enumerating the ten most desirable traits for getting along with people.
5. Discussing the value of having a variety of social relationships.
6. Identifying traits of character which have contributed to the happiness or unhappiness of individuals.
7. Describing traits of character which have made people in the community successful.
8. Pointing out the character traits of authors.
9. Weighing the desirability of having membership in clubs and its effect upon personal development.
10. Deciding what it is that makes a person a desirable group member.
11. Discussing mass media of communication.
12. Reading selections on the list of books and other materials to be read by all.

The foregoing suggestions were intended to serve as stimuli for discussions and other activities within the groups of six into which the members of the class had been organized. The thought underlying the giving of such suggestions was that wisdom and knowledge might emerge from the pupils' sharing of ideas found in their reading

and individual speculation concerning human values and human personality. It was hoped that the activities listed would, in some manner, create greater understanding of common problems and deeper concern for the welfare of one another; that they would increase mutual appreciations among adolescents belonging to widely varied social and economic situations, and having markedly different cultural attainments.

In keeping with the intention just expressed, one of the groups became interested in discussing the subject of Character Development Through the Reading of Good Literature. Thus, they searched writings of fiction to find stories appropriate for the building of strong character in growing children. They made a further search for poetry which might be regarded as character building. Finally, they compiled a booklet of fifty short stories, the reading of which might, in their estimation, have desirable effects on youth. In doing so, they prefaced each of the stories with an appropriate poem. They then presented their compilation to the class with an explanation of how they had conducted their research. They also told some of the representative stories and recited the accompanying poems.

Another group undertook an interesting dramatization based on the plan of Gray's "Elegy." The group had made

large cardboard shapes indicative of tombstones. Hidden behind each (seated on the floor) was a representative of a deceased English poet. Then, as a modern poet walked through the graveyard, he read from each of the "stones" in turn. A head would then appear above the "stone" and its owner would converse with the poet, telling him about various phases of his life and of the works he had written; finally reciting for him a few of his favorite lines. With some, there was conversation about the glories of the literature of the past, as well as of yesteryear's drama. The ghost poets also took their turns hearing about the literature of the Twentieth Century.

The poem, "The Cotter's Saturday Night," was the inspiration for a dramatization by a third group. First, a play was written, suitable for the characters belonging to the poem. Then, with a show of enthusiasm which continued throughout the project, plans were made to present their work. Unfortunately, those chosen to create roles in the play performed their parts poorly, due to lack of preparation. However, they did succeed in bringing out the theme of wholesome personal relationships and love leading to satisfying lives.

A serious and interesting program was presented by a fourth group. On it there were six speakers, each of

whom chose a "key" subject in the high school curriculum and told how it would unlock the door to success in some specified vocation. Each then pinned a golden key on the blackboard over the name of the "subject key," tied to the "vocation."

A fifth group became interested in the subject of segregation in the public schools, along racial lines. After its members had gathered information and opinions on that subject, they prepared and presented a spirited panel discussion thereon. The members of the panel gave evidence of having read widely, and each had written a paper in preparation for his presentation. One member was able to relate his experiences while attending a school having Negroes among its pupils.

A quiz on English literature, presented by a small group, and patterned after the television program, "Beat the Clock," proved to be stimulating to the entire class. Nearly all the pupils seemed to enjoy attempting to answer the questions prepared for them, questions which covered a wide range of literary subjects.

In addition their work with the small groups which were organized as a distinct feature of the unit, the individual pupils in the class undertook various tasks and projects as their own responsibilities. For example, one

boy wrote a group of original poems. They were not very good, as poetry, but they were his efforts and he was proud of them. He read them aloud to the class. It was felt that, by his creative effort and participation, he had gained satisfaction and courage.

Another pupil, greatly interested in art, made a booklet devoted to the history of art, entitled "From Cavemen to Architect." The booklet contained a short summary of the history of art which began as far back (quoting the words of Sheldon Cheney) "....as the roots of human culture have been traced, in history and prehistory...", and which continued on to modern times. She had sections in her booklet on Prehistoric, "Modern " Primitive, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Oriental, Byzantine, and Modern Art. Each section contained written explanations, historical facts and illustrative sketches of her own making. "The Reindeer," on the cave of Font-de-Saume, France, 15,000 B.C.; "The Woolly Rhinoceros," a drawing at Font-de-Gaume; "The Rock Painting," by the Australian Bushmen; "The Alaskan Indian Mask; Mountain Monster;" "Queen Nurfetete," a limestone Egyptian painting having life-sized eyes of rock crystal, 1375-1358, B.C. (Berlin); "Greek Sculpture;" "Marble Portrait of a Man," Roman, First Century, B.C.; "Head of Lohan," glazed statue, A.D. 1000;

and so forth. All pictures were her own renditions and all were surprisingly good. Concerning her work with art, she said, "I have, because I found an interest here, discovered a way to express myself by means other than words."

Individuals engaged in other work which was somewhat uniform in nature, in addition to special undertakings corresponding to the two just cited. Among the activities which everyone pursued was that of reading selections from standard English literature. To assist pupils in reading effectively and with satisfaction to themselves, they were given instruction on the techniques involved. For example, they were taught to skim rapidly through materials until they had found key ideas and concepts; then, when they had located materials relevant to whatever problems they might have at hand, to give full attention thereto.

Another responsibility which devolved upon the individuals in the class was that of making a Continuing Critical Report or "CCR," as it was familiarly called. Making that report constituted the major part of the written work done in the unit. It contained the day-to-day reactions of the individual maintaining it, to the situations he might be encountering; both in reading and in actual, first-hand experiences, especially those

concerned with class sessions, activities of the small work groups, assigned readings, and events outside of class which seemed related thereto. Reading those reports helped the teacher appraise the levels of insight which the pupils were having, particularly in connection with their studies of personality. Pupils were asked to submit their reports for review, from time to time, and thus give the teacher better bases for guiding their efforts.

In order to acquaint the pupils with the nature of that obligation, each was given a mimeographed sheet describing the Report and explaining in detail how it was to be kept. After the sheets were distributed, their contents were read and explained orally, at considerable length. Questions were asked and answered. Words which pupils did not understand were studied by consulting the dictionaries and by holding class discussions. The sheet is reproduced, as follows:

CONTINUING CRITICAL REPORT

This report will be referred to as the CCR. Keeping it is one of the major activities for this six weeks. Members of the class will participate in the regular class sessions and small group activities, consult reference materials, and engage in such other activities as will increase one's understanding of the self. As one means of the translation of these experiences into an integrated educational experience, each student will prepare a CCR.

The C.C.R. will be made up of entries prepared throughout the six weeks. It will be a running account of your response to the activities in which you engage. The account should be a critical reaction and appraisal of those experiences which are of most significance to you. With entries made, the Report at end of the six weeks will reflect your development during this period.

Since this project should be built around the area with which you are most concerned, the Report ought to reflect your increased understanding in approaching the problems of most importance to you. In order that the teacher may be of the most service to you in the development of the CCR, she will ask that it be turned in at specified times for criticism and guidance. The CCR ought to include attention to the wide range of activities related to the course: the class session, small group meetings, readings, activities, and personal problems.

There are a number of elements which ought to characterize your report:

1. Range: Present situations covering a variety of activities; class discussions, small group meetings, other classes, class readings, general readings, personal behavior, and others.
2. Pertinent sampling: Do not try to cover **every** area. Select those which are most pertinent for you.
3. Frankness: Deal with problems in which you are personally involved. Make an analysis of your own behavior. Use small group and class situations as illustrative of your opportunities for improvement.
4. Depth of Ideas: Use ideas from readings and other sources. Compare approaches of various authors to the same idea.

5. Continuity: Compare later insights with earlier reactions. Experience growth in mastering ideas both in terms of clarity and of application to situations.
6. Freshness: Try to present materials so they will be stimulating and interesting to read. The writer must have the reader in mind.
7. Application of concepts: Concepts developed in class and in the readings ought to be critically analyzed with reference to your own problems.
8. Analytical approach: Descriptive materials should be held to a minimum with the major focus in analysis, approach and evaluation.

The CCR's will serve as the major basis for evaluation of your written work for this six weeks.

Use the dictionary freely.

In addition to his reading and his work with the CCR's each individual in the class was expected to make a special oral communication to the class. Frequently, those communications were reports of individuals' projects, such as that given by the pupil, previously referred to, in connection with her study of art. A still further individual undertaking was that of preparing a bibliography of the reading each had done.

* * * * *

A prominent aspect of the unit was that of evaluation. At the beginning, the members of the class had agreed that some tests and other means of evaluation should be used

to gauge their attainment of objectives. Accordingly, the teacher provided certain tests of her own making, to which the pupils responded and thus she and they were enabled to measure their mastery of some of the goals agreed upon. At all times both the teacher and the pupils were expected to join in evaluating the progress the latter had made as individuals. In so doing, considerable reliance was put upon informal observations of the pupils' performance in connection with the five kinds of activities in which each had engaged, as follows:

- 1) Making the Continuing Critical Reports.
- 2) Presenting special individual oral communications.
- 3) Sharing in special group oral communications.
- 4) Making bibliographies of readings.
- 5) Engaging in class and group discussions of readings.

When pupils attempted to evaluate their work, they would judge the quality of the efforts of individuals, small groups, and the entire class. Then, they would try to envision ways of improving their performance in all three respects.

As for evaluating the entire unit, and awarding school marks to indicate quality of achievement, it had been agreed in advance that pupils reaching minimum expectations would be "passed." Students not fulfilling them

would be given the mark of "Incomplete" and allotted a period of time in which to meet such standards.

Although pupils were encouraged to learn language structure, and to use language as elegantly as possible, still the main concern at all times was to foster greater fluency and effectiveness in communication, in accordance with three criteria for English usage which were set up earlier in the study. Thus, the written tests and other devices employed by the teacher were useful for evaluation only to a limited extent. Therefore, reliance had to be put, whenever it was desired to appraise pupils' progress, on more informal measures. Among such means of appraising growth, the most important by far were the CCR's kept by the pupils. It was from entries made therein by individual pupils that both they and the teacher were able to judge progress and discover needs for improvement.

In order to show the manner in which the CCR's tended to reveal pupils' learning, the following extracts from various individuals' reports are quoted:

Marcia¹

I am seated in the kitchen writing a few pages of my CCR. As I look around me I think how much character a kitchen can have. I would rather be in the kitchen than in any

¹ See page 45.

room in our house. Our kitchen is decorated in yellow and brown. There are pine bars across the ceiling. There is a brick fireplace on one side. On the hearth are all kinds of antique gadgets. There is an iron teakettle, an old iron pot, a copper teakettle, an old waffle-iron, a candle mold, a lemon squeezer, an apple peeler and some old molds. On the mantle there are some oil lamps, some old platters, and an old coffee grinder. In the glass cupboards mother has her collection of old bone china. In another corner there is an old flour bin and hanging above it is a spice cabinet. Near the door is an old wooden churn. Next to the wall there is an old "hutch bench," which tilts up to make a table. In the middle of the kitchen there is an old lazy susan table which we eat on. It is made out of wood that is about one hundred and fifty years old. As I sit here writing I feel as though I were in another world, I feel as if I were using these things which our ancestors used long ago.

Tom

What is democracy? Often I have asked myself this question. After pondering over it a while I began to think of our forefathers in the American Revolution who died so a democracy could be born. That is why today some men are proud to fight for our country, to stand up for the precepts on which it was founded and make this a better world, a world of peace for those who follow, our children and our children's children.

Janet¹

A large part of the world is made up of adults. It is smart even from a selfish viewpoint, to try to understand and get along well with adults. Greater responsibilities come to

¹ See p. 43.

each of us teenagers year by year. Are we getting ready today to accept responsibilities as adults tomorrow? I believe so.

Milton

I have enjoyed being in this class with all the fine pupils. I think I have learned things in this class that will help me later in life as well as now. I have enjoyed doing my work for the teacher. One thing that has helped me is that I have learned to get along with people better. I have enjoyed reading the poems and all the other work we had to do.

¹
Fren

I enjoyed working on my C.C.R. I shall never have it finished. I shall go on working on it all of my life. Every day I see things that must go into my report. I shall improve it as it grows larger and I will do all that's in my power to help the people of the world that was never as lucky to have the lovely Instructor that set me to thinking about the different phases of life.

James

It seems to me that I do not have as much ambition as other people my own age. Right now it worries me. I wonder if I will always be like that. There just doesn't seem to be quite enough drive in me, but really, I think that I will eventually obtain it.

¹See p. 42.

Lucy¹

I don't want you to think that I look for everything bad in my fellow classmates for I don't but I have noticed if we look we can find something good in everyone and I am trying to find the best qualities of persons around me and blend them into my life.

Fred

My view of group discussion is that groups are not successful unless they have a good leader or are under supervision of the teacher. In our group we did not accomplish anything and was in my opinion a loss of time. Little interest was brought out and very few members expressed their ideas.

Clara

All of the group projects were interesting. Its always interesting to me, when a group of people, or an individual can begin with absolutely nothing and have such interesting results. I think each member of the different groups seemed genuinely interested in his work. Each person in our class had the same material to work with, and each came, in conclusion, to some different feeling about the work he has been doing.

Ottis²

I think that everyone listened to me as if there was interest. I was afraid of getting mixed up and everyone would laugh at me and then I couldn't go on. But I appreciate the way the

¹This piece of writing came after the pupil received the following comment on her paper: "Criticisms do not have to be destructive. Look for some of the good points."

²See Chapter V p. 94.

student paid attention to my talk, because it helps a lot. It makes you forget the nervousness of your body.

Curt

At the assembly this morning, Miss D..... G..... painted a very interesting and bright picture of her native land.

She made one remark stating that it wasn't beautiful in its buildings and such, but she went on to say that the flowers and trees and even the beach and waters were beautiful and as for me I have never seen man made articles that would even be compared with Gods natural resources.

Wanda

"My Heart Leaps Up," is a beautiful poem, written to express the joy when seeing a rainbow. When I see a rainbow, I think of the promise made by God, that not ever again would He destroy the earth by water. And I am reminded that the legend of "the pot of gold at the rainbow's end," will not stand against the storms of doubt, but the promises of God are never broken.

As I read the poem, "We Are Seven," an incident which actually happened flashed into my mind. This is rather funny, and does not connect directly with the poem. As I recall, a woman was asking about the renting of some rooms in an apartment house. The landlord asked her if she had any children, and the woman wiped her eyes and said that all of her children were in the graveyard. The woman was permitted to rent the rooms and was given a two year lease. Within a matter of a few minutes, the house rang with the laughter of many children. The landlord inquired, and the woman said that they were her children who had been playing in the graveyard.

After the CCR's had been thoroughly reviewed by the teacher, they furnished the bases for judging the manner in which the individuals concerned had met the specific objectives of the course and of the unit to which those reports belonged. Accordingly, each pupil's achievement was judged in respect of each of those objectives, as follows:

Abilities: Every pupil was judged in terms of his ability: "to express thoughts naturally and fluently; to use language according to acceptable and appropriate standards; to recall and apply simple rules of sentence structure, punctuation, and capitalization; and to use idiom effectively."

Obviously, the children's writing in the CCR's, some of which are reproduced in this chapter without corrections, gives some indication of the extent to which they attained the specific objectives under this category. Those specimens seemed to manifest considerable "fluency" and capacity for "natural expression." Obviously, they violated many standards of English usage. However, their level of writing, in respect of such standards, seemed to be "appropriate" for their ages and school placement, and was therefore "acceptable." Since attainment of the objective regarding simple rules of sentence structure,

punctuation, and capitalization was not sought primarily in connection with the CCR's no great amount of concern was felt when it was discovered that those reports contained many violations of such rules. However, the attention of pupils was called to such violations and, in consequence, some improvement was noted. Somewhat the same situation existed regarding the objective, "to use idiom effectively," in that few pupils attained high levels of elegance in reference to idiomatic usage. Still, some pupils made marked improvements in that respect and all made some.

Understandings: As the children's writing discloses, it seemed that all had not reached an understanding "of essential rules governing sentence and paragraph structure." Some had trouble keeping the correct relationships between subjects and predicates, respecting number and person. More had trouble using the tenses of verbs appropriate to the various contexts of their sentences. Nearly all experienced some difficulty with the inflections of the word, who. However, considerable improvement was noted with regard to sentence structure, especially after individuals had become aware of rules governing such matters. The same situation was found respecting paragraph structure. Ideas tended to be expressed without relating to one another. Many did not attempt to use paragraph structure, but

expressed their thought in isolated sentences.

Appreciations: It seemed that the pupils made their greatest gains with regard to appreciations. All seemed to put a high value on "speech or writing suited to the situations in which language is used." Most of the pupils, to some degree, appreciated "beauty and elegance in language." Nearly all came to appreciate "the power of language to control the course of events." Everyone appeared to be impressed, as never before, by the importance of the "role of language in the development of the self," and "in fostering good human relations." Finally, many of the group glimpsed, perhaps for the first time, the importance of "language in the creation and maintenance of human institutions."

In somewhat similar vein, the achievement of pupils was measured in respect of the specific learning objectives set up for the unit, The Improvement of Human Relations by Means of Understanding the Self, as follows:

Abilities: Nearly all pupils in the subject group seemed to have learned how "to deal successfully and agreeably with other people." At least three-quarters of them learned better how "to organize and compose a written or oral report." Everyone seemed to have learned better how to "listen attentively and with discrimination to spoken discourse;" some far more than others.

Understandings: All pupils developed some awareness of the "nature of self" and of "ways in which groups may be organized to work toward common goals." However, differences in degree of attainment respecting those understandings were marked. Many began to perceive the "causes and effects of various behavior patterns." In a somewhat undeveloped fashion, they grew to be more conscious of the importance and significance of behavior on the part of human beings.

Appreciations: In some few cases phenomenal growth took place respecting their value for "team work in which every one strives for the good of all;" some previously rugged individualists seem to have made a complete about-face and to have entered wholeheartedly into conjoint activities. All seemed to have made some progress toward attaining this particular goal. Likewise, when the members of the group began to understand some of the meanings underlying human behavior, they seemed to develop a much greater appreciation for "goodness and truth" as manifested in such behavior.

* * * * *

In this chapter, portraits of some of the representative members of an English class have been presented. Next, have been given the seven units which were devised

in order to foster better English usage on the part of the members of that class, together with a catalogue of procedures and devices used in connection with those units. Then, to indicate the manner in which the class was taught, one unit was described in detail. The conclusion of the chapter deals with a description of the provisions made for evaluating the achievements of pupils, and contains brief extracts from their writing as exhibits of the bases used in such evaluation.

Chapter V, which follows, offers an evaluation of the manner in which the class was taught, based on the six criteria for judging the teaching of good language usage, developed earlier in the study.

CHAPTER V

PRESENTATION OF CERTAIN CASE STUDIES; EVALUATION OF THE METHOD USED TO TEACH TWELFTH-YEAR PUPILS, BASED ON SIX CRITERIA FOR JUDGING THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH USAGE; ALSO, SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

In order to facilitate evaluation of the method used to instruct the subjects of this investigation, a number of case studies were prepared. In so doing, the intention was to show how the means employed by the teacher seemed to affect the behavior of specific individuals. Thus, this chapter is to present those cases; also to evaluate the method used, in the light of data given in those cases and of other information offered earlier in this writing.

A. CASE STUDIES:

Ben¹

The teacher read some of the beautiful passages of Wordsworth's "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality" and explained them to the class. Ben looked interested, and put his reading aside. He asked such questions as the

¹ See Ch. IV, p. 41.

following: "Do you believe that people will know each other in heaven? How can a person be sure he is going to heaven? Are you afraid? Aren't you afraid for people you love?"

The teacher answered his questions, giving him all the assurance she could. She suggested that he read certain famous passages on the subject; she also suggested that he interview his minister (of whom he was very fond) and report his findings to the class. She remembered that his mother was very ill and in a tuberculosis sanatorium.

The next day, Ben handed in his homework. While discussing a certain issue (assigned) with his group he became flustered when he misspelled a word, and was teased by the other members. He borrowed a dictionary, removed himself from the group and studied quietly alone for the remainder of the period. He worked on a paper which the group chairman had assigned.

At the end of class, when he passed her desk, the teacher asked Ben about his mother. Ben seemed to want to talk about her.

Next day Ben read his paper to the group. Some members of the group laughed at it. He took their laughter good naturedly.

Ben handed in four written book reviews: two classics,

one book on opera, and one historical novel. The teacher asked him questions about each book. He seemed interested in discussing them with her.

When Ben's group gave its oral communication he was on the panel. He was rather loud and dogmatic when expressing his opinion.

Ben asked the teacher to read more poetry to the class. When she did, he listened attentively and entered into the discussion afterward in an orderly manner.

The teacher gave a test. Ben appeared to be struggling over it but was able to finish only a part of it. The teacher wrote suggestions for improvement on all the papers, including Ben's, and returned them to the students to be improved before making a final check. Ben's paper came in that time for a passing grade. Although the paper was far below average the teacher found something commendable in it, and praised Ben for that part; she did not mention the rest.

The next day (Wednesday) the teacher announced that she would like to see the C.C.R.'s¹ by the first of the week so that she might offer suggestions, and see that everyone was working in the right direction.

¹ See Chapter IV, p. 77.

A group of bright students gave a panel discussion¹ on the benefits and expectancies of group dynamics. Ben listened attentively. He asked no questions.

Monday, he checked the files to see how many of his required book reviews he had handed in and what types of book he had yet to read. He decided to read a book on etiquette next.

Later, Ben appeared to be entering into the group life. Most of the time, he was discussing (not arguing) with the group the issues brought up and offering suggestions. When he did so, the group appeared to listen to his contributions.

He was still loud and argumentative at times, but he was evidently trying to cooperate and to identify himself with the group. He would take part in the activity of the moment and read in class only on the regular reading day.

Ottis

Ottis was a thin, pale-looking, seventeen-year-old senior. He weighed 130 and was about five feet, six inches in height. His mother was dead and his father had remarried. Ottis had two step brothers, ten and seven. His parents were uneducated. His father was a carpenter who owned a

¹ See Chapter IV, p. 67.

small lumber company. Ottis was very quiet, but friendly enough when given the lead. His English usage was much below average both in written and oral communications. He tended to ignore the rules of English in all of his discourse, yet he would always listen attentively in class and try to follow directions. He belonged to the Primitive Baptist Church, and told the teacher on one occasion that his church did not believe in teaching the Scriptures.

The teacher stressed clarity of thought for both oral and written work, so, when Ottis's papers were handed in, she was somewhat dismayed to see how poorly he had expressed his ideas. However, she commented only on what was good and withheld criticism of the faulty. Soon after, she suggested that he study some easy textbooks on usage improvement. Later, she would write notes on the margins of his papers, pointing out specific ways of improving his work. She also asked him to let her explain when he did not understand suggestions. He would always look up the references, would often come to her for explanations, and invariably would hand her a correction sheet¹ on the

¹ The correction sheet was a device for emphasizing improved usage. It contained sentences and words, previously used incorrectly, set forth in the proper manner.

following day.

One day, Ottis closed his literature textbook and rewrote in his own words a selection which he especially liked. He was not pleased with the results. The teacher suggested comparing his writing with the original and then writing a criticism of his paper. The results were interesting. Ottis decided to close his book and try again. The second paper showed some improvement.

Ottis was selected to give practice dictation to his group. The group ruled that he was to read no more than twice the sentences used in that exercise. When the dictation was over, he collected and checked the papers in order to evaluate himself and the members of his group. From the results, he and the others in his group decided that he needed practice in giving dictation and that his colleagues needed practice in taking it. They decided to do more of the same kind of work, giving others besides Ottis an opportunity to dictate.

The group selected a subject, "The High School Prom," and each member wrote a discussion of it, as viewed by another. Ottis gave the viewpoint of the teacher. The pupils read their papers before the class. Ottis' paper showed some improvement in clarity of expression and in organization. It showed that much work was still needed in grammar and usage, but there were some improvements there, too.

Ottis handed in his C.C.R. for guidance and suggestions. His organization and sentence structure showed improvement. His use of tenses still needed to be made better. The teacher suggested special references in certain attractive books on English usage which she kept on her desk. Those books contained much illustrative material showing correct and incorrect ways of expression.

Ottis had covered a wide range of material in his C.C.R. and he showed much growth and some wisdom in his thinking processes.

On one occasion, Ottis was giving the plots of ten plays which he had read, to the teacher. He paused in the midst of his oral communication to ask if it was correct to say I had come instead of I had came. The teacher realized that, at last, he had become sensitive to correct usage. Then, the pupil and teacher paused, in the midst of the oral communication regarding the ten plays, to discuss the matter of "tense." Ottis was full of questions by then and was ready to learn what accepted standard usage called for; that the helping verbs, have, had, has are used with come (not came), seen (not saw), taken (not took), and that come, saw, and took should stand alone.

After the discussion of tense, Ottis continued his

communication, with pauses, halting and slow, feeling carefully for the right words and tense formations.

The goal of correct usage was a long way ahead but, at last, he was conscious of discords and sensitive to the beauty of words.

Janet¹

Janet asked the teacher's help in writing a letter of application for membership on the Youth Council.² Her action in doing so seemed characteristic, not only of her disposition to take part in current affairs, but of her tendency to make the best of resources at hand. The resulting letter seemed to have been effective, since she was awarded the coveted membership. About that time, she was elected chairman of her group in English Class. In that capacity, she encouraged and helped the recorder of the group to write the weekly reports of its activities and progress, for submission to the teacher. Throughout the school, she was regarded as an "A" student. As well as doing her own work and guiding that of the group, she helped the individual members by listening to their

¹ See Chapter IV, p. 43.

² The Youth Council was a group which anticipated being called upon to administer, in simulated fashion, the Town of Pulaski on Youth Day.

discourse, and by giving constructive criticism and helpful suggestions respecting their reports to the class. She tried to see that each member contributed as best he could to the whole group.

The teacher called on her to do some special research work; then to speak, with other outstanding students, on the panel which gave information to the class concerning the work of Wordsworth. In that way, Janet had the experience of gathering much information through research as well as of learning improved ways of evaluating and organizing material for use in oral communication.

Janet was reserved and somewhat reticent but she nevertheless gave full vent to her emotions when she wrote in her C.C.R., perhaps because she knew that that was to remain a confidential writing.

She was elected by her classmates and teachers to receive the good citizenship award of the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. After her election, she prepared a speech which she delivered before that body.

The teacher used her whenever possible in all classroom and extracurricular activities. She seemed to grow in tact, wisdom, and consideration of others, as well as in skill in writing and speaking. She was unassuming at all times and tried to work others into prominent positions

in the classroom program as often as possible. She cooperated with the teacher and the chairmen of the other groups by assuming responsibility for special social activities of the class. She also contributed to the learning program by helping others when they were preparing for the various activities of the class, such as giving readings, making speeches, rendering dramatizations and skits, and playing roles.

Karl

Karl was a tall, thin, sallow-looking lad of seventeen years, about five feet seven inches tall, who weighed some 100 pounds. He had much talent in art. In his senior year he belonged to the Art Club and was elected its secretary. He was friendly and well-liked. His was a very large family of meager means. His parents were uneducated. His English usage was at a very low level. Yet, he chose his friends from members of a higher social class who seemed to like him and to want to include him in their groups.

The teacher asked him to make a special oral report which involved some exposition, and to enliven his talk with blackboard sketches. He spent much time in preparation for the talk; did research work in the library; and discussed the sketches to be used as illustrative material

with his art teacher.

Karl's communication seemed to be understood and enjoyed by the class, although his use of grammar was very poor. His choice of words, surprisingly, seemed to be much superior to his grammar. He seemed to enjoy giving the report, and asked the teacher to let him give another one soon. She then assigned him a story, "The Bottle Imp," from the literature textbook, which she asked him to read and examine, re-write in his own words, and then tell to the class. She suggested that he study the style and sentence structure of the author and try to model his writing on that of the author. Karl appeared interested and went immediately to work on it. He studied the story intensively and used the dictionary frequently. He wrote and rewrote his paper. He asked his group to give him critical help. There were two outstanding students in his group who were able to give him some excellent suggestions and guidance. The result was that he told an effective story and held the interest of the class throughout. When he finished he asked the students (at the teacher's suggestion) to write the story which he had told. He collected the papers and, with the help of his group, checked them for clarity of expression and usage. There was much discussion in the group about some

points on usage, which led to the teacher's being called in to clarify some of their thinking. They also consulted several good reference books on usage.

Karl seemed to enjoy some special exercises on improving construction of sentences, in a test given to the class, even though he did not do very well. The teacher praised the good parts, pointed out errors without making her criticism seem harsh, and refrained from mentioning grades in that connection.

In an exercise which required pupils to fill in blanks with correct or incorrect usage, the teacher suggested to Karl that he use a textbook for reference and find examples like the ones given in the exercise. Karl spent much time pursuant to that suggestion, with good results.

Karl read and discussed poems with his group. They discussed questions of style, subject matter, and usage. After school reports were issued on one occasion, he told the teacher, delightedly, that he had received the first "A" he had ever received in English, on his report card. Much to the teacher's regret and chagrin she had to tell him that it was a mistake on her part in transferring grades. His attitude was excellent. He was disappointed, but said that he would have been hurting only himself had he not told her.

The teacher wondered if it could have been, in part, the accident of the wrong grade that had put such determination and effort into the work habits and attention of Karl. He appeared determined to make the "A" of the accident become a true "A". His English showed much improvement although it still had a long way to go.

Bill

Bill, a senior in high school, had average intelligence and a good personality, but he was hesitant about reciting or speaking in class. Yet, he had good study habits and seemed to be active in doing things other than participating in discussions. His parents were farmers who made a comfortable living but they were uneducated. His brothers had been poor students in high school. He had no sisters.

Bill was slow to grasp his assignments, but he was careful to ask the teacher's help whenever he did not understand. Undoubtedly, part of his difficulty stemmed from his stuttering. He seemed unable to trust himself to do much talking. The teacher ignored that difficulty and frequently directed questions to him which required short answers. His written work was average and below.

Friends were allowed and encouraged to work together in the group life of the class in which Bill was enrolled,

as long as they complied with the regulations.¹ Several of his friends were in Bill's group. Perhaps it was on that account that he was appointed recorder for his group. His reports of the daily discussions and work accomplished were full but they lacked clarity. To help him, the teacher would often write suggestions in the margin of his paper. She would suggest that he see her and get help in making some improvements, during individual work times. When he would respond to her offers of help, he would say little but would listen attentively and appear to appreciate her help. She suggested that he come as often as he felt the need of help.

Before the unit had progressed very far, Bill had begun to talk more with the members of his group. He would come often to the teacher's desk for help during the quiet work period, and during the library and reading-day sessions on Mondays. He would ask for many explanations about grammar and usage. The teacher noticed that he would then take her explanations back to his group and discuss them there. He did not seem to be stuttering so much as he once did.

When reporting one-act plays to the teacher, he once

¹See Chapter IV, p. 63.

became confused and stuttered so much that he had to stop. The next day, the teacher found on her desk a written report of the ten plays about which he had attempted to report. She said nothing, but gave him credit for the plays and returned his paper with a note of commendation for its good points; the bad she left alone.

Bill was asked to distribute forms to be filled in by seniors, to elicit information from them for use in the school paper. The next day he was asked to read a short announcement to the class while the teacher wrote an assignment on the blackboard. He responded with but slight difficulty.

Bill's work group presented a panel discussion in the form of a radio quiz, and Bill took part in it successfully. His answers were short but clear.

He wrote a long paper on "My Difficulties with English Usage," a subject of his own choosing. He told of the points in English usage which were the most difficult for him to understand and remember. He had done research work on such points, and was able to give examples of each when correctly or incorrectly observed.

In his CCR he was able to give vent to his emotions regarding his speech difficulty. He said that the practice he had had in talking with his small group had seemed to

make him more comfortable; that it was easier now to speak before the class. He said that the group had helped him prepare his class reports and that, when he had presented them to the class, he had felt that the others in his group were supporting him.

B. EVALUATION OF THE METHOD

After a review had been made of the five cases presented in Section A, as well as others, it seemed appropriate to undertake an evaluation of the method used to instruct the pupils whose progress and attainment had been noted. Accordingly, reference was made to the criteria developed earlier in the study for use in judging the teaching of English; in order to appraise the extent to which the method used that conformed thereto, and to make judgments respecting the work done with the highschool seniors who were the subjects of this study. Thus, each criteria was considered in turn, as follows:

I. Provide experiences in which boys and girls have ample opportunity for free language expression.

It seemed that this criterion had been met to considerable degree. An example of such provision is found in the directions for the CCR, wherein the pupils were guided into a wide range of experiences

involving discussion and other forms of oral and written communication. Thus, students were allowed freedom to choose, think, talk and write about many things in which they were interested. Furthermore, the arrangement of the chairs in the classroom was conducive to conversation and free expression among the pupils. Other features of the work, supporting the view that this criterion had been met, were the provisions made for pupils to listen to various types of radio and television programs, to examine all available magazines and newspapers, and to report their findings to the class respecting the different viewpoints they had encountered.

- II. Provide interesting and exciting experiences, -- new things to think and talk about -- as opportunities for learners to gain skill in expressing ideas effectively and appropriately, both in speech and writing. It seemed that this criterion had been met to a high degree.

Extra-curricular activities had opened the doorway to many interesting experiences, on the part of pupils, which involved correct and appropriate usage. Thus, they had had occasion to seek the teacher's aid in writing effective letters of application; in

preparing speeches; in writing invitations; in the correct manner of welcoming, introducing and thanking speakers; as well as in many other activities involving communication. The Senior play provided opportunity for much lively discussion about the different levels of English usage. There were many panel discussions followed by many questions about points brought out in the discussions. Comparisons of modern-day slang and cliché's with the figures of speech used by the old writers proved very interesting and broadening. Literary selections had greater significance for the group when related to common problems, as in the case of Ben¹ whose mother's illness seemed to account for his intense interest in Wordsworth's "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality."

- III. Promote such an atmosphere in the classroom that each pupil, feeling secure in his identification with the group, is willing to accept responsibility therein; to express his thoughts and feelings naturally; and, at the same time, to attempt improvements in his usage of English. It seemed that this criterion had also been met to a high degree.

¹ See Chapter IV, p. 41.

The grouping technique used seemed to promote a feeling of security, particularly among the more timid and backward pupils, as well as to develop social sensitivity and promote effective participation. Many who would never speak in the large group were able to express themselves quite freely in the small groups. Doing so led to their participation in panel discussions conducted before the class (when identified with the group), and eventually to their being able to appear in individual roles.

The small group members cooperated well in their social responsibilities to one another. Each seemed to try to help the others prepare their individual reports in the most effective and pleasing manner possible. Such help was given by listening to others' papers, by proof reading, and by giving constructive criticisms and suggestions. Also, whenever reports were given, the members of the class did very well, in the matter of accepting their responsibilities as sympathetic listeners.

Of course, there were some pupils who took advantage of the freedom allowed them, as do members of any democracy.¹ The antics of such pupils, however, were

¹ John J. DeBoir, Walter V. Kaufers & Helen Rand Miller, Teaching Secondary English, 1951, p. 361.

regarded as signs of retarded social development; that greater opportunities needed to be given them to mature as social beings.

- IV. Provide means of gaining thorough understandings of certain simple, but essential, principles of sentence structure and usage, which, coupled with the will to apply them, may lead to pupils' developing the skills and abilities they need for fluency and effectiveness in reading, listening, speaking, and writing.

It seemed that this criterion had been met, in the main.

As the teacher called for the CCR's from time to time, she was able to discover the pupils' needs, and to give suggestions and aid where they seemed to be required. Students would then consult books on usage, and follow suggestions by the teacher, in making corrections and revisions of their work before finally submitting such writing to their instructor. Doing so gave the students opportunities to think and to study their errors without having mistakes corrected for them, prior to their own discoveries.

There were many times when the class expressed the need for sitting down in small groups, and discussing sentence structure and usage, because they had

found certain shortages in their discourse while engaged in various activities. At such times the teacher would suggest using as references several good guides to modern English which she kept available to the pupils. Doing so saved the teacher many times from setting an example of discourtesy by making direct corrections of pupils' solecisms.

Another means of meeting this criterion was the practice of having a pupil dictate to the rest and then having him check their papers, in order to gauge his own clearness of speech as well as the listening powers of the others.

- V. Provide situations and activities in which learners may acquire not only skill but confidence in their own powers, as they communicate with one another.

This criterion seemed to have been met to a high degree.

In all the activities, emphasis was put primarily on fluency and secondarily on elegance. Thus, the pupils who had become inhibited from speaking and writing, for one reason or another, were encouraged to engage in discourse without the excessive regard for correctness which others had imposed upon them. Rather, they tended to work first for effectiveness in communicating thought; to strive next to eliminate solecisms,

one by one, after their major objective of fluency had been attained, at least to some extent.

- VI. Provide experiences likely to increase each pupil's appreciation of the role of good English usage in all sorts of human relations. It seemed that this criterion had been met to a considerable degree.

During the course of the unit which was judged by this criterion, it appeared that pride in group projects had led progressively to more effective and better expression. There was friendly competition between groups. The students seemed interested in reading stories about people and customs of other countries and in trying to understand ways which were different from their own. Reading plays and other literature; giving reports of television (more than a third of the group had television in their homes) and radio programs; comparing and evaluating pictures on the basis of movie reviews; discussing and making discriminating judgments respecting articles, books, and other writings they had perused; studying the lives of writers and playing roles; all, seemed to help the pupils to gain new viewpoints and insights as well as to broaden and enrich their language usage.

Teaching done by pupils seemed to have been a

valuable experience, for them. It demonstrated anew the old principle that "one learns by teaching others."

As an additional means of evaluating the unit, an effort was made to appraise the extent to which individual pupils had attained the specific objectives listed in Chapter IV under the headings, abilities, understandings, and appreciations.¹ For obvious reasons, such appraisals had to be subjective in nature, hence their reliability might be questioned. However, in doing so, the objectives were carefully viewed and the resulting judgments were made as deliberately as possible, with the result that considerable success was noted in respect of the pupils' attainment of those goals. In consequence of such judgments, further support was given to the view that the method used had been successful to a considerable extent.

* * * * *

As concluding step in the investigation, a summary was made thereof, also certain interpretations of the findings, as follows:

The study which has been set forth in the preceding chapters was designed for the purpose of discovering some

¹See Chapter IV, pp. 50 and 66.

of the factors that promote or hinder good English usage on the part of older adolescent children attending a public high school; also to conduct a search for a suitable meaning for the expression, "good English usage"; further, to search for clues, concepts and conclusions in the writings of others as to the best means of promoting such usage, particularly in courses of study for the teaching of secondary school English; to trace the movement to emphasize usage and effective communication in English teaching, rather than structure and the formal aspects of grammar. Mainly, however, it was to devise a distinctive plan of teaching English suitable for twelfth-year pupils; to test that plan in actual practice; and to evaluate the results stemming from such teaching.

In accordance with the intentions just enumerated, a functional definition for good English usage was found, criteria were set up by which to evaluate teaching designed to promote such usage, and a plan was constructed by which to teach certain pupils in conformity with those criteria. The plan had the following distinctive features:

- a) Most of the work was done in small groups of six or fewer.
- b) Considerable emphasis was put on oral communication.
- c) A special device, the Continuing Critical Report, was used.

- d) Habitual usage was stressed rather than direct teaching of syntax.
- e) Grammar and other aspects of usage were taught incidentally and to individuals rather than directly to the entire group.
- f) Provisions were made for the pupils to have varied experiences in situations which were meaningful and important to them.

To facilitate evaluation of the method, anecdotal records were kept respecting the progress made by each of the pupils and a few case studies were made of certain individuals.

Finally, the method was judged in the light of six criteria, with the result that it was found to have met three of those standards to a "high" degree; three others to a "considerable" degree. In consequence of those judgments, the plan was deemed effective in meeting the needs of older adolescents in public school classrooms and is recommended to the favorable consideration of other teachers of English.

As a means of testing this plan objectively, it is further recommended that it become the subject of experimental research and thus project further the results of the present descriptive study.

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