TEACHING GEOGRAPHY IN THE SIXTH GRADE

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TEACHING GEOGRAPHY IN THE SIXTH GRADE

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

"All school subjects have undergone important changes; but few have had as wide a range of emphasis and organization as geography."

After teaching geography in the sixth grade for five years, the writer became interested in making a research study of educational literature in the field of pedagogy to see the need for, the value of, the methods of, and the results in teaching geography in that particular grade. Geography, as taught in the old traditional way, was so often mere strings of useless, senseless facts. Today, the geography teacher considers that subject the most fascinating in the entire curriculum. It is definitely a live subject in which the pupil, if properly led, will show a keen interest. Geography, in its various aspects and phases, enlarges one's vision and thus makes for a broader outlook on life. This study attempts to show the best methods and plans used by contemporary geography teachers.

Plan

This study begins with a definition of geography from various angles and aspects. A brief discussion of the needs of the teaching of geography in the sixth grade and of geography as a separate subject in the school curriculum are given in Chapter II. Chapter III deals with methods used in teaching geography in the sixth grade, with emphasis laid upon objectives of teaching, methods and results obtained. The last chapter contains conclusions derived from a five-year experience as geography teacher in the sixth grade, from conferences with some people interested in the teaching of geography, and from a wide reading of numerous books, magazine articles, reports, and bulletins on this particular subject.

Source of Data

The data for this study were obtained from personal interviews with teachers of geography in various schools in Texas, from teachers of social studies, from correspondence with geographers and other educators in different sections of the state, and from a wide reading of educational literature in the field of pedagogy.

Definition of Geography

The word "geography" means "a description of the earth." The word is derived from two Greek words: "geo"
meaning "the earth" and "grapho" meaning "I write" or "I describe." Hence, according to the original meaning of the word, any spoken or written description of the earth constitutes geography or geographical description.

From earliest times man has been particularly interested in his natural environment. To the early writers natural phenomena loomed larger, appeared more formidable, more forbidding and less controllable than they do today. It was difficult for them to conceive of man apart from his environment. So it appeared to Strabo, who, born in 65 B.C., wrote what is probably the greatest work undertaken in early times, and in his seventeen volumes he gives a general geographical account of the countries of the earth as known at the end of the Augustan age.

Of geography Strabo says: "In addition to its vast importance in regard to social life and the art of government, geography unfolds to us the celestial phenomena, acquaints us with the occupants of the land and ocean, and the vegetation, fruits, and peculiarities of the various quarters of the earth, a knowledge of which marks him who cultivates it as a man earnest in the great problems of life and happiness." This passage makes it clear that geography to the Greeks was a description of man and his natural

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environment in the very fullest sense of the phrase as then understood. Centuries before the Christian era it was thus a recognized subject for study whose field embraced the entire universe.

Geography is a study of the earth as the home of man. It deals with man in his present physical, social, and industrial environment; it occupies the broad practical ground of everyday life as it is. Geography is focused upon the interactions between man and the earth. It might even be said to be a connecting bridge between two great real studies - nature and man.

Geography is a science. It has advanced from a purely physical science to a social study. In the words of John Dewey:

geography has to do with all those aspects of social life which are concerned with the interaction of the life of man and nature; or...it has to do with the world considered as the scene of social interaction. Any fact, then, will be a geographical fact in so far as it bears upon the dependence of man upon his natural environment, or with the changes introduced in this environment through the life of man...The ultimate significance of lake, river, mountain, and plain is not physical but social; it is the part which it plays in modifying and functioning human relationship.

When geography is considered as the study of the

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3Charles A. McMurry, Special Methods in Geography, p. 8.
4Ibid., p. 9.
relationships between man and his natural environment, the character of the science is completely changed. No longer is it a static, lifeless form; now it may function as a dynamic and constructive power. It provides many a platform for synthesis, a necessary element in modern education. To gain accurate concepts and valid generalizations concerning the significant relationships between man and environment is above all to fit one's self for a place of leadership in the intellectual world. Without such understanding one is doomed to drift like a "rudderless boat in a storm-tossed sea." Geography is essentially a study of relationships, particularly the relationships between human activities and the physical environment.

In order to describe and interpret geography correctly, since it is such a complex field, the geographer has to borrow rather freely from the whole field of knowledge. Professor Harlan H. Barrows of the University of Chicago, in addressing the Association of American Geographers in December, 1922, said this:

As time passed, geography bore many children, among them astronomy, botany, zoology, geology, meteorology, archaeology, and anthropology. Some of its offspring have pursued independent careers in the world of science for so long a time that quite naturally their relation to the mother subject is commonly entirely overlooked. Thus each child

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6 C. L. White and George T. Renner, Geography and Introduction to Human Ecology, Preface.
became a successful specialist, while the parent still retained multifarious interests. 7

As can be seen very readily from the brief excerpts given above from various authors, geography is both simple and complex, and, like any other live, challenging science, it cannot be confined to narrow, limiting boundaries. Perhaps it is true that geography cannot be defined in just so many words. Perhaps because of its many-sided vastness, its physical, economic, political, social and international aspects, its variety in the light of human experience, its intermingled relations in every phase and field of human knowledge it defies description and definition. However, if the teacher of geography can get that inner feeling and love for geography, regardless of whether or not he can define it in specific technical terms, so that he can convey that feeling and love to his class so that his pupils will exclaim with the Prince of Wales, "What more fascinating study is there than geography?" he will have a more accurate, genuine definition of the meaning of geography than if he were able to quote pages from the works of the world's leading geographers.

7Bryan, op. cit., p. 2.

8These words were spoken by the Prince of Wales in his speech, when he presided at the centenary dinner of the Royal Geographical Society, in London, October 23, 1930.
CHAPTER II

THE NEED FOR TEACHING GEOGRAPHY IN THE SIXTH GRADE

As a preparation for the discussion of the needs for teaching geography in the sixth grade, a brief resume of the history of the teaching of geography and a few paragraphs dealing with geography as a separate subject in the school curriculum will be given.

Early History

In the fifth century, B. C., Herodotus, a keen observer, travelled widely in the somewhat limited extent of the then known world. Based partly on personal observation and partly on the verbal descriptions of others, he left for the world a series of fascinating accounts of peoples and their environments. By some he has been called the father of history, but there is little doubt that Herodotus was much more of a geographer in the original sense of the term than he was an historian, for his plain accounts of the manners and customs of people and their differing geographical settings bear a close relationship to travel descriptions of later ages.

1Bryan, op. cit., p. 1.
Down the centuries there is evident a definite growth of geographical ideas. There is a development of geographical ideas from the early Greek view of geography as a description of the earth to the modern conception of human geography as a study of the adaptation of nature or natural environment by man in the process of satisfying his desires.

The early books used as textbooks for teaching geography were encyclopedic and were meant to be memorized, just as textbooks unfortunately are in many places today. It is particularly interesting to note the content of early courses in geography. The textbooks, of which there were at least ten in the United States by 1860, were large compendiums of unrelated, information. The pupils simply memorized the facts concerning innumerable features of the earth. Many of the teachers required perfect memorization, some of them insisting that the entire lesson be repeated verbatim. Much of the content was simple, some of it bizarre, and the fundamental assumptions as to child nature were often amusing. At the close of the section on physical geography, seemingly one lesson that covers a third of the book, the teacher quotes from "the pious Psalmist" and the pupil is called on to say: "I shall never forget what you have been telling me. I feel very thankful, sir, for your

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2 Douglas E. Lawson, "Geography Then and Now," Elementary School Journal, V.41 (April, 1941), p. 597/
entertaining instructions and long to have tomorrow come
that I may hear more of them."  

Geography was established in America in the schools
before the Revolutionary War. In 1776 it was being taught
incidentally as a part of other subjects, such as as-
tronomy, mathematics, and navigation.

From 1784 for four score years, American geographies
for school and home use gave distinction to Jedidiah Morse,
a Congregational clergyman, and to Sidney Morse, his son.
In 1784 Morse published his Geography Made Easy, in the
preface of which is written, "men wish to know the world
but the geographical books are too expensive." This is a
16-mo book, with 214 pages and the only approach to a map
is a page with the names of the countries of a continent
printed in their relative positions. Morse's definition
of geography calls mainly for location, but he adds much
description.

By 1800 geography was offered in a number of elemen-
tary schools and in the academies, and by 1840 at least
two states had required geography by law as a subject in
all elementary schools.

3 The Teaching of Geography, Thirty-Second Yearbook
of the National Society for the Study of Education (1933),
p. 3.
4 Ibid., p. 5.
5 Lawson, op. cit., p. 597.
The influence of Herbart reached America about 1890 or earlier, and geography was one of the subjects which most sharply revised its aims and methods under the Herbartian school.  The labors of Colonel Francis W. Parker and of Charles A. McLerry and Frank W. McLerrry were pre-eminently responsible for a large part of the new movement in the subject after 1890. The content was liberalized, and attempts were made to relate it to everyday living with new emphasis on integrating geography with the study of social and political problems. "These efforts however, were met in no friendly manner by the stern advocates of the status quo." The hand of tradition rested heavily on the wheels of progress, and parents and teachers everywhere were committed to the older ways.

The first World war was largely responsible for the impetus of a movement which shifted the emphasis in the teaching of geography from descriptive and place geography to relational and interpretative geography. A new interest in other lands, peoples and places was awakened by the war. Teachers of geography were unwilling to return to the old descriptive and place geography. They taught from a standardized outline which was the same for all classes.

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6 Ibid., p. 599.  
7 Lawson, op. cit., p. 600.  
8 C.C. Crawford and L.P. McDonald, Modern Methods in Teaching Geography, p. 15.
After 1920 the records of various school systems show a tendency toward the correlation of geography with history, especially in the new junior high school organization. Then came the project method of teaching based on units of content or activity. By 1926 there were hundreds of school systems with reorganized courses in which geography in the junior high school was integrated with civics and history to form a broad course known as "Social Studies." The emphasis now is on functional social uses of geography, particularly through the study of local resources, needs, and modes of living. 9

Geography as a Separate Subject

Whether geography should be taught as a separate subject in the school curriculum or whether it should be correlated with other social studies is a problem that has called forth much discussion by teachers and educators. A vast amount of pedagogical literature has been written on the subject, and opinions of educators vary.

A comparison with older courses of study shows that geography is losing some of its separate identity as a distinct subject, that it is built around the needs and the immediate interests and problems of the pupil in his

9 Lawson, op. cit., p. 602.
own environment and times, and that it is being adapted to the age levels and to the occupational and social climates of its learners. On the other hand, in the state of New York, as well as in other states, many schools still follow separate courses in geography, history and civics for the first eight grades.

No sharp lines of cleavage separate the several branches of natural or of social science into water-tight compartments. There is an interdependence and interrelationship of the various fields of knowledge, as has been stated before in this study. So intertwined and intermeshed have the several natural and social sciences become that they find borrowing of materials unavoidable. On the other hand, each uses common materials in its own way. For example, the material "iron" may be studied by the geologist, the metallurgist, the engineer, or the economist, each of whom attaches a different significance to the same material. The geographer may also study iron not for its own sake or interest, but as a factor of the natural environment to which mankind reacts economically, socially, and politically. Thus geography reveals itself

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10 Ibid., p. 604.

to be an interpretation of the relation between the life of man and the elements, factors and forces of Nature; in brief, this is human ecology. It studies man's adjustments to the natural environment. When geography is thus considered as human ecology, it discharges a duty performed by no other science, physical or social; it then possesses a unity and a point of view unique among the sciences which deal with humanity. Geography has been called by some, and properly so, a science of relationships in which facts of the natural sciences are linked with the facts of the social sciences.\textsuperscript{12}

The core curriculum, as practiced in the elementary schools of Lakewood, Ohio, there is an integrated program with geography, science, and history as major subject matter areas, while the language arts are mainly functional, contributing to and growing out of the core.\textsuperscript{13} Geography units are the basis of the core during one half of each semester, while science and history units occupy the remaining weeks. A larger portion of time is allotted to geography because very little time is given to this study after the elementary grades. Each group works with one teacher during the entire core period of

\textsuperscript{12} White and Renner, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 6.

two hours. In other words, Lakewood, Ohio, has a unified program which brings into one learning situation materials that were formerly found in sharply-separated subject matter fields. During a daily period, from one to two hours, one subject is the center of interest, but the flexibility of the program permits many types of activities to be carried on within the period. Each unit aims to focus on the attainment of certain understandings, abilities, and attitudes, as objectives appropriate to the particular subject matter area - geography, history, or science. Thus, geography, with its various implications, occupies an important place in the core curriculum and in the life of the child.

The current attempt to fuse geography, history, and civics into social studies will do one of two things to the place of geography in the elementary school in this country.

1. It will decrease the importance of geography, or
2. It will increase its importance.

In some schools the entrance of the social studies concept has resulted in less geography, and that not so well done as it might have been. "In explaining why this

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happened, one might say that those school administrators who have all but shelved geography in the social studies process were unconsciously avenging some youthful tortures or waste of time that they endured under the name of geography.\(^\text{15}\)

Judging from the lengthy discussions, both pro and con, that appear in the educational magazines, and taking into account the actual practices in the various schools in our country, it appears that geography is taught both as a separate subject in the curriculum and also correlated in the social studies, the method used depending upon the teacher, the supervisor, and the community. Geography is so fundamental to a complete understanding of the other social sciences that it will not suffer much from the unified studies. If taught separately, geography has a real contribution to make to the education of the child.

**Needs**

For the sake of brevity, only a few of the many reasons for teaching geography to children in the sixth grade are discussed in this study. The discussion is divided into two main parts: (1) the practical worth, and (2) the interpretative value.\(^\text{16}\)

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\(^{15}\) Ibid.

\(^{16}\) Z. A. Thralls and E. H. Reeder, *Geography in the Elementary School*, pp. 18-34.
The practical worth of geography.--Geography has a practical worth in the field of vocational guidance it gives the students. At various stages nearly every boy is a fireman, a cowboy, an engineer, and a policeman. His ambitions vary with his age and with the association he forms. The same is true to a lesser extent with the girls. This has a bearing on geography, for geography with its wealth of information concerning the world, its products, and man's activities, helps to satisfy the child's eager questions concerning his possible future activities. As he learns the stories of industries and the products of the world, he becomes interested in them. He desires a part in the game himself. The knowledge which the sixth-grader gains helps him decide what part he wants to play. Those children with creative imagination are particularly stimulated; they see the possibilities involved. To them a piece of dirty black coal is transformed into power, light, heat, dyes, medicines and powerful explosives.

Another practical value of geography to the sixth grade child is the business and professional benefit he receives from such a study. Geography is being emphasized now as a subject necessary to equip children for the practical side of life. Without question, a knowledge of geography not only helps a child to find the field in which he may have the greatest possibility of success, but
it also helps him in making a success in this chosen field. Every day the fact is brought home to adults that business, as carried on under modern conditions, demands a knowledge of the four corners of the earth, of the resources of all regions, of the world's trade routes, and of the climatic and physical characteristics of all lands.

The need of understanding the natural forces and conditions of the earth and man's reaction to them is greater today than ever before. The business man must know the sources of the raw materials for his factories, he must know the geographic conditions under which those materials are produced, he must know the routes by which they reach him, and he must know the geographic facts concerning his markets.

Agriculture, law, medicine, in fact, practically every vocation, require some knowledge of geography. The farmer should know world markets and crop conditions in order to market his crops satisfactorily. He should know the structure, the composition, and the physiology of farm crops; he should know also their environment - the climate, the soil, and the fertilizer best suited to each. This is only one example of the influence of geographic knowledge on the problems of making a living.

There is hardly a phase of geographic information which is not convertible into daily commercial service.
"Geography is the alphabet of business."

A sixth grade child needs to study geography because in that study he receives enrichment of other school subjects. Geography enriches the background of all of them. Other school subjects gain in meaning and interpretation if the geographic factors are understood. This is especially true of history and literature in junior high school. The history of every country has been influenced by its geography. This is notably true of the United States. The barrier of the Appalachians tended to consolidate the American colonies and consequently helped to make possible their successful resistance to England. As the children trace these relationships between the physical features of the land and the historical events, the latter become more real to them. The music and art of all nations are more meaningful to the children if they know the people and their environment. The children's reading is more enjoyable if they can trace on a map the scenes of the heroes' adventures and picture them in their imagination. Geography is equally indispensable to the understanding of civics, and of sociology. Professor Fetter, of Princeton, once remarked: "I want my

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17 Ibid., p. 22.
students to have economic geography before I try to teach 18
ten economic theory."

The child in the sixth grade needs to study geography because of the resulting intellectual development that comes from such a study. In studying geography, children acquire the habit of tracing cause and effect and endeavoring to see relationships. They find that they must test the accuracy of their own and other people's thinking or they will reach wrong conclusions. They are not so willing to believe what a textbook says. They question all facts. As children make field trips and visit shops, stores, factories, seeking specific information, they form habits of closer and more intelligent observation. What they see has meaning and purpose. This self-activity develops initiative and judgment.

As the child makes progress in his geography he will receive guidance in intelligent reading. A certain amount of locational knowledge is necessary if one is to read the newspapers even casually. If children are going to read intelligently and with discrimination, a considerable background of fundamental principles, generalizations, and local geography is essential.

18 Smith, op. cit., p. 197.
Interpretative value.--Geography gives the child a broader outlook on life. Geography has a cultural value, for it is not exclusively a bread-and-butter subject. Today, one's education is questioned if it is limited to our own time and country. Really to live, one should have breadth of knowledge and breadth of sympathy, and that may come from the study of geography.

According to Dewey, "sunlight, wind, stream, commerce, political relations come from afar and lead the thoughts afar. To follow their course is to enlarge the mind, not by stuffing it with additional information, but by remaking the meaning of what was previously a matter of course."\(^\text{19}\)

In the study of geography the imagination is given a rich realm in which to grow. Creativeness is encouraged. Industrial activities assume significance in the study of geography. All this helps solve the problems of modern life.

The child needs to study geography to make his travel experiences more vital. Travel is a most worth while leisure occupation if the traveler has the "seeing eye," and can read the symbols written on the face of the earth.

in cliff, hill, and mountain; in canyon, valley, and river plain; in water-worn or wind-hewn rock. Through the study of geography an appreciation of the natural beauties is developed. Each region has its own beauties of form. Every region, near or remote, has a story to tell, a beauty to be enjoyed.

A sixth grade child needs to study geography for it will stimulate his interest in worth-while reading. A child's reading is influenced by geography in two ways: through redirection and through making what is read more meaningful. This has already been suggested in a previous paragraph. Educators have maintained that children who have had good training in geography read with greater satisfaction because they have a background upon which to build; they have a basis which assists them in the comprehension of distant places and people.

Children also need to study geography for it gives them an appreciation of people and their activities. Children are always interested in human beings, and through a study of geography this interest develops into a deeper appreciation of other peoples and their activities. Their own and other people's activities become more significant as intellectual perspective is acquired.

In order to become intelligent citizens of this country it is necessary for children to know: (1) what the people in the different parts of our own land are doing, (2) what we as a nation have to contribute to the world, (3) what we must have from other countries, (4) how this nation has gained its strength, and (5) what are our present international relations.  

Geography gives the child a background for effective citizenship. Today every nation is a far-flung political, social, and economic empire, tied together with a million strands of interlocking interests. Thus, even though Americans would, they are not able to separate themselves from the rest of the world. As a result the people of the United States are realizing that they must know their neighbors in order to keep from misjudging individuals as well as nations. "We must learn to understand and to appreciate why our neighbors, near or remote, are as they are and to ask ourselves if we would be the same under like conditions."

From the writer's experience in teaching sixth grade geography it was evident that the students need to know

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22 Thralls and Reeder, op. cit., p. 33.
what the people in different parts of their own land are doing, what America as a nation has to contribute to the world, what the American people must have from other countries, how this nation has gained its great strength, and what are its present relations with other nations.

The children did not know their own home geography, neither did they realize the relationships between their home community and that of other countries.
CHAPTER III

METHODS USED IN THE SIXTH GRADE

Objectives

As a preparation for the discussion of methods used in teaching geography in the sixth grade something must be said about the objectives of geographical instruction. To understand the objectives of teaching in any system of schools one must bear in mind that the things outside the school have much to do in guiding and interpreting the things inside. The aims and purposes of teaching a certain subject may be rooted deeply in the conditions of the national life itself. They are not detachable details but are an inseparable part of the whole. This seems to be especially true of geography, a subject in which the data lack the precision of the physical sciences, and in which the selection of the content is not wholly a matter of the science itself.

Geography is made to serve a double purpose in the school training of most nationalities. Besides the acquisition of knowledge and skill, it is to serve as a

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1 Isaiah Bowman, Geography in Relation to the Social Sciences, p. 241.
medium through which desired attitudes are brought about. Through then the children of a country are to be indoctrinated in ideas of nationalism or internationalism, capitalism or communism, or whatever theory is favored by the leaders of the state. Perhaps Germany today is evidence of the carrying out of this double purpose as shown in the statement of the aims of geographic instruction in Prussian schools, as found in a recent official program:

To awaken and cultivate in the pupils love of native soil, the home and fatherland; to contribute to an understanding of German civilization, both past and present; to help to train the pupil for German citizenship. In Germany the child is first familiarized with his immediate environment. The feeling for the little home district gradually broadens out into feeling for the great German Fatherland, and for the whole world of foreign peoples and countries. 2

Beard says the aim of teaching geography in the junior high school is three-fold:

1. To encourage the child to reflect upon his immediate surroundings,

2. To stimulate thought and imagination about the world in which he lives,

3. To help him realize how, as civilization

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advances, communities come to depend upon one another for the necessities and comforts of life. These aims seem logical and comprehensive. They proceed from the known to the unknown in a systematic way.

The main objective in good geographical teaching is to develop an attitude of mind and a mode of thought characteristic of the subject. In the study of any region, the following elements are involved:

1. The physical and climatic conditions that go to form the region
2. The characteristics of the inhabitants
3. The conditions and effects of their work.

If these three objectives are thoroughly mastered, the child will then have a comprehensive knowledge of a particular country or region.

The main aim of the teaching of geography should be to enable the pupils, by a study of the regions of the world, to realize how the peoples of the world live and work, and how their life and work are related, and to show the distribution and activities of man in relation to his physical environment.

The social motive back of the teaching of geography in junior high school is:

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1. To get a well organized picture of the natural landscape and its relations to population and industry

2. To realize how life and work are related

3. To coordinate facts in relation to their causes and consequences

4. To know the conditions of life which nature imposes on man, and the part in them industry has enabled him to play

5. To stimulate thought and imagination about the world

6. To develop ability to grasp the relationships between natural environment and cultural activities

7. To trace the phenomena of life to their natural sources

3. To realize how, as civilization advances, communities come to depend upon one another for the necessities and comforts of life.

Such objectives as these seem to give evidence that geography is no longer a mere statistical and descriptive subject, or even a purely natural science; it takes its place among the new humanities. It is important in creating an attitude favorable to group living.

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4 Brown, op. cit., p. 367.
Methods

In 1904, when William Morris Davis of Harvard said that geography is a study of the relationships between earth and the life upon the earth, \(^5\) that caused a quick change in the methods of presenting the subject. When educators conceived of geography in terms of relationships, they started an educational revolution and the social studies concept is one of the results of the particular revolution. Whatever educators may decide is the answer to the question of teaching geography, history, and civics at one time as one subject, they cannot lose sight of the fact that social study starts with geographic understandings.

In planning a course of study, the following ideas may serve as guide: \(^6\)

1. The general movement is from the home and home neighborhood outward, first to the home state, then to surrounding states, to the United States and to North America as a whole, later to Europe and the rest of the world.

2. The most obvious reform in planning the course of study is that of reducing the number of subjects treated

\(^5\)Smith, op. cit., p. 196.

\(^6\)Ibid., p. 199.
in each grade to a few main topics, each of which has an important fundamental idea. The trend is to move from the known to the unknown. The topics are simple but striking and obvious in character.

Geography in the sixth grade should be devoted mainly to the study of the United States and North America. The main emphasis on the United States is as it should be for the children need to understand thoroughly that one country above all others. They will have more dealing with it in all sorts of ways than with all the other countries combined, and these dealings have to do with the essential labors and pleasures of life. The children must understand clearly that the United States is not a small secluded corner of the world. Its widespread plains and forests, its canals and rivers, its mountains and lakes, its varieties of climate, coast line, products, and cities teeming with industrial life furnish a bewildering variety of great geographic object lessons.

Topics treated in connection with home geography are especially adapted to introduce the class to larger subjects of American geography, for America is so big it makes for suggestiveness. In the sixth grade some of

\[7\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 201.}\]
the more complex topics of American trade, manufacture and government may be handled and different ideas of mathematical geography worked out. Such large and complex units of study as the Rocky Mountain system, the entire Mississippi Valley, the whole Appalachian Highlands should be reserved for the latter half of the sixth grade. The thorough mastery of a relatively small number of important type objects goes a long way toward the mastery of a whole wide and varied field of geography. It is most important for the teacher to remember to select only a few important representative ideas out of the countless multitude of facts and to have a method of approach to these ideas which shall instruct the children and interest them. If not more than twenty or thirty topics are taken up during the year, from one and one-half to two weeks can be spent upon each topic. This is time sufficient to give to each important subject a reasonably exhaustive discussion.

A further plan is to follow in the sixth grade a series of type studies through the Atlantic and Pacific states, British America, and Mexico, closing the work with a conclusive survey of North America as a whole. North America then becomes the type of a continent with which the teacher may set out to measure more accurately
the other continents of the world. The general movement is toward ever larger and more complex wholes. It is, in the main, synthetic.

However, teachers of geography must also keep in mind the fact that no single answer may be given to just what in particular should make up the geography course for each grade or year of school. If the question could be answered readily, geography teaching would be a routine task or trade rather than a professional pursuit. No statement may be given in this study of what projects or units should follow other projects or units, because these questions must be answered differently for different localities, different teachers, different students, and different periods of time.

Another important item to be considered is the interests of the children themselves. It has been discovered that when pupils are doing things they are interested in they are happier, they learn more, they become better adjusted in their personal relationships, and there is an enormous drop in the emphasis needed on discipline. It is true that the interests of the pupils

McMurty, op. cit., p. 66.
will vary in different communities and in different sections of the country. Lee and Lee give four major fields in which children naturally reach with interest. First, in physical activity, using the body as a whole, and particularly the hands; second, the use of tools; third, mental activity, actively thinking about things, solving problems that are meaningful to them; fourth, the activities of people around them. Through the child's gradually broadening contacts with people, he can become interested in all the vital phases of human life and their environment. The teacher must learn not to depend too much on the validity or the permanency of the interests expressed by the children for many of them are of the enthusiasm type and are gone as quickly as they came. However, some of the children's interests are real and permanent. It is a part of the teacher's job to study her pupils until she has a clear picture of the things that appeal to them and of the types of interests as well as enthusiasms which children of that age are apt to have. After all, this knowledge of pupils is indispensable if the teacher is to teach effectively and meaningfully.

It has been pointed out in this study that geography is closely related to practically every subject in the curriculum, and that the teacher can often teach two or more

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subjects at once if she takes advantage of possible correlations. The activity program is perhaps the best method of accomplishing these possible correlations. A single large-scale geography may involve wide reading, letter writing, handwork with various tools, art work or drawing, arithmetical calculation, searching through newspapers and magazines and even dramatizing and music.

Tools

At this point a number of devices or aids that have been used by teachers of geography and social studies over the country to make geography a live subject will be discussed briefly.

Pictures.—The importance of pictures in the teaching of geography needs no emphasis. Colored and uncolored pictures of agricultural and manufacturing operations, engineering feats, land forms and scenery are needed. Some of the best pictures are to be found in the children's textbooks, but these are not sufficient. Post cards and small pictures may be passed around in class if there are sufficient copies for every child to be occupied; they are useful for individual work and for use in the episcopel. Large pictures for class teaching should be unvarnished, as the class can see them better on a dull surface and the colors are more pleasing.

Many of the attractive pictorial posters displayed on
billboards are good pictures for geography. There is real value in large pictures. They are impressive, and often the beauties of detail are much more striking in the larger pictures. The tendency in modern advertising is to increase the size of posters. The advertising experts have evidently studied the psychological impression of size upon the mind. Most modern posters are designed and drawn by artists who depict the scene in its most alluring form with the essential feature emphasized in order to impress it upon the adult mind. How much more will it be permanently impressed upon the especially retentive mind of the child. This impressionable nature of the child-mind makes it important that only beautiful pictures shall be used, and these pictures painted by artists are beautiful. As a source of geography, posters are invaluable. The children will never forget the geography pictured in their favorite poster, and some will have made up their minds to visit the places so attractively depicted, thus, education and the outside world can go hand in hand, each complementary to the other, in the supply and use of posters, which, incidentally, can usually be obtained by the mere writing of a tactful letter to the firm or company which produces them.

The use of pictures is one of the most economical mediums for the conveyance of ideas. It economizes both time and effort. When the child reads the printed word,
he must get his ideas from the word and then translate these ideas into a concrete image. The gap between the ideas and the image is great. The picture bridges this gap for it brings the required idea into the pupil's consciousness at once. As a result, the ideas or images secured are more accurate. Pictures not only help to correct wrong impressions, but they clarify ideas.

Although pictures are valuable and easy to secure, yet teachers of geography are not making the best use of them. The teacher should train his children to read a picture as they would read the printed word. The children will learn much more from the pictures with guidance from the teacher. It is only by planning his picture lessons carefully that the teacher is able to secure the full mental activity of the children. He must select his pictures and use them at the proper moment. The proper study of pictures seems to create in the child a desire for self-expression. He wants to tell his classmates something that he sees which they do not. He eagerly asks questions. He is mentally active and is trying to make this visual experience his own.

A few devices for using pictures have been reported by teachers. They may be mounted on heavy cardboard and

10 Crawford and McDonald, op. cit., p. 132.
used as posters or ornaments for the room. They may be classified or arranged in logical order and made into picture books, each book a separate country or topic. They may be used for observation contests, each side trying to see more things in the picture than the opposing side. The teacher may show a picture and ask the children to write a paper about what it represents. Pictures without descriptive titles may be presented to the class for identification as to country, topic, and the like. Pictures may be pasted to a long strip of paper and rolled so that each picture presents a new chapter, phase or step in the development of a topic, making a series of moving pictures.

Lantern slides.—One great advantage of slides, as contrasted with pictures or stereoscopes, that they can be studied by all pupils at once and with little difficulty. A set of pictures may be assembled to illustrate a given lesson, and the whole class may participate actively in the discussion of the things represented by them. There are instruments available at low cost which will reproduce pictures without their being transferred to the usual glass slide. This makes possible the showing of a much wider variety of pictures. If it is impossible to visit the beet fields or coal mines in the United States, the next best thing is the enlarged photography of such places as shown
on the lantern screen, and even where first-hand acquaintance has been made, the lantern slide may be used to emphasize teaching points. Slides and a machine should always be available in the geography or some other room. For they are best used, here and there, to illustrate points in particular lessons, rather than in a set where twenty or thirty slides are shown in succession, though this has its place where continuity is necessary or where special stimulation and pleasure are the aim.

The best teaching is probably done with the teacher's own slides made from his own negatives. Where these are not available, slides selected by geographers or recognized geographical bodies, such as the Geographical Association, are the next best, though recourse must frequently be made to sets of slides put together by travel agencies such as railway and steamship companies, the purpose of which is not geographical in the first place.

There is no lack of slides suitable for geography teaching. As a rule, application to a company or firm must be made at least ten days in advance. Many of the sets of slides are accompanied by notes. In most cases the slides are sent free of charge to teachers or schools with the understanding that transportation charges must be paid by the borrower.

Moving pictures. Moving pictures may be used in
three ways to aid the teaching of geography: "(1) classes may be taken to a performance of a geographical film open to the general public; (2) they may be taken to a movie house to a performance arranged especially for children from certain schools, and (3) by means of a school projector in the classroom." By this third means the pictures can be more easily made an integral part of the work of the class, it being possible to supplement the film with oral teaching at successive stages, the projection being stopped for that purpose. There appears to be no doubt as to the value of this kind of teaching in the minds of those who have tested it. Tests both in the United States and in England show that lessons accompanied by films produce a better result from the majority of children than lessons on the same subject given without the film.

There is considerable activity in this country and in other countries with regard to the production of educational films. One firm in England says: "We find that there is a growing demand in schools and colleges for the educational film and the use of the 16 mm. film." It must be accepted that the good geographical film is of great value in the teaching of geography. It should be short and


12 Ibid.
coherent; it should have captions dealing with the fundamental facts, explicit and suitable to the age of the children, there should be maps if they are necessary to the argument and they should be of moving subjects. There is great need for cooperation between the producers of films for educational purposes and those who understand the child mind. In other words, it is the teachers of geography who should test the films, come to some decision as to what they want and approach the producers who are asking for such information and are waiting for it. 13

The radio.—This is another aid to the teaching of geography. Many series of travel talks are presented by speakers with first-hand knowledge of the subjects discussed which should provide the listeners with a good background of many phases of geography. Travel talks have been features of the broadcasts to schools for many years and are still one of the most popular items in the school programs. Such talks will be most successful when some previous studies, using atlases and school slides, where possible, have been made in the classroom.

Pauline Powers has this to say about the use of the radio in the teaching of geography:

Is the radio a help to the geography students? We believe that it is and we know that pupils can be

13 Ibid., p. 61.
led to 'listen' on programs that feature travel talks and current events of geographic content. Certainly Admiral Byrd's Antarctic broadcast found eager young listeners. The boy of thirty years ago when asked to name two animals native to the Antarctic Circle was obliged, after much cogitation, to fall back upon: 'Two whales.' But thanks to the radio, today one of the whales at least could be replaced by a penguin! 14

Maps, graphs, diagrams.—These are other aids that have the same value as pictures. They help to make abstractions concrete. Diagrams are frequently of greater value than pictures, because in diagrams the non-essentials may be left out. Statistics of all kinds become concrete and may be made really comprehensible to children through the use of graphs. Both graphs and diagrams have a greater instructional value if the teacher has the ability to sketch them quickly on the blackboard. No matter how crude the diagram or drawing may be, it usually conveys a new idea better than does mere verbal description. The teacher does not realize that even a crude drawing built up as he talks is far more effective than the neatest of sketches where the children see only the finished product. Most teachers want too perfect a piece of work. The pupils should be encouraged and guided in the making of these maps, graphs and diagrams.

Training in the use of maps is essential in the teaching

of geography. More time and care should be spent in the study of maps. Coherent training in mapping and map reading, beginning usually in the third or fourth year in school and continuing through the grades and into the high school, should be a part of the geography curriculum. Kipling once said, "As soon as men begin to talk about anything that matters, someone must go and get an atlas."\(^{15}\) That has long been true in the Old World, and it is becoming increasingly true in our own country, particularly since the beginning of World War II.

In connection with map work, the schools should make much greater use of the topographic maps of the United States Geological Survey. "Topography should no more be omitted in geography than the multiplication tables in arithmetic."\(^{16}\) No child should leave school without being able to use the topographic map of his own district or one nearby, and to visualize with considerable detail the area which it represents.

Much of the geography in every school should be learned on the playground. There is where lessons on the sun, direction, wind, and other aspects of the weather, the measuring of distances, and the beginnings of map

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\(^{15}\) Bowman, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

\(^{16}\) *Ibid.*
making should be given. Children proceed to make relief maps of their playground, of the town or village. From that, as time and opportunity permit, wider surveys may be made.

**Miscellaneous apparatus.**—Other valuable tools that are of great assistance in the teaching of geography are: a mercurial barometer, a thermometer, a homemade wind vane, a rain gauge, a simple sun dial, a globe that is suitably mounted for the purpose, a vertical rod and a quadrant. A modeling table with moist sand or clay is a valuable piece of equipment. The older children, even sixth graders, will not consider a sand table childish if the teacher uses it to illustrate his descriptions and encourages them to use it. A file case is another piece of equipment very desirable, especially in the geography workroom. Atlases and yearbooks are valuable tools and sources of information which have been neglected. Magazines and newspaper clippings and travel booklets are other materials which should not be neglected.

An interest-stimulating device is one described by Hadwen Harry Williams. Williams says that this word puzzle has helped to increase variety and to continue interest in his geography classes. The advantage of

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puzzles, as Williams points out, are two-fold: the student will "dig" for the information without thinking of it as a cut and dried research assignment; the teacher will find it a novel way to freshen the mind on geographical detail that is the quality mark of a good geography teacher. A sheet of the puzzles should cover the main points of the material studied during the previous month. Rectographing or mineographing makes an inexpensive aid in this project. A typical puzzle used by Williams is shown below.

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1  P
2  E
3  N
4  N
5  S
6  Y
7  L
8  O I R V E R
9  R
10  I
11  A
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"Directions: Look at the list of helps on the next page.
When you think you have found the answer to the line, try
to place it on the puzzle. Place one letter in each vacant block. The key word on that line is part of the correct word and will help form the answer.

Cities and Rivers of Pennsylvania

"1. Largest city along the Delaware river. (Philadelphia)

"2. River flowing between Pennsylvania and New Jersey (Delaware)

"3. River that unites with the Allegheny river to form the Ohio river (Monongahela)

"4. City in Pennsylvania tobacco district (Lancaster)

"5. The Smoky City (Steel industry). (Pittsburgh)

"6. Pennsylvania battlefield of the Civil War (Gettysburg)

"7. Name of a sacred city in Palestine found in eastern Pennsylvania (Bethlehem)

"8. City near the scenic Horseshoe Curve of the Pennsylvania (Altoona)

"9. City in the anthracite coal region (Scranton)

"10. Pennsylvania city along Lake Erie (Erie)

"11. Pennsylvania river flowing into Chesapeake Bay (Susquehanna)"

A museum can be made a veritable treasure house for the geography class and should be used to the utmost if there is one near or in the community. Schools which are
not in a city where there are good museums may still enjoy their service, since many museums have regular traveling exhibits which may be secured for school use with little or no cost, and with liberal arrangements as regards the time during which they may be kept for study.

The Museum at North Texas State Teachers College contains, among other items, a rare collection of dolls dressed to represent the costumes of many lands, original vehicles and models showing the development of transportation in different countries; objects such as spinning wheels, ox yokes, sewing machines, lamps and the like, which show the development of industry. Such objects as these would be of the greatest interest to children and most valuable in teaching sixth grade geography.

Travel is another important aid in the teaching of geography. Under this head three items may be considered: local excursions and trips, reports of those who have traveled, and imaginary journeys and travel clubs.

Local excursions are necessarily limited to the immediate environment. When geographical excursions are mentioned the first thought is one of seeing natural objects, landscape, land formations. Practically every

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19 Historical Museum, North Texas State Teachers College, Denton, Texas. Much of this material will be loaned to schools in Texas if they will pay transportation costs.
fact and principle of physical geography may be found represented on a small or large scale in a radius accessible to the ordinary geography class. Likewise erosion may be seen in any community. Sea shells may be found on a hillside, thus showing that the region was once beneath the ocean. Similarly, trips to the open country give better opportunity for observation of plant and animal life, and for the observation of landscapes not visible in the city.

No less important than physical phenomena, but more likely to be overlooked, are the social phenomena of the local community. There is a cultural landscape, or a variety of human types, in the ordinary community that would repay a most extended study. The city child often has a distorted and inaccurate idea of what the country child or the country home life is like, and could very easily profit by a day spent on a farm in the country with children who live in a rural environment. Similarly, country children have much to learn about people who live in cities, who work in banks, and who dwell in apartment houses. Children from well-to-do neighborhoods would be bettered if they could visit the neighborhood in which the poorest families of the city congregate or the neighborhood which the colored or the foreign population occupy.
Visits by children from these unfortunate districts into the neighborhood occupied by those who are more fortunate might be made to yield equally valuable results. Such visits may result in racial or social antagonisms if not well managed, but when properly conducted may yield the opposite results. Almost every community has a variety of types of human beings who will bear a closer acquaintance, and excursions with social objectives are much more promising as regards educational results than are excursions purely to see physical phenomena.

Since a large portion of geography is economic or commercial, it is very appropriate that industrial establishments be made one of the outstanding objectives of excursions by geography classes. Any large factory is likely to use raw materials from widely different parts of the world, and to send its finished products to remote regions. A thorough study of such a concern becomes a pretty good lesson on world geography. A modern factory may be used as a contrast with the crude methods of manufacture employed by less thoroughly developed nations. Even the smallest community has something out of the ordinary. A village in the wheat belt is likely to have a flour mill, or at least an elevator. A cotton growing community is almost certain to have a gin, possibly an
oil mill. There is something out of the ordinary in practically every village or town. In big cities such school excursions become means of advertising for big firms, such as dairies, bakeries and mills. These firms often furnish free delivery wagons to transport children to and from the plants visited and furnish guides to conduct the party through and explain everything.

Much can be learned from the management of excursions. An excursion should not be a mere picnic, although it may well have much of the advantages of one. It should be a purposeful undertaking, preceded by careful planning by the teacher, accompanied by active supervision, and followed by definite class study of the things seen. Children should know what they are to look for, and provision should be made for determining how well they observed while they were there.

In general, it is better to take a few trips to important places and to make them genuinely educative, than it is to make a large number of trips with little preparation and only superficial observation.

The second item under travel is that of utilizing the experiences of those who have traveled. No picture is quite as satisfying as is the actual face to face talking with someone who actually saw the thing described. There are three sources of such experiences:
The teacher's own travel experiences.—It is very unusual in this day and age if the teacher has not had considerably wider travel contact than most of the children in the class. This being the case, she should be able to tell her class what she has seen in different parts of the country, and to describe vividly some of the things which are ineffectually described in the available books. Simply to tell a little incident that occurred while the teacher was watching Niagara Falls adds a touch of reality to the Falls that is hard to get otherwise.

The pupils' travel experiences.—A plan can be worked out whereby each child can profit from the travels of his fellows, the interchange of experiences would be of remarkable value. Usually there will be some child who was born in a foreign country and can report some of his childhood experiences. Perhaps there are children whose parents were born in foreign countries and can supply rather intimate pictures of other nations. Some children have come from different sections of the country. Others have taken trips during the summer vacations. The wide-awake teacher will take advantage of all such opportunities to make geography real to the rest of the class.

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20 McMurry, op. cit., p. 148.
The travel experiences of outsiders.—The school may make use of outsiders to give talks on their travel experiences. Missionaries, newspaper reporters who have been in foreign countries, and today, men in the armed forces of our country who are at home on furlough all may be classed as "outsiders" who might make valuable contributions to the geography class by speaking at various times.

Some geography classes take imaginary tours around the world or over certain continents. Such imaginary journeys, if well planned and executed, can be extremely interesting. One such imaginary journey might take the form of a "scrapbook" journey where pictures are collected of the places visited. These pictures are pasted in a scrapbook in the order in which the places were visited. Considerable reading is necessary in order to be able to select pictures which really represent the places visited. A "diary" journey might be another type of imaginary journey. In this case, the class takes a trip around the world and combine geography with English by reporting in individual student diaries the sights seen in each country. The various routes traveled are reported, along with things seen, the occupations of the people observed, the personal impressions about manners, customs, and institutions in the various lands. A
"souvenir" journey might be one in which the class "visits" in foreign countries and makes a special point of assembling souvenirs to represent each country. A few real souvenirs might be secured from persons who have actually traveled, but most of them might be made by the children themselves after reading about the people of the countries visited. The souvenirs consist of miniature articles of clothing, tools used in characteristic occupations of the foreign countries, small images of soap carvings of pyramids, leaning tower of Pisa, Chinese pagodas, and the like. This is one way of correlating geography with manual training. The "sight-seeing tourist" journey is another imaginary journey in which the class acts as a group of tourists on a bus with the members taking turns acting as guide. The guide's duty is to explain points of interest which are seen en route. Each child carefully prepares his assignment and is expected to make his talk so interesting and realistic that the passengers will feel satisfied with their expenditure of the fare for the day's tour.

There are a number of laboratory activities which the sixth-grade pupil will enjoy in his geography class. He may perform scientific experiments related to laws of physical geography. The scientific experiments which might be used to explain geography are almost without
number. Two are given as suggestive: a pan of water placed in the sun to evaporate may be used to show how the clouds are formed by the action of the sun upon water bodies; pupils may predict next day's weather by use of the barometer and other available data.

A type of laboratory work which has possibilities of adaptation to an almost endless variety of geography lessons for sixth grade pupils is that of making reproductions of things studied. The actual construction of these miniatures is ordinarily an interesting task, and if the undertakings are well supervised by the teacher they may be made to add considerably to the child's knowledge and understanding of what is represented. A few illustrations are geographical land formations, such as volcanoes, harbors, glaciers, deserts, rivers; human habitations typical of different countries may be built on a small scale (Eskimo's ice house carved out of soap, bamboo house of native African built in a tree, thatched huts of the Philippine native, the wigwam of the American Indian, and so on); costumes typical of different nations may be made, in reduced sizes, or dolls may be dressed to represent the people of the different countries; typical activities may be reproduced in their natural settings; various animals may be carved of wood, soap, wax or modeled in clay and placed
in situations which represent their respective habitats: polar bear, kangaroo, elephant; "peep boxes" containing either specially designed scenes or pictures. Holes are cut for peeping and lighting, these being arranged so as to show off the pictures or models to best advantage; map making. This may be good or bad. If it is used just because the children like maps and because it keeps the children occupied, it is foolish. Mere mechanical copying of maps may be largely wasted time and energy. There are many possibilities for worth while work: outline maps may be filled in to represent a particular type of information; a physical map which is printed in colors may be reproduced as a salt and flour relief map; product maps may be made by gluing small pictures of the different commodities to the map at the appropriate places.

Writing letters to foreign children or to children in different parts of the United States is another aid that may be used in teaching geography to sixth grade children. The language barrier sometimes makes this impossible unless contact can be made with schools in which the foreign children are studying English. Since English is spoken in a large part of the world, it is possible to establish rather varied contacts in distant portions of the world. The letters that are written are naturally about the lives, interests, and activities of
the children who write them and are as beneficial to those who receive them as to those who write them. Pictures and souvenirs may be sent with the letters, and the children in other countries may be induced to send objects of interest from their part of the world.

Two geography units in the activity program of two widely-separate school systems in the United States will be briefly summarized here.

Lakewood, Ohio, has been using geography units as the basis of the "core curriculum" for three years. In the sixth grade geography class a study was made of the countries of Europe, Asia and Japan. When this study was approached the boys and girls were reading and hearing about the strained relations between Japan and the United States. Starting with their interest in current happenings, the children were guided in planning problems whose solution would bring an understanding of the elements of Japan's natural environment and the related human factors, thus giving a background for understanding current events. Investigation of historical facts contributed to an understanding of how Japan's isolation had kept that nation an agriculture country because of the necessity for self-sufficiency. Investigation of the changes

21 Blouch, op. cit., p. 156.
which have come since the opening of Japan's doors brought out many factors relative to its natural environment which has aided it in becoming a world power. One purpose of this program was to develop and maintain techniques of general value in the study of content material. Reading assignments in periodicals and daily papers were given to gather information needed for solving the problems selected to motivate the unit. During all phases of the unit there was much opportunity for oral expression. In the exploratory period the children gave reports on current events and discussed them. While raising problems, they made observations on maps and statistical data; they reported and discussed the information secured from their reading and from maps and pictures. Other activities which involved discussion were the making of graphs, cooperative outlining, securing and arranging an exhibit, and planning a dramatization. Written expression growing out of this unit took various forms such as notes on reading, individual outlines, reports, summary paragraphs, and letters of invitation and appreciation. This is a unified program which brings into one learning situation materials that were formerly found in sharply separated subject matter fields. During a daily period of two hours one subject was the center of interest, but the flexibility
of the program permitted many types of activities to be carried on within this period. The children acquired certain geographic understandings and abilities. In the attainment of these objectives, they received training in clear thinking, in recognizing problems, and in securing data by which to solve the problems. In estimating the values received from this unit of work, however, was an indirect and relatively intangible outcome, namely, an intelligent and favorable attitude toward the problems of another country and its people.

Bearnice Skeen and Loraine Meussey, sixth grade teachers in Salem, Oregon, describe a geography class of thirty-five sixth grade pupils. This was an heterogeneous group with reading abilities ranging from second grade to eight grade level and chronological ages from ten to thirteen years. The members of this group, brought together in school for the purpose of acquiring and helping to preserve the culture of the society in which they lived, were at first highly individualistic and selfish in their attitudes and points of view. It was evident that they needed to grow in attitudes of

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tolerance, open-mindedness, intelligent curiosity, and social responsibility, and that each child's needs were somewhat different from those of his classmates.

The teacher and principal observed some of the attitudes and appreciations evidenced by the children, then objectives were listed, with special notations for individual children. Lines of interest, a unit of work in the social studies, and other activities were found which gave individual children opportunities to grow in the attitudes and appreciations desired. These activities were guided patiently and understandingly so that each child experienced satisfaction at his own level of achievement. Records were made of the actions and statements of each child which indicated changes in his attitudes and appreciations. As far as possible, observations were made when the children were unaware of the observation. They were observed in the classroom, on the playground, in the auditorium, in the library, in the cafeteria.

The following is an abbreviated outline of the activities used:

The social studies unit, Building a New World
This included working in groups; finding and assembling materials; working out reports, exhibits and booklets; explaining work to visitors; pooling information and
evaluating contributions through general discussions; making field trips.

The school newspaper.--This included gathering news and writing articles; establishing an editorial policy; cartooning; working up the subscription sale; preparing the mailing list and delivering the papers to the rooms; doing the stenciling and mimeographing; caring for the materials.

Assembly programs presented by the sixth grade.--This included choosing the type and topic of each program; getting or making costumes and scenery; assigning parts; announcing numbers.

Miscellaneous activities.--This included attending assemblies and showing courtesy as an audience and as a participant; using lavatory periods; passing to other rooms; selecting radio programs for class listening; entertaining guests at luncheon; participating in discussions; selecting and posting material for bulletin boards; doing special school jobs such as caring for the music room, the mimeography, the radio or "keeping the books" on the school's cafeteria.

Measuring Results

The task of measuring results in geography teaching may be performed by two different kinds of tests:
the standardized and the homemade kinds. There are
certain carefully prepared tests which have been pub-
lished and standardized, and for which norms have been
determined. There must, however, always remain much
in the way of geographic results which, because of
its local, temporary, or individual nature, no such
standardized tests will be able to measure. For these
things the teacher will have to devise her own tests.

The chief value of a standardized test is that
norms have been determined for it. A norm is a score
which by previous giving of the test to large numbers
of pupils has been established as the average achieve-
ment of pupils of that age or grade. Without norms the
geography teacher would not know whether a certain
average score by her pupils was indicative of good or
poor work on their part, or whether the results of her
teaching were comparing favorably with those of other
teachers. There would be no basis of comparison. These
standard tests are expensive. Standardized geography
tests have limitations in that geography differs from
some of the tool subjects, such as reading, writing,
arithmetic and spelling, in that the content does and
should vary greatly in different schools. Since a
diagnostic test is one which measures several different
kinds of knowledge or ability and yields a separate
score for each kind, the teacher should select this kind of test in preference to one yielding a single total score. There are several forms of new-type objective tests which the teacher makes up for her own individual use with her pupils. There are several forms of tests which can be made readily by the inexperienced teacher, and without any technical training in tests and measurements. For example, there are true-false tests which consist simply of a number of statements which are either true or false and the students are to say which; the completion tests which consist of a number of statements in each of which some essential word is omitted; the multiple-choice tests resemble the completion tests, except that they have a number of answers provided from which the pupil is to choose the correct one; the judgment tests are well suited to geography classes. Judgment tests resemble true-false tests except that the pupils write the reason for the truth of each statement, rather than deciding between truth or falsity. The answers will be in sentence form and are not objective or easy to score as are true-false tests. However, they measure ability to think of geographical facts.

Some general principles and suggestions for measuring geography results in the sixth grade are:
(1) There is danger of measuring only facts, and thus neglecting the more intangible results. To measure attitudes, appreciation, understanding, and thinking ability may be much more difficult than to measure information, but it is more worth while. (2) Change and variety in tests used is important. No single kind of test should be used to the exclusion of other kinds. Different tests measure qualitatively different things. The more types of tests are used, the more comprehensive and complete is the measurement. Certain children are weak in regard to English expression, and hence do poorly on tests that call for much writing. Others are poor in reading, comprehension, and hence do poorly on true-false or completion tests. If the tests are widely varied, the inequalities of the children as regards writing ability, reading ability, comprehension of dictated statements, tend to be somewhat equalized.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

The greatest of all needs in the teaching of geography is better prepared teachers. When teachers have a reasonable grasp of the subject they will select and present subject matter in the light of the recognized purpose of geography. Relationships will be developed and principles illustrated. The home will be drawn upon. Geography will be taught with man as the central thought. Pupils will be led to see many ways in which geography influences human life and how their lives can be enriched by a better understanding of real geography.

One of the major problems in the teaching of geography is to enrich the intellectual content of local studies. Schools are not generally equipped with a literature of local geography, either in maps, atlases or textbooks, so the geography teacher has many obstacles. There is nothing in this country to compare with the county geographies of England, Germany or Switzerland. Only two counties of the United States, Los Angeles County in California, and Cook County in

\[1\]
Bowman, *op. cit.*, p. 337.

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Illinois, have carefully prepared culture maps of their areas.

Each area must have its own plan of study. The responsibility for the details of such a plan rests almost wholly on the teacher. America has such a rapid turnover in her teaching force and that fact adds to the difficulty for it brings to a locality short-term teachers, unfamiliar with the surroundings and untrained in methods of investigating and interpreting them. This problem will require time for a solution.

Geography has, to a large extent, advanced from a purely physical science to a social study. Major emphasis is placed upon reciprocal relationships between physical environment and life. Where there is life, there is geography. Geography must be looked upon not as old-fashioned matter of national boundaries and the location of capital cities, but as a living subject, full of the variety of human life, which explains ways of living in all their myriad diversity.

There is a rapidly growing demand for more geographic information. Considerable knowledge which properly belongs to the field of geography is being brought into use through non-geographic channels. For one thing the war has aroused an interest in the location of the world's rubber plantations. The guayule plant was
practically unknown to the average citizen of the United States until it suddenly leaped into prominence because of its possible substitution for rubber. Today numerous experiments are being made to determine soil and climatic conditions best suited to this plant. Not only the rubber shortage but also sugar rationing has made the United States more conscious of geography as the sugar beet is being contemplated as a large source of the nation's sugar supply. These are only two of many similar possible examples. The program of geography in the modern progressive school is based on three-point criteria: a knowledge of physical facts; a knowledge of human activities, and a knowledge of interrelationships between the human activities and the physical facts. The geography teacher should not only be able to plan for the present in such a way as to avoid serious handicaps from environmental change, but be able to visualize the future sufficiently to aid in adjustment to approaching changes. The teacher may thus teach the child to properly evaluate his environment and to expect changes which are bound to come. Such attitudes will tend to develop happy and worthy citizens fitted to live in an ever-changing world.

An enriched educational program of geography does not divide the day into short periods for recitation in
each subject. It tends to group related subjects together so that they may provide experiences for the children in continuous activities over broader areas. The enriched program uses subject matter as means to the development of the child, and not as having particularly intrinsic value in itself.

The devices, aids and equipment that may be used to enliven and enrich the geography class are numberless. Many of these devices may be secured free of charge or at a very nominal cost.

The major objective of geographic instruction is to assist in the development of the child through giving him a knowledge of the interrelationships existing between man and his natural environment in specific regions and an ability to apply such knowledge in solving the problems of living. If this major objective is reached, the ultimate objectives gained will be:

1. A knowledge of geographic facts, concepts and relationships that will enable the individual to give more intelligent consideration to current problems - local community, state, national, and international.

2. An understanding of how the varied problem of peoples are related to differences in natural environment.
3. A growing power to sense and grasp the economic and cultural interdependence of regions and peoples.

4. A better understanding of the value of natural resources and the need for intelligent use of them.

5. The ability to make a worth while use of leisure time through the vitalization of local field trips, of more distant travel, and of reading because of an understanding of the interrelations between man's working, playing, living and the elements of the natural environment.

6. The recognition and appreciation of the variety of human labor in the major types of regions through the world, arising from an understanding of man's adjustments to his natural environment.

The teachers of geography should realize that to them, to quite an extent, is given the power to decide whether tomorrow's citizen shall have the vision, imagination, ambition, sympathy and understanding to enable him to make his full contribution to better living and a better civilization in a world that is so rich in resources. These possibilities can be realized only by the working together of large groups of people within national boundaries and across national boundaries. This opportunity of the geography teacher is made even greater than it seems by the fact that most adult
activities are bent toward the realization of desires conceived before the age of fifteen years.

Teachers should use more varied programs. There is a need for more variation in the methods of presenting geographical material. In many instances, geography is taught week in and week out in the same manner with little attempt at making the subject vital and interesting. The teachers should show still more progress in the use of the many aids now available to the study of geography. Especially should free materials be fully utilized since there is such an abundance and variety of them. A wider use of pictures, the radio, and the many other devices for teaching geography should be incorporated into the teacher's plans for teaching. The teacher should use large units of work and these units should develop out of the pupil interest.

In the last analysis, the teaching of geography in the sixth grade depends upon the teacher, his interest in and knowledge of the children, his interest in and knowledge of his subject and methods of teaching. The best of plans and the finest of methods depend upon the teacher's personality and ability for maximum results. The pupils are already interested in geography, and it is up to the teacher to make the most of a wonderful opportunity.
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