

Significant Books

Column Editor:
Elizabeth Z. Howard

Contributors:
Bearnice Skeen, John Moldstad

Looking Ahead to Teaching. Deobold B. Van Dalen and Robert W. Brittell. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1959. 403 p.

The authors of *Looking Ahead to Teaching* designed their book "to give the beginning student in education an up-to-date picture of teaching . . . with information he must have, the working conditions he can expect, and the pressures he must face." This is a formidable task considering the complexity and variety found in the educational systems of the United States. That Van Dalen and Brittell have succeeded is evidenced by their adherence to a basic assumption, by the consistency in their philosophy, and by their selection and organization of content.

The underlying assumption of the authors is "that only those who are best qualified should enter teaching" because the "demands are too great, the results too critical." The role of the teacher, as presented in this book, would tend both to discourage and to encourage the person looking ahead to teaching. After studying this text, only the able and dedicated person would dare teach.

The consistency of the authors in their psychology and philosophy did not prevent their sketching the development of the various aspects of education. The summarization of modern views of chil-

dren under such topics as "The child as a developing organism," "The child as a receiving organism," "The child as a responding organism," "The child as a unified organism," and "The child as a unique organism," is in harmony with the role of the school and teacher, in such topics as "Perpetuating our way of life," "Building a dynamic society," and "Meeting today's needs." The general objectives of education accepted by the authors were those stated by the Educational Policies Commission.¹ In general, the authors stress the problem-solving, cooperative-planning, unit-organization approach to learning experiences with emphasis upon the importance of democracy in teaching.

The selection and organization of the content for an introduction to the teaching profession seem well done in this text. The book is divided into three parts. Part I, The Profession, ranges from decision to teach, ethics and preparation, to the securing of a position. Part II, The School, discusses the growth, organization, administration and financing of the public schools, with some attention to some controversial issues (purpose, funds, methods, patriotism). Part III,

¹ Educational Policies Commission. *The Purposes of Education in American Democracy*. Washington, D.C.: the National Education Association, 1938.

The Teacher, considers the teacher in relation to the child, to the school, to instruction, to the extensions of teaching, and to the community. An appendix containing a list of professional magazines and a self-rating scale are an integral and useful part of the text. A bibliography contains 263 items. The book is adequately indexed.

The amount of material presented, both generally and specifically, gives the student an over-view of the profession and enough detail in specific areas of professional knowledge to serve him in his professional decision making. He is saved from being confused and overwhelmed because of the excellence of the organization of the content and the frequent summaries.

This book is a comprehensive and useful contribution to the literature introducing the teaching profession. The authors evidently had in mind a semester course. The college instructor and the college student are given a broad introduction to the profession of education through emphasis upon understanding child growth and development, upon high ethical principles and professionalism; through the history of education, school organization, and administration; and through discussions of staff and community relationships and current pressures upon the school.

—Reviewed by BEARNICE SKEEN, professor of education, Department of Student Teaching, Western Washington College of Education, Bellingham, Washington.

Administering Audio-Visual Services.

Carlton W. H. Erickson. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959.

This book has as its primary focal point "the organization of information for the

efficient promotion of learning experiences for a fundamental course in the administration of audio-visual services." Although several yearbooks and readers have been written about selected audio-visual administrative roles and functions, Dr. Erickson's volume appears to be the first prepared as a textbook in which all the major aspects of administering audio-visual services are considered in a systematic and integrated manner.

The author depends upon periodical literature and research reported in educational publications for many audio-visual standards and criteria. One of the refreshing aspects of the book, however, is the inclusion of accounts of many personal teaching experiences and observations which insure stimulating and rewarding reading. These teaching and administrative experiences reflect the author's 25 years of contact with audio-visual materials as a science teacher, city director of audio-visual services, school principal, U.S. Navy training aids officer, and university audio-visual center director. As further background for writing the text, the author undertook a 12,000 mile trip visiting city-wide and university audio-visual centers throughout the United States. By including administrative forms, diagrams, and criteria developed by personnel of these nationally recognized audio-visual centers, this becomes not only a valuable graduate textbook but a useful planning guide and handbook for school building audio-visual coordinators and city audio-visual directors, school administrators, and curriculum specialists.

In the opinion of the reviewer, the core of this book includes the chapters on in-service training, acquisition of materials and equipment, ways of facilitating the use of audio-visual materials, and evaluation. It also offers the reader in-

valuable techniques and suggestions for helping teachers to realize the full potential of audio-visual materials. Summaries of tested practices, evaluation forms, check lists and standards which have been successfully used by the 34 audio-visual and instructional materials specialists visited by the author fulfill a recognized need not only of the newly appointed director but also of experienced "old hands" who periodically wish to evaluate their present procedures and programs.

As a background for further discussion, the author begins with an analysis of the four essential roles of the director of audio-visual services, namely, those of executive, supervisor, audio-visual specialist, and equipment technician. Sound working principles for setting up an effective service program also come in for early consideration.

Believing that the successful audio-visual director must possess a penetrating insight into the process of teaching and learning, the author includes a synthesis of learning principles and theories related to motivation, the complexity of learning, transfer of training and the process of discrimination and generalization. He relates these to implications for the use of audio-visual materials. Basic roles that audio-visual materials can play in helping teachers to improve instruction and a set of utilization principles which help the teacher use these materials effectively constitute some of the most valuable suggestions.

Ideas for preparing and defending the budget are always of interest to administrators. Besides reviewing many of the minimum financial standards recommended by state and regional organizations, the author provides nine sample budget tables for various hypothetical school situations.

Erickson devotes a part of his text to aiding the prospective director in setting up a central service headquarters, namely the audio-visual center. Such physical considerations as space needs for the various activities, layout, traffic patterns, storage requests and maintenance suggestions all come in for discussion and recommendations. Developing a system-wide staff organization is also considered.

For those audio-visual directors who are about to expand their services, Erickson discusses patterns for setting up and administering instructional materials collections such as books, maps and globes; photographic and graphic services; radio broadcasting; and closed and open-circuit television.

Lastly, the author offers suggestions as to the role of the audio-visual director in "helping others use good communicative techniques for their own public relations programs on the one hand, and making sure on the other that his own service program in audio-visual methods is adequately understood and supported by all who are concerned."

The "suggested activities" section at the end of each chapter is a valuable feature for all instructors planning to use this as a textbook. The author reports that the majority of these suggested exercises have been tried out during his many years of teaching audio-visual administration classes. They appear to be practical learning experiences which students, working as individuals or in groups, can engage in with profit. As such, they constitute a very worthwhile study and activity guide for the course for which the book is intended as a basic text.

This book makes a definite contribution to the literature.

—Reviewed by JOHN MOLDSTAD, assistant professor of education, Indiana University, Bloomington.

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