Significant Books

Reviewers / *Robert S. Fleming*
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Unit Teaching in the Elementary School: Social Studies and Related Sciences. *Lavone A. Hanna, Gladys L. Potter and Neva Hagaman.* *New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc., 595 p. $6.50.*

It is refreshing to find a book in 1963 which continues to focus on the teacher as the major curriculum planner. It is also refreshing to find major emphasis being placed on the quality of learning experiences provided for boys and girls. In an era when so many would want to predetermine the content, to emphasize the significance of subject matter and to provide many new and automated teaching aids, it is helpful to find this unique resource for teachers. *Unit Teaching in the Elementary School* (Revised Edition) concerns much more than unit teaching. It is a composite document effectively bringing together many facets of education of high quality. The book is grounded in the needs of our contemporary society, the growth characteristics of children, the nature of the learning process and the values of a democratic culture.

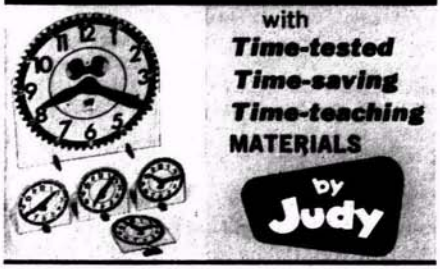
Part one of this book will be exceedingly useful to many groups. It provides an extensive and comprehensive framework for the foundations of curriculum. For learning to become meaningful and for teaching to be thoughtfully planned, the foundations of curriculum must be understood. It is out of such understandings that maturity can be generated in the classroom. The authors pull together extensive knowledge about our technological revolution. They also develop a synthesis of findings from current research in the learning field and from substantial work in the area of growth and development.

Part two concerns the unit of work. Here one gets a feeling of the comprehensiveness of the unit and of the potential values to be achieved. Great care has been given to such details as selecting the unit, arranging the environment, developing and extending concepts and generalizations, problem solving, developing skills of inquiry, using basic skills, providing aesthetic experiences, developing social behavior and evaluating changes in behavior of children. Such topics are treated fully with numerous suggestions to teachers as to a variety of ways of accomplishing basic purposes. It is for this reason that the book may be thought of as a source book for teachers. It relates foundation to both the selection of content and to ways of working.

Part three includes help for teachers in the preparation of resource units with a variety of illustrations of several types of units.

The book is a valuable addition to our literature. However, as it is studied one needs constantly to focus on the assumptions made in a "unit" approach to the

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curriculum of the social studies and related sciences. It is conceivable that more than one unit should be employed in many classrooms at one time. It may be that many "units" should emerge naturally out of life experiences of children rather than from other considerations of scope and sequence.

Hanna, Potter and Hagaman have an attractive, readable document which is fully illustrated. Effective use is made of action photographs of children. The volume contains an abundance of current reference material for use by teachers.

This book should be of great interest to individuals seeking insight into the nature of mature curriculum planning and of effective teaching.

—*Reviewed by* ROBERT S. FLEMING, *Assistant Commissioner of Education, State Department of Education, Trenton, New Jersey.*

Principles of Modern Education. ***Ralph L. Pounds and Robert L. Garretson.*** *New York, London: The Macmillan Co., 1962. 455 p.*

Many teacher education institutions offer, as a first level course in the professional sequence, a conglomerate of information called "Introduction to Education" or a similar title. The Pounds and Garretson book is a text for such a course, geared to the task of orienting and inducting into the teaching profession young people who have made commitments to become teachers.

Written by professors at the University of Cincinnati, the book is organized into six parts: understanding the nature of education in a democracy, analyzing backgrounds for teaching in the schools, understanding goals for education in a democracy, methods of teaching and organizing instruction, evaluating educational programs, and applying educational principles to meet the future challenge to education.

The chapter on the selection of objectives for education in American society, dubbed an historical overview, is 47 pages long and includes many lists. In this way, the authors handle a difficult task and develop their own emphases by elaborating upon some topics and compressing others.

The language is clear and direct; the sections within the chapters are short, well defined. Pictures are plentiful and help clarify the content. The use of a pleasant blue color-block emphasizes and sets apart chapter headings and special charts and diagrams. Especially helpful to the beginning student will be the comprehensive discussions of group process and unit teaching, as well as an interesting section on education and the East-West conflict. At the end of each

chapter suggestions for further study are listed. Some chapters list selected films that are directly, others less directly, relevant to the ideas presented in the chapter. Students planning to become secondary school teachers will appreciate the many examples of high school situations and the numerous references to books on secondary education.

The title of the book is justified by the series of generalizations and principles drawn from the text and listed at the end of each chapter. To summarize and draw relationships between the various aspects of education, one of the final chapters brings together combined and enlarged principles for which creative instructors will find theoretical and practical use.

—Reviewed by MARY-MARGARET SCOBEY, *Professor of Education, San Francisco State College, California.*

Teaching and Learning the Democratic Way. ***Gertrude Noar.*** *Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963. 244 p.*

A title for this book that is descriptive of its contents would be "Unit Teaching in Intergroup Education." Some writers apparently view democracy as a kind of conceptual Fibber Magee closet into which any of the vague, ill-assorted ideas about the "American way of life" can be crammed. Gertrude Noar, however, is not such a writer. She sees democracy primarily as equality for the individual of minority group status and as cooperativeness in committee work. She mentions but fails to elaborate upon critical thinking. Freedoms essential to the survival of democracy other than those of minority groups are hardly touched.

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democracy, but scholars would identify other beliefs that are important to democracy as a political theory and as a way of life. Equating "the democratic way" with intergroup relations and democratic methodology with unit teaching may be disappointing to readers who expect a more thorough analysis and treatment of the subjects than the author gives. Nevertheless, the book contains useful suggestions for those who would improve their program in intergroup education.

Part I, "Unit Teaching," gives step-by-step directions that may be helpful to undergraduates in teacher education and to elementary teachers who have not mastered the technique of unit teaching. Teachers in high school social studies, especially in Problems of Democracy classes, may find some of the material in Part I useful. Part II, "Ideas, Concepts, and Principles Related to Teaching," compresses into 36 pages a brief review of what is commonly taught in beginning courses in child development, educational psychology, and educational sociology.

The most valuable part of the book for many readers will be Part III, "Resources for the Teacher." Miss Noar's experience as National Director of Education of the Anti-Defamation League, B'nai B'rith, qualifies her to write several excellent unit outlines, complete with bibliographies and audio-visual aids. These units are entitled, "Prejudice and Discrimination," "Human Rights," "Race and Race Relations," "American Cultural Pluralism," and "The Major Religions of the World." Material in the chapter headed "Brotherhood Celebrations" and in the appendix "Bibliographies of Materials on Human Relations" is helpful.

—*Reviewed by* GRACE GRAHAM, *Professor of Education, University of Oregon, Eugene.*

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