THE WORKSHOP PROJECT AT DENTON, TEXAS.

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE

SUMMER OF 1940

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SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE

SUMMER OF 1940

PROJECT

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State Teachers College
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

By

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August, 1941

90757
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Aims and Limitations

We propose in this study to give a brief review of the workshop project as carried on at the Denton Senior High School, Denton, Texas, during the six-weeks summer session of 1940. While the purpose of this paper is not to give an evaluation of the program, we shall point out some of the best points and suggest a few items which might be improved.

The workshop program as administered by the Southern Association Staff during the summer of 1940 included five schools. Our discussion however will be limited to Senior High School. Because separate figures were not available, we shall use, however, in Tables 1 and 2 tabulations from the conference as a whole.

Source of Data

 Practically all the material necessary for this project was obtained from primary sources. A questionnaire was given to the high school students and to the teachers to secure their reaction to the project. Stenographic reports of the staff meetings together with a mimeograph report on the conference furnished still other information.
Treatment of Data

Our report on the workshop project as conducted in Denton Senior High School shall be preceded by a short history and background for the workshop together with something of the philosophy back of the workshop idea.

The discussion of the workshop as used in the Senior High School will include results of questionnaires sent students and teachers; a verbatim report of one of the meetings in which students, representatives from the various classes, took part in the discussion which had to do with determining school policies; and some material from the story of the conference as reported in the Southern Association Conference mimeographed book.

Some Physical and Social Aspects of the School and Community

Denton, with a population of 11,189, is essentially a school town. It has two state colleges, the North Texas State Teachers College and the Texas State College for Women. Both rank among the largest colleges of their kind in the country.

The predominating educational atmosphere which results, together with the convenience in attending results in between eighty and ninety per cent of the Denton High School graduates attending college.

The Senior High School is a fairly modern school plant, having been built in 1925. It has twenty-two classrooms.
History of the Workshop

Better preparation of teachers has long been felt as a real need. It was an outgrowth of this need that summer workshops in secondary education began.

In the summer of 1936 two commissions jointly conducted a six-weeks seminar at the Ohio State University. This direct access to research findings and consultation with specialists proved so helpful that it was decided to expand the idea the following summer and in 1937 a "workshop" was held at Sarah Lawrence College Bronxville, N.Y., the leadership being furnished by three commissioners of the Progressive Education Association.

The experiment proved so successful that in 1938 three workshops were set up, the Eastern Workshop at Sarah Lawrence College, the Rocky Mountain Workshop at Denver, Colorado and the Western Workshop at Oakland, California.

These workshops differed in certain notable particulars from the conventional summer sessions. There were no formal classes or lecture courses. The needs of the individual student, school and community determined the program, and a staff of consultants, fresh from contacts with new developments in evaluation, curriculum, guidance and study of adolescence were on hand to serve as needed.

That the summer workshops were markedly different from most of the in-service programs hitherto available for teachers is the testimony of nearly all who took part in them as staff members or students.

The value in the workshop lies in the sincere effort to carry out certain fundamental principles that have long been neglected in American education.

1. Concern for the needs of individual human beings in direct relation to the demands of the community.

2. Insistence upon a rich experience of living as essential to all education.

3. A scientific approach to the understanding of human beings and society that makes use of modern instruments of evaluation, but views these not as important as an end in themselves, but primarily as helps to achieving educational objectives that grow out of a reasoned philosophy of life in which human happiness is placed uppermost.

One of the major problems of the workshop procedure is to secure balance -- balance for example, between consideration of general materials of philosophy and preparation on the one hand and implementation on the other. In an effort to attain this balance the staff must be
constantly on the alert to see that both receive consideration.

The workshop experience shows that it is easy for the student to become interested in the general problem and stop tackling the task realistically and begin to philosophize about it. Some of the other students tend to regard their problem too specifically without reference to a large understanding. It has been found necessary to mediate the forces that are operating in the workshop. It is a major problem to plan the different aspects of the workshop to bear upon the student without disintegrating him in the process.

Quality of material is another problem. It is not desirable to have work produced that is below standard, yet the workshop ought to make available the contribution of each member. Rightly handled the production of material with the understanding that it must be reasonably good offers an educational incentive to quality.1

An Example of the Workshop in Action

Before undertaking to discuss the workshop as it was conducted in Denton Senior High School, it seemed wise to give a little of the history and background of the movement since it is a comparatively new phase of education. To give the reader a still better understanding of how the workshop operates, it seemed wise to cite an example of a workshop program in action. Perhaps the best example of this is to be found in the school of Holtville, Alabama. A recent issue of Life Magazine devoted twelve pages to the subject of "Democracy in United States Schools". One-third of this space was devoted to the Holtville School.

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1 Progressive Education Association, Summer Workshops in Secondary Education (An experiment in the In-Service Training of Teachers and Other Educational Workers, P.E.A. Bulletin, N.Y., P. 7.)
Almost everywhere a school lives within its community. But at Holtville, Alabama it is just the other way. Here the community lives within the school. If by unhappy chance Holtville High School should disappear, most of the social structure of the community and an important part of its economic structure would also collapse.

Holtville is a tiny village twenty-five miles from Montgomery and five miles from the nearest post-office. It is set in an average farm community. Holtville High School set out to fit its students for their future life in Holtville. In doing this the school has completely taken the lead in all community life by making the community a better, richer place in which to live.

When it was found, for instance, that a fourth of the meat slaughtered in the country spoiled because of lack of refrigeration, Holtville High set up a slaughtering and refrigeration plant. Last year students butchered and cured 50,000 pounds of local meat. When an expert declared that canning could add $300 to the annual income of farm families, Holtville High set up a cannery. Last year students in the cannery put up 8,359 cans of corn, okra, kraut, peaches and the like. Under teacher guidance or supervision they also set out 100,000 slash pines and 8,000 peach trees, contour plowed 600 acres of land, hatched and sold 23,000 blood-tested chickens, sprayed hundreds of peach trees.

The farmers paid for the services -- $1.00 per acre for plowed land, 8¢ per blood tested chick, $1.00 per slaughtered animal. The money went to pay off loans on equipment, buy new equipment. Everybody got much for his money's worth, for both children and their elders were learning how to better live on the farm.

The school also makes life in Holtville more pleasant. The students run weekly movies. They conduct a community lending library and a barbershop. They watch over the health of young pupils, put out the only local newspaper. For themselves they run a bank which accepts deposits, makes small loans.

This group action for the good of the group is the best kind of object lesson in a working democracy. The school itself breeds self-reliance. There are no rigid class schedules. When a boy enters school, he writes down what he wants to learn -- Latin, farming, history, canning, trombone playing and the like. He is assigned to classes accordingly. At any time he wants to do something special, he writes his teacher and explains that he will not be in class for awhile because he wants to learn how to butcher or string electric wires. At regular intervals, he writes a report on his work and progress to his parents and his teacher adds any appropriate comments. If a senior gets a job before he graduates, he can study at home and graduate with his class.
Only one out of four Holtville graduates go to college, but so good is their scholastic ranking that not one college entrant in recent years has failed.  

Basic Educational Philosophy
of the Workshop

The American child of the twentieth century lives in a culture whose material aspects are determined by scientific knowledge applied to control of the forces of nature. The social values of this culture are derived in part from the traditions of a pre-scientific society and in part from attempts to social forms appropriate to a scientific age. In the face of conflicting values and the limitations of scientific approach in satisfying human needs, irrational forces manipulate the tools of science and offer alternative values.

This culture, with its scientific basis, its rival and confused values, and its irrational forces, prevades the world in which the child grows through childhood, and in which he must assume his adult role. It establishes the terms in which his basic personal adjustments are necessarily made. Any program for the schools of America must take cognizance of that culture and must equip children to understand it and to function in and through it.

All educational instructions, whatever the society of which they are a part, perform certain major functions; they pass on to the rising generation the heritage of the past and they protect the future by equipping the individuals to function under the conditions that are to come. The characteristics of the society determine the way in which any particular set of schools perform these functions; what they select from the heritage of the past, how they pass it on, and the terms in which they equip individuals to confront the emerging future.

It is probably beyond dispute that the schools of any society, reflect by and large, the predominant ideas of that society -- at least in so far ideals are understood and are capable of being carried over into action. Any system of thought and practice in education is formulated with some reference to the ideals and interests dominant or widely cherished in society at the time of its formation.

American schools function in a society committed to the principles of democracy. This central fact determines the terms in which they perform the functions common to all education and give direction to the whole of formal education.

2 "Democracy in United States Schools," Life Magazine January 13, 1941, pp. 68-71
CHAPTER II

INITIATION OF THE PROGRAM

We have seen something of the history, background and underlying philosophy of the workshop. We shall now see how the program was started in the Benton Senior High School.

The idea was prevalent in the halls on the first morning that a new scheme of things was to be tried out during the six-weeks of summer school, and all the students were pretty well excited. Many wild ideas and rumors were filling the halls. When the time seemed right, the assembly bell rang and all filed into the auditorium with much talking among the students and with many misgivings. After a short discussion of the new plan by the Principal, and the children realized that they were to be a part of an experiment which was very unusual, the spirit of the whole thing changed. Questions relative to plans, courses and policies were asked and explained. When it dawned upon all who were in summer school that the plan was to make the individual student, who was trying to get somewhere, a partner in the whole transaction, it seemed that the time was at hand for the group to form. The elastic schedules were handed to each student, who next passed to the counselor with whom he would work for further guidance. His first concern was to indicate the courses in which he wanted credit. The basic studies, English and social studies were the first to be scheduled, then the electives. As soon as the group met, the students were asked to fill in interest cards. Many of these problems cut across subject lines as the children worked. Personal conferences were also held with the students in all areas of work throughout the summer, but the first one was of particular importance in getting started.  

Two points in which the workshop differs from the traditional school are:

freedom in selection of subjects

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1 Report of Southern Association Conference (no author, mimeographed), 1940, p. 64.
and freedom in pursuit of this interest. Since the Senior High School students during the summer of 1940 studied the same courses as in the winter, it might appear that in this respect the ideals of the workshop were not very well observed. In most high schools this might be true. The Denton High School, however, is virtually a "prep" school since between eighty and ninety per-cent of the graduates attend college. For this reason the students wanted those subjects that would fit them for college entrance.

The second point, that in allowing freedom in pursuit of studies, was rather well observed. The students were not required to obtain absence and tardy permits to enter class as they were in the formal school. They could study in class or in the library or on the campus. They might form groups around common interests and have a group of their own in a separate room.

In order to get a better idea of how the program was initiated and carried out, we shall again refer to the notes on the Southern Association Conference.

Each department considered what would be the work of the several groups and the individual student. The interests indicated on the cards and in the personal conferences formed the basis for some groupings. Other factors influencing grouping indicated in the various departments were, friendship for other students, study habits, stage of advancement and mutual help. No specific suggestions seem to have been made by the teacher in forming the groups, but in some cases suggestions were made to change from one group to another when it was found that a student was not working successfully in a certain
group. This was particularly true in the mathematics group. Groups in history centered around interests in current political conventions, cosmetics, aviation, consumers' problems, industry, conservation and the work done in the various agencies of the New Deal. After the groups had become formed and their desires became known, the decentralization of the groups started by attempting to meet the interests and needs of the individual. Each individual belonged to one or more of the above groups, but he did his work individually and came to the group to get help and make reports.

In providing opportunity for developing initiative and responsibility the plan showed to the best advantage. Provisions had been made in the elastic schedule for pupils to meet their individual needs at all times. In each report one finds evidence which indicates that students were able to locate and attack personal problems. They would not have been able to do this in a formal program that was using a definite schedule which stipulated unchanging time.

Ample evidence is to be found in all the reports to show that individual initiative was encouraged and that the responsibility was placed upon individual members.

In the mathematics department each student decided on the work he must accomplish in the six-weeks period and indicated the time he wished to come for help. Sources of information were given to each, according to his needs. No assignments were made by the workers. The student was to work at his own rate of speed with help from the teachers when he felt that he needed it. The student was free to leave the mathematics room and work in other places. The only restriction was self-imposed by agreement, that each student should finish the task he had set for himself. He could go to the teacher of his choice for assistance; he could work in a room by himself; he could work on something other than mathematics, or he could go to the library to work.

The science students were given freedom in going to the library, laboratory, advisor, shop, home, stores, and outdoors in obtaining information or material for their problems.

In the homemaking department the students asked if they might do home projects, and they did projects that would be most helpful to them. They selected their own patterns and materials. No special stress was given on when to complete a piece of work.

History students found information on their interest fields and made oral reports, written reports, notebooks and charts about their findings. When they came to a standstill in their work on a problem, and were undecided on just what to do next, it became the responsibility of the teacher to guide them in paths they needed to follow.
The fact that they were allowed to type materials of their own seemed to spur the beginning typing students on. Seeing the advanced typing class working on stencils, mimeograph material and other advanced projects kept the beginners always at work to attain a higher goal. This advanced class put out the newspaper for the English class.

The latter part of the first week of school, some of the students asked if they were going to have an assembly. They wanted one soon. With the help of the advisor one was planned for the following Saturday. Each department was to have a student tell something about the work they were doing and to contribute any number that might be used. One girl gave some poetry selections she had done for memory work, another gave a book-review, several musical selections were also given. A similar program arranged by the same group was given on the fourth of July.

The element which assisted all in locating and meeting the interests and needs of the individual members of any group was frankness in discussion groups. One will observe from the minutes of the stenographic reports of the various adult and student meetings that the same thing which prevailed all such meetings was the spirit of frankness which existed between pupils and co-workers. This caused all to feel that they were a part of the plan. No matter what form was used in securing needed information from another group, it was forthcoming. The pupil and the co-worker realized that in order to make the plan effective and successful all should feel a responsibility in locating, facing and solving the problems as they became evident in the conference, in class and out.

Our flexible program and high degree of cooperation made it possible for materials, methods and aids to be mobile. It would seem that the individual departments, as such, tended to lose their identity and all were working on the problem of meeting and assisting in the solution of problems which were causing a student concern.

One of the English group became interested in studying etiquette and moved into the home economics laboratory for conferences. In this department classes also visited both college libraries, the Teachers College museum, and the display of inaugural gowns of wives of Texas governors at Texas State College for Women. One group visited the Coca-Cola bottling plant here.

Most of the work of the six-weeks was done by groups within a class or by various groups from the various classes. 4

4*ibid.*, pp. 63-70
CHAPTER III

WORK AND PLAY

We have seen something of the history, background and philosophy of the workshop. We shall now consider the students and co-workers, as student-teachers were called, at work and play. The fact that it was not all work is revealed by the following table.

TABLE 1

FORMS OF RECREATION ENGAGED IN BY STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form of Recreation</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skating</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trips</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse-back riding</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rifle shooting</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatics</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnics</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room activities</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parties</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycling</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ping pong</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft-ball</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teas</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#Figures for five schools.
Table 1 shows that the students preferred the more active forms of recreation. Swimming, skating and the more active games lead the list.

No definite attempt was made at any organized form of recreation at Senior High School during the summer with the exception of the assembly programs and the various class activities such as parties and picnics. Due to the small enrollment and the heat during school hours, intermural sports were not practical. Most of the students interested in baseball were allied with one of the civic soft-ball teams which played at the City Park in the evenings.

The Administration sponsored two picnics at Lake Dallas for the teachers and supervisors. One or more such outings for the students would have been welcomed and the need for such recreation is brought out in the questionnaire sent to the students. If such outings had been engaged in and the students and teachers had had the opportunity to meet informally, it would have tended, it seems, to have fostered a spirit of democratic, co-operative atmosphere.

Working on assembly programs might be considered as a form of recreation. The students seem to enjoy it. Two assembly programs were held during the summer. Perhaps if more of these had been given, further opportunity for student recreation would have been provided.

We show in Table 2 the forms of recreation engaged in by the student-teachers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form of Recreation</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shows</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trips</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational class work</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skating</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseback riding</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badminton</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rifle-shooting</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft-ball</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croquet</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodeo</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutting flowers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archery</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needlework</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures for five schools

Shows were the most popular with teachers. Many of the forms of recreation popular with students were also engaged in by a large number of the teachers. Some form of recreation would be necessary, it seems, in the workshop idea to help in rounding out the whole personality of the individual.
In order that we may get a better idea of the freedom of students and the prevailing spirit of democracy in the workshop, we shall consider a stenographic report of one of the meetings in which students, representing the various classes, took part in the meeting which was for the purpose of determining some phases of school policy. One of the students acted as chairman of the meeting. The meeting was held in the school auditorium.

Virginia: (Chairman) As Prof. said there have been some problems brought to him. Do you have any problems you would like to talk about this morning?

Student: We have had history high ten and are taking low ten, and we are doing the same thing.

Matthews: Are you worried?

Student: It's boring to have the same thing over again.

Calhoun: How come you are going over the same thing?

Student: Well, we studied about consumer problems in the class and we are going over the same thing again.

Matthews: Why don't you quit?

Student: We always tell the teacher what we have had, but there are some in the class who say, "Let's go on with it."

Matthews: Wouldn't it be possible for a small group to pull off from the other group and find out what you would like to do?

Student: I guess so.

Virginia: Anybody else have a problem?

Calhoun: You can't hurt our feeling by anything that you think. Dr. Matthews and I don't have any feelings.

Matthews: I left mine out in the car.
Virginia: Pat, what about biology?

Pat: They are letting us do what we want to do.

Calhoun: There's an idea Miss Westcourt could take up. She could say, "In biology one group does one thing, and one group does another."

Virginia: Is anybody worried about time? There are just about ten more days of school. I know in our English class we talked about how much more we have to know to complete our work, and we are setting a time limit for each thing we will do so we can get credit.

Calhoun: Who sets that?

Virginia: Our teacher. She doesn't set it exactly. She asks us how much time we will need.

Calhoun: Did you, as an individual, elect to work on those things?

Virginia: She is letting us select the plays we want to read, but there's a certain amount of work required for low eleven English and we are doing that. Surely somebody else has a problem.

Matthews: Did anyone have a notion that if he spent six weeks here he would get credit on low eleven whether he read Macbeth or not?

Virginia: We are going to have a conference next week and see if there is any use of our staying. If we haven't done very much work there's no use of our staying in the group.

Calhoun: You mean you have to work in summer school?

Virginia: Yes.

Matthews: Will you take some evidence to the conference to show what you have been doing?

Virginia: Well, we have been handing in notebooks, papers, giving oral reports and things like that.

Thelma: We have individual groups. We may choose the group we want to.
Virginia: We have oral reports on what we have done. We have five different groups, novel, drama and others, and we choose the group we want to work in and then make reports on our work.

Calhoun: Let's take up some of the things that worry us.

Virginia: All right. What worries you, Sam?

Sam: I don't know right now.

Student: In our geometry class it's difficult; we work with high and low ten in there together. The low ten is getting the fundamentals and with all of us in the same room we get mixed up.

Calhoun: Why be in the same room?

Student: We just are.

Virginia: It seems like high ten could go to another room.

Calhoun: Has anyone told you that high ten had to stay in there?

Student: No, we have just been doing it.

Virginia: Maybe you could choose some bright fellow to take charge of the group and go into another room.

Matthews: Maybe you could choose some fellow who didn't know much about it so he wouldn't let you go until it had been explained.

Virginia: Would you like it better if the groups were separated?

Student: It is confusing when some of us are having discussions but when we are working by ourselves it doesn't matter.

Calhoun: Would it be possible to move into another room when they are having a discussion?

Student: Yes.

Virginia: It seems to me that would be a good idea. Is there any other class working like that -- low and high?

Student: In algebra class we are doing that. The teacher hardly ever has discussions. She helps individually. I don't find it very confusing.
Thelma: Some have just now realized that over half of the time is gone and they are not half through with their work.

Calhoun: You mean that you have to go along and pull up a certain number of "pegs" in order to finish?

Student: Yes.

Matthews: What does a fellow do when he discovers that over half of the time is gone and he has about a fourth of his "pegs" pulled up?

Student: Double up and work harder, I guess.

Calhoun: Would you find that condition in a formal class? Is the fact that you have neglected your work a part of this situation, or would you do that any time?

Student: Most of us do that anyway.

Pat: If there was just some way that the teachers could pound it into our heads that the time is short and that we should work hard. Our teacher tells us when things are due, but if we don't hand them in, she doesn't say anything.

Calhoun: Is that her responsibility?

Matthews: Who should do that "pounding"?

Virginia: We should.

Calhoun: What is going to be the reaction of individual members of the class if they get here at 7:30 and stay till 11:30 each day, but do no work and get no credit. Will it make them unhappy?

Virginia: Certainly, but it will be their own fault.

Calhoun: Will they really be unhappy? How many are expecting something for nothing?

Virginia: Some of them are.

Student: Seems like teachers could make them work.

Sam: I don't like all this freedom!
Calhoun: Why don’t you like it?

Sam: In English class I am used to having a teacher make me get things. This way I don’t work. I don’t like the things we are doing.

Calhoun: Why don’t you put things in your course you like?

Virginia: There are so many things required. These teachers are letting us do what we want to. The teacher lets us select the plays we want to read.

Sam: I just don’t like that.

Calhoun: It is just an experiment on our part. We don’t have a lot of definite ideas on the subject. This is the only experiment like it in existence.

Matthews: In the summer — —

Student: I think it’s a pretty good idea, because college will be something like this and we won’t have someone behind us saying, “Do this and this.”

Virginia: I think it’s a good idea. We have this work we can do if we want to.

Student: We get more individual attention.

Sam: Do you think we are going to have this next winter?

Calhoun: I don’t know.

Sam: I just wondered. What’s the use of putting all this in and then going along in the regular way in typing?

Student: There are certain things you have to know in typing. It doesn’t seem like you could follow this plan in typing.

Sam: Looks like we could type anything we wanted to. It’s like regular school.

Virginia: Our teacher lets us do something else if we think we can.

Student: I could have finished the book in the first two weeks if she had let me.

Virginia: It would be pretty good to run a typing class like that.
Calhoun: I thought next Wednesday's lesson depended on what you will learn in Tuesday's lesson.

Sam: In advanced typing that wouldn't be true.

Matthews: I wonder if Sam could explain to us why he wants to do the thing he wants to do in typing, and wants assignments in English?

Sam: It's O.K. in typing, I was just wondering why they were doing the same as in long term in typing, why it hadn't changed.

Calhoun: You like to have a definite assignment given with a time limit on it?

Matthews: I wonder if Sam asked his teacher for an assignment in English if she wouldn't give it to him?

Sam: Everyone else is doing the other way.

Matthews: I wonder if she wouldn't do it though.

Virginia: Don't you find it a lot easier the new way?

Sam: Yes, but I think we are going to have some questions in college that we can't answer.

Calhoun: How will you know when you have finished a thing?

Student: Could you set a certain amount at the first of the term?

Calhoun: Who is to be satisfied, the teacher or you?

Student: Both.

Virginia: Sam, can't you find anything you want to do?

Student: I believe assignments would be a little better for me. If I don't have to do something, I don't do it. I like this, but it's better if a teacher sets a certain time for me to do things.

Virginia: I think I see his point. He might have less than he should have -- or maybe too much?

Calhoun: Are you penalized for having too much?

Virginia: No.
Student: I put off work when I don't have to do it.

Student: I had rather have work like this summer because when you get through with something, you can go on with something else.

Calhoun: How would that operate in a large system?

Virginia: I think they could work it out.

Student: What if you were not interested in a thing and you needed it?

Virginia: Maybe you could get interested.

Calhoun: Do you ever need advice and counsel?

Student: We could have different rooms and have the teachers in them. Let the students work individually and get advice from the teachers when they need it.

Calhoun: I don't want to do anything; I want to raise sand all the time. What are you going to do with me?

Pats: Let you raise sand.

Calhoun: I know you girls and I know that you are trying to get somewhere, but I go in there and you can't work.

Matthews: Yesterday a group pitched a fellow out. There wasn't a teacher there. There were twelve people and out he went.

Calhoun: I just wanted to get your reactions. What do you think the basis of credit ought to be?

Jack: They have so much more in the fall term, I don't see how they can get the same credit. They don't take up a lot of things in the summer they do in the fall.

Calhoun: Maybe it is not all essential.

Student: What about college? It will be hard unless you have these things in high school.

Pat: If they have to have that, maybe they would study that.

Matthews: They might do a little finding out what those things are like.

Calhoun: I have some placement tests. We might look at these.
Pat: We fill out a card showing what we want to do. We tell the teacher what we want a test over. It's so interesting that way!

Calhoun: We are going to have to decide before long what the credit basis will be.

Matthews: What do you think about having a share in deciding whether you have done the work this summer, and getting together things to show that you have done it? Would you like to have a share in that? What would you advise your group in the light of this discussion? You might advise them to think that the time is more than half over. What else?

Student: About credit?

Virginia: About two sections working together.

Matthews: If a fellow wants an assignment and thinks he will get along better, he should ask for one. It is O.K. to ask for an assignment. It is O.K. to ask for a conference and say, "How am I doing?"

Calhoun: What about the fellow who was just coming for credit?

Virginia: He should do his share of the work.

Matthews: Suppose he has a notion that if he spends six weeks here we are going to "pay him?"

Virginia: Talk to him.

Student: This morning a boy insisted that he wouldn't do something unless he got credit.

Matthews: You might tell them that no fellow is going to get credit unless he's done the work.

Calhoun: Do you believe in paying a boy for mowing you lawn if he doesn't mow it?

Matthews: A fellow has my car right now. He is going to wash it. If he doesn't, I am going to keep my money. Isn't that fair?

Calhoun: Who will decide whether it's been washed?

Matthews: He and I together. If we decide it hasn't been done right, he might ask for a chance to do it again, saying, well, I can do better than that."
Calhoun: You are a part of the Council of this summer school. You are helping us decide on what to do. I want you to tell your group what you decided to do. Explain to them that, that was the consensus of opinion of this group.

Student: I would like to ask a question about low and high ninth English. We are both studying the same thing.

Matthews: If they don’t know it, that’s all right.

Student: We are all in the same group. I know most of it already.

Matthews: We might discover that we are wasting a lot of time studying the things we already know.

Calhoun: We might come to the place where we can do high school in three years.

Matthews: Or find there are a lot of things we think are more important.

Student: I think the teachers should determine more than the pupils whether we have learned enough or not. The teachers have had college work and they know more about what we will need in later life.

Matthews: Would you want a share in deciding that?

Virginia: I would want the teacher’s opinion. I wouldn’t want any opinion to be higher than hers.

Matthews: We said while ago you might talk it over, get all the evidence you can that shows what you have done, then leave it with the teacher or share with her in the deciding.

Calhoun: Do you think you would be a part of the picture if you had a chance to sit down and talk that over with the teacher? Could you bring in some evidence to show that you had done the amount of work that was supposed to be done, and of sufficient quality?

Virginia: Our teacher lets us tell her what we think we deserve, and she tells us whether she thinks we deserve it or not.

Student: The teacher ought to have the final decision.
Douglass: We are discussing current problems. How will we know whether we have done what we are supposed to do? How can we tell if we have made progress?

Pat: The teacher should tell you at the first of the term what you are supposed to complete.

Student: Our teacher told us what his class in the regular term completed, then we decided how much we thought we needed.

Virginia: I think it is up to the teacher to give us some idea of what we should complete.

Douglass: In current problems, we discuss them but there is no way to tell whether students have done their part.

Calhoun: Could you talk that over with the teacher. Could you put something in the teacher's mind so that she would remember whether or not you were proficient in those discussions?

Matthews: Number of reports you have given; way in which you have given them; the kind of material reported--

Calhoun: Show the way he progressed?

Matthews: Yes.

Student: Lots of students don't bring up assignments if they are allowed to do what they want to, and they "bawl" the teacher out if they don't get what they want. I think the teacher ought to give certain instructions.

Pat: Could you go to the teacher at the first and tell her what you wanted to complete and decide whether that was enough?

Calhoun: Who would decide?

Student: The teacher.

Calhoun: How would she know whether you knew that or not?

Student: Have conferences with her.

Virginia: If you were worried about something the whole class might discuss it.
Calhoun: Suppose a member of the class isn't interested in anything you do. What are you going to do with him?

Student: He shouldn't be in school.

Calhoun: How are you going to get him out?

Virginia: Talk with him.

Student: In the lower grades they take mental ages and physical ages and put them where they ought to be.

Matthews: You might have something. We might form groups on certain bases.

Student: Have entrance tests.

Calhoun: You may put me in a "C" group, my best friend may be in the "A" group.

Virginia: I don't think entrance tests are fair. Maybe they just happen to hit the things you don't know.

Calhoun: Let's decide on when we will meet again.

Virginia: What about the question of credit?

Calhoun: Same as usual if you did the work agreed upon.¹

(Next meeting set for Wednesday at 9:30 A.M.)

This rather lengthy report on one of the meeting was introduced in order that the reader might get some first-hand information on some phases of the workshop. A close reading of it will reveal several things. It not only shows the freedom of the students in expressing their own opinion but also how some of them cling to the traditional standards of the conventional school, how prone they are to accept and to rely on the judgement of the teacher, how they feel lost without the

¹ "Stenographic Reports of Conference Meetings" (typewritten)
accustomed assignments with time limits.

It seems rather surprising that the students, rather than the teachers, were worried about the thoroughness in covering subject matter. In this respect, as previously pointed out, the goal is college.

The meeting, guided by questions from the adults, brought out some vital points to be considered if the workshop were to be used in the same school with an enrollment of six hundred instead of one-hundred and fifty. The problems of room, discipline, assignments and credit would need to be worked out.
CHAPTER IV
EVALUATIONS

While this paper is not, primarily, an evaluation of the workshop, we shall show in Tables 3, 4, 5 and 6 reactions of both students and teachers to the various phases of the project.

The same questionnaire was given to both students and teachers in which they were asked to rank ten questions as "outstanding," "average," and "poor." On ten other questions they were asked to rank the items as "not enough," "sufficient," and "too much."

TABLE 3
CRITERIA BY WHICH THE STUDENTS EVALUATED THE WORK DONE IN SUMMER SCHOOL AND THE PERCENT THAT CHECKED EACH VALUE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Per cent Checking Each Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Efficiency of system</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Value in meeting real needs of the students</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Opportunity for advancement of all students</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Value in preparation for college</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Value in establishing good habits</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Developing leadership</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Developing individual responsibility</td>
<td>61.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Sufficient library facilities</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Classroom order</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Happiness in work</td>
<td>56.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The high school students seemed to think the workshop more outstanding in the developing of leadership and individual responsibility than in any other points. A very small percent of them ranked it as "poor" in any of the ten items.

**TABLE 4**

**ITEMS USED BY STUDENTS IN EVALUATING WORK DONE IN SUMMER SCHOOL AND THE PERCENT THAT CHECKED EACH ITEM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Per-cent checking each degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Freedom of students</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Definite purpose</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Thoroughness in covering subject matter</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Field trips</td>
<td>54.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Recreation (parties, picnics)</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Teachers' attention to individuals</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Length of period</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Definite assignments</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Play and fun in work</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Stress on grades and credit</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The largest percent of students voting on the insufficiency of any one item was in the matter of recreation. As has already been pointed out, an outing to the lake in which the whole student body took part would not only have fostered the spirit of democratic procedure, but would have tended to off-set the expressed need of more recreation.

A large number of the students indicated that they thought the two hour period, without an intermission, was too long. A large percent of the students indicated that they should liked to have had more field trips.
There is a rather striking similarity to the way teachers and students ranked the various items.

### TABLE 5

**CRITERIA BY WHICH TEACHERS EVALUATED WORK DONE IN SUMMER SCHOOL AND PER CENT CHECKING EACH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Efficiency of system</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Value in meeting real needs of students</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Opportunity for advancement of all students</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Value in preparation for college</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Value in establishing good habits</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Developing leadership</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Developing individual responsibility</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Library facilities</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Classroom order</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Happiness in work</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teachers as well as the students thought the system good in developing leadership. The teachers checked it poor in preparation for college and establishing good habits. Teachers and students were pretty well together on the value in meeting the real needs of the students. Practically half of the group voted the system outstanding and half only average. The teachers seemed to be more in agreement on items marked "poor" than did the students as their ranking was more decisive in this column. The "poor" column showed only a small per cent in the ranking done by the students on any of the items.
In this group of questions the teachers seemed to think the system less efficient in the matter of definite purpose. Attention has been called to the seeming lack of any definite educational philosophy. Thoroughness in covering subject matter appears to be the next item of concern of the teachers as 45 per-cent ranked this item as "not enough".

One fourth of the teachers seemed to think that too much stress was placed on grades and credit compared with only 6.2 per-cent of the students.

Both teachers and students agreed that the period was too long. Thirty-five per-cent of the teachers thought more field trips should have been held.

To sum up the significant features in this evaluation of both students and teachers, we might offer the following suggestions: (1) a more definite educational philosophy, (2) a break in the two hour period, (3) more field-trips and recreation.
Why Students Came to School

"Why did you come to Summer School?" and "Did you get what you wanted in coming?" were two discussion questions on the questionnaire sent to students and teachers. If the student did not get what he expected to get in coming, then the summer school, for him at least, would not be a total success.

### TABLE 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To get credit</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make up work</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To learn</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To improve English</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing else to do</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanted to have less work in fall</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To learn shorthand and typing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make senior year work lighter</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To finish typing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like to go to school</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To get classes straight</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To go to college</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To have something to do</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To get more education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To take English</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make extra work</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To go into business</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In answer to the question, "Did you get what you wanted in coming to summer school?" ninety-three students answered in the affirmative; ten students said that they had not; five answered, "I believe I have"; four that they had not received their report cards yet, four did not know and two hoped that they had.

From the above, we may judge that the students, on the whole, were satisfied with the workshop. Most of them were happy in the outcome.

A few were not happy. Since most of them came to obtain credit we can see from Table 8 that at least seventeen were disappointed.

TABLE 8

SUBJECTS IN WHICH STUDENTS FAILED AND THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS FAILING EACH COURSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algebra</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geometry</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two of these students failed two courses or all the work taken. Possibly they, among others, were in need of some of the guidance in which the program was lacking.

This tabulation would indicate that approximately nine per-cent of the students failed at least one course.

One of the discussion questions in the questionnaire the students were asked for suggestions on how summer school might be improved. We shall now consider some of these answers.
Suggested Improvements

Table 9 shows a tabulation of suggestions by students on how summer school might be improved.

**TABLE 9**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestions</th>
<th>Number Giving Each Suggestion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No suggestion</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorter periods</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More individual help from teachers</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More definite assignments</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go back to traditional school</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longer term for amount of work</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate classes for low and high divisions</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have less oral work</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have less freedom of students</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a more definite purpose</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start classes later in day</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More recreation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More work</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination of workshop and traditional school</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better co-operation of students</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow students to decide on own interest</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a better library</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a cooling system</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have more teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More students agreed on a shorter period than any other one item. It seems rather surprising that the suggestion of "More work" and "Less freedom of students" should come from the students themselves. Only seven teachers offered suggestions.
"It should have a few more definite aims and attitudes that could be set up."

"By eliminating so much of the emphasis that is being placed on grades and credit. Too many of the students have 'graditis."

"Better results might be obtained by having a better understanding with the students about the amount of work that they should do in order to receive credit."

"The program will be improved after the people learn more about how to work it."

"I think the school might be improved when more students fully realize the value of establishing good habits and evaluating their progress each day."

"More books for the library -- better equipment, cases and shelving for library -- more money for projects, displays and posters."

"There should have been a little more definiteness of purpose in the teachers in helping the students in their work. I believe the teachers have a better idea of how much guidance the students need and how to give them this guidance. This would improve the school. The students need to have a better understanding of what was expected of them."
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We have traced, briefly, the history and background of the workshop, have given something of the underlying philosophy, and have seen it in action. We also offered some of the evaluations as made by the students and teachers.

In the light of the above data we might offer the following recommendations:

1. **A more definite philosophy of education.** The student-teachers seemed to feel more or less "at sea" in regard to just what the program was expected to do. If more specific instructions had been given and more definite goals set up, this situation might have been improved.

2. **More student guidance.** Both students and teachers expressed a feeling of need for this item. Perhaps some of the students who failed courses might have been helped if more individual attention had been given to pupils.

3. **More student activities and recreation.** Attention has already been called to this point. The students in their suggestions for improvement mentioned it and it is brought out in the questionnaire.

I think we may say, on the whole, that the workshop as conducted in Denton Senior High School during the summer of 1940 was a success. The majority of the students seemed to have been happy in their work and to have received all they expected from summer school.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


