

1954

A Project in Civic Education in Elementary Schools Through Pupil Participation

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A PROJECT IN CIVIC EDUCATION IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
THROUGH PUPIL PARTICIPATION

BY

MILDRED CLAIRE ALGER

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN
EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

1954

MASTER OF SCIENCE THESIS
OF
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1954

ABSTRACT

Elementary schools have organized their curricula to insure the teaching of fundamental skills and subject matter, such as reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, social studies, and art. Over the years, schools have assumed other responsibilities upon the insistence of the public which supports education. One of these added responsibilities has been education for citizenship.

Education for citizenship is a vague term and no one seems to know how this education is to be accomplished. For a number of years, there have been well conceived plans for attacking this problem in secondary schools with suggestions that some of these approaches might be adaptable for elementary schools. However, no objective evaluation of a program in operation has established the way for educating elementary children for citizenship.

Two teachers at the Broad Street Elementary School, Providence, Rhode Island, became interested in the problem and organized a project in citizenship for their fifth and sixth grades. The focus of this project was a study by the children of their Rhode Island heritage. This has been reported in another thesis. As the children worked, their activities were organized, directed, and supervised in such a manner that basic skills and concepts underlying good citizenship were developed and emphasized. This thesis gives a descriptive account of these activities. All evaluation of the project is personal, based upon observation and subjective appraisal of the behavior of the children involved in the project.

In developing the project, much attention was given to class organization, to individual and group work, to assuming personal

responsibility, and to working together cooperatively. Community participation was a large factor in the success of the project. These are described in detail so that other teachers might find helpful suggestions for carrying out similar projects.

While having no objective data showing the effectiveness of this project for citizenship training, the writer concludes that in the light of her experience and subjective evaluation it was effective. Citizenship education comes not from subject matter but from group experiences, such as are herein described.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The problem.--The problem for this thesis deals with civic education for elementary school children, particularly those in grades five and six. It presents methods and activities carried on in conjunction with the teaching of basic skills. In every classroom there is a definite place for the basic skills which must be taught. Equally important is teaching children to think.

Thinking is not possible without a grasp of the basic skills. It requires knowledge. The individual who has a grasp of knowledge and is equipped with the basic skills will do a far better job of clear, creative thinking than one who is less well-equipped. Good, clear thinking also requires that the thinker be in good physical, mental and emotional condition. Thinking is necessary in the areas of family living, work experiences, and citizenship.¹

In grades five and six, Broad Street Elementary School, Providence, a special project in civic education was undertaken. Part of this project was the preparation and collection of materials, samples

¹Education for Citizenship. Metropolitan School study council, No. 9. New York. 1949, p. vi.

of industrial products, and other items showing the history and development of Rhode Island. As "The Exchange Kit" this has been discussed in another thesis.¹

As this project was carried through a one year period, attention was given to various classroom procedures and instructional programs that would develop skills, understandings, and attitudes essential for good citizenship. This thesis relates those experiences of the children which were helpful in civic education. The content of the thesis results from the personal accounting of what took place and from personal evaluation based upon observation of the pupil's behavior.

Reasons for the study.--

The teachers of America are sharply conscious of the dangers that threaten democracy. They know that our free way of life must be protected against attacks from without and weaknesses from within. They are all fully aware that the schools must take a major part in this most urgent of all civic tasks! ²

¹Mary Underwood Phillips. "A Project in Civic Education for Elementary Grades" Thesis, M.S. in Ed. University of R.I., 1954.

²Making Better Citizens. Civic Education Foundation. New York. p. 3.

This poses the problem of civic education which has been the conscious concern of junior and senior high schools for many years. With the realization of the importance for acquiring proper skills and attitudes in childhood, the formative period of life, elementary schools are giving increasing attention to ways and means of developing good civic behavior and responsibility. How should it be done? There is no agreement among educators. The purpose of this study was to explore an approach to the problem in a given school situation.

The project in civic education was carried on in a democratic climate, as far as the teacher was able. By this is meant that children learned that democracy means freedom insofar as it does not interfere with the rights and freedoms of other members of the group. They realized that rules and regulations were necessary and that once made they had to be obeyed.

Children had conferences and discussions with the teacher as to the part they were to have in carrying out the units of work. From these conferences

the children learned the following: the rights of an individual to disagree with another; the way to disagree without disparaging the other's point of view; the art of listening while another spoke; and to accept criticisms and suggestions.

During the first conference children were very critical of each other if their ideas didn't coincide. They interrupted the speaker when they did not agree. They insisted that the other child was wrong if his suggestions were different. As the school year progressed, the children began more and more to respect the rights of the other individuals and to realize the courtesies required among people.

To learn these attitudes toward each other, techniques for sharing experiences and information, and ways of responding to group activity was the intent of the project. Within this concept of democratic behavior the activities of the pupils were organized.

CHAPTER II

BUILDING CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship through classroom organization.--

In order to help improve citizenship the classes of grades five and six were organized into groups. This was done so the teacher would have an opportunity to better acquaint herself with each individual pupil and his needs. To do this the teacher made a thorough study of the background of each member of the class including his chronological age, his intelligence quotient, results of achievement tests, and information from previous teachers. From this information the reading and arithmetic groups were formed. As the teacher worked with these groups, motivation which best fitted the group was used.

In reading and arithmetic homogeneous grouping was found to be better suited for developing skills and acquiring information. It was found by having heterogeneous grouping in these subjects, the slower learners were likely to withdraw from taking part in the activities.

In arithmetic the children who had the ability to proceed at a faster rate were hindered by the

slower children. Children with ability, waiting for slower children, might develop the bad habit of idleness. The slower children were not discouraged in a grouping of like abilities because it gave them a chance to recite and not have to sit, time after time, while the brighter ones came forward with the answer. These children felt competent, worked hard to keep up with the other members of their group, and had the sense of satisfaction of being leaders in their own little group. Bad habits of indifference, defeatism, and lack of initiative were lessened.

In reading a more elastic program was possible when reading groups were arranged according to ability. Strangely enough, it was not always the children who were best in arithmetic that were also best in reading. Many times the groups were quite different.

In all other subjects children of varying abilities worked together. In social studies, sociometric grouping was used throughout. It gave the children the opportunity to experience all the differences that came from the various social,

religious, economic, and racial groups represented while working with children of their choice. The advantages observed for this type of grouping include: it brought out the shy child; it encouraged every child to participate; it demanded cooperation by all; it placed responsibility on each member; it trained aggressive children to respect rights of others; and it gave all children leadership experience.

From experiences in the group activities, children learned the following:

1. to work with children of varying abilities, and of different racial, religious, and social background.
2. to share their information.
3. to work cooperatively.
4. to accept differences in actions and opinions.
5. to understand the rights and privileges of others.
6. to accept responsibilities.

These skills are essential to good civic behavior.

Citizenship through classroom procedure.--

Living today means belonging to a world community. It requires citizens with civic

literacy. One must have not only the ability to read, write, and do arithmetic, but also the ability to think, discuss, and act on citizenship problems.¹

Children should have a broader view of real life than is found in the text books. This connection between real life problems and what is found in the textbooks can be made through properly adapted classroom procedures.

Every child likes to think he is somebody. He may not be outstanding in the classroom, but put him on a committee and he will soon take active part. He has been given a responsibility and is happy in carrying it out to the best of his ability. A valuable committee in fifth grade was the current events or news committee. News items of interest to the class were brought in by every member of the class and the members of the committee were held responsible for sorting them, arranging them, and mounting them. They took pride in arranging the articles according to type, such as sports, school articles, startling adventures, and world news. The committee aroused the interest of the class by having

¹Teaching Current Events. (American Education Press, Columbus, 1947) p. 4.

a catchy phrase or a question at the top of an article. This committee worked together anytime during the day when class assignments had been completed. During the opening exercises of each class day a short review was given on the topics and it was suggested that the members of the class take time during the day to read these items. Pupils followed closely the recent contest on selecting the state bird because of their study of Rhode Island. Much interest was shown in any article that had to do with this state. Questions and discussions always followed.

Some of the activities which resulted from the news committee were:

1. studying the map for information about Indo-China.
2. comparing Indo-China with Korea.
3. listing all suggestions for license plate title.
4. discussing purposes of meetings of heads of state.
5. listing qualities necessary for a Secretary of State.
6. recognizing that history is being made every day.
7. studying the map for Israel.

These are only a few of the many activities which resulted from the work of the news committee. It really served a dual purpose. It brought out good participation practices for the members on the committee. It also aroused interest in news items. This should give pupils an awareness for information in order to participate in civic affairs.

Another important committee seemed to be for housekeeping. The class discussed the meaning and the items included under housekeeping, and they became more conscious of papers on the stairs, in the schoolyard, or in the classroom. The teacher noticed that desks and chairs that were often set at all angles were being kept in line. When books were collected they were replaced in good order and so, too, was the inside of the children's desks. Materials used in activity or group work were collected and put away. At first, many children would just leave things when they had finished with them, but working in this committee taught the value of orderliness.

Another committee which gave children

a certain amount of responsibility was the committee on opening exercises. This group planned the exercises for each day. A patriotic song was chosen, and a poem or a recitation was planned. A silent prayer and a salute to the flag were used every day. A talk on news items was sometimes planned. It required planning, working with others, a sense of responsibility, and a sense of pride in being successful.

The library committee proved very popular. The classroom librarians were responsible for getting the books from the library and returning them when due. Pupils had to see that the books were kept in good order in the bookcase and on the library table. When they took the books from the library they made a card file so that they knew just what books they had. If the members of the class did not know how to make a card file, the teacher discussed it with them, and then, at the convenience of the school librarian, took them to the library where it was explained in detail.

A group of children particularly interested in science asked if they might bring in their col-

lections. Some of the things brought in were:

1. a collection of mounted butterflies.
2. a collection of shells.
3. a book of mounted bird pictures.
4. a book of unusual animal pictures.
5. a collection of different kinds of stone.
6. some stuffed animals.

Children were very willing to explain where and how they assembled the articles in the collection. They also wanted the other children to share in looking at them, hearing about them, and in looking up information concerning them.

Committee work was very necessary in the activity work. Since the pupils seemed to get so much from the study of their heritage by learning about Rhode Island and Rhode Islanders, they thought they would like to continue studying about people who helped the nation other than Rhode Islanders. They decided to study contributions to our culture made by people from foreign countries. When the class decided it would like to study this, a discussion of aims and objectives took place. Ob-

jectives were limited to the following:

1. to learn the true meaning of brotherhood.
2. to appreciate how people from every nation have enriched our land.
3. to recognize the importance of our freedoms.
4. to accept willingly our duties and responsibilities.

Many ways of grouping for this activity were considered, and finally the pupils decided they would like to form their committees according to areas. They formed the following committees: education, industrial research, science, art, music, journalism, agriculture, transportation, and literature. Each child chose the committee he felt he would like to be on. In one or two instances, where too many were on a committee some one would make a second choice. Since then, the committees collected books which would help them in their own departments. They also decided to make a mural of scenes representing outstanding events in this country's advancement. In the center of this mural they thought a picture of the Statue of Liberty would be appropriate. As new words appeared, the children listed and explained

them to other members of the class. To form a bibliography each group kept a list of the books which were used. The pupils planned to make a map of the United States showing where certain nationalities settled, what type of work they did, and why they chose that particular place to settle, and what effect these settlements had on the country. The children worked as a class when reporting on their books, giving summaries, and when reporting progress on what they had done. At all other times, work was done in groups or singly.

It was important to provide much resource material for all groups. The library table contained plenty of books, readable for the slow readers as well as the good readers. Magazines, art materials, and the like were available. (For books in the classroom, see appendix, page 56.)

From this committee work and group work these children were observed forming the following habits:

1. Keeping busy through worthwhile reading.
2. Accepting the responsibility of completing assigned tasks.

3. Working without disturbing other members of the class.
4. Putting materials away and cleaning up whenever necessary.
5. Working with each other and sharing ideas and materials.

At all levels of learning, children must experience problem solving. This can not be done by memorizing passages from books. By having discussion groups children must think. Research must be done, discussion carried on cooperatively, and sometimes conclusions drawn. Discussion provides for participation of all members of the class.

"The discussion method assumes a problem - one in which there is a difference of opinion. The general characteristics of discussion are:

1. A cooperative effort to arrive at the facts or conclusions about a subject.
2. Contributions come from many individuals, as contrasted with the lecture or debate.
3. Discussion starts only after careful and open-minded search for facts. The ignorant participant destroys the value and fun of the discussion.
4. Participants share their facts and their conclusions and permit both facts and conclusions to be subjected to critical analysis.

5. Participants are courteous and sportsmanlike in their attitude toward others."¹

There are many forms of discussion. Some of these were used by the fifth grade children in the Broad Street School. These included panel discussions, press interviews, and club meetings.

The panel discussion was tried and met with enthusiasm from the group. A chairman was chosen, and two or three others participated. When the research had been done the members of the group sat at a table facing the class and each member made a brief statement giving his point of view. The rest of the class joined in after the discussion had been carried on for a while by the panel members. One interesting panel discussion carried on in this fifth grade classroom was on the topic, "Should Children Have Homework?" One child represented a parent, another a teacher, and the third, a child. It was very enlightening. The children liked these discussions and were willing to work hard in preparation for them. Topics suggested by the children

¹Teaching Current Events. (American Education Press, Columbus, Ohio. 1947) p. 10.

included:

1. Why We Should Help the Community Chest.
2. Value of School Banking.
3. Why Should We Help the Red Cross?
4. What Can We Do for Clean-up Week?
5. How to Get Along with People.
6. Do Comics Influence Children?
7. Why We Should Learn about Civilian Defense.
8. Fire Prevention.

Occasionally a group planned a press interview. Three or four children represented the press. A "public figure" was questioned. There was a moderator who controlled the questioning. The members of the class were the observers. Questions pertaining to actions of boys around the school were asked.

Club meetings were another form of discussion. A serious discussion on the qualities to look for when voting for a class officer took place before voting for him. After the discussion and when the preliminary work was done, pupils were allowed to vote by secret ballot. It was very rare

that an outstanding pupil was not chosen as leader. As near as possible these club meetings followed simple, parliamentary rules. In this fifth grade class club meetings were held every second week. They were usually pretty lively and interesting topics were brought up for discussion. When something pertaining to the school, such as passing, or school yard activities, was brought up and motions made, a committee was appointed to make an appointment for a conference with the principal. Interest in school rules and school responsibilities was greatly aroused by this technique.

Schools should be discussion conscious... because in a democracy, discussion is a form of action on the part of citizens in making their government effective - because in a democracy, if youth discusses contemporary affairs now, intelligent discussion will increasingly become the habit of the Nation - because in a democracy, citizens both old and young, must banish ignorance of contemporary affairs within themselves and among others - because youth should learn how to share ideas in discussion, for doing this fosters their growth as citizens -

Because when ideas, based on facts about contemporary affairs become more widely shared through discussion, civic life becomes more dynamic - because the way of discussion is the democratic way.¹

¹Teaching Current Events. (The American Education Press, Columbus, Ohio. 1947) p. 21.

Through observation it was noted that the techniques of discussion helped children to:

1. prepare facts accurately
2. organize these facts
3. Think clearly
4. state facts concisely
5. work with members of a group cooperatively
6. listen to others attentively
7. act courteously
8. use correct English

Good civic habits were formed by these experiences. The teacher noted that the children became interested in news items, in current happenings, and in geographical locations of current interest. The teacher also noted that the children were asking intelligent questions on current news, thinking critically on topics, expressing themselves with clarity, and accepting responsibilities for getting information.

Citizenship through school-community influences.--The school utilized the resources of the community in three ways. First, the children were

taken from the school building to study the various activities and materials of the community at first hand. Second, people were brought to the school to help children interpret their environment. Third, concrete materials from the community were used in the school. The best use of community materials and experiences demands careful preparation on the part of the teacher, and understanding on the part of the supervisor and administration. Teachers, as well as pupils, may need to make simple trips that need identification. The teacher must be familiar with all aspects of the trip.

These out-of-school activities sponsored by the school were justified only when the total learning values achieved by them were generally superior to those possible through other instructional procedures.

It must be admitted that there are units in the curriculum for which the use of community materials is not only difficult to arrange but is artificial. If not well managed, such efforts may become a nuisance to everyone concerned. Probably

a great deal of very valuable school time is now wasted by too many excursions that are poorly planned.

Field trips.--Groups frequently reach a point in their classroom work when actual experience is necessary if learning is to be effective. The excursion meets the need. Through study trips in the community and region, the danger of losing touch with reality and mere verbalisms instead of meanings can, to a large degree, be checked.¹

The success of an excursion depends upon the efficiency of the leader and the ground to be covered should be familiar to him. The children should record certain data and upon returning to the classroom should have a follow-up of some type.

The field trip offers a wonderful opportunity in developing social graces and character training. It affords an opportunity to write thank-you letters and a chance to show good manners through proper behavior.

Because it is believed that the field trip is worthwhile in that it provides a personal experience, develops a sense of reality, creates interest, arouses curiosity, and helps to develop cooperation, the children of Broad Street School took many field trips.

¹ Utilizing the Local Environment. Margaret Koopman, Dept. of Superintendence, 14th Yearbook, The Social Studies Curriculum, Washington, D.C., p. 30.

In connection with their science lessons, the children in the fifth and sixth grades took a number of trips to Roger Williams Park Museum. One visit was to the planetarium. The curator gave a lecture and demonstration. This visit was a revelation to the scientific-minded child. It stimulated the others to think, to wonder, and perhaps to develop a new interest. In everyone there was a feeling of pride because Providence was so fortunate to possess a planetarium. The majority of children attending felt that it belonged to them for many of them had contributed toward the planetarium drive. Some classrooms had received "deeds" to the Milky Way or other places in the sky, depending upon the size of the contribution. When the groups returned they immediately wanted to look up more information on the stars and planets.

Another trip was taken to the park in connection with the study of conservation. The director of the visual education department took the class on a tour of the grounds and explained various land formations and the different kinds of trees.

Broad Street School is fortunate in its location in that its neighboring areas provide so many educational advantages. The Roger Williams Park Museum has daily classes held after school and on Saturdays. Here, many of the children study astronomy, mineralogy, and general nature study. In this way, the children's eyes are opened for the first time, perhaps, to new fields. Information was often correlated with school subjects. Careers may even be started along scientific lines. Initiative was developed in those students who joined classes voluntarily. Training in research work was begun. Promptness and perfect attendance were encouraged.

The sixth grade took a bus trip to the museum for an illustrated nature lecture followed by a tour of the museum. Observing the animals in the museum with the proper background created a desire among many of the children to find out more about them. Following this visit reports were given on what they found most interesting. Some of the children wrote stories and poems about the animals and others drew sketches of them. Discussions on the value of this sort of trip led to the need for

care in observing all the rules connected with the park and the park museum.

A branch of the Providence Public Library is located in the Broad Street School. The pupils had an opportunity to go there during the day for research, special reading, and instruction on how to use the library. This consisted of the proper care of books, finding information in reference books, the value of the card catalogue, the location of different types of books, and, of course, library etiquette. When the children wanted information on Rhode Island heroes, they were allowed to go to the library and look up information in reference books. In preparation for their reports and discussions the children were free to go to the library for needed research.

The children of Broad Street School were invited to hear the Philharmonic orchestra at the Veteran's Auditorium. The response from the children was enthusiastic. The majority of them sat enthralled. No doubt, many of them were hearing good music for the first time. For those who study music a familiar tune was a delight. A trip of this kind provided an ideal opportunity to stress what is or isn't done at

concerts of this kind. The preparation and follow-up of this trip is explained in a later chapter.

Resource visitors.-- The term, 'resource visitors' is applied to people, who can demonstrate accomplishments or particular abilities which are of interest and value to school pupils, and who are also able and willing to display, discuss or otherwise present their attainments before a student group. Resource visitors are generally utilized for serious educational purposes rather than for mere entertainment.¹

There are many people in the neighborhood with fine backgrounds who could enrich a school program by providing some worthwhile information. Therefore, it is well to keep a "human" file of available people in the office of the school. Perhaps someone has traveled a great deal who could enliven a geography lesson. A good reader or story teller could inspire the pupils to be good readers. An interesting hobby, a travel movie, a talk by a fireman, policeman, etc., are all of value.

The resource visitor not only provides real experiences but he can be an inspiration to his young listeners. Respect is developed between the adult and the child. The experience is two-fold.

¹Edward G. Olsen, Schools and Community, (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1945), p. 128.

The visitor gets a better understanding of what the school is trying to accomplish. The child has a chance to develop the social graces.

As in the field trip, if a talk by a resource visitor is to be successful, it must be well planned. The speaker must first be contacted to see if he is available. If so, a definite date and time may be set. Transportation can be provided, if necessary. The speaker should be informed as to just what to expect as to the age of the children, material that will be on hand, the size of the room in which he is to speak, the length of his talk, etc.

The children's interest should be aroused as they await the day of the coming speaker. Posters on display will help do this. Good manners should be emphasized, and the children should understand that their attitude not only reflects on the school's reputation but shows their home training also.

Following the visit there should be a discussion and a record filed for future reference.

There are limitations, too, in this sort of activity. Some people may possess valuable information but refuse to speak before the group. The unfamiliar

stories about how she made her collection. It was a very successful talk and was followed by class discussions. Letters of thanks were sent to her by the children.

Another parent was invited to talk about her ceramics. She had some finished pieces and also the clay and mold to start a new piece. She went through all the steps to the baking. The children were fascinated. Many interesting questions were asked by the children.

In connection with book week, the principal invited a neighbor who had written children's books to speak to the children. He read from some of his books and also gave a summary of others. Many questions were asked him in regards to writing. Some wanted to know how he started. Others wanted to know how long it took and how many he had written. All had interesting reports to give on the talk.

The librarian also talked in connection with book week. She had many book jackets on display and talked on the various types of books interesting to children.

The curator of the museum was another speaker and, as always, provided an inspiring talk on nature. She had a few of her own books that had been published on display. She also talked on how she came to write books.

Visits like these at the Broad Street School helped to develop a better relationship between the child and the adult. It brought them closer together and in a different setting. Such understandings brought about the desire to learn more and to help in every way possible.

Children were stimulated by the visits to borrow more books from the library. Books were selected carefully and for the proper age level. More children joined classes at the museum. They became conscious of beautiful Roger Williams Park and the advantages it offered. To help preserve these many privileges in the park became the duty of each child. From each child it was also carried into the home to younger brothers and sisters.

Personal interviews give valuable resource material. These usually are held in a person's

place of business or residence. The procedure is informal and is usually in the form of the question and answer method instead of a prepared talk. The child may hold interviews with helpful people who are not actually connected with school procedures.

The teaching program can be enriched by encouraging students to interview local residents. In every community there are citizens who possess worthwhile experiences, interests, and knowledge. The interview gives young people an opportunity to meet and talk with mature people on some problems of common concern. By so doing, they themselves have advanced toward maturity.

As in the field trip, before the actual interview takes place there should be definite preparation. First, there should be a group discussion concerning the purpose of the interview. Once this has been decided upon, the group can select the person or persons to interview who can best serve the purpose. A "human file" can determine this. It is necessary to study the qualities and experiences of this selected person for the student should plan to ask intelligent questions as well as to listen.

A decision should be reached as to what questions should be asked, what should be recorded, and most of all, to remember not to exhaust the interviewer. Following all this comes the act of contacting the selected person to acquaint him with the objective. This should be done by the teacher or a mature student. It may be accomplished by a personal interview. Once the group learns the chosen interviewer is willing to cooperate, more planning needs to be done. If necessary, travel arrangements should be made. Promptness, good behavior, and little acts of courtesy should be stressed. Upon returning to the classroom discussions should be held, final reports written out and filed for future reference.

Children at Broad Street School had interesting interviews. A group of boys took it upon themselves to visit the Governor of Rhode Island. They thought he could inform them in regard to a certain project they were undertaking. Childlike, they found themselves outside the Governor's office without an appointment. Through his kindness and graciousness, however, they were ushered in and treated most royally. They received not only the

information they went after but pamphlets, a state seal, and the Governor's signature besides. During the conversation the boys learned the Governor's date of birth. True to form, when the day came, the boys were back with gifts for their new friend.

Through such an unrehearsed visit the boys gained much. They learned that great people are humble, that people in high office are as a rule, sincere, kind, thoughtful, and never "too busy"; that it is fun to cooperate and to share.

When the sixth grade class was studying communication in their social studies lesson, an interview with a telephone employee was arranged. This interview was held in the telephone building. It was held to plan for the class to go on a tour of the building. The kindly attitude of the gentleman made the children eager to ask intelligent questions. Once again, a good child-adult relationship was established.

The school child of today is no longer confined to four walls. The community itself has a place in the school program for it has much to offer in the enrichment of a child's learning experiences.

This may be in the form of field trips, resource visitors, or interviews. The personal contact with people and places has a definite effect on children.

Through these experiences in the community, pupils in this project learned to write courteous letters, to behave properly in a public building, to use proper form of address, to appreciate civic or business leaders, to feel a part of the community, and to take pride in the community and its leaders.

Citizenship through communication.--It is desirable to have for educational use, films produced for the purpose which deal inspiringly with the problems of life and the world; also films designed to instill in students those elusive elements, which form character, citizenship, and goodness.¹

Interest and appreciation of good, worthwhile movies were stressed in the classroom. This was done by very indirect methods. Children were exposed to good reading. Interest in the right types of literature led to interest in the right kind of movies. Many of these stories were dramatized

¹Elizabeth Laine, Motion Pictures and Radio (New York and London: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc. 1938) p. 22.

and when the same type was shown on the screen the children wanted to see them.

After reading the King Arthur stories, many of the children saw "Knights of the Round Table." The next day some of them gave a summary of the picture. A discussion was held on what the children had learned from that picture. This can be done with many good pictures. The children in this fifth grade classroom read the book, "Heidi." It was going to be shown in a theater in a week or two. After reading it and talking about it, many wanted to see it. Similar preparation can be made for many worthwhile motion pictures. It might be a fantasy such as "Snow White" or "Alice in Wonderland." These books can be read by members of the class or as is frequently done in this fifth grade classroom the story is read by the teacher. They can learn what a fantasy is and know what to expect when they are seeing one.

A panel discussion on worthwhile moving pictures created much thinking by the class. The children realized the worth of good movies and the dangers attached to too frequent attendance. Topics relating to this medium of entertainment and in-

formation were:

1. How often should we attend movies?
2. Should we know what picture is being shown before attending?
3. What type movies are good for children?
4. When are movies recreational?

When possible, after school movies were held at a minimum cost followed the next day by a discussion. By being exposed to good movies, the urge to attend "just anything" was minimized.

Much has been done in the classroom with educational movies. The Providence School Department has an excellent selection of moving pictures which can be and is used in the school auditorium. Many of these fit in very well with the social studies curriculum.

Broad Street School is fortunate to own two machines. The one used in the auditorium is a Bell and Howell which is a 16 mm. movie projector. Boys were taught to run this machine under a teacher's supervision. Only boys who could be trusted were allowed to partake in this activity. This knowledge, no doubt, played a part in developing better civic patterns in the minds of these youngsters, for the

majority were most eager to learn this skill.

The other machine is a view-lex which is a combination of a slide and filmstrip projector. Filmstrips on science, arithmetic, and penmanship were only a few of a large selection owned by the school.

Two boys were chosen to take care of this machine. It was their obligation to plan a satisfactory schedule for its use. After the showing, the equipment had to be carefully put away. These boys were held responsible for their classroom assignments and could not neglect any of their work in order to run this machine. They were taught the proper care of valuable equipment which belonged to someone else.

Through the use of educational films in the school, children learned:

1. science, social studies, and other school subjects through the physical senses, namely those of hearing and sight.
2. the art of careful listening and watching.
3. to report on the films shown.

When the children were ready to study Daniel Boone, a discussion was carried on. Then the class

was taken to the auditorium to see the movie, "Daniel Boone." After watching the picture, the children asked many questions and were anxious to read about the adventures of Boone. It was an excellent means of motivation. The same procedure was followed with many other pictures, some of which were "The Star Spangled Banner," "Lincoln in the White House," "Lincoln's Gettysburg Address," "Land of Liberty" (4 parts - 5b, 5a, 6b, 6a). Before each movie, a preparatory discussion took place. Following the movie, there was further discussion and all were anxious to study and learn more about these topics. Movies on Roger Williams and Rhode Island were shown in connection with the preparation of the 'Exchange Kit', another part of this project on civic education.

The filmstrips were used in the classroom whenever the need arose. During a science lesson the word, conservation, came up. The class was shown filmstrips on conservation, making it much more meaningful to them. During the activity in connection with the 'Exchange Kit', children were making book covers and arrangements with paper, so the filmstrips on paper

sculpture were shown. After seeing them, the children were ready to try things on their own. Many of the other filmstrips were used in the same way. As the need arose, the picture was shown.

Radio and television.--Next to movies, radio and television are a vital force in forming the attitudes of young people. A popular comedian, a musical artist, an educational forum, all have their followers among children. Many hours are spent by most children listening to the radio and watching television. More often, it is television. The school should try to create right thinking on the part of youngsters as to what is valuable and what is best to avoid.

At the present time, in the secondary schools, television sets are being installed. By having these, many worthwhile programs can be heard and seen. There should always be preparation and motivation for these programs and a follow-up so the value of the program won't be lost.

Here is where our short talks can do much in having some influence on radio and television

listening. The teacher should be alert to programs and suggest to the children that they listen or watch so as to be able to give a brief report on the program to the class. If this is made a regular part of the day's work, children will make an effort to listen so something worthwhile can be repeated to the class. Soon they will become conscious of the worthwhile programs.

A number of schools today have radios. Opportunities for children to take part on radio programs should be encouraged. Such experiences may open the way to a radio career. In most instances, it will, in all probability be a memorable event in each performer's life.

The use of this medium, however, is limited to a certain number of pupils. This drawback can be alleviated somewhat by making use of the public address system and using phonograph records for background. Children in the Broad Street School have done this very thing. As there are loud speakers in each room, it is easy to create a radio illusion. Programs have been given on current events, plays, book reports, and special holidays.

Programs of this type were very valuable for they taught the children to enunciate clearly, to be well poised, to be accurate, to be prompt, to accept responsibility, to do research, and to plan worthwhile programs.

Children, as a rule, wanted to participate in such programs. Therefore, there was a great deal of competition, and as a result more and more children worked to acquire the qualifications so that they, too, might be chosen to take part.

Television is recognized as an important medium for communication. It brings events of the day to the student even as they are happening. The values gained from programs of a scientific, professional, industrial, historical, or musical nature are important contributions.

Children of Broad Street School have participated on television programs. The values are similar to radio and the child realizes he must learn to be poised, to speak clearly, to be pleasant, to be prepared, to be punctual, and to be reliable.

Allowing children to discuss what they had

seen on television gave a fine opportunity for directing them to the types of programs most valuable. Then, too, many of their own childhood fears were overcome. The children discussed a television program which portrayed the imaginary horrors of a child and how she came to realize that her fears were unfounded. They were then asked to write a story entitled, "My Most Ridiculous Fear." Some of the stories were very good, and even the children who hadn't observed the program were able to write freely about their fears. This, the teacher felt, was a very good way of lessening these very fears. A similar activity was tried after a discussion of a program where the father in the story had a joke played on him and what a good sport he was about it. The children then wrote on, "The Funniest Joke Ever Played on Me".

When the children told about listening to, "Meet the Press", for instance, they were asked what they noticed about the group. The answers were:

1. They were courteous.
2. They had good speech habits.
3. They used clarity of expression.

4. They had well thought out questions.
5. They listened carefully when anyone was speaking.

Every weekday morning there is a short radio program called, "Streets of Our City." Many of the children were interested in listening to this because of their study of Rhode Island.

When the children were planning a "Meet the Press" program in school they watched the television program of the same name. The next day they discussed what they observed and how they could use these observations on their program. They also listened on the radio to the Chicago Round Table and America's Forum on the Air to get ideas for their discussions.

Other media of communication which influence behavior are books, newspapers, and magazines.

Reading preferences differ widely according to the mental age, chronological age, home environment, reading achievement, the home influence, and availability of materials.

Classroom experiences help develop the

desire for reading and discrimination in what is read.

The reading table or library corner in school is a big influence on reading habits. Once the children became interested in a certain type book, they were anxious to read more of the same type. For instance, it has been found that as the children, boys particularly, have read one of the Landmark Books, they were anxious to read more of them. In the classroom at the Broad Street School they had this opportunity of becoming acquainted with these books. In connection with this set of books, records based on the stories have been released. The Broad Street School has purchased these and some of them have been tried out in the classroom. The children instantly liked them. After listening to the recording there was a great rush for the books. The records tell the story in conversation form. There is a musical accompaniment throughout the record. After listening to the record it is possible for a group to dramatize the story. The records include:

1. Voyages of Christopher Columbus.
2. Landing of the Pilgrims.
3. The California Gold Rush.

4. Riding the Pony Express.
5. Paul Revere and the Minute Men.
6. Our Independence and the Constitution.
7. Building the First Transcontinental Railroad.
8. Wright Brothers - Powers of American Aviation.
9. Exploration of Pere Marquette.
10. The Lewis and Clark Expedition.
11. The Monitor and the Merrimac.
12. Lee and Grant at Appomatox.
13. Stephen Foster Songs.

Interest aroused in the classroom concerning biographies was also transferred to outside reading. The librarian at the Broad Street School reported that many of the children asked for these books for home reading.

The news corner trained the children on what to look for in a newspaper. The boys brought in clippings from the sports page and were very capable of reporting on them. News items on current events stimulated much class discussion.

Newspapers were used in preparing the 'Exchange Kit'. One of the children brought in a copy

of a newspaper printed in 1936 and used it in the classroom. Children read it and reported on articles and stories from it. They later used the information they had read in writing their stories on cultural Rhode Island. Pictures were cut out from this paper and pasted in the scrap book. Current newspapers were also used in the activity. Some of the stories read in the paper and later reported were:

1. Story of a Rare Coin.
2. Quaker Meeting in Foster
3. The Only Battle of Rhode Island.

Many magazines should be on hand in the classroom. The reading table included the following:

1. The Weekly Reader.
2. Reader's Digest Reading Skill Builder.
3. American Junior Red Cross.
4. Jack and Jill Books.
5. Story Parade.
6. American Girl.
7. American Boy.
8. Boy's Life.
9. Junior Natural History.

Most of these books and magazines are written so as to arouse the interest of youngsters. The habit of reading this type of story was formed and so the majority of children called for this same type later. All children in the fifth grade had library cards and were encouraged to use them. All types of stories were available and since the children had been giving and listening to reports on biographies, imaginary stories, history, mystery, animal, and every other type of story, they were familiar with all kinds of good reading.

Music plays a role in developing attitudes underlying good citizenship. Feelings of patriotism are certainly stimulated by appropriate music. Folk tunes help children understand the culture of people.

In this project, music was used including "The Star Spangled Banner," "America," "America, the Beautiful," "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean," "Battle Cry of Freedom," "Young America Sings," "O Great America," "Tenting Tonight," "America for Me," and "Battle Hymn of the Republic." The story behind the lyrics was taken up in detail with each selection.

In the case of "The Star Spangled Banner", the movie was shown where Francis Scott Key was seen on the ship as he recited the words. After the story behind these patriotic selections was heard, the children sometimes dramatized scenes from the story in the song. The words sacrifice, love, honor, obey, trust, and defend were brought out in connection with these songs.

When the children sang the Stephen Foster songs, an interest was aroused to learn more of the history of the South. Their appreciation of the simple wants of the Negroes was learned as they sang these Southern tunes. The story of "Dixie" and the friendliness and understanding of Lincoln when he requested that the song be sung at Gettysburg, were strongly felt. Around this same time, they were shown the movie and were deeply impressed.

Songs used in connection with the 'Exchange Kit' were "For the Beauty of the Earth," "The Thanksgiving Song," and "Rhode Island Fair."

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSIONS

This project in civic education was undertaken to give children a better understanding of their civic duties and responsibilities while developing those skills and acquiring that information which characterizes the curriculum of a fifth and sixth grade. This thesis recounts, in some detail, the activities and experiences, as they took place, which were organized to educate children. Attempts at evaluation are those made by the classroom teacher as part of her teaching routine.

Citizenship is a long-range problem and definite results can only be found after a period of years. However, some instances of the results of this activity have become evident in the community, as observed by the writer and commented upon by parents and other adults in the community. Better manners have been observed in the park museum, in the library, in the local movie house, at the school, and on the playground as well as in the homes. Children have been observed to take more interest in keeping the classroom clean and orderly. Acts of kindness have been noticed and commented upon. Students assumed and carried out responsibilities in completing school assignments, in doing home chores, in helping other children.

These conclusions were drawn from observations

made in the classroom and around the school building. The author also talked with parents and businessmen in the community. The parents commented on the interest taken by the children in the home. The people in the business places observed less annoyance by the children and more courtesy when in their establishments on business. Reports reached the author on the obedience of many children in the local theater and their willingness to remain in their seats and be quiet. In the recreational groups it has been reported that better attitudes of sportsmanship have become evident. The librarian stated that more of these children were taking out library books and seemed to know what they wanted. She also reported that they were very alert about getting the books back when due. The curator at the park museum felt more interest was stimulated among these children toward museum classes. When a classmate was out with an illness that was to be rather long, some children suggested sending letters, gifts, and cards. Other children offered to go to his home and help him along on any work he was missing.

These are instances of good civic traits and

even though it is impossible to get any real tangible results the author feels an excellent start has been made in molding the citizenship habits of these children in the right direction.

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CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS

The problem of this thesis was based on the need for improvement in teaching citizenship. From experiences with this project, the following recommendations for teachers are suggested:

1. Have available not only such resources as books, magazines, visual aids, pamphlets, news items, but also community resources.
2. Carry on activities according to a democratic pattern, as club meetings, discussions, group working and planning, centers of interest patterned after real life situations.
3. Encourage creative work in the classroom as planning a science corner, a news corner; clean-up and safety campaigns, including the making of posters, writing stories, mottoes and poetry.
4. Use functional methods in all teaching of manners, on the bus, in public places, in games and sports, on the playground, and in relations with all school companions.
5. Create interest in the study of biographies of outstanding citizens.
6. Teach the worth of cooperative living through group planning in social studies, learning to give and take, working out classroom rules and regulations, sharing knowledge with other members of the group, learning to try to understand the other fellow's point of view, and helping younger or slower children.

7. Foster the necessity of active responsibility by having them serve on committees, prepare booklets on interesting places to visit for field trips, form lost and found committees, carry on a library program, work for welfare as making articles for veteran's hospitals, filling Red Cross boxes, making articles for children's hospitals, operating visual aid equipment, and taking pride in school grounds.
8. Show example by participating in P.T.A. meetings and activities, performing civic duties, and keeping up on current events.
9. Inspire good and worthwhile use of leisure time.
10. Guide discussions on pertinent topics as Hallowe'en, fun, safety, fire prevention, and health.
11. Encourage community-school cooperation, interviews, speakers, P.T.A., local history study, open house, and recreational activities.
12. Analyze the citizenship problems of your community and develop your program of civic education in terms of them.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer is greatly indebted to Dr. Frank M. Pelton and Dr. J. Edward Casey for help and advice in organizing and developing this thesis.

APPENDIX

Lists of Books for Fifth and Sixth Grade Children

I. Allabout Books

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Andrews, Dr. Roy Chapman | All About Dinosaurs |
| Gould, Jack | All About Radio and Television |
| Hess, Ferdinand G. | All About the Sea |
| Pugh, Frederick W. | All About Volcanoes and Earthquakes |
| Townsend, Jean Kay | All About the Weather |

II. Biographies

A. Group

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Bailey, Carolyn Sherman | Children of the Earth |
| Baldwin, James | Four Great Americans: Washington, Franklin, Webster, Lincoln |
| Balton, Mrs. Sarah | Famous American Authors, Famous Men of Science, Lives of Girls Who Became Famous, Lives of Four Boys, Who Became Famous, Historic Americans, Boyhood Stories of Famous Men, Girlhood Stories of Famous Women, Heroes of Civilization |
| Brooks, Miriame S. | Boys and Girls Who Became Famous |
| Cather, Mrs. Katherine | Famous Americans, Flyers |
| Gottler, Joseph | Good Stories for Great Birthdays |
| Gruse, Mrs. Amy | Heroes of Service |
| Fraser, Charlotte A. | |
| Olcott, Francis J. | |
| Parkman, Mary Rosette | |

B. Individual

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Franklin, Anna | Andrew Carnegie |
| Larson, Jane | Nathan Hale |

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Lists of Books for Fifth and Sixth Grade Children

I. Allabout Books

Andrews, Dr. Roy Chapman	All About Dinosaurs
Gould, Jack	All About Radio and Television
Lane, Ferdinand C.	All About the Sea
Pough, Frederick H.	All About Volcanos and Earthquakes
Tannehill, Jean Ray	All About the Weather

II. Biographies

A. Group

Bailey, Carolyn Sherwin	Children of the Handicrafts
Baldwin, James	Four Great Americans Washington Franklin Webster Lincoln
Bolton, Mrs. Sarah	Famous American Authors Famous Men of Science Lives of Girls Who Became Famous Lives of Poor Boys Who Became Famous
Brooks, Elbridge S.	Historic Americans
Cather, Mrs. Katherine	Boyhood Stories of Famous Men Girlhood Stories of Famous Women
Cottler, Joseph	Heroes of Civil- ization
Cruse, Mrs. Amy	Boys and Girls Who Became Famous
Fraser, Chelsea A.	Famous American Flyers
Olcott, Francis J.	Good Stories for Great Birthdays
Parkman, Mary Rosetta	Heroes of Service

B. Individual

Brockhausen, Anna	Andrew Carnegie
Darrow, Jane	Nathan Hale

B. Individual (Cont.)

Hallock, Grace Taber	Edward Jenner
Hawthorne, Hildegard	Oliver Wendell Holmes
Purdy, Mrs. Claire	Stephen Foster
Putnam, G.	Amelia Earhart
Richards, Mrs. Laura	Jane Addams
Sullivan, A. M.	Helen Keller

III. Gateway Books

Moran, Eugene F.	Famous Harbors of the World
Nathan, Adele G.	Famous Railroad Stations of the World
Steinman, D. B.	Famous Bridges of the World
Talbert, Ansel	Famous Airports of the World
White, Edward E.	Famous Subways, Tubes, and Tunnels of the World

IV. Landmark Books

Adams, Samuel H.	The Erie Canal
- - -	The Pony Express
- - -	The Santa Fe Trail
Brown, John Mason	Daniel Boone
Conaidine, Robert	The Panama Canal
Cousins, Margaret	Ben Franklin of Old Philadelphia
Dougherty, James	Landing of the Pilgrims
- - -	Trapping and Traders of the Far West
Fisher, Dorothy	Our Independence and the Constitution
- - -	Paul Revere and the Minute Men
Forester, C. S.	The Barbary Pirates
Holbrook, Stewart	Wild Bill Hickok Tames the West
Hunt, George	Story of the U.S. Marines
Janeway, Elizabeth	The Vikings
Jennings, John	Clipper Ship Days
Johnson, William	Sam Houston, The Tallest Texan
Kantor, MacKinlay	Gettysburg
- - -	Lee and Grant at Appomatox
Kjelgaard, Jim	Coming of the Mormons
- - -	Explorations of Pere Marquette

Landmark Books (Cont.)

Lawson, Marie	Pocahontas and Captain John Smith
Lawson, Ted and Considine, Bob	Thirty Seconds over Tokyo
Mason, Van Wyck	Winter at Valley Forge
Mayer, Jane	Betsy Ross and the Flag
McNeer, May	California Gold Rush
Nathan, Adele	Building of the First Trans- continental Railroad
Newberger, Richard	Lewis and Clark Expedition
Owen, Russell	Conquest of North and South Poles
Pinkerton, Robert	First Overland Mail
Pratt, Fletcher	Monitor and Merrimac
Reynolds, Quentin	Custer's Last Stand
- - -	The Wright Brothers
Sheen, Vincent	Thomas Jefferson, Father of Democracy
Shippen, Katherine	Mr. Bell Invents the Tele- phone
Sperry, Armstrong	John Paul Jones, Fighting Sailor
- - -	Voyages of Christopher Columbus
Tallant, Robert	Pirate Lafitte and the Battle of New Orleans
- - -	The Louisiana Purchase
White, Ann Terry	George Washington Carver
- - -	Prehistoric America

V. Real Life

A. Explorers and Early Settlers

Congdon, V.E.	DeSoto
Cottler, J.	Roger Williams
Emerson, C.D.	Stuyvesant
Leighton, M.	John Smith
Nolan, J.C.	La Salle
Weir, R.C.	Columbus

B. Leaders of the American Revolution

Cavanah, F.	Washington
Condon, V.E.	Father Serra
Cottler, J.	Jefferson
Holberg, R.L.	Abigail Adams
Neilson, F.F.	Franklin
Weir, R.C.	John Paul Jones

C. Leaders in Western Expansion

Judson, C.I.	John Jacob Astor
Knoop, F.Y.	Zebulon Pike
Nolan, J.C.	Daniel Boone
Phillips, J.E.	Rufus Putnam

D. Leaders Since 1850

Blackstock, J.	Jane Addams
Bontemps	G. W. Carver
Cavanah, F.	Lincoln
Graham, W.W.	Thomas Edison
Solem, E.K.	Robert E. Lee

VI. The Childhood of Famous Americans Series

Bebenreth, Charlotta	Meriwether Lewis
Bryant, Bernice	Dan Morgan
Burnett, Constance	Lucretia Mott
Burt, Olive	Luther Burbank
- - -	John Wanamaker
- - -	Young Jed Smith
Clark, Electa	Robert Peary
Guthridge, Sue	Tom Edison
Henry, Marguerite	Robert Fulton
Higgins, Helen	Alec Hamilton
- - -	Stephen Foster
- - -	Juliette Low
Howe, Jane	Amelia Earhart
Long, Laura	Oliver Hazard Perry
- - -	David Farragut
- - -	George Dewey
Mason, Miriam	Mark Twain
- - -	Young Audubon
- - -	William Penn
- - -	Mary Mapes Dodge
- - -	Dan Beard
Mitchell, Minnie	Hoosier Boy
Monsell, Helen	Boy of Old Virginia,
- - -	Robert E. Lee
- - -	Thomas Jefferson, A Boy
- - -	in Colonial Days
- - -	Young Stonewall, Tom
- - -	Jackson
- - -	Dolly Madison, Quaker Girl

VI. Childhood of Famous Americans Series (Cont.)

Monsell, Helen	Henry Clay, Mill Boy of the Slashes
- - -	John Marshall, Boy of Young America
- - -	Woodrow Wilson, Boy President
- - -	Susan Anthony, Girl Who Dared
Parks, Aileen	Davy Crockett, Young Rifleman
- - -	Bedford Forrest, Boy on Horseback
Parks, Ed	Teddy Roosevelt, All-Round Boy
Peckham, Howard	William H. Harrison, Young Tippecanoe
Seymour, Flora	Bird Girl, Sacagawea
- - -	Pocahontas, Brave Girl
Smith, Bradford	William Bradford, Pilgrim Boy
- - -	Dan Webster, Union Boy

VII. Junior Literary Guild

Aldis, Dorothy	Lucky Year
Ayars, James	Basketball Comes to Lonesome Point
Allen, Allyn	Lone Star Tomboy
Brink, Carol	Family Grandstand
Carmer, Carl	A Flag for the Fort
Carter, Page	The Ghost Hollow Mystery
Chalmers, Audrey	High Smoke
Carpenter, Frances	Wonder Tales of Horses and Heroes
Davis, Lavinia	Sand's Spurs
- - -	Secret of Donkey Island
Eames, Genevieve	The Good Luck Colt
Erickson, Phoebe	Black Penny
Hogeboom, Amy	Christopher Columbus and his Brothers
Johansen, Margaret	The Wooden Locket
Jones, Ruth	Bay of the Pyramids
Liers, Emil	The Otter's Story
McMeekin, Isabel	Ban-Joe and Grey Eagle
O'Neil, Hester	The Picture of Alaska
Paradis, Marjorie	Timmy and the Tiger
Richardson, Myra	Finders Keepers
Robinson, Tom	Lost Dog, Jerry
Sterling, Dorothy	Trees and Their Story
Wallace, May	A Race for Bill
Warner, Priscilla	Biddy Christmas
Warren, Billy	Ride West into Danger
White, Anne	The Story of Serapina
Wilson, Leon	This Boy Cody and His Friends

Filmstrips Used in Fifth and Sixth Grades

I. Classroom Crafts

- Clay modeling
- Paper Sculpture
- Puppets
- Wire Sculpture

II. Communication

III. Conservation

- Saving the Soil
- Using Our Forests Safely

IV. Science

- We Learn about Weather
- Understanding Weather Conditions
- Changes in Weather
- Balance Among Living Things
- Seasons
- A Home for Water Plants and Animals

V. Social Studies

- The Oil Hunters
- Drilling for Oil
- Petroleum Refining

VI. Transportation

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